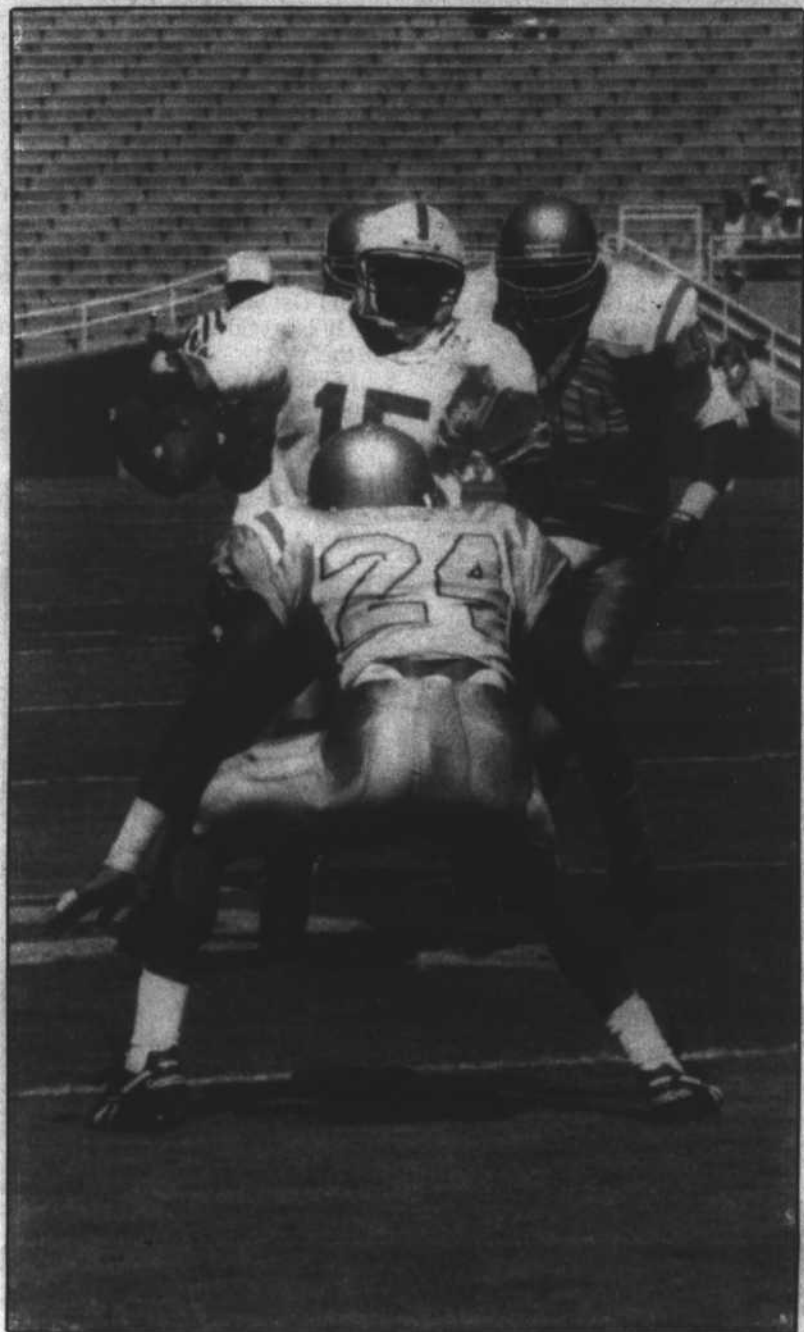


West Coast squeaker nearly tweaks Nebraska



Turnovers plague Husker offense

By Jeff Singer
Senior Editor

PASADENA, Calif. — After coming off back-to-back blowouts, the Nebraska football team was finally given a test Saturday.

And although the Cornhuskers often looked like they would succumb to the challenge from UCLA, sixth-ranked Nebraska was able to escape with a 14-13 win over the Bruins before a crowd of 50,299 in the Rose Bowl.

