



Travis Heying/DN

Devastating Defense

The Huskers allow only 122 yards to pick up their first shutout of the year.

By Derek Samson

Q uarterback Tommie Frazier planted his name in the Nebraska record book. True freshman Ahman Green started at I-back and led the Cornhuskers with 90 yards rushing.

But Saturday, the Nebraska defense was the highlight of the Huskers' 57-0 shutout of Missouri in front of 75,552 fans at Memorial Stadium.

"Defensively, we really did a nice job," Coach Tom Osborne said. "It was really a good performance. Some of the second- and third-unit guys who don't

seem to get a lot of practice repetition seemed to hold up pretty well later in the ballgame. So overall, defensively, it was probably our best performance."

But the offense wasn't too shabby, either.

Nebraska totaled 475 yards, compared to Missouri's 122 yards.

The Huskers took their first drive 43 yards to the Missouri 3-yard line. The Tigers, however, denied Nebraska the score when they stopped Green on a fourth-down-and-1 run.

That was about the only complaint coming out of Nebraska's locker room after the game.

"That fourth and 1 was bad," Osborne said. "Then I started second-guessing myself, thinking, 'I should have gone wide,' or 'I shouldn't have done that.' But we did sputter a little bit offensively at times."

Missouri's defensive stand lasted only two plays on Nebraska's next possession, as Frazier scored on a 29-yard run with 7:08 remaining in the first quarter.

After trading punts, the Tigers gained possession at the Nebraska 35-yard line. But penalties helped the Tigers move backwards, and the drive ended when Tony Veland intercepted a Corby Jones pass and returned it 43 yards.

But Nebraska couldn't manage any points after the interception and again punted to the Tigers.

Once again, the defense came up with a big play when Jared Tomich recovered a Brock Olivo fumble at the Missouri 27-yard line.

From there, Green and Frazier combined to rush on all six plays, and Frazier capped the drive off with a 1-yard touchdown run.

On the Huskers' next possession, Jeff Makovicka plugged ahead for 28 yards, and tight end Mark Gilman hauled in a 33-yard pass from Frazier to set up another 1-yard touchdown run by Frazier with 3:00 left in the second quarter.

Osborne said the Tigers' defense finally started to wear down late in the first half.

"Offensively, we were going against the strongest part of Missouri's football team in its defense," Osborne said. "Their defense is probably a solid, respectable defensive unit."

Nebraska drove the final nail in just before half time after regaining possession at the Missouri 38-yard line with only 25 seconds remaining.

Frazier lofted a pass for Jon Vedral. The pass was tipped off Vedral and Missouri defender Clayton Baker and

caught in the corner of the end zone by split end Brendan Holbein for a touchdown as time expired. The touchdown put Nebraska up 28-0.

"That's not the way we practiced it, but I'll take it," Frazier said.

The defense came through again at the start of the second half when junior Terrell Farley blocked a punt out of the end zone for a safety and a 30-0 lead with 9:42 left in the third quarter.

The offense dominated after the safety, scoring on its next four possessions.

After the safety, Green finished Nebraska's next drive off with a 9-yard touchdown run, and Frazier followed with a 6-yard touchdown pass to Sheldon Jackson the next possession.

The pass gave Frazier five touchdowns on the day (three rushing and two passing) and 64 for his career, breaking Steve Taylor's all-time Husker record of 62 touchdowns.

Reserve quarterback Matt Turman and I-back Damon Benning both followed with touchdown runs to end Nebraska's scoring at 57 points.

Missouri didn't pass the 100-yard mark in total yards until the fourth quarter, with a little more than five minutes left in the game.

Missouri 0
Nebraska 57