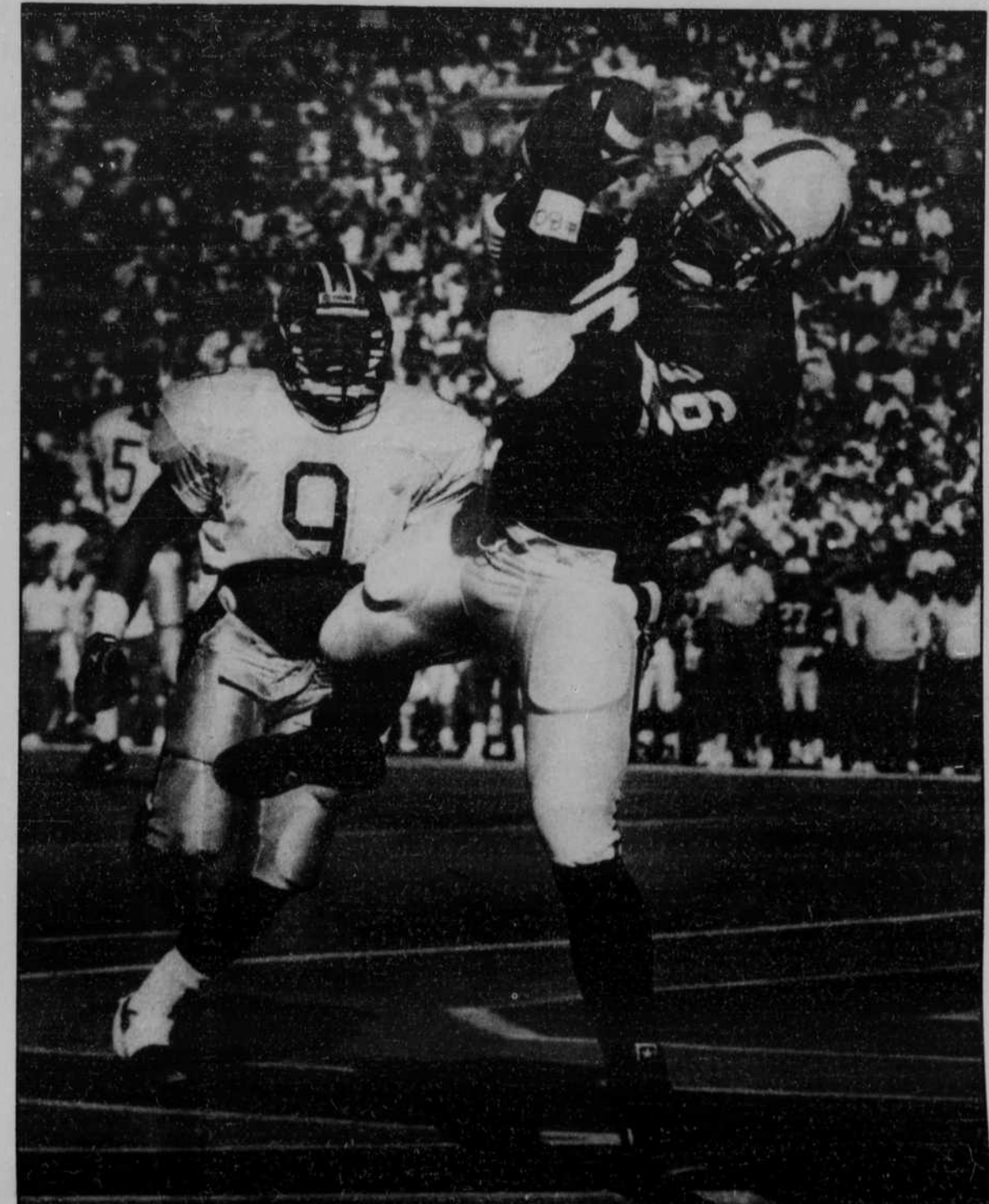


# 4 downs plenty for NU vs. Missouri



Butch Ireland/Daily Nebraskan



Al Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

By Paul Domeier  
Senior Reporter

**B**efore a play during Nebraska's 69-21 rout over Missouri on Saturday, the Missouri assistant coaches in the press box screamed frantically for someone to call a timeout. The Tigers had only nine defenders on the field. That could cause the 76,317 spectators who saw the game at Memorial Stadium to ask, "Didn't Missouri use only nine defenders on every down?"

The Tigers didn't, but it often looked that way.

