

Cornhusker victory leaves coach puzzled

By Jeff Griesch
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska football team had an answer for every Kansas State touchdown Saturday.

But Nebraska coach Tom Osborne had more questions after the Cornhuskers' 45-28 win over the Wildcats at Memorial Stadium on Saturday.

In a conversation with Wildcat coach Bill Snyder before the game, Osborne said he could never remember being five games into the year and not knowing how good his team was. After the game, Osborne said he still wasn't sure how good the Huskers were but he said that Snyder should have a better idea of how good Kansas State was.

"I hope today he feels like he has a pretty good team, because if they're not a good team, then we're in big trouble," Osborne said. "Honestly, the score wasn't indicative of the ball game."

Despite winning 45-28, the Husker defense gave up 565 yards in total offense.

Led by quarterback Tommie Frazier's career-high 312 total yards, the Huskers racked up 545 total yards. Frazier led Nebraska with 158 yards rushing and 154 yards on nine-of-19 passing.

Osborne said he felt confident about the ability of his secondary coming into the game.

But against the Wildcats, the secondary was trailing Kansas State receivers all day en route to allowing the second biggest passing total in Big Eight history.

Kansas State quarterback Chad May completed 30 of 51 passes for 489 yards, which broke the Big Eight passing record of 480 yards set by Kansas' Mike Norseth in 1985 and tied by Missouri quarterback Jeff Handy last season.

"Coming into the game, I felt our pass defense had been excellent for two or three games in a row, but today we obviously had some busts," Osborne said.

Defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said the Huskers also dropped three interceptions that could have ended Wildcat drives.

"They made some great plays," McBride said, "but we dropped three. So, I don't know, maybe we need to carry baskets with us or something."

While Nebraska had some broken coverages, Osborne said, Kansas State also made big plays.

"They couldn't be any more 'on' than they were today," Osborne said. "It seems like when we play these guys, either their quarterback plays out of his head or he's that good all the time...but I didn't see that guy throw like that before."

Behind May's passing, Kansas State tied the game twice in the first half. The Wildcats came within three with 7:44 left in the fourth quarter before giving up two Husker touchdowns in the final minutes.

In what proved to be one of the biggest plays of the day, free safety Tyrone Williams intercepted a pass at the end of the first half.

With 45 seconds remaining in the half, Williams, a sophomore from Palmetto, Fla., picked off a pass from Wildcat running back J.J. Smith intended for quarterback Chad May at the Nebraska 4-yard-line.

Williams' interception prevented the Wildcats from scoring a sure field goal and possibly a touchdown.

After a two-yard rushing play up the middle by I-back Calvin Jones, Kansas State called timeout and Nebraska moved into the hurry-up offense.

AP TOP 25		Record	Pvs
1. Florida St.	7-0-0	1	
2. Notre Dame	7-0-0	3	
3. Ohio State	6-0-0	5	
4. Alabama	5-0-1	2	
5. Nebraska	6-0-0	6	
6. Miami	4-1-0	8	
7. Arizona	6-0-0	11	
8. Tennessee	5-1-1	10	
9. Florida	5-1-0	4	
10. Auburn	7-0-0	19	
11. Texas A&M	5-1-0	13	
12. North Carolina	7-1-0	14	
13. Michigan	4-2-0	18	
14. Penn State	5-1-0	7	
15. Wisconsin	6-0-0	16	
16. Colorado	4-2-0	20	
17. Oklahoma	5-1-0	9	
18. West Virginia	5-0-0	17	
19. UCLA	4-2-0	22	
20. Louisville	6-1-0	23	
21. Virginia	5-1-0	15	
22. Washington	4-2-0	12	
23. Syracuse	4-1-1	24	
24. Michigan State	3-2-0	25	
25. Washington State	5-2-0	-	