The main point the Huskers wanted to get across after the narrow victory was "a win is a win." With the victory, Nebraska moved up to No. 6 in the Associated Press Top 25.

"We're just glad to get out of here with a win," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said. "If you go minus-four turnovers against a good football team on their field, then you're very fortunate to win the game."

The turnovers — including three Husker fumbles and an interception — hampered the Nebraska offense in

numerous drives, while the Bruins were able to remain turnover-free in their bid to upset the Huskers.

Nebraska turned the ball over in key drives each quarter, but the team was able to overcome those mistakes.

"We played well — with the turnovers," said Nebraska freshman I-back Lawrence Phillips, who ran for a career-high 137 yards on 28 carries. "We did what we had to do after the turnovers occurred."

UCLA's Skip Hicks put the Bruins up 10-0 on a 6-yard touchdown run midway through the second quarter.

But on the ensuing drive, the Nebraska offense finally got in sync. The Huskers drove 80 yards in nine plays, capped by Phillips' 5-yard touchdown run, to cut UCLA's lead to three.

The Huskers opened the third quarter with another turnover — this time a fumble by junior fullback Cory Schlesinger. But they again overcame the miscue.

After forcing the Bruins to punt after three plays, Nebraska drove 80

yards on 14 plays in nearly six minutes. An 11-yard pass from quarterback Tommie Frazier to tight end Gerald Armstrong gave the Huskers their first lead halfway into the third quarter.

UCLA was able to cut the lead to 14-13 on a 27-yard Bjorn Merten field goal early in the fourth quarter, but the Bruins could get no closer.

The Bruins had one last chance when they had the ball with more than four minutes left in the game, but they were forced to punt with 2:23 left. The Huskers were able to run out the clock in their final possession.

Frazier, who completed 13 of 19 attempts for 145 yards, said the score was the only thing that mattered at the end of the game.

"We scored 14, they scored 13 — it was a win," Frazier said.

Nebraska entered Saturday's game leading the nation in scoring with 63 points per game.

But Nebraska wingback Abdul

See NEBRASKA on 8

California natives dazzle at home

By Jeff Singer
Senior Editor

PASADENA, Calif. — For a pair of Nebraska football players, Saturday's game against UCLA was a homecoming of sorts.

And the duo didn't disappoint their followers who watched them at the Rose Bowl.

Freshman I-back Lawrence Phillips and junior wingback Abdul Muhammad, both natives of Southern California, had solid performances in the Huskers' 14-13 win over the University of California at Los Angeles.

Phillips, a native of West Covina, Calif., rushed for a career-high 137 yards on 28 carries in his second game as a Husker.

Muhammad, who had 156 family members and friends from his home-

town of Compton, Calif., in attendance, caught three passes for 38 yards. Muhammad hauled in a 16-yard shovel pass from quarterback Tommie Frazier that set up Phillips' score on the next play.

Muhammad said it was nice to play in front of his many supporters but that it didn't affect his on-field performance.

"I've played in front of my family and friends before so it was no big deal," Muhammad said. "I was just very focused."

Phillips said he had a similar outlook.

"I wasn't thinking of the crowd; I wasn't thinking of being at home. I was just thinking about winning the game," he said.

But Phillips said he was also concerned with protecting the football.

Phillips was fortunate enough to be one of the Huskers who was not bitten by the turnover bug. Nebraska had four turnovers in the game, including three fumbles.

"I was just worried about holding onto the ball because it's crunch time and I can't turn it over," he said. "I really didn't want to sit on the bench and think about fumbles."

Phillips said he didn't think the estimated 30 family members and friends of his in attendance would get to see him play as much as they did.

"Last week I got 14 carries, and I was pretty much thinking I was going to get that much (Saturday)," he said.

Breaking the 100-yard rushing mark for the first time in his college career in front of family and friends made the win memorable, Phillips said.