Nebraska, 6-0 and in position to climb in both national polls, had 622 of the game's 1,004 combined total yards. The Tigers' offense couldn't keep up with the Cornhuskers. To borrow from another sport, Missouri forgot to bring sprinters to the track meet. The shot-putter types on the Missouri defensive line kept the Huskers from running up the middle, so Nebraska blazed a track around the outside.

Mickey Joseph, starting at quarterback for Nebraska, sparked the rout with his speed and option decisions. Joseph ran for 95 yards and four touchdowns.

I-back Leodis Flowers gained 111 yards, his fourth straight game over the 100-yard mark. I-back Scott Baldwin gained 79 yards, and Derek Brown gained 77 yards.

"We didn't expect a game like that," Joseph said.

The Huskers took the opening kickoff and marched 76 yards for a touchdown. Flowers gained 56 yards on the drive.

The first possession for Missouri's imposing passing attack ended in a fumble by quarterback Kent Kiefer.

Husker middle guard Pat Engelbert recovered at the Missouri 21-yard line. Flowers ran for 11 yards, then Joseph found split end Jon Bostick open in the back of the end zone for a 10-yard touchdown pass.

"(Bostick) did a good job getting open," Joseph said. "He didn't have much room to work with."

The Huskers got a great jump at the crack of the starter's pistol, and the Tigers were acting as if the gun had been loaded and pointed at them.

Nebraska's offense played short-handed due to injuries — a concern to Husker coach Tom Osborne. In addition to the expected absences of tight ends Chris Garrett and William Washington, both of whom suffered from ankle

injuries, guard Erik Wiegert did not play because of a jammed neck and starting tackle Tom Punt missed the game with the flu.

"It was like we were without three or four starters, and we functioned really well," Osborne said.

Osborne said he was pleased with the play of backup tight ends Daryl Leise and Johnny Mitchell. Mitchell, a freshman from Chicago, caught two passes for 51 yards, including a diving touchdown on a pass thrown by Mike Grant.

Kiefer, who completed 16 of 31 passes for 202 yards before leaving in the third quarter, led Missouri on an 80-yard drive to make the score 14-7.

Nebraska, though, came back with two more touchdowns before the quarter ended.

The domination continued throughout the game; the Huskers never used punter Mike Stigge.

Osborne said he didn't think the Nebraska offense answered any doubts, since he didn't think there should have been any doubt in the first place.

"It's getting a little tiring," Osborne said. "We were leading the conference in rushing offense, leading in total offense, leading in scoring offense, leading the conference and maybe the nation in kickoff returns, and yet it was like we're a bad offensive team."

Kiefer and company had some success against the best defense statistically in the nation. The three Missouri touchdowns were two more than Nebraska had given up in any previous game.

