



Huskies survive scare, preserve hope for titles

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Once again, Nebraska dodged a bullet.

But this time, the bullet came closer than ever to shooting down the Cornhuskers' hopes for a chance at the national championship.

Nebraska escaped with a 21-20 victory Saturday to remain undefeated at 9-0 overall and 5-0 in the Big Eight.

Coach Tom Osborne said he felt fortunate to leave Lawrence with a victory.

"We were very concerned coming in that it would be one of our toughest of the year," Osborne said. "At the beginning of the season, we thought this was going to be difficult, and it was. I'm just glad to get out of here with a win."

The game was decided on the Jayhawks' two-point conversion with 52 seconds remaining.

Kansas pulled within 21-20 after running back Charles Hendley dove over the pile for a 3-yard touchdown. Kansas coach Glen Mason elected to go for the win, instead of kicking the extra point to tie the game.

On the two-point conversion, Kansas quarterback Asheiki Preston attempted a pass to Ashaundai Smith that fell incomplete.

Osborne said Mason's decision to go for two and also to pass on the play should not be questioned.

"If anyone should be second-guessed it should be me, not Glen Mason," Osborne said. "You just have to win the game. I respect his decision, and I think that's the decision you have to make. A tie wouldn't have done them any good."

Nebraska led 14-7 at halftime but could not pull away from Kansas in the second half. The Jayhawks scored with just over a minute remaining in the third quarter to tie the game at 14 and put the pressure on the Husker offense.

The 14-14 score was the first time since 1973 that Kansas hasn't trailed Nebraska going into the final period.

"We should have scored a lot more points than we did," Osborne said. "We just didn't get out in front like we needed to. We could have been a lot sharper."

However, the Nebraska offense did respond to the Kansas' score with 8:20 left in the game.

After Calvin Jones' 51-yard run

Miami vaults ahead of Nebraska in Coalition Poll

Nov. 7 standings

	Rankings	USA Today/ CNN	Coalition Point total
1. Florida State	AP 1	1	3,098
2. Notre Dame	2	2	2,956
3. Miami	3	4	2,747
4. Nebraska	4	3	2,703
5. Ohio State	5	5	2,495
6. Tennessee	6	6	2,449
7. Florida	8	9	2,237
8. West Virginia	9	7	2,158
9. Texas A&M	11	8	2,072
10. UCLA	10	10	1,937

The bowl coalition will use the combined point totals of the Associated Press and the CNN/USA Today polls to rank the Top 25 teams.

The Big Eight champion will play in the Orange Bowl. The Southeastern Conference champion will play in the Sugar Bowl and the Southwest Conference champion will play in the Cotton Bowl.

The highest-ranked team of those conference's champions may face the winner of the Notre Dame-Florida State game Nov. 13, if that team remains undefeated. But the Fiesta Bowl would get the No. 1 and No. 2 teams if they aren't locked into another bowl.

Thus, if Miami stays ahead of Nebraska, the Hurricanes will probably play the winner of the Florida State-Notre Dame game, if that team remains undefeated, in the Fiesta Bowl.



DN graphic

to the Kansas 8, Nebraska scored two plays later on a 10-yard pass from Tommie Frazier to Trumane Bell.

On the touchdown catch, Frazier scrambled out of the pocket then spotted Bell, who ran out of the end zone to make the grab in front of two Kansas defenders. Bell then stretched the ball across the goal line as he was taken down.

"I was just thinking about going up and grabbing the ball as soon as I can so I could make something happen," Bell said. "I knew I wasn't in so I just tried to get the ball across the goal line."

The score came on the last Husker possession before Kansas staged its 80-yard, 17-play drive that took up 7:28 of the fourth quarter and resulted in the Hendley touchdown.

Nebraska captured its second one-point victory of the season and won its third game by less than a touchdown.

Backup quarterback Brook Berringer said the close victories were a mark of a great team. Berringer, who led a second quarter drive in place of Frazier, completed three of five passes for 40 yards. But he threw an interception in the end zone that ended the scoring threat.

"We know we're out there and we're going to win it," Berringer said. "Anytime you get out with a one-point win, you feel lucky. But it is great teams that win the close games."

Last year's upset loss at Iowa State gave fans, players and coaches a feeling of déjà vu as Kansas lined up for the two-point conversion.

"The stage was set," Osborne said. "We were not as emotionally ready as we needed to be."

Kansas scored on the opening drive of the game after Preston completed a 30-yard touchdown pass to Dwayne Chandler on fourth down.

Nebraska answered with a touchdown on its opening drive when Jones, who led offense with 195 yards on 29 carries, scored from four yards out.

In the second quarter, Frazier completed an 8-yard scoring strike to tight end Gerald Armstrong to put Nebraska on top 14-7.

Even though the win was close, Frazier said, it showed Nebraska has matured since the Iowa State loss last year.

"This shows we are a better team this year," he said. "This year, we just keep going where last year, I feel we may have let up."

