

RIGHT: Missouri quarterback Phil Johnson is pursued by Cornhuskers Travis Hill (93), John Parrella (diving) and Pat Engelbert (97). Johnson, who came into the game leading the Big Eight in total offense, finished with only 169 yards on 15-for-29 passing.
 BOTTOM RIGHT: Nebraska's Tyrone Legette breaks up a pass intended for Missouri wide receiver Kenneth Dunn.
 BELOW: Third-string quarterback Tom Haase runs for seven yards late in the fourth quarter. Haase was one of 109 players to see action for the Cornhuskers.

Jeff Haller/DN

Victory too easy, Huskers say

By Todd Cooper
Senior Reporter

By most Cornhusker accounts, the Missouri Tigers were too tame for anyone's good during Nebraska's 63-6 victory Saturday.

Tight end Johnny Mitchell: "Actually, I didn't want the score to be the way it was today. I wanted it to be tight. You don't learn from that type of game."

Strong safety Steve Carmer: "They really kind of surprised me. I thought emotionally they were kind of low. I had heard earlier in the week where they said they were going to come in here and pass on us at will. That didn't happen."

Defensive coordinator Charlie McBride: "I thought they would be as good a football team as Kansas State was. After watching film of them I thought, 'Holy Smokes, these guys are ripping teams.' I really thought we were going to have our hands full."

And it appeared that way when Missouri capped its opening drive with a 42-yard field goal by Jeff Jacke. Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne declined a holding penalty that might have taken Missouri out of field goal position on the previous play.

It was a small price to pay, Osborne said. "I may have been a dumb call," Osborne said. "I was satisfied with giving them three points. We figured we'd come back and score."

After the field goal, Missouri never looked back — at the scoreboard that is — as Nebraska rattled off touchdowns on eight straight possessions.

Nebraska scored three touchdowns each in the first and second quarters

and added three in the second half to hand the Tigers their 13th consecutive loss to the Huskers.

Nebraska, 6-1 and 3-0 in the Big Eight, racked up 681 total yards against the Tiger defense, ranked 102nd nationally coming into Saturday's game.

Meanwhile, Nebraska's defense — which was riddled by 340 yards of Kansas State passing last week — held Missouri to 261 total yards.

"Today, everything seemed to work well, offensively and defensively," quarterback Keithen McCant said. McCant worked the offense well, Osborne said. For the second week in a row, McCant threw and ran for more than 100 yards.

He also ran for more yards than I-back Derek Brown, who finished with 118 yards on 18 carries. That marked the seventh consecutive game in which Brown rushed for more than 100 yards. It marked the first time Brown had been outrushed by McCant.

Brown said he didn't care. "If he gets us near the end zone, I don't mind," Brown said. "He can run for 200 yards if he wants."

McCant, who finished with 268 total yards including 144 yards on 9-for-13 passing, put Nebraska in the end zone when he found a wide-open Jon Bostick for a 27-yard touchdown with 8:57 remaining in the first quarter.

After Nebraska cornerback Kenny Wilhite intercepted a Missouri pass, Brown ran twice for eight yards. McCant then ran untouched down the sideline for a 36-yard score to make it 14-3 with six minutes left in the first quarter.

By then, Mitchell had seen enough. "After the second one, we felt like we could score at will," Mitchell said.

"It was kind of easy for us as the game opened up."

"When you have a couple-touchdown lead, you can take chances." Nebraska didn't have to.

After another Missouri punt, Brown capped Nebraska's next scoring drive with a 5-yard run. Brown ran for 43 yards on the drive, while McCant sparked the offense with a 35-yard pass to split end Tyrone Hughes.

By the end of the first quarter, Nebraska had 221 yards of total offense to Missouri's 123. By half, the Huskers had outgained the Tigers 398-175.

After a Missouri field goal, McCant completed four of five passes on the Huskers' first drive of the second quarter. He found Mitchell for a 7-yard touchdown which put the Huskers up 28-6.

One play later, Missouri quarterback Phil Johnson, who finished with 169 yards on 15-for-29 passing, fumbled and Nebraska outside linebacker Travis Hill recovered at Missouri's 17-yard line. Six plays after Hill's recovery, back-up I-back Calvin Jones barreled in from five yards out to make it 35-6, three minutes before half.

"I should have got to them more than that," said Hill, who also had a sack Saturday. "I was in the backfield a lot today, and the rest of the defense was, too."

