

# No. 1 Nebraska dodges another Cyclone upset

By Derek Samson  
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AMES, Iowa — Nebraska may have been feeling a little déjà vu for the first three quarters of its 28-12 win over Iowa State on Saturday.

Just two years after the Cyclones upset Nebraska 19-10 in Ames — handing Nebraska coach Tom Osborne his only loss to a team that finished with a losing record — the Cornhuskers looked close to suffering the same fate again, leading the winless Cyclones only 14-12 going into the fourth quarter.

But top-ranked Nebraska, which remained No. 1 in both polls after Saturday's win, wore the Cyclones down in the fourth quarter, scoring two touchdowns to improve its record to 11-0 overall and 6-0 in the Big Eight.

Osborne said Nebraska played well considering the added inspiration the Cyclones had in Coach Jim Walden's final game.

"They certainly played with a lot of intensity," he said. "Their defense played hard. On our side of the ball, I was very pleased with the fact that we never lost our poise. We kept playing and did a nice job. It was an emotional day."

"They were ready to play. Their defense played with a lot of emotion. I think they were a very emotional team, and this was their bowl game today. It was very reminiscent of two years ago."

But from the beginning, it didn't look like Iowa State had a chance to win its second straight over Nebraska in Cyclone Stadium.

The Huskers took their 16-play opening drive 80 yards in 7:26, and Lawrence Phillips capped it off with a 1-yard touchdown run.

But Phillips and Nebraska could do no more for a while. Phillips gained only 30 yards on 15 carries in the first half.

After Nebraska went three plays and out in its next two possessions, it held only a 7-0 lead at the end of the first quarter. But it also held Iowa State to only seven total yards in the period.

Osborne said holding Iowa State to seven yards in the first quarter, 55 at the half and 213 for the game proved that the defense showed up ready to play.

"I thought our defense played pretty well," Osborne said. "Iowa State has a pretty good offense, and they were moving the ball well in the last few games. They had 440 yards against Kansas State (the week before), so I thought our defense played

pretty well."

In the second quarter, Iowa State benefited from Nebraska's mistakes.

Nebraska's Jon Vedral was flagged for a personal foul after a Nebraska punt, giving the Cyclones a first down at the Nebraska 35-yard line.

The Huskers held and forced a 35-yard field goal from Omaha native Ty Stewart.

On the Cyclones' next series, the Husker defense again held and forced Iowa State to punt.

However, on the punt, the ball apparently bounced off a Nebraska player, making it a live ball, which was recovered by Iowa State's Jim Knott at the Nebraska 18.

"They (officials) said it hit one of our players, but from where I'm standing from I can't see that," Osborne said. "I asked the player, and he said it didn't (hit him), but they always say that."

Nebraska's defense again held and forced another Stewart field goal, this one a 37-yarder that cut Nebraska's lead to 7-6.

The Husker offense finally got back on track at the end of the half, as quarterback Brook Berringer, who threw for 193 yards, completed two passes to Abdul Muhammad on a four-play scoring drive — the last one for a 38-yard touchdown.

Muhammad's diving catch in the end zone gave Nebraska a 14-6 lead with 1:59 left in the first half.

"He (Muhammad) just got behind him, and thank goodness I put the ball where it needed to be," Berringer said. "It gave us a little bit of momentum coming out of the locker room the second half, and I think we used it to our advantage."

That momentum swung quickly midway through the third quarter when Iowa State quarterback Todd Doxzon connected with Calvin Branch for a 58-yard touchdown pass.

Iowa State tried to tie the game with a two-point conversion, but Doxzon was stopped short of the goal line, and the Huskers still led 14-12 with 3:42 left in the quarter.

Nebraska cornerback Tyrone Williams said the Cyclones tried to burn the Huskers with the deep pass all day.

"They hit us with a play we knew was coming from early in the game," Williams said. "We knew that would be coming, and then they finally hit on that one. The guy just made a good move and got inside position on me."

But like so many times before, the Huskers' running game — which managed only 106 yards in the first three quarters — took over in the fourth quarter, allowing Nebraska to pull away from 0-8-1 Iowa State.



Michelle Paulman/DN

**A first-half prediction that an Iowa State player made lays forgotten at the end of the game on Saturday. Unlike 1992, when Iowa State beat Nebraska 19-10, the Huskers won this year.**

The Huskers' first drive of the final quarter started at the Iowa State 41 and ended four plays later in the Cyclone end zone.

Berringer's 28-yard run around the right end on a third-and-three play set up Damon Benning's 6-yard touchdown run on the following play, putting Nebraska up 21-12.

