

Berringer's performance deflates critics

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

After Nebraska starting quarterback Tommie Frazier's season was ended by a blood clot, many Cornhusker fans believed the national championship hopes had gone down with him.



Now, after leading Nebraska to a convincing 24-7 win over then-No. 2 Colorado Saturday, Brook Berringer has silenced the critics of both him and Nebraska.

For his efforts, Berringer was named the Big Eight offensive player of the week Monday.

Berringer said the lack of respect of his abilities and that of his teammates helped fuel the Huskers against Colorado.

"I was confident, and I think the whole team was," Berringer said. "We had been labeled as underdogs, and we don't take that very lightly, especially at home. We were ready to get out there and prove what we can do."

The 6-foot-4-inch, 210-pound junior from Goodland, Kan., appeared in his biggest starting role ever and has been a major factor in keeping the Huskers' national championship hopes alive.

Berringer completed 12 of 17 passes for 142 yards and one touchdown.

"The biggest thing is we were well-prepared," Berringer said. "This is a week where there is a lot of hype, and a lot of teams can get caught up in that. I don't think we did. We waited until the right time to jump up and down."

Besides the fact he was playing against a second- and third-ranked Colorado team, Berringer had to play knowing that his lung had partially collapsed in two of the previous four games.

But Berringer said it wasn't difficult to forget about his lung.

"I just went into the game and totally blocked it out," he said.

And Berringer's ability to do that in those conditions impressed Nebraska coach Tom Osborne.

"Brook was great," Osborne said. "It was just like he was going out there for a scrim-

mage. He didn't show any wear and tear.

"The Kansas State game was a big game, but he didn't start down there. In many ways, this was the biggest game he's been involved in, and I thought he responded very well."

Berringer said his approach to the game was the main reason he appeared so calm.

"I was fine because I tried to treat it like any other game," he said. "There was a lot of hype involved in this week, and we had to concentrate on what we had to do."

Berringer said the 24-7 win shouldn't be a shock to people but rather send them a message.

"We proved that we're No. 1," he said. "I think we're going to come out and continue to prove it all season. I think we're a team with a lot of heart, and we've had a lot of adversity this season."

But will anyone listen to that message?

"Probably not," he said. "Hopefully, but it doesn't seem like anything we've done so far has. This is obviously a big game, and we came out and played well. We came out, played well and went through adversity when nobody really gave us a chance."

Defense

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Sept. 8, Tony Veland, still recovering from knee surgery, was forced to take over as the starter.

In order to provide depth, Eric Stokes was moved from cornerback to safety. For a short period of time, Stokes played both free safety and rover. No. 1 left cornerback Barron Miles also played some safety in practice.

"They weren't learning things," McBride said. "We just settled down one week and said, 'They are going to play one position and learn it right.'"

Now that Miles is back at cornerback full time, Stokes has adjusted to free safety and Veland is almost 100 percent recovered from his injury, the defense has been able to gain momentum, McBride said.

Since Big Eight play began, Nebraska has allowed 5.8 points and 67 rushing yards per game.

"I think there were a lot of people who didn't believe in us," he said. "Maybe they still don't, which is fine, but it's been a motivational factor. It has pulled our football team together a lot."

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Forecast keeps Kansas game off TV airwaves

By Andrew Strnad
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's game against Kansas this Saturday will not be televised by ESPN and will start at 1 p.m.

ESPN originally planned to televise the game at 6:30 p.m. but will instead show the Alabama-Louisiana St. game.

Athletic Director Bill Byrne decided to keep the game at 1 p.m. instead of risking the chance of playing in winter-like conditions.



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