"We did what we had to do today. And we did the same things that we did last week. We just approached it differently — more intensely."

Nebraska's offense approached the second half in a similar way, rattling off a touchdown to open the second half and engineering another drive before McCant and the first team took

a seat. "He wanted to go back in," Osborne said of McCant, who exited with a slight shoulder bruise in the third quarter. "We told him he had had enough."

Back-up I-back Scott Baldwin, who finished off that drive with a 1-yard touchdown, probably has had enough frustration. Playing for the first time since spraining his ankle on Nebraska's opening drive against Utah State, Baldwin dislocated his shoulder while running through a Missouri defender to make it 56-6 late in the third quarter.

That was practically Nebraska's only loss Saturday, Osborne said. But it was costly.

"We sure hate to lose Baldwin," Osborne said. "He's a real inspirational guy."

Nebraska's defense found some inspiration after holding Missouri — the No. 1 passing offense in the conference — to just 184 yards passing, well below its 245-yard average.

"I was really proud of them today," Osborne said. "I thought they were a little more ready to play emotionally."

"Overall, they've done pretty well this year."

But overall, what did this game tell Nebraska going into next week's match-up with Colorado?

"It tells us we're better than Missouri," Osborne said. "Other than that, I don't know."

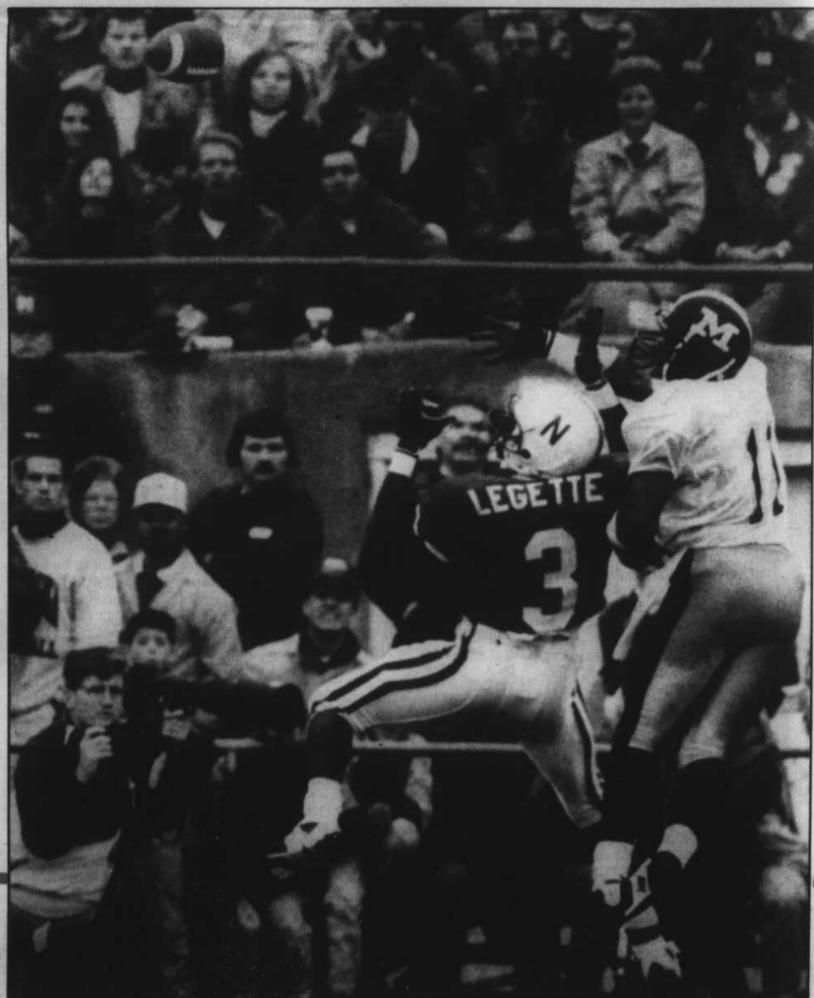
Mitchell didn't know either.

"A game like Kansas State last week, you learn from that," Mitchell said, "because you dig real deep inside and it takes a team effort."

"You learn more from that than a big-margin game like today."



Shaun Sartin/DN



Shaun Sartin/DN

Tigers shocked by loss margin

By Chuck Green
Senior Editor

For the second straight week, a Cornhusker football opponent has gone home angry at the way they lost.

