



**Photos by
Scott Bruhn**

Clockwise from left:

SCOTT FROST scrambles from Virginia Tech's Pierson Prioleau in the Dec. 31 Orange Bowl. NU Coach Tom Osborne said Frost had his best game of the year against the Hokies.

JIM DRUCKENMILLER is wrapped up by defensive tackle Jason Peter for a 9-yard loss. Peter, who had two tackles, returned a fumble 33 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter.

BRENDAN HOLBEIN wrote No. 25 on the tape around his wrist in honor of suspended wingback Jon Vedral.

OSBORNE watches his 10th Orange Bowl as Nebraska's head coach. He is 3-7 in Orange Bowl games but has won two straight in Miami.

Football Polls

Associated Press Poll

Team	Record	Prev.
1. Florida (65-1/2)	12-1	3
2. Ohio St. (11-2)	11-1	4
3. Florida St.	11-1	1
4. Arizona St.	11-1	2
5. Brigham Young	14-1	5
6. Nebraska	11-2	6
7. Penn St.	11-2	7
8. Colorado	10-2	8
9. Tennessee	10-2	9
10. North Carolina	10-2	12
11. Alabama	10-3	16
12. LSU	10-2	17
13. Virginia Tech	10-2	10
14. Miami	9-3	19
15. Northwestern	9-3	11
16. Washington	9-3	13
17. Kansas St.	9-3	14
18. Iowa	9-3	21
19. Notre Dame	8-3	18
20. Michigan	8-4	15
21. Syracuse	9-3	23
22. Wyoming	10-2	22
23. Texas	8-5	20
24. Auburn	8-4	
25. Army	10-2	24

Coaches' Poll

Team	Record	Prev.
1. Florida (58)	12-1	3
2. Ohio St. (4)	11-1	4
3. Florida St.	11-1	1
4. Arizona St.	11-1	2
5. Brigham Young	14-1	5
6. Nebraska	11-2	6
7. Penn St.	11-2	7
8. Colorado	10-2	8
9. Tennessee	10-2	10
10. North Carolina	10-2	13
11. Alabama	10-3	15
12. Virginia Tech	10-2	9
13. LSU	10-2	16
14. Miami	9-3	19
15. Washington	9-3	12
16. Northwestern	9-3	11
17. Kansas St.	9-3	14
18. Iowa	9-3	21
19. Syracuse	9-3	22
20. Michigan	8-4	17
21. Notre Dame	8-3	18
22. Wyoming	10-2	23
23. Texas	8-5	20
24. Army	10-2	24
25. Auburn	8-4	

Samuel leaves a winner

Former NU coach builds Aggie staff of former Huskers.

By **MITCH SHERMAN**
Senior Reporter

MIAMI — As he walked off the battered, green grass into a tunnel toward the Cornhusker locker room at Pro Player Stadium, Tony Samuel took a piece of Nebraska's football program with him to New Mexico State. But the 11th-year coach of NU's outside linebackers left an even bigger part of himself behind for the Huskers to carry back to Lincoln.

Samuel, who accepted the head-coaching position at New Mexico State on Dec. 13, coached his final game at Nebraska on New Year's Eve, a 41-21 win over Virginia Tech.

After the game, Samuel headed to Las Cruces, N.M., where his new coaching staff assembled a week later, sporting a red glow and a winning history. Eight of Samuel's nine assistant coaches have Nebraska roots.

Back in Lincoln, Samuel's legacy remains.

"Not only is he a great coach, he's been a great friend over the years," NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride said. "I'm going to really miss the guy."

Samuel said little to his players in the locker room before the Orange Bowl, only asking them to stay in touch.

"I promised him that I would do

that," said Grant Wistrom, the latest of Samuel's All-Americans, "because he's a great man. He made me the player I am today. It's going to be a big loss for the Nebraska football program."

Nebraska's loss may be New Mexico State's gain. Samuel and his Husker disciples bring a winning tradition to the sagging Aggie program, which has won 22 games in the last seven seasons.

Joining Samuel's staff are former Huskers Barney Cotton (offensive coordinator), Jeff Jamrog (defensive coordinator), Rich Glover (defensive line), Gerry Gdowski (quarterbacks) and Steve Stanard (rush ends and recruiting coordinator).

Samuel, who split his time between Las Cruces, Lincoln and Miami in the weeks leading up to the Orange Bowl, also hired three coaches with experience as NU graduate assistants: Kendall Blackburn (offensive line), Bill Busch (secondary) and Clayton Carlin (receivers).

"My mind is already going forward," Samuel said. "I've got a lot to do. I've never been in a situation like this. It's been a strange experience, and now I've got to lock down on one thing."

In 1996, both of Nebraska's starting rush ends — Wistrom and Jared Tomich — earned All-America recognition. In addition, Jamel Williams, also coached by Samuel, led Nebraska in tackles from the Sam linebacker spot.

Seven of Samuel's former NU pupils currently play in the National Football League. Williams and Tomich are nearly certain to join the league next season, and Wistrom, projected as a first-round draft pick, passed up the NFL this year to return to NU.

One of Nebraska's budding defensive stars, Mike Rucker, also credits much of his improvement to Samuel.

"
He made me the player I am today. It's going to be a big loss for the Nebraska football program.
"

GRANT WISTROM
NU rush end

The 6-foot-6 sophomore recorded seven sacks and 15 tackles behind the line of scrimmage while backing up Wistrom this season.

"We have gotten a little bit closer this year with me playing more," Rucker said. "I'm sorry to see him leave. But on the other hand I'm happy, because he's doing something he's always wanted to do."

Samuel knows his staff's Nebraska ties will not ensure success at New Mexico State. Building a program requires years of work, he said, but his time at Nebraska will help him through the difficult days and push him to reach the top.

And through it all, he won't forget Nebraska.

"I got attached to the players," he said. "Whenever you coach a guy and they lay it on the line, you get a specific attachment."

McBride said several candidates have already interviewed with the Husker staff to fill Samuel's position.

"We would like a person who has coached the position before," McBride said, "but we're not in a hurry. We are just going to feel our way through this and try to get the right person."



Samuel