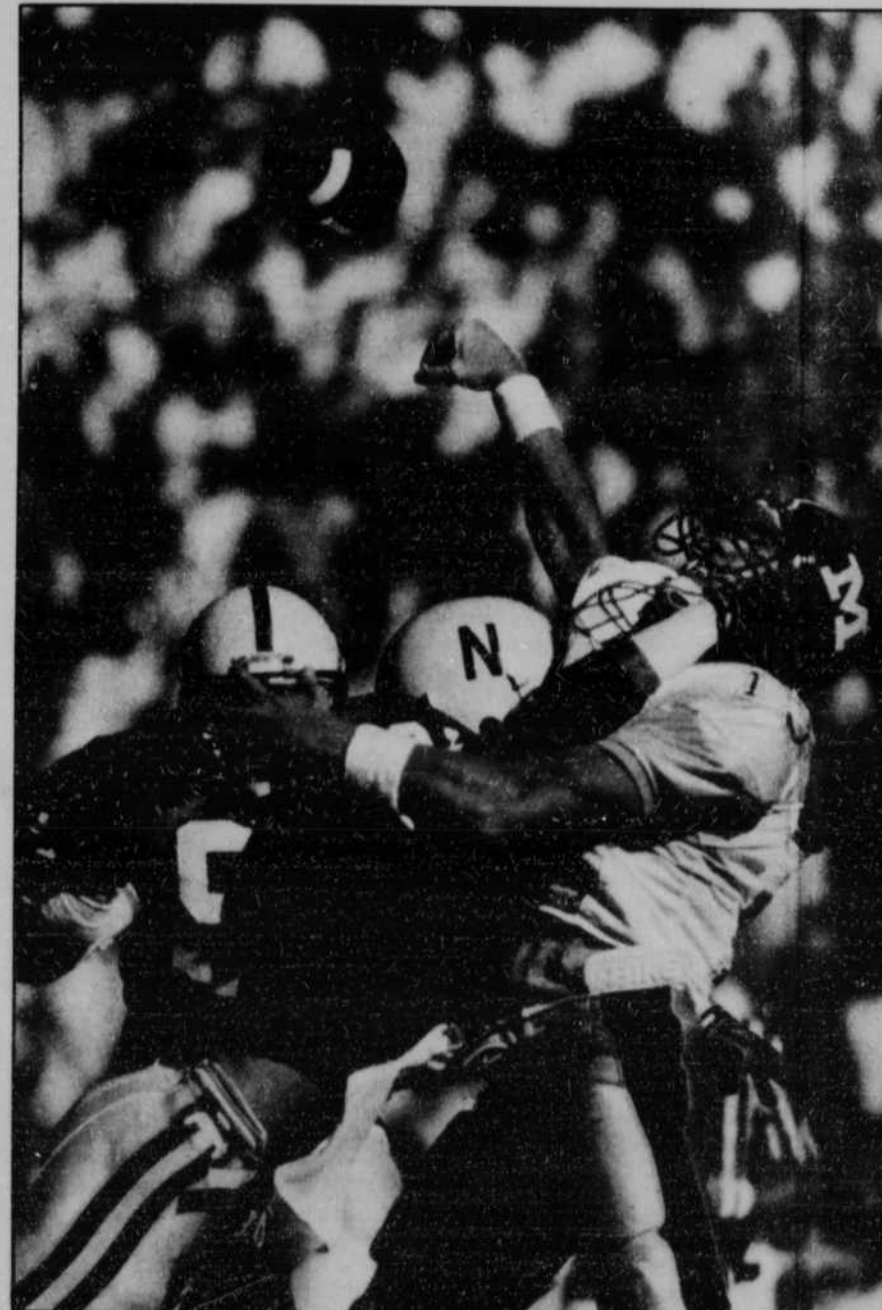
Missouri had 223 total yards at the half, 198 of them from Kiefer's passing, and Nebraska had only one sack.

In the first three Tiger possessions of the second half, though, Missouri managed one first down, and Nebraska got sacks two and three. After those series, Kiefer gave way to reserves Mark Ramstack and Phil Johnson.

Of the Tigers' 383 total yards, 135 came in the fourth quarter, when Nebraska was going with backups to backups. Some of them, Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride admitted, played positions they had never played before.

McBride had freedom to tinker since the game was such a rout. Nebraska's coaches said they didn't expect such an easy win any more than they expected Missouri to go with nine defenders.

"We played better than I thought we would today," Osborne said. "I'm kind of surprised the way things went."



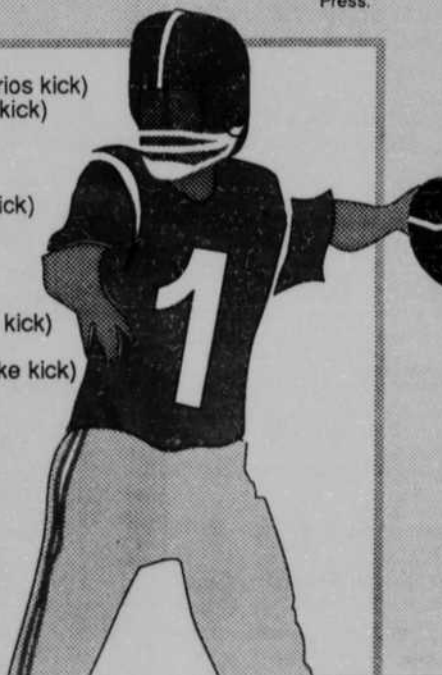
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### Score by quarters

Missouri	7	7	0	7	21
Nebraska	28	17	10	14	69

Source: Associated Press.

