

# Gameday: Nebraska 24, Okla

## Gameday Notebook

Several Oklahoma State players said after the game that they would have liked to play the Cornhuskers at their home field instead of at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo. The game was moved from Stillwater, Okla., to the neutral site partly because OSU earned a \$1.3 million payoff.

Instead of playing in front of a stadium full of its fans, Oklahoma State was forced to deal with a loud, predominantly Nebraska crowd.

"We should have had the game in Stillwater," said Cowboy quarterback Tony Lindsay, who admitted NU fans distracted OSU.

"That's where we've been practicing for this game. That's our home."

NU Defensive tackle Jason Wiltz thought he had intercepted his position-record third pass of the season with 4:07 remaining in the third quarter. Wiltz grabbed a Lindsay pass and tossed it to linebacker Jay Foreman who ran it to the OSU 2-yard line.

But the pick off was called back because of a Husker roughing the passer call.

Said Lindsay of the call:

"It wasn't really anything. (NU linebacker Eric Johnson) hit me after I threw the ball, but it wasn't that hard."

Nebraska's Joe Walker scored NU's game-winning touchdown when he returned a punt for 73 yards with 7:29 remaining in the third quarter.

OSU Coach Bob Simmons criticized the Huskers' punt return blocking techniques after the game.

"I talked to the officials before the game about the technique they use with having a guy in front and a guy in back," Simmons said. "If you slow down, they run by you, and if you go through, they call you for getting into the returner's halo."

"It's a situation where we could not be right. Am I happy with the officials? No, I am not."

Nebraska split end Kenny Cheatham did not return after the third quarter of Saturday's game because of an injury to his left shoulder. Cheatham caught three passes for 32 yards.

Offensive guard Brandt Wade injured his left knee during the second half and did not return.

Redshirt freshman quarterback Eric Crouch also suffered a hip-pointer in the third quarter.

NU Coach Frank Solich said Crouch, the Huskers' No. 2 quarterback, entered the game so the coaches could talk with starter Bobby Newcombe. Crouch did not return.

Game day notebook compiled by senior staff writers Shannon Heffelfinger and David Wilson.



## Last-second stand preserves NU win

BY DAVID WILSON  
Senior staff writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — One play. One foot. Five seconds.

Dreams of a national championship and thoughts of the hard work he endured during the off-season danced in Nebraska senior Mike Rucker's mind as the play clock wound down Saturday at Arrowhead Stadium.

He wasn't alone. Facing a game-tying threat, the Cornhusker defensive unit hit late head on, and stopped Oklahoma State halfback Nathan Simmons short of the goal line.

The Cowboys flirted with an upset of No. 2 Nebraska for four quarters — the first team to do so this season. But when it came down to one last play, the Husker defense proved it had the muscle to preserve a 24-17 win over Oklahoma State in front of 79,555 fans. The Huskers improved to 5-0 in their first Big 12 Conference game, while the Cowboys fell to 2-2 and 1-1.

"Basically, what we were telling each other is, 'This is the whole season,'" said Rucker, the first to hit Simmons on the final play. "It boiled down to five seconds. It came down to a foot. That's the whole season. We were there."

The Cowboys had pounded almost 90 percent of their 55 running plays up the middle Saturday, so the final battle in the trenches didn't come as much of a surprise to the Huskers.

Nebraska Coach Frank Solich said the Husker coaches didn't fret too much upon deciding to apply pressure up the middle to stop the run.

But that didn't mean Solich was calm and confident on the sidelines as the clock ran down.

"They said Coach Solich almost had a heart attack," said rover Joe Walker, who was on the field for the final play. "I almost did as well. Thank God for the victory."

Walker was beat by OSU receiver Ethan Howell for a 67-yard touchdown before giving NU its final lead on a 73-yard punt return with 7:29 left in the fourth quarter.

Trailing by a touchdown, Oklahoma State forced the Huskers to punt and began their final drive at their own 41-yard line with 2:21 left in the game.

Simmons trucked up the middle for seven yards, then OSU sophomore quarterback Tony Lindsay connected with receiver Sean Love for 25 yards to put the Cowboys on NU's 27-yard line.

In the final minute, Oklahoma State was successful on two fourth-down conversions, including another completion to Love, which set up the final play

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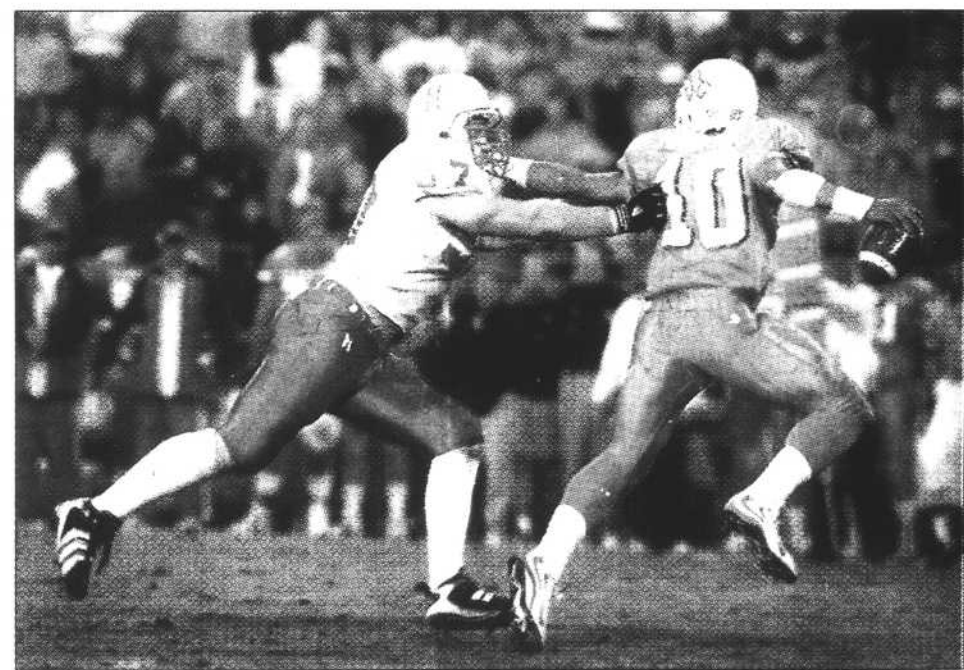
inside the 1-yard line.

"It was kind of a reality check," senior linebacker Jay Foreman said. "I think the next game will be a really telling game. We have to go back to the chalkboard and get better."

But the defense, NU quarterback Bobby Newcombe said, was the Huskers' strong point.

The Cowboys rushed for 175 yards and tossed for 180 yards though the air. Nebraska, on the other hand, was on the losing end of every statistical category, with the exception of special-team yardage and score.

In the first half, the Huskers rushed for 4 yards on 15 carries, and entered the



Photos by Matt Miller/DN  
(clockwise from top left)

TIGHT END SHELDON JACKSON hauls in a 30-yard pass to set up a DeAngelo Evans touchdown in the third quarter. Jackson had two receptions for 70 yards, about one-third of Nebraska's total yards.

NATHAN SIMMONS IS STOPPED by the Husker defense on the last play of the game, preserving the NU victory.

JOE WALKER FINDS A SEAM on the way to his 73-yard punt return in the fourth quarter. The touchdown proved to be the game-winner.

DEFENSIVE END CHAD KELSAY and the rest of the Blackshirts did not allow Tony Lindsay many yards, but Simmons and Jamaal Fobbs ran for 169 yards. NU ran for 73 yards.

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