Mark Della Giustina/Special to the DN
Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier is pursued by UCLA's Robert Gamble (No. 24) and Shane Jasper during the Cornhuskers' 14-13 win Saturday at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. Frazier ran for 33 yards on nine carries and threw for 145 yards on 13-of-19 passing despite being hampered by a sprained right ankle.

NU volleyball coach celebrates 500th win

By Tim Pearson
Senior Reporter

After his 500th win at Nebraska Saturday night, Cornhusker volleyball coach Terry Pettit didn't want to take credit for the milestone.

Instead he gave the credit to the university and the athletes he's worked with during his 17 years as Nebraska coach.

Pettit achieved the milestone as the Huskers improved their record to 9-0 by winning two matches this past weekend at the First Tier Invitational at NU Coliseum.

"This is a lot better than getting my 118th loss," Pettit said. "There are two things that stand out.

"One, to achieve that you have to be at a university that provides the financial and administrative support that Nebraska does. The second thing is a litany of exceptional athletes who have been wonderful players."

The Huskers, ranked fourth in the coaches poll and seventh in the Volleyball Monthly poll, defeated No. 14 Georgia on Friday 15-9, 15-8, 12-15, 15-8 and No. 22 Louisiana State on Saturday 15-9, 15-3, 15-4.

In the Georgia victory, sophomore middle blocker Allison Weston, named the invitational's Most Valuable Player, set a Nebraska school record with 35 kills in a four-game match.

"It surprised me," Weston said. "But my shoulder felt it afterwards."

Weston said the Cornhuskers knew they would see a tough Georgia team Friday night.

"We knew that Georgia was going to be good," she said. "This gave us a good outlook of where we stand as a team.

"We had a few shaky practices last week, but fortunately we turned it around this weekend."

Louisiana State coach Scott Luster said Nebraska was just a better team Saturday night.

"Nebraska's a fine team," he said. "They're very experienced, and they play good consistent volleyball. We weren't as smooth as Nebraska."

"That's why they're ranked fourth, and we're not."

Luster said the Huskers could possibly be the nation's best all-around team.

"We've seen Long Beach State, Texas and Pacific, and I think Nebraska is far the most balanced out of the four," he said. "They have good senior leadership, and Terry just keeps reloading every year."

In the first game, the score was tied 3-3 before Nebraska reeled off 10 unanswered points to seal the game. The Tigers made a late run to make the score 14-9, but that's the closest they got.

The Huskers ran away early with the second game, jumping out to a 5-0 lead. With the score 8-3, junior outside hitter Kelly Aspegren had three consecutive service aces to start a run of seven unanswered points.

Nebraska won the third game on the strength of Weston's five kills.

Pettit said the presence of Weston and 6-foot, 2-inch freshman middle blocker Jen McFadden make it tough

Match stats	
First Tier Invitational	
Nebraska defeats Georgia	
15-9, 15-8, 12-15, 15-8	
Nebraska defeats Louisiana State	
15-9, 15-3, 15-4	
Team leaders:	
BLOCKS:	10 Jen McFadden
ASSISTS:	85 Nikki Stricker
KILLS:	35 Allison Weston
HITTING PERCENTAGE:	.619 Allison Weston



DN graphic

for opponents to match up.

"It means opponents can't concentrate on a particular attacker," he said.

Weston said the Huskers did a good job of defending and attacking against LSU.

"We were bringing up balls that they were hitting at us and then pounding it right back at them," she said.

NOTES:

● Along with Weston being named Most Valuable Player, three Huskers were named to the All-Invitational team. Senior setter Nikki Stricker, McFadden, and freshman outside hitter Maria Hedbeck all were named.

● Assistant coach Cathy Noth said junior Kim Tonniges, who's recovering from off-season shoulder surgery, will likely play in the back row most of the season. Senior Laura Luther is still out while she recovers from shoulder surgery.



Kiley Timperley/DN

Freshman setter Stephanie Clerc (left) looks on as freshman outside hitter Maria Hedbeck makes a dig Saturday.