

Sports

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Big 12 Notebook

College football great Doak Walker died Sunday at the age of 71. Walker died in Steamboat Springs, Colo., due to complications of paralysis. He was paralyzed in a skiing accident earlier this year.

Walker had a storied football career both in college and in the NFL. He won the Heisman Trophy while playing for Southern Methodist in 1948. The award for the nation's top running back is named after Walker.

"(Walker) is someone that all of us have seen and looked up to," Texas Coach Mack Brown said. "It is just an awful shame. Society has really lost a great person."

"All of our thoughts and prayers at the University of Texas are with the family."

Coming into last Saturday's game against Alabama-Birmingham, Kansas hadn't played in an overtime game. That changed in a big way with a four-overtime, 39-37 win against UAB. The game took more than four hours to complete.

The victory was the Jayhawks' first road win in two years.

"That was quite an interesting affair, and we feel very fortunate to come out on the correct end of that one," Kansas Coach Terry Allen said.

Texas' Ricky Williams was named the Big 12 offensive player of the week. Against Rice, Williams rushed for 318 yards and six touchdowns. The defensive player of the week is Nebraska's Chad Kelsay.

The special teams honor went to Kansas' Harrison Hill. Hill had an 81-yard punt return for a touchdown against Alabama-Birmingham.

Missouri is coming off of a bye week after its game against No. 1 Ohio State two weeks ago. Now, the Tigers are preparing for Division I-AA Northwestern (La.) State.

Tigers Coach Larry Smith said his team can't afford any kind of a letdown because Northwestern State is undefeated.

"The message to my team is beware, and be ready to play," Smith said. "My biggest job is to make sure our team is focused for a good team."

For the first time in 22 years, Texas Tech has started the season 4-0. Tech Coach Spike Dykes said a big reason why the Red Raiders are undefeated is running back Ricky Williams.

In four games, Williams has run for 770 yards and 8 touchdowns.

"(Williams) has given us a chance to be successful because he is a guy who can run the football," Dykes said. "He has given us a lift; there is no question about that."

Big 12 Notebook compiled by staff writer Jay Saunders

Swiney healthy, effective vs. UW

■ The Husker defensive back fights through a groin injury and makes a key fumble recovery by the goal line to help preserve the lead.

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Senior staff writer

Erwin Swiney awoke Friday morning and discovered his prayers had been answered.

After fighting for the past month to heal a nagging groin injury, Swiney, a cornerback on the Nebraska football team, spent Friday free of pain for the first time all season.

The sudden recovery couldn't have come at a better time. Swiney had hoped to be near 100 percent healthy for the Cornhuskers' Saturday date with then-No. 8 Washington. And, playing pain-free for the second straight day Saturday, Swiney made the most of the opportunity.

Swiney and linebacker Jay Foreman combined on a hit to UW running back Willie Hurst that caused a fumble at on the Husky 3-yard line during the second quarter. Swiney recovered the loose ball.

"This was the second day I haven't played in pain," said Swiney, who also recorded four tackles. "I thank God for that. I've been praying every night to be able to play pain-free."

Along with Swiney, three preseason projected starters — Mike Rucker, Clint Finley and Jason Wiltz — returned on defense Saturday to give a boost to the Husker defense. The Blackshirts held UW to 97 yards rushing and 273 yards of total offense.

NU intercepted Washington's Brock Huard three times and sacked the quarterback — who holds 16 Husky passing and offensive records — three times for 17 yards.

"They had a good quarterback and great receivers, and our secondary did well against them," Swiney said. "The pass rush really helped us out, too. When those guys get to the quarterback, it gives us a chance in the secondary."

Individually, Finley, a free safety, recorded two tackles after missing the first three games with a knee injury.

Wiltz played for the first time since the Huskers' season opener against Louisiana Tech and broke the single-game record for interceptions (two) for a defensive tackle. Rucker, who suffers from an injury similar to Swiney's, played nearly three quarters.

Although Rucker played at "about 90 percent," he said both he and Swiney were relieved to play — even with osteitis pubitis, an inflammation of the bones that form the hips.

"There were some things we wanted to clear up,



NEBRASKA DEFENSIVE BACK Erwin Swiney lines up against Troy Edwards in Nebraska's 56-27 win over Louisiana Tech. Swiney, who had been fighting a groin injury, recovered a key fumble Saturday against Washington in a 55-7 victory.

MATT MILLER/DN

and we did what we needed to do to get that accomplished," Rucker said.

"The best thing that could have happened for me was to get out there and have some fun, and that's what I did."

For Swiney, there was no other choice.

"It's a hard injury to deal with because it comes and goes," Swiney said. "But this was our fourth game — I knew that I would have to do what I could to play 100 percent."

NU impresses Big 12 foes with win

Missouri's Smith calls victory over Huskies 'domination'

BY JAMES NICAS
Staff writer

Three games into the season, many people wondered if Nebraska was going to be able to measure up to its usual standards.

But after the Cornhuskers' fourth game, a 55-7 victory over Washington on Saturday, there is little doubt around the Big 12 Conference that NU is still near the top of the national scene.

"I thought it was total domination," Missouri Coach Larry Smith said. "When the opponent struggles on offense, and their option game goes inside and outside, there is little chance for the opponent to win."

The Huskers' victory over the Huskies was the 45th straight victory at Memorial Stadium for NU. The last loss at home for Nebraska was a 36-

21 loss to Washington on Sept. 21, 1991.

Smith said teams need to play an almost perfect game to beat Nebraska at home.

"When you go into their stadium, they play with such confidence at home you can be 14 to 21 points behind after a couple of mistakes," Smith said. "You have to play with a lot of poise and not make avoid costly mistakes to have a chance."

The No. 2 Huskers had been maligned recently for their performance on both offense and defense. Despite many injuries on both sides of the ball, there were still questions about Nebraska.

Those questions were answered quickly against Washington. NU scored on five of its first six possessions. The Huskers also showed their quick-play potential with three touchdown drives under a minute.

Defensively, NU forced six turnovers, had three quarterback sacks and spent most of the day pressuring Husky quarterbacks.

Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney said any questions people might have

had about Nebraska were answered Saturday.

"It was scary. I've been there and done that," said McCarney, whose team lost at Memorial Stadium 77-14 last year. "Washington has a great program and tradition, and Nebraska still dominated in every way possible."

Kansas Coach Terry Allen also was impressed with Nebraska's performance and said he never expected Nebraska to have a drop-off from previous seasons.

"It didn't surprise me. Nebraska will be the champ until someone knocks them off."

Big 12 report card

Rising	Comment	Week grade*
Nebraska	One word: flawless. The Big 12's best performance this season. Michael Bishop had 474 yards of total offense. He's in the race for the Heisman.	A+
Kansas St.	Still undefeated. Can't ask for much more than that.	A
Texas Tech	Ricky Williams is back with a vengeance. Texas needed a win over Rice.	B+
Texas	The Aggies pushed aside distractions and beat North Texas 28-9.	B
Texas A&M		
Stable		
Oklahoma	Sooners have to find an offense soon.	NA
Iowa St.	Couldn't hold on against Texas Tech, next up is Texas.	C
Colorado	Narrow win over Baylor isn't pretty, but it's a win. Buffs are banged up right now.	C
Baylor	Bears hung in vs. CU, but still lost. The Bears are tougher than some expected.	C
Kansas	KU escaped with a 39-37 4OT win over UAB.	C
Missouri	Have pushover Northwestern State this week.	NA
Oklahoma St.	With two weeks to prepare for Nebraska, OSU's got a chance. A small one.	NA

*Grades not given for teams who haven't played.

JON FRANK/DN