

Huskers clear UCLA obstacle

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Nebraska didn't do anything to hurt its No. 1 ranking Saturday as it leaped over its third hurdle in the race for the national championship.

But Nebraska and its offensive line proved that UCLA wasn't as big of a hurdle as many expected it to be.

The Cornhuskers beat the No. 12 Bruins 49-21 in front of a Memorial Stadium crowd of 75,687.

The Huskers racked up 484 yards on the ground. They were led by sophomore I-back Lawrence Phillips' 178-yard rushing day.

"I think our objective was to try to wear UCLA out a little," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said. "I don't think we completely did that. In the first half, we did a good job offensively, keeping the ball and hammering at them."

Like its first two games, Nebraska struck early.

On their second possession, the Huskers opted to go for the first down on a fourth-and-two play from the UCLA 40-yard line.

Phillips carried the ball for 17 yards and a first down, and on the following play, with 9:09 left in the first quarter, quarterback Tommie Frazier hit tight end Eric Alford with a 23-yard touchdown pass.

Frazier said the Huskers were ready to prove themselves on the field from the opening kick-off.

"I think they did more talking than preparing for us," Frazier said. "All week in the papers they said that in last year's game we got lucky. I think we were the better team last year, and we're the better team this year."

Nebraska wasn't finished in the first quarter, as it took its following drive 89 yards on 13 plays and took up only 4:32 of the clock.

Phillips capped off the drive with a 1-yard touchdown run off the option to put Nebraska up 12-0.

The Bruins opened the second quarter by unleashing their passing attack, which was hurt by the loss of Heisman candidate J.J. Stokes. Stokes sat out the game with a deep thigh bruise.

But the Bruin offense went on without Stokes.

UCLA quarterback Wayne Cook completed three passes for 80 yards in the Bruins' seven-play drive, capped off by a 20-yard touchdown pass to Kevin Jordan, who caught seven passes for 129 yards.

Cook and his backup, Ryan Fien, combined to connect on 21 of 35 passes for 285 yards against the Husker defense.

But Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said emphasis should be put on the final score, not the game statistics.

"A lot of people want to see the West Virginia game again, but that's over," McBride



Shaun Sartin/DN

said. "West Virginia played right into our hands. When they catch a pass, it doesn't mean that our secondary is done for the year. I'm tired of that. We wanted to be better than their defense, and we were."

Nebraska's defense was especially better than UCLA's in the first half.

After the UCLA score, Nebraska scored twice more — on a 12-yard Frazier run and on Damon Benning's 2-yard run — and was successful on both two-point conversions to hold a 28-7 lead at intermission.

Altogether, Nebraska racked up 234 yards rushing in the first half, while the defense allowed the Bruins just 46 yards rushing.

UCLA posed a brief threat to Nebraska in the second half, beginning with the opening drive.

Nebraska had held UCLA and forced the Bruins to punt from the Nebraska 49-yard line, but the Huskers were flagged for a roughing-the-punter penalty, resulting in an automatic

See GAME on 8

Clockwise from top left: Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier runs the option with fullback Jeff Makovicka leading the way for him. Nebraska I-back Damon Benning does a flip into the end zone to put the Huskers up 28-7. Nebraska's Cory Schlesinger dives ahead for extra yardage while UCLA's Paul Guidry, Andy Colbert and Phillip Ward try to bring him down. UCLA's Derek Ayers (25) is brought down by Nebraska's Leonard Alexander, left, Brendan Holbein and Jeff Sakalosky.

Game Stats		Nebraska 49		UCLA 21	
Scoring	1st 2nd 3rd 4th				
Nebraska	12 16 7 14				
UCLA	0 7 7 7				
Neb- Eric Alford 23 yd. pass from Tommie Frazier (No good, blocked) Neb- Lawrence Phillips 1 yd. run (No good, pass) UCLA- Kevin Jordan 20 yd. pass from Wayne Cook (Bjorn Merten, kick) Neb- Frazier 12 yd. run (Frazier, run) Neb- Damon Benning 2 yd. run (Benning, run) UCLA- Sharmon Shah 3 yd. run (Merten, kick) Neb- Clinton Childs 8 yd. run (Tom Sieler, kick) Neb- Brendan Holbein 9 yd. pass from T. Frazier (Sieler, kick) Neb- Brook Berringer 1 yd. run (Sieler, kick) UCLA- J Milliner 11 yd. run (Merten, kick)					
Rushing	Att. Yds.	Rushing	Att. Yds.		
Phillips	19 178	Shah	18 91		
Benning	8 29	Milliner	7 38		
Schlesinger	7 50	Washington	4 -2		
Frazier	7 29	Ayers	4 15		
Childs	7 78	Cook	2 -13		
Makovicka	7 50				
Passing	Comp-Att. Int. Yds.	Passing	Comp-Att. Int. Yds.		
Frazier	5-11 0 59	Cook	15-28 2 217		
Berringer	1-1 0 12	Fien	6-7 0 68		
Receiving	No. Yds.	Receiving	No. Yds.		
Alford	2 35	Jordan	7 129		
Holbein	2 14	Washington	4 39		
Muhammad	1 15	McElroy	2 32		
Childs	1 7	Ayers	2 17		
Breakdown	Neb. UCLA				
First Downs	24 24				
Rushes-yards	65-484 35-129				
Passing	71 285				
Return Yards	17 13				
Comp-Att-Int	6-12-0 21-35-2				
Punts-avg.	3-47 4-40.5				
Fumbles-Lost	2-1 0-0				
Penalties-Yards	7-65 4-25				
Time of Possession	32:05 27:55				



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