

# Osborne describes CU as fast, strong

## Coach says defense must perform well to win against Buffs

By Derek Samson  
Senior Reporter

With Nebraska's most important game and toughest opponent of the season coming to Lincoln Saturday, coach Tom Osborne wants to talk about Colorado the football team, not Colorado the rivalry.

Osborne said the importance of Saturday's game is No. 2 versus No. 3, with a possible Big Eight championship at stake.

"It doesn't mean that we don't respect Colorado. We think they've got a great football team," Osborne said. "It doesn't mean we don't look forward to playing them. We certainly do. We just don't have any (rivalries) ... so don't ask me about it."



Osborne

"This is a big game this week and we're really zeroed in on Colorado. But last week it was Missouri and next week it's going to be Kansas. I don't see why it (rivalry) has to be an issue, it's just an important game."

And what a game it promises to be. Colorado, ranked second in The Associated Press poll, has beaten five ranked opponents on its way to a 7-0 record. While the AP's second-ranked Cornhuskers have struggled through injuries to post an 8-0 mark.

Osborne said he was yet to find a weak spot on the Colorado team.

"Colorado does have a great team. They've got a lot of speed and on both sides of the ball they're very strong," Osborne said. "They've got a fine quarterback (Kordell Stewart) with a lot of experience, a great running back (Rashaan Salaam), and they've got excellent receivers. We think it will be an exciting game."

The combination of Stewart, Salaam and receiver Michael Westbrook may be especially

scary to Nebraska fans because they are being compared to some of the 1983 Cornhuskers. Nebraska's 1983 "offensive explosion" featured quarterback Turner Gill, running back Mike Rozier and receiver Irving Fryar. That team remained No. 1 throughout the entire year, until losing 31-30 to Miami in the Orange Bowl.

Through seven games, Stewart has thrown for 1,330 yards and rushed for 445 yards. Gill, in 1983, passed for 1,516 yards and rushed for 531 yards. Salaam has rushed for 1,256 yards through seven games, while Rozier rushed for 2,148 yards in 1983. Westbrook has caught 21 passes for 420 yards. Fryar, who plays for Miami in the National Football League, caught 40 passes for 780 yards.

But Osborne did not want to make any comparisons.

"We had an outstanding receiver in Irving Fryar, we had a very good quarterback in Turner Gill and a very good I-back in Rozier and maybe that's what they're talking about (when making the comparison)," he said. "We haven't played (Colorado) so I couldn't say a whole lot more than that. They certainly look good on film. They're an outstanding offensive football team."

But the Colorado offense will be matched against a Nebraska defense that has been at its best.

Nebraska's defense has given up only 16 points in its first three conference games — against Oklahoma State, Kansas State and Missouri. The Nebraska defense leads the Big Eight in total defense and is 10th in the country.

The Huskers' rushing defense is third in the nation, allowing just 60.6 yards rushing per game.

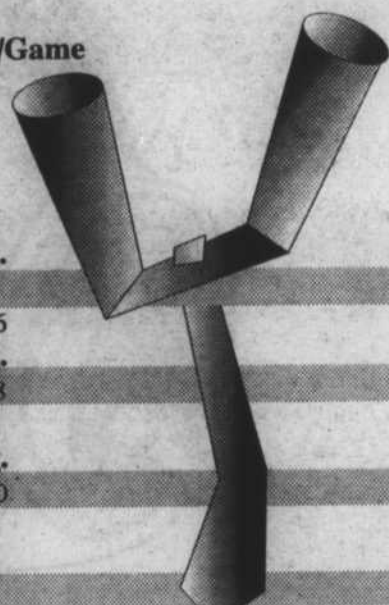
Osborne said the defense stepped up when the offense lost quarterback Tommie Frazier for the season and would need to step it up again this Saturday.

Colorado is second in the nation in total offense, averaging 502.86 yards per game.

"Our defense has given up fewer points since Tommie (Frazier) got hurt, with the Wyoming game being the exception," he said. "The last three games they've done pretty well. Hopefully, everybody just picks it up a notch and plays a little harder."

## Comparing Colorado - Nebraska

OFFENSE	Yds./Game	Pts./Game		
Colorado	502.86	40.3		
Nebraska	500.75	40.6		
Quarterbacks	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	
Kordell Stewart CU	143	93	1330	7
Brook Berringer NU	75	45	527	6
Running Backs	Carries	Yds.	TD	
Rashaan Salaam CU	188	1256	18	179.43
Lawrence Phillips NU	184	1233	12	154.13
Receivers	Catches	Yds.	TD	
Michael Westbrook CU	21	420	4	
Abdul Muhammad NU	14	196	1	
DEFENSE	Yds./Game	Pts./Game		
Colorado	358	13.3		
Nebraska	266.3	19.7		
SPECIAL TEAMS	No.	Avg.		
Punting				
Andy Mitchell CU	31	42.26		
Darin Erstad NU	No.	Avg.		
Punt Returns	18	11.78		
Chris Hudson CU	23	8.57		
Kareem Moss NU	No.	Avg.		
Kickoff Returns	10	18.70		
James Kidd CU	7	28.4		
Damon Benning NU	FGA	FG		
Field Goals	11	6		
Neil Voskeritchian CU	6	2		
Darin Erstad NU				



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