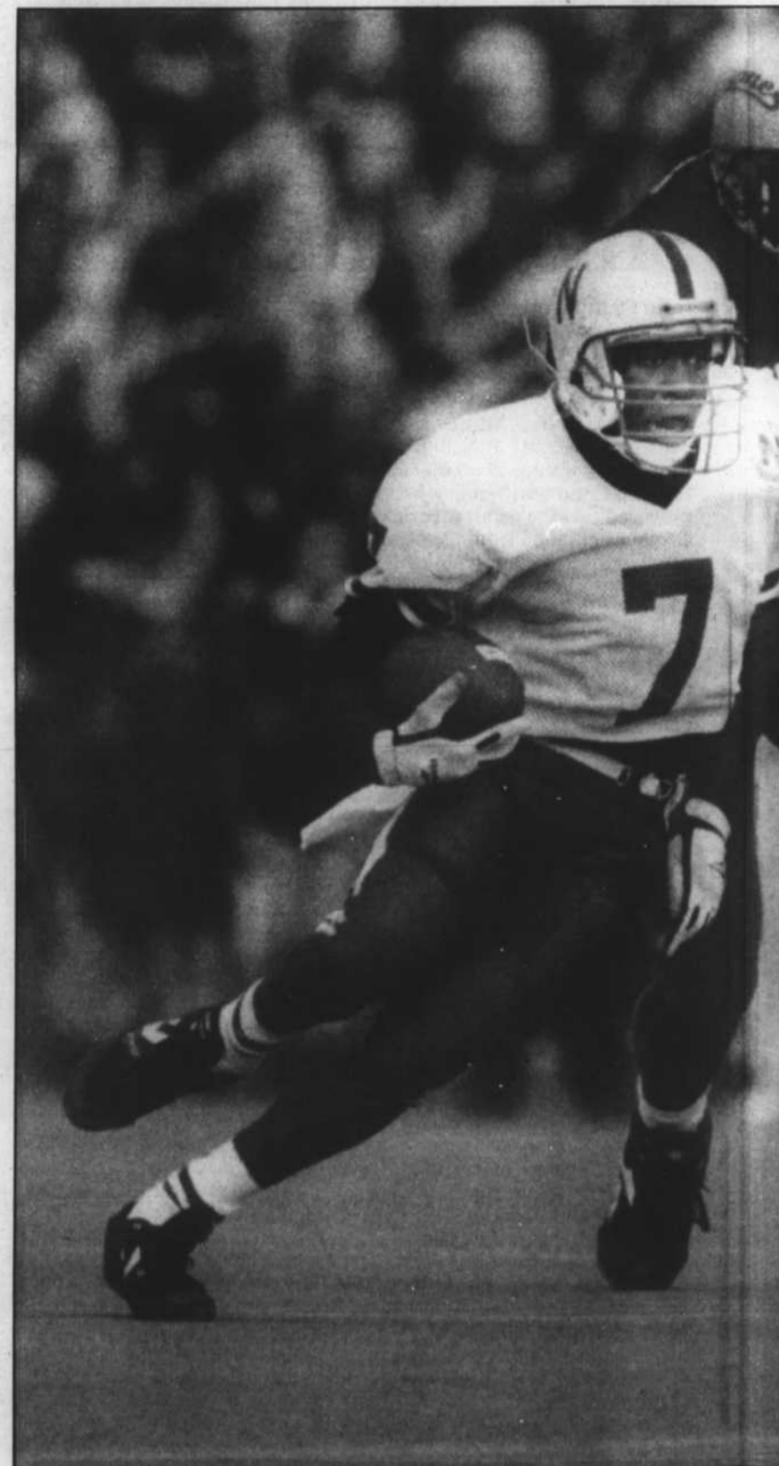
Phillips, who finished with a game-high 183 yards, broke loose on Nebraska's next possession for a gain of 61 yards, but he fumbled at the Cyclone 5-yard line, and Iowa State recovered in the end zone.

Nebraska, however, put the game away with its final possession, driving 60 yards in 10 plays and finishing with a 21-yard Phillips touchdown run.

"I don't think our team was flat or didn't play well," Osborne said. "Obviously, you don't approach this game with the same intensity as you do Colorado and maybe even Kansas. I certainly thought the players understood the severity of the situation. I think they understood that they'd come over here and play a team that would play very hard."



Nebraska quarterback Brook Berringer tries to elude Iowa State's T 61 yards and passed for 193 more.



Nebraska split end Reggie Baul goes for more yardage after one o 295 yards.



Michelle Paulman/DN

**Nebraska's Kareem Moss tries to corral Iowa State's Geoff Turner. Turner caught three passes for 31 yards, and Moss recorded seven tackles.**