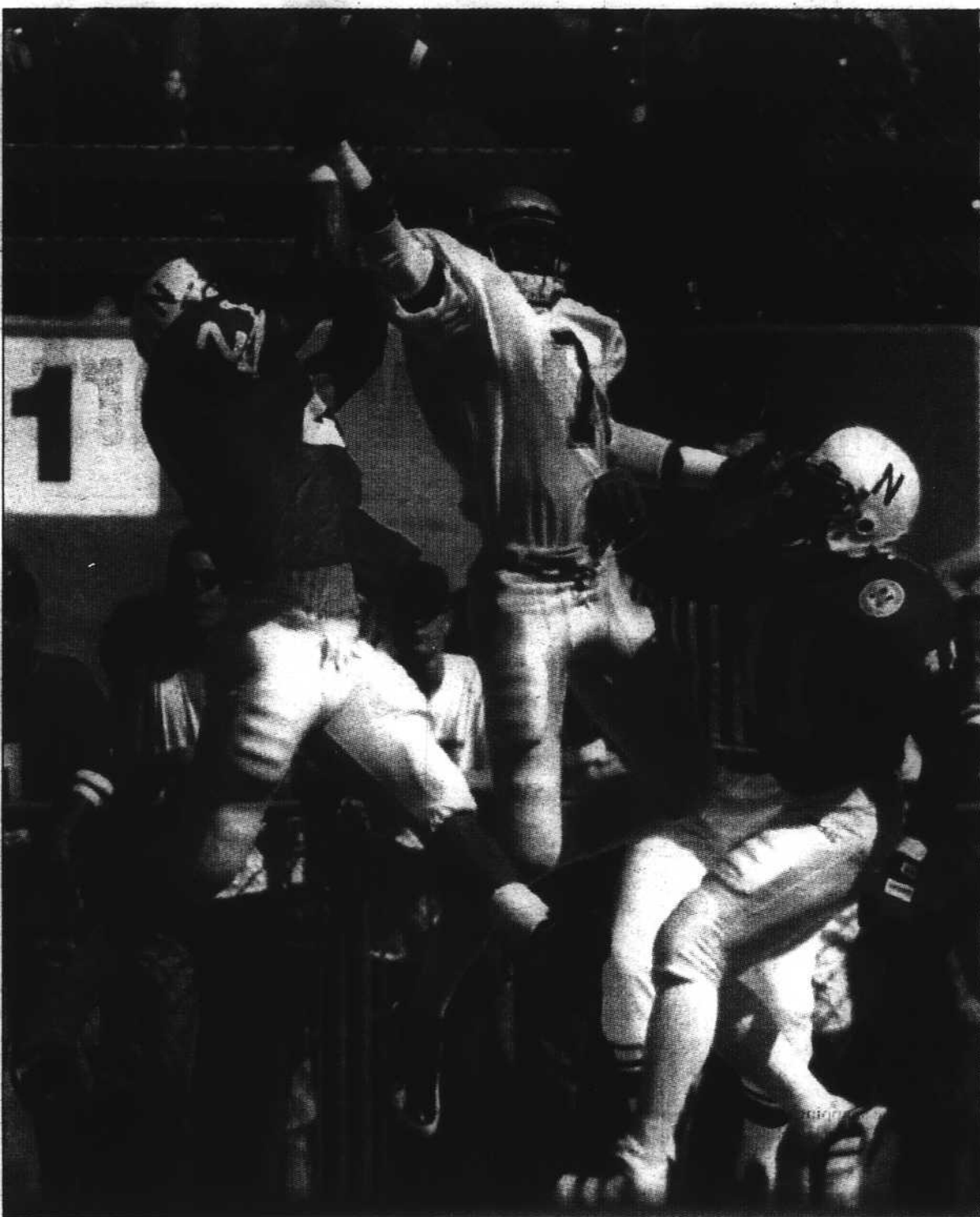


Florida vs. Nebraska



RYAN SODERLIN/DN

Culpepper Saturday. Culpepper riddled the Husker defense for 318 yards passing.



SCOTT McCLURG/DN

MIKE BROWN (No. 21) and Jerome Peterson knock a pass away from Charles Lee. Peterson intercepted the ball.

Golden Knights save pride in 14-point loss

BY JAY SAUNDERS
Assignment Reporter

Everyone seemed surprised that Nebraska won its game against Central Florida by only 14 points, played most of its first-string offense and defense late in the fourth quarter and was losing at home at halftime for the first time since 1995.

That is, everyone except the Golden Knights.

Central Florida opened some eyes across the country with its 38-24 loss to the Cornhuskers Saturday. UCF led at three different times in the game. The Knights opened the scoring in the first quarter and sustained two first-half Husker scoring drives to take a 17-14 lead at halftime.

"We played pretty close to the top of our game," UCF coach Gene McDowell said. "I don't think (Nebraska) played as capable as they could in the beginning."

UCF moved the ball effectively with a passing attack geared around the right arm of junior quarterback Daunte Culpepper. Culpepper survived the NU defensive pressure and threw for 318 yards against a young Nebraska secondary.

Culpepper had 34 yards rushing while the rest of the UCF team mustered just 13. The preseason third-team All-American also scored Central Florida's first touchdown, a

Scoring Summary

Team	Qtr	Scoring play	Conversion	Score	UCF
UCF	1st	D. Culpepper 10-yd run	F. Waczewski kick	0	7
NU	2nd	S. Jackson 16-yd pass from S. Frost	K. Brown kick	7	7
UCF	2nd	F. Waczewski kick 51-yd field goal		7	10
NU	2nd	F. London 8-yd run	K. Brown kick	14	10
UCF	2nd	M. Grant 2-yd run	F. Waczewski kick	14	17
NU	3rd	K. Brown 21-yd field goal		17	17
NU	3rd	C. Buckhalter 13-yd run	K. Brown kick	24	17
NU	3rd	C. Buckhalter 5-yd run	K. Brown kick	31	17
UCF	4th	K. Moore 4-yd pass from D. Culpepper	F. Waczewski kick	31	24
NU	4th	S. Frost 5-yd run	K. Brown kick	38	24

10-yard scoring run to cap a 69-yard drive.

But for Culpepper, it was a tale of two halves. He passed for 186 yards in the first half, leading the Knights to 17 first-half points. In the second half, Culpepper accumulated 154 yards in total offense and threw his only interception in the fourth quarter, a pass intended for Charles Lee in the end zone that was picked off by Jerome Peterson.

Culpepper said he was happy with the team's performance, but he gave a lot of credit to the Husker defense for stepping up in the second half.

"Mr. (Grant) Wistrom and his defensive friends really picked up the pace in the second half," Culpepper said. "They were liked crazed dogs out there."

McDowell kept his offense on the

field on a fourth-and-1 situation late in the third quarter when the Knights were on the NU 29-yard line. Culpepper ran a sneak on the left side for a gain of two yards.

Central Florida went at the Huskers the entire game.

"We came in feeling we could move the ball," UCF wide receiver Siaha Burley said. "We don't want to accept a moral victory, but we earned a little respect."

McDowell said he was happy after the game that he didn't have to answer questions about another Husker blowout.

"This is a huge morale booster for every UCF fan," said, whose program moved up to Division-IA last season. "I am just happy we all have a chance to talk about this. I don't think we would be here if the score was 70-6."



LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

Demps (No. 10) and Deaubrey Devine. Green ran for 123 yards Saturday, the