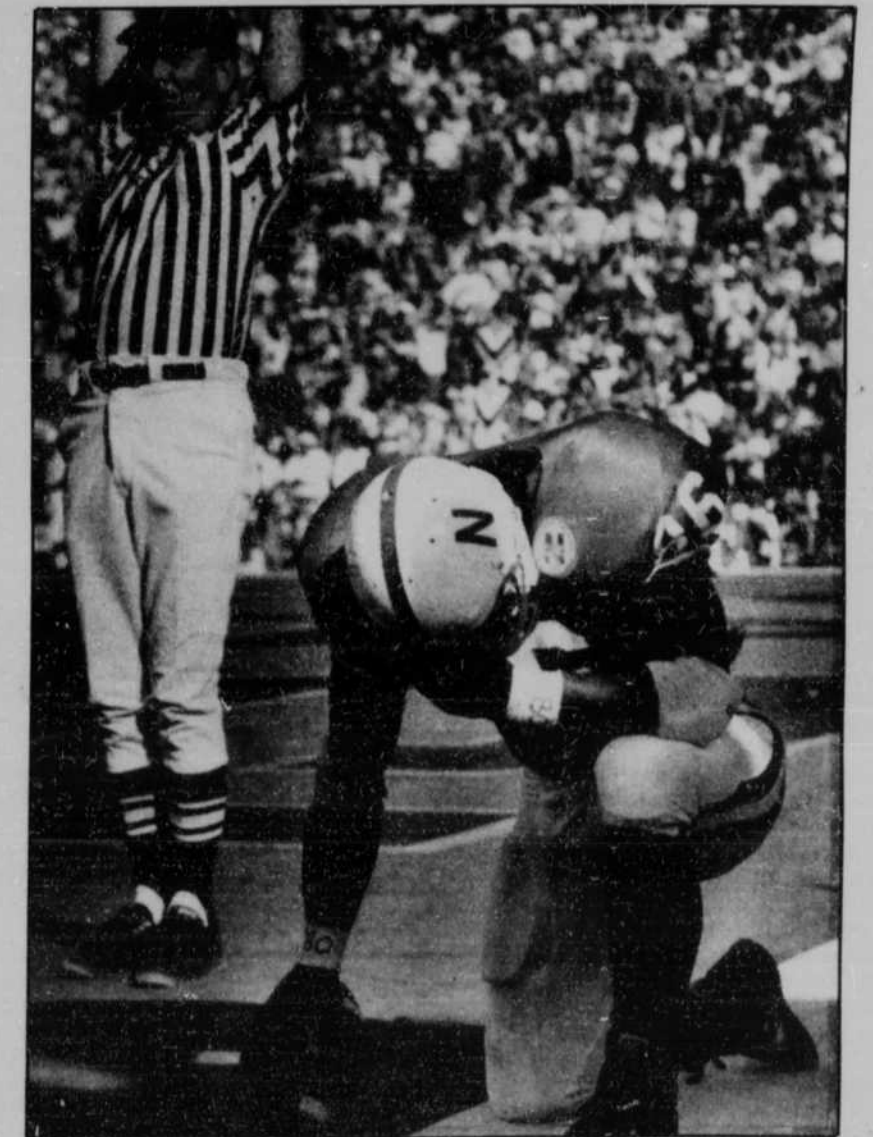
- Nebraska Flowers 1 run (Barrios kick)
- Nebraska Bostick 10 pass from Joseph (Barrios kick)
- Missouri Jones 10 pass from Kiefer (Jacke kick)
- Nebraska Joseph 15 run (Barrios kick)
- Nebraska Joseph 5 run (Barrios kick)
- Nebraska Joseph 2 run (Barrios kick)
- Missouri Jones 4 pass from Kiefer (Jacke kick)
- Nebraska FG Barrios 31
- Nebraska Joseph 3 run (Barrios kick)
- Nebraska FG Barrios 38
- Nebraska Brown 23 run (Barrios kick)
- Nebraska Mitchell 15 pass from Grant (Lang kick)
- Nebraska Haase 6 run (Lang kick)
- Missouri Bailey 11 pass from Johnson (Jacke kick)



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	Mis	Neb
First downs	19	33
Rushes-yards	27-57	69-500
Passing	325	122
Return Yards	40	47
Comp-Att-Int	25-47-3	9-16-2
Punts	5-37	0-0
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	3-30	3-15
Time of Possession	25:50	34:10

Clockwise from upper-left: Nebraska quarterback Mickey Joseph runs into the end zone in the first quarter against Missouri. Joseph rushed for four touchdowns and passed for another in the Cornhuskers' 69-21 victory over the Tigers. Nebraska's Johnny Mitchell catches a touchdown pass in the fourth quarter. Mitchell kneels and bows his head after catching his touchdown pass. Nebraska's Steve Carner crunches Missouri quarterback Mark Ramstack.



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