

Sports Opinion



## Jay Saunders Bowls offer fun holiday diversions

'Tis the season to be bowling, college football style.

With the announcement of the six teams that will play in the three Alliance bowls, the rest of the 17 bowls fell in line. Starting on Dec. 20, one of the best times of the year will kick off with the Las Vegas Bowl, pitting Marshall and Mississippi.

The Las Vegas Bowl is just one of several bowl matchups that are very intriguing this year.

This year's Holiday Bowl could be the most interesting one in years. Missouri and Colorado State do battle in what could be renamed the Lack of Defense Bowl. Both the Tigers and the Rams each probably will put up 400 yards of total offense. Corby Jones, who is supposedly the Big 12's best quarterback, does battle with Moses, Moreno that is.

This year, I am putting my morals aside and will select a Big 10 team to win a bowl. The Purdue Boilermakers go up against another Big 12 team, Oklahoma State.

As a rule, I never pick Big 10 teams to win outside of their conference, but Purdue is no ordinary Big 10 team. The Boilermakers know how to pass.

And as these quality bowls are going on, there are some bowls that are going to disgrace college football. I offer you the Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho, between Utah State and Cincinnati.

Neither one of these teams has grabbed the national spotlight this year. If this were supposed to be a humanitarian effort, they wouldn't play this game. Maybe each team will get some free potatoes.

Another monstrosity of a bowl includes another one of my favorite Big 10 teams, Penn State. The Nittany Lions, whose fans wear shirts that say "Nebraska: anytime, any place," get to travel to Orlando, Fla., to play the Florida Gators in the Citrus Bowl.

Come on, Penn State is horrible; Michigan State proved that. Florida will pass all over the Lions, who have much less defense than another Gator victim, Florida State.

There is a lot of talk about the national title picture, but there are a lot of bowls that may be more interesting than Nebraska's trip to the Orange Bowl.

So while sitting in front of the television this holiday season, happy bowl watching to all and to all a good Jan. 2 night.

Saunders is a sophomore broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan assignment reporter.

## Wistrom named top collegiate lineman

HOUSTON (AP) — Just hours after learning that his coach was retiring, Nebraska defensive end Grant Wistrom got good news Wednesday night that he had won the Lombardi Award as the nation's top collegiate lineman.

Coach Tom Osborne, who led the Cornhuskers to two national championships and 254 victories over 25 years, announced Wednesday that he would step down following No. 2 Nebraska's game against No. 3 Tennessee in the Orange Bowl.

Wistrom, a 6-foot-5, 250-pound senior, was a main cog in the defense that helped the Cornhuskers take a 12-0 record into Osborne's final game as coach. Wistrom credited Osborne for his success.

"You look at every one of the players here tonight and each one is on a great football team," Wistrom

said. "The reason we are on a great football team is because of Coach Osborne. He's a large part of why I've been fortunate to have won it."

It was an emotional day for Wistrom, who learned of Osborne's retirement decision in a telephone conversation with his coach prior to the Lombardi dinner.

"I was upset. I mean, the man meant the world to me the last four years," Wistrom said. "He praised me when I needed praise and he scolded me when I needed scolding. He's been a father to me away from my own father. Next to my father, I respect him the most."

Wistrom, the school's career leader in tackles for losses, became Nebraska's fourth Lombardi winner and first since Dean Steinkuhler in 1983.

On Monday, he was named Big 12 defensive player of the year for

the second year in a row.

Wistrom beat out Greg Ellis of North Carolina, Andy Katzenmoyer of Ohio State and Andre Wadsworth of Florida State for the 28th annual trophy, named in honor of former Green Bay and Washington coach Vince Lombardi.

It has been an eventful few days for Wistrom. He helped Nebraska beat Texas A&M 54-15 in the Big 12 championship game on Saturday. On Sunday, he was in a highly publicized altercation at a pizza parlor in Lincoln and now has won the Lombardi.

Wistrom said he was ticketed for disturbing the peace when he stepped in to help a friend at a pizza parlor.

"It's unfortunate the pizza thing happened," he said. "I still maintain my innocence. I without a doubt did nothing wrong."

Wistrom said he did not retaliate when he was struck and that he may "press charges against the other person."

Wistrom returned for his senior year at Nebraska instead of turning pro and has no regrets.

"This season has been a dream come true," Wistrom said. "We're 12-0 and in the Orange Bowl where we wanted to be. We still have realistic shot at playing for the national title. We've done everything that we can do."