Last week, Kansas State was upset that it didn't pull off the upset.

After Missouri's 63-6 loss to ninth-ranked Nebraska Saturday in Memorial Stadium, Tiger Coach Bob Stull was bewildered.

"That score, hopefully, is not indicative of where our program stands at this time," Stull said. "This was a classic example of things just getting out of hand. Nebraska is a better team than us, but not that much better."

"We're better than this."

On Missouri's first possession of the game, many in the crowd of 76,244 fans must have visions of last week's Husker struggle with Kansas State. The Tigers drove 57 yards on six plays. Two of Missouri's first three plays were passes of 23 and 36 yards, respectively. The drive ended with a 42-yard field goal by Jeff Jacke.

But Missouri's offense sputtered after that, and the Tigers' only other score of the game was another Jacke field goal, this time from 47 yards out in the second quarter.

Nebraska held Missouri to 261 yards of total offense, while the Tiger defense firmly entrenched itself in the bottom spot of the Big Eight by allowing the Huskers to roll up 681 yards.

Stull said he was concerned with his team's lack of ability to generate

points or to sustain drives. He said the absence of big plays was the primary obstacle.

"What we needed was to generate some plays to create enthusiasm, to make a spark," he said. "We needed to get some turnovers and score some points early, but we didn't do either."

“We're better than this.”

Bob Stull
Missouri football coach

Missouri's leading rusher was full-back Michael Washington, who carried 11 times for 48 yards. Wide receiver Kenneth Dunn was the Tigers' leading receiver, pulling down four passes for 69 yards.

Missouri quarterback Phil Johnson, who leads the conference in total offense, completed 15 of 29 passes for 169 yards and threw one interception.

Because of Missouri's inability to move the ball, Stull said, the game had no real turning point.

The Huskers "just took control with their running game and never let up," he said. "What really hurts is that when we were controlling the ball, we turned it over and gave them some cheap ones."

Missouri lost one fumble and threw two interceptions Saturday. All three turnovers resulted in Nebraska touchdowns.

Stull wasn't alone in his befuddlement over Missouri's poor play.

"You can't let it hurt your confidence," Missouri cornerback Jason Oliver said of the lopsided score. "Once that happens, it's all over. You're going to make mistakes, and Nebraska's a good team, but we helped them. I know — I know — we're better than that."

Oliver, who made seven tackles, said the worst part about the game was how poorly the Tigers played.

"It's different if you play well and lose, but today wasn't Missouri football," Oliver said. "When you get beat that bad it hurts. It hurts real bad."

Stull said the player he was most impressed with in the game was Nebraska quarterback Keithen McCant.

"He can run or throw extremely well," Stull said. "That's why they were able to do so well offensively. I think (backup Husker quarterback) Mickey (Joseph) is a little faster, but McCant is more diverse."

"Last year at this time, they were trying to find out who their quarterback was. This year, they knew."

Stull said the Tigers have to work on their consistency to have a successful remainder of the season.

"One week we play well, the next week we do poorly," Stull said. "I'm not making excuses. I expect our players to go out there and play better than they did today."

"If we don't, we're in big trouble the rest of the way."

NU vs. MU stats

FINAL SCORE: NU 63, MU 6

	Scoring by quarter:	
	MU	NU
1	3	21
2	3	21
3	0	14
4	0	7

- MU — FG Jacke 42
- NU — Bostick 27 pass from McCant (Bennett kick)
- NU — McCant 36 run (Bennett kick)
- NU — D. Brown 5 run (Bennett kick)
- MU — FG Jacke 47
- NU — Mitchell 7 pass from McCant (Bennett kick)
- NU — C. Jones 5 run (Bennett kick)
- NU — Hughes 21 pass from McCant (Bennett kick)
- NU — D. Brown 1 run (Bennett kick)
- NU — Baldwin 1 run (Sieler kick)
- NU — Achola 7 run (Sieler kick)

	MU	NU
First downs	16	32
Rushes-yards	32-77	68-511
Passing yards	184	170
Total yards	261	681
Return yards	11	35
Passing	17-35-2	13-19-0
Punts	7-39.2	4-45.2
Fumbles-lost	3-1	1-0
Penalties-yards	4-32	5-36
Time of possession	25:02	34:58

Amie DeFrain/DN