

# Old criticisms of T.O. won't do

In "Caddyshack," Ty Webb/Chevy Chase says, "In one physical model of the universe, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line — in the opposite direction."

The best way for Nebraska to improve — the shortest distance between Nebraska's status as perennial



**Paul Domeier**

tease to status as possible juggernaut — is to diversify the offense and allow more emotion in the big games.

Well, Nebraska is doing that. In an effort to get better, the Huskers have shown more emotion this season, and Friday against Oklahoma the Huskers passed more — and headed in the opposite direction.

More passing and more emotion (early in the season) didn't keep Oklahoma from winning 45-10 in one of the most pathetic games of Tom Osborne's tenure.

The Huskers tried the right things. That doesn't mean life is peachy in Huskerland, since from every perspective, Nebraska lost by 35 points.

What it does mean is that if you want to say, "T.O. must go!" you can't use the old reasons:

1. Osborne must change the offense. Pass more and run up the middle less!

Nebraska's basic I and I-bone offensive structure can't be too bad. Colorado and Oklahoma have copied it directly.

In one rough play count, Nebraska passed 25 times against Oklahoma and called two other pass plays that turned into runs. Fifteen of those came in the first half; the Huskers weren't just throwing out of desperation.

Three plays were reverses or some type of trick play. Of the 33 conventional runs, 12 went up the middle.

Twice as many passes as middle

runs; 43 percent of the plays called as passes. The "run left, run right, run up the middle, punt" stereotype didn't apply to the Oklahoma game.

Opening up the game gave Nebraska's its only chance to stretch the Oklahoma defense and win. The strategy backfired with seven turnovers leading to 31 easy points. Conservative running could have held down the score, but Nebraska couldn't have won.

2. Nebraska can't stop runs up the middle.

Defensive coordinator Charlie McBride couldn't find a way to stop or even slow down Colorado's Eric Bieniemy, but the Huskers did slow down Oklahoma's backs. Oklahoma's tailbacks gained 40 yards on 12 tries up the middle, 3.3 yards a carry.

On 16 of the Sooner fullbacks' carries, they gained 62 yards, 3.9 yards a carry. The other fullback run was the 48-yard touchdown busted by Mike McKinley, the one of eight Sooner gains of 15 or more yards to come up the middle.

3. Osborne can't get the Huskers fired up for any game.

Well, he isn't very good at it, but that didn't keep the Huskers from being emotional in earlier games this year.

A hard tackle this year earns the tackler a head-shattering left hook to the helmet from Kenny Walker or Pat Tyrance. This is the way psychopaths and defensive players show happiness, especially when the categories overlap.

On offense, Mickey Joseph is downright flamboyant on the field and tight end Johnny Mitchell has shown a variety of end zone dances.

In the Colorado game, Joseph ran for an apparent touchdown early in the second half. The Husker sideline exploded before the official ruled that Joseph had grazed the sideline.

Later, when Mitchell scored a touchdown and Nebraska led 12-0, the Huskers were penalized 15 yards for celebrating too wildly. This team is too tame?

But in the fourth quarter of the Colorado game, the Buffaloes destroyed the emotion and momentum for the entire season. That 27-point fourth quarter broke Nebraska.

Friday, the Huskers were all but comatose. But this wasn't Nebraska's normal flat loss, like Iowa 1981, Syracuse 1984, Colorado 1986 or numerous Oklahoma defeats, where being neither too hot nor too cold wasn't just right. Nebraska was frozen, mentally numb.

For the first time in years, Nebraska fans have seen the Huskers have an emotional letdown against a good team, and nobody knows how to react.

Go ahead and verbally abuse Osborne if you want, but come up with new criticisms. The strategies, though they failed, were correct.

The Huskers didn't look dazed as they walked into their locker-room after the game. They almost looked like they didn't care.

Of course they cared, terribly so, in their heads, and in years to come they will care even more. They couldn't care in their hearts, though, because they left their hearts behind Nov. 3.