All four players will be a part of the bowl season. North Carolina (10-1) will play Virginia Tech in the Gator Bowl, and Ohio State (10-2) and Florida State (10-1) will square off in the Sugar Bowl.

The Lombardi winner was selected in balloting by a nationwide panel of sports writers and broadcasters.

## Fellow NU coaches wish best for Osborne

BY ANDREW STRNAD  
Staff Reporter

Like everybody else in Lincoln, Tom Osborne's coaching peers were just as surprised as the players.

Cornhusker Strength and Conditioning Coach Boyd Epley was present at Osborne's Wednesday afternoon news conference said that, despite the shock of Osborne's announcement, the program shouldn't miss a beat.

"Of course, it was a real shock at first but things go on here," Epley said. "It's business as usual for Nebraska."

Epley said Osborne and former coach Bob Devaney helped pioneer one of the most successful football programs in the last 30 years.

The Huskers' record since Osborne joined Nebraska in 1962 is 355-69-5.

In addition to all of the successes on the field, NU swimming Coach Cal Bentz said Osborne made an equal impact off the field.

"His record speaks for itself," Bentz said. "What I think goes overlooked is how he has taken the leadership role for the entire athletic department, which has made it easier for us to recruit and succeed on a national level."

Nebraska Track and Field Coach Gary Pepin called Osborne the most respected man in the state. Pepin echoed Bentz's sentiment and said



NEBRASKA COACH TOM Osborne walks out of his news conference in South Stadium. During the news conference Osborne announced he was stepping down as the Huskers' head coach.

Osborne represents the best in college athletics.

"I truly wish the very best for Tom, and I hope his health is good, so he can continue to be a part of the school in

some way," Pepin said.

Bentz said Osborne's work has ultimately left an unique impression amongst those who live outside Nebraska.

"I think Nebraska athletics mystify a lot of people because a state with 1.6 million people isn't supposed to have teams as dominant as they are," Bentz said.

## Bluejays blast past Nebraska; Lue leads Husker scoring with 25

BY SAM MCKEWON  
Staff Reporter

The road has not been kind to the Nebraska men's basketball team, and it continued its unfriendly ways Wednesday night in Omaha.

The Cornhuskers (7-2) lost their second straight road game in two tries as Creighton University broke a seven-year drought against NU with an 84-73 victory in front of 8,403 at the Omaha Civic Auditorium.

"We were our own worst enemy tonight," Nebraska Coach Danny Nee said. "Part of that's Creighton and part of that's Nebraska."

The Bluejays (4-2) led for all but one minute and eight seconds of the game jumping out to an 25-12 lead in the first 8:38 of the first half.

"They came out a lot more fired up than we did," junior point guard Tyrone Lue said. "They were pretty emotional."

Most of CU's early points came from forward Rodney Buford.

"We had the momentum and they took it."

COOKIE BELCHER  
NU guard

Buford, who came into the game averaging 19.8 points per game, scored 20 in the first half alone on 8-for-12 shooting from the floor. He finished with a game high 29 points.

Nebraska sophomore guard Cookie Belcher said there was little stopping the junior from Milwaukee.

"I don't know if he caught on fire or what," Belcher said. "I even contested his shots and everything was going in."

"There's nothing you can do about that."

The Huskers, on the other hand, weren't able to put any first-half runs together. NU shot only 46 percent from the field and the Bluejays' mul-

ti-ple-zone defenses forced 10 NU turnovers.

Nee said Nebraska couldn't match Creighton's first-half level of play.

"They played superbly in the first half," he said. "Anytime we tried to make a run, they just canceled it."

In the second half, CU opened its biggest lead at 65-51 with 9:51 remaining when the Huskers responded with their final run outscoring CU 13-2 over the next 5:27 to cut the lead to 67-65 with a Lue three-pointer.

Then came what Lue called the "back-breaker."

Creighton set a screen at the top of the key when sophomore guard

Matt West hit a three-pointer to put the Bluejays up 70-65. Nebraska never threatened again.

"If he misses that, we would have won," Belcher said. "We had the momentum and they took it."

For the game, Lue led NU scorers with 25 points, 14 in the second half. Junior forward Venson Hamilton had 15 points to go with his 11 rebounds. NU was out rebounded by CU 37-32 and shot 42 percent for the game.

Creighton, which won its second game in a row, beat Nebraska for the first time since 1989.

CU Coach Dana Altman said the program took a step forward with the win.

"They were a pretty talented team," Altman said. "They've got some future NBA players, so it's a good win."

Nebraska continues its road trip Saturday against Minnesota, who went to the Final Four last season.

"We'll be ready," Lue said. "That much I can tell you."