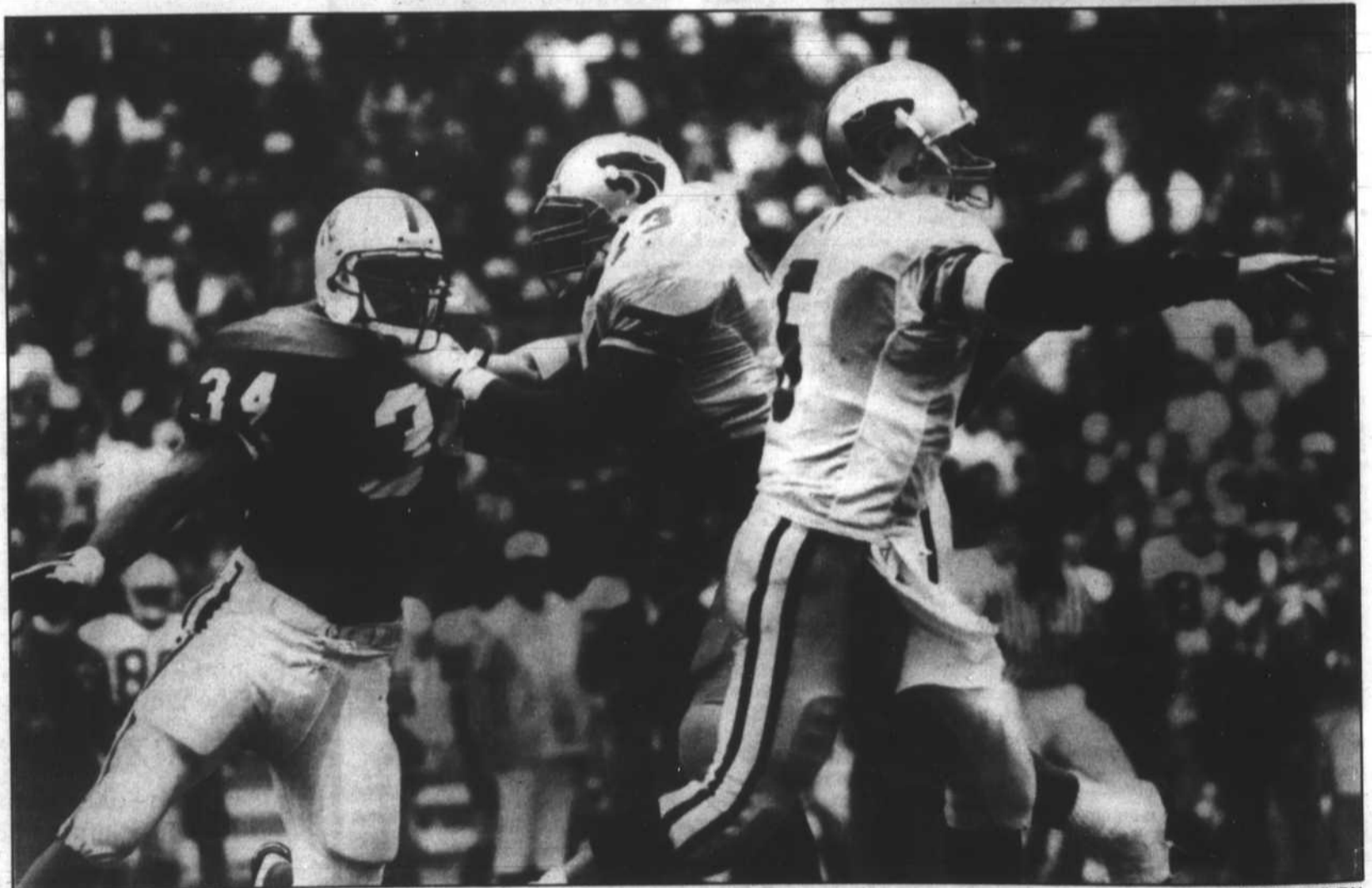
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Three Tommie Frazier-Abdul Muhammad receptions later, Byron Bennett kicked a career-long 48-yard field goal to send Nebraska to the locker room with a 31-14 lead.

After the game, Snyder said that calling timeout after the Husker running play was a mistake.

"I did a silly thing then," Snyder said. "I thought that when they were running the ball we could use a couple of timeouts and have a chance of a punt return or maybe one offensive down."

Clockwise from right: Nebraska defensive tackle Billy Wade leaps over the block of Kansas State's Eric Wolford while trying to deflect a Chad May pass during Nebraska's 45-28 win over Kansas State. I-back Calvin Jones takes off upfield during the first half. Jones had 138 yards and two touchdowns on 29 carries. Quarterback Tommie Frazier (left) pitches before getting hit by Kansas State defensive end Nyle Wiren. Frazier tallied a career-high 312 total yards on the day. Nebraska outside linebacker Trev Alberts charges May (right) while trying to get around Kansas State offensive tackle Barrett Brooks.



Julia Mikolajcik/DN