

# NU offense awakens, charges past Tigers

By Mitch Sherman  
Senior Reporter

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The Nebraska defense continued to roll along Saturday, and after a one-week hiatus, the Cornhusker offense bounced back to life.

Despite a scoreless first quarter, in which the Huskers gained only 16 yards, Nebraska caught fire and rolled to a 42-7 victory over Missouri in front of a crowd of 50,537 at Faurot Field.

Hampered by a still tenuous left lung, Nebraska quarterback Brook Berringer did not take full advantage of the Husker arsenal, but he managed to muster 175 yards of total offense and three touchdown passes.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Berringer was under doctor's orders to avoid contact if at all possible. At times, Osborne said, that may have limited the effectiveness of the offense.

"It's a lot more like a pro offense," Osborne said of the Husker attack without its trademark option plays. "I feel like you're fighting with one hand tied behind your back. We have stood there like a pro team and haven't run any options. But that will change."

Dormant for the game's first 15 minutes, the Husker offense finally registered a first down on a 13-yard Berringer scramble with 14:52 to go in the second quarter. Twelve plays and 73 yards later, I-back Lawrence Phillips found the end zone on a 5-

*"It was all just a part of a day's work. You have just got to go out and get the thing recovered and get the ball in the hands of our offense and let them get going."*

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**ED STEWART**  
NU linebacker

yard run to give Nebraska a 7-0 lead.

"I wasn't sure if we were ever going to get untracked," Osborne said. "I couldn't find anything that would work to start with."

Osborne said Phillips, who ran for 110 yards — his eighth consecutive game of more than 100 yards — was practically playing with only one arm. He injured his thumb on his left hand last week against Kansas State and was limited all week in practice.

Behind the running of Damon Benning and Jeff Makovicka, the Huskers struck pay dirt again to go ahead 14-0 with eight minutes left in the half.

The Nebraska defense, which held its fourth straight opponent to less than 50 yards rushing, has allowed 576 yards and 16 points to three Big Eight opponents.

After taking a 14-0 lead into the locker room at halftime, the Huskers almost let the Tigers back into the game.

On the second play of the third quarter, Berringer lost control of a pitch to Phillips, and Missouri cornerback Clayton Baker recovered the ball at the Tiger 10-yard line.

But on a second-and-goal play from the 1-yard line, Nebraska's Barron Miles jarred the ball loose from Missouri tailback Joe Freeman, and Ed Stewart recovered it in the end zone for a touchback.

"We were just looking to stop them," Miles said. "We wanted to get a field goal or a turnover. It just so happened that we got a turnover. I believe it was my helmet (that knocked the ball loose). He went outside, and I was the last man there for the tackle."

Stewart said his recovery was a major momentum swing in Nebraska's favor.

"The ball came loose, and I was able to get over there and fall on it,"

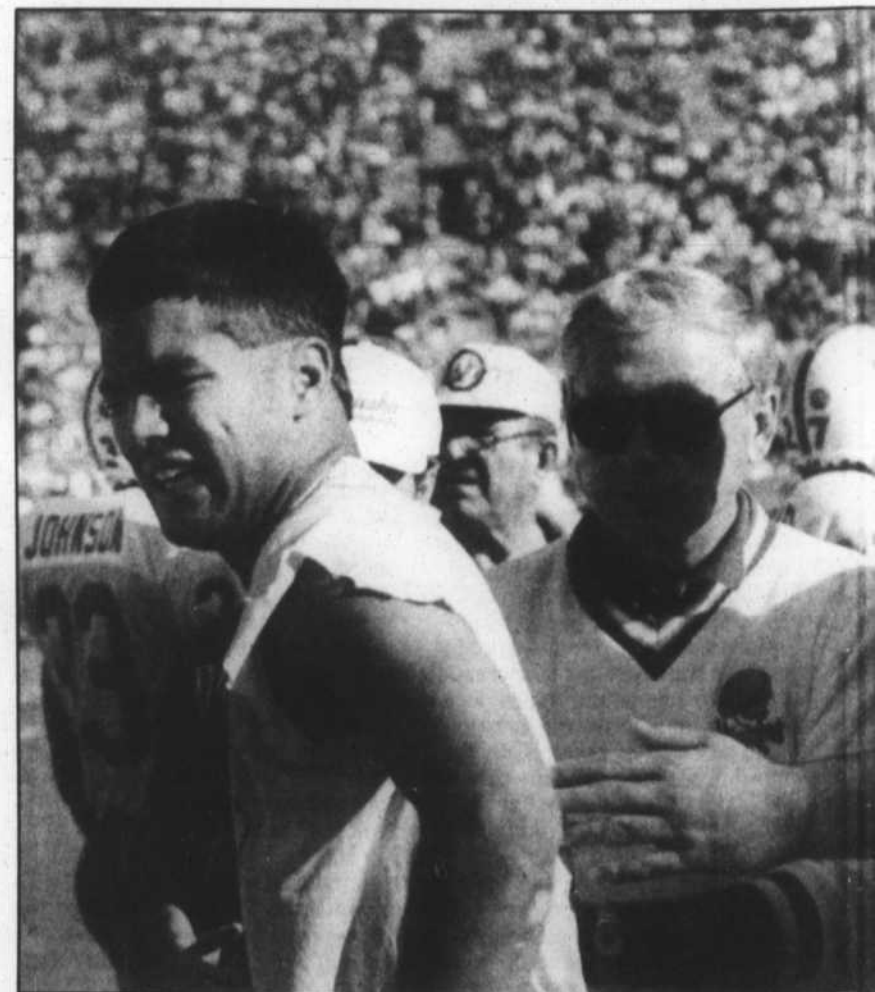
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Nebraska I-back Damon Benning tries to escape from Missouri's Clayton Baker after catching a Brook Berringer pass in the second quarter. Benning rushed for 39 yards against Missouri.



Nebraska middle linebacker Phil Ellis hits Missouri running back Joe Freeman for a 1-yard loss in the second quarter. Ellis had six tackles, including a quarterback sack, in the game.



Nebraska quarterback Matt Turman winces in pain as he is helped by Pat Clare and Robert Dugas. Turman bruised his right shoulder in the second quarter.

Photos by Damon Lee/DN