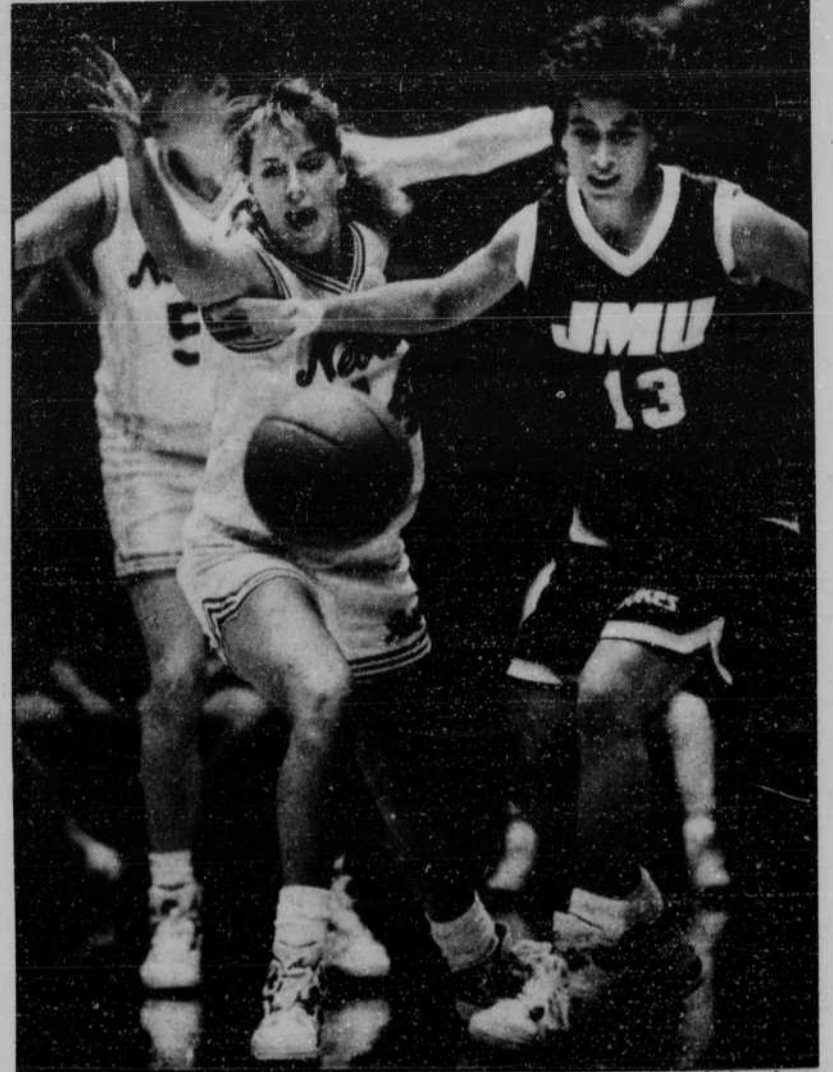
Losing to Colorado was no reason for the Huskers to hang their heads in shame, so they weren't playing a "pride" game. Pride comes into play in the bowl game against Georgia Tech. Now the Huskers have the crushing loss to goad them.

If Nebraska goes to the Citrus Bowl still in a funk and throwing interceptions, that's bad. It's even worse if the Huskers come out emotionless and conservative on offense.

This is the deal: If Osborne is to live up the Huskers, the team will risk a few humiliating losses. In exchange for making the team competitive for the national title, every once in a while Nebraska will go in the opposite direction.

For which every fan will say, "Thank you very little."

Domeier is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan sports reporter and columnist.



David Fahleson/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Kristi Dahn and James Madison University's Emily McCracken fight for a loose ball during the Wimmer's Invitational on Saturday. The Cornhuskers will play Robert Morris College today and will compete in the Ohio State Invitational this weekend.

## Beck

Continued from Page 13

nate this team if we put the ball where it needs to be," she said.

More importantly the Huskers will have to continue to hold their opponents to 47.5 points a game and a 23.7 shot percentage from the floor, Beck said.

Beck said Nebraska's combination of size and speed will help them throughout the season.

"We're going to match up with a lot of people because we have pretty good size and an up-tempo offense," Beck said.

The Huskers will be led by junior Sue Hesch, who was named the tournament Most Valuable Performer after scoring 25 points, shooting 91 percent, and pulling down a team-high 22 rebounds in the two games. Sophomore Karen Jennings was also named to the All-Tournament team, after racking up 22 points and 12 rebounds.

Despite coming off the bench to relieve Hesch, senior Ann Halsne is the team's leading scorer averaging 17 points and 6.5 rebounds per

game. Halsne's performance, however, was looked over in the voting for the select team.

The game against Robert Morris was scheduled to let the team get some experience on the road before they head into the tourney, Beck said.

"Our first game will maybe be one that we can handle a little bit better," she said. "We'll go into the tournament with one road game under our belt."

Nebraska plays Houston in the opening round Saturday at 1 p.m. Ohio State meets Pittsburgh at 3 p.m. with the championship Sunday at 3 p.m.

In Monday's women's basketball AP Top 20 the Huskers received two votes, an honor Beck said she didn't expect.

Beck said she has also been impressed with the leadership of seniors Kristi Dahn and Ann Halsne whose half-time speech helped spark the Huskers turn a 24-24 halftime tie into a 68-44 win over James Madison in last weekend's championship game.

"We finally have some seniors to lean on," Beck said. "We haven't had that kind of leadership in a long time."

### IF YOU'RE ONLY PLANNING TO MARRY HER ONCE...



Shouldn't her ring be the best it can be? Whether you're planning to spend \$250 or \$5000, there's only one place where you're sure to find the ring that says what's in your heart



Only at Borsheim's.

120 Regency Parkway, Omaha (402) 391-0400 800-642-GIFT  
Hours: Mon & Thurs. 10-8, Tues., Wed. & Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5:30, Sun. Noon-5

### Saturday, Dec. 1st ... 9am-4pm

Come see us after the Star City Parade!



301 OAKCREEK DRIVE  
NORTH OF KERREY'S OFF OF SUN VALLEY BLVD.