

Gameday Notebook

With a boot following Nebraska's only touchdown of the game Friday, senior kicker Kris Brown broke the NCAA career record for extra points. Brown bettered the mark of 216 set by Fresno State's Derek Mahoney in 1993.

"I was just fortunate to be at the right school," Brown said. "It's an honor for me, because I feel like I represent all those guys that got in the end zone."

Brown also kicked three field goals Friday to finish with a team-high 89 points. The Carroll, Texas, native led NU in points three of his four seasons.

"His contribution has been tremendous throughout the course of his career here," NU Coach Frank Solich said. "He contributed with record extra points, he contributed with field goals under pressure, and he contributed on kickoffs."

Emotions were no doubt running high in Nebraska's 21 seniors as they played their final game at Memorial Stadium on Friday.

Each senior was introduced before the game and hugged NU Solich before running onto the field.

"I think everybody was on a mission," said junior linebacker Eric Johnson. "You look into the seniors' eyes, everybody was crying. We had to win this game for the seniors. They were crying before the game, during the game - we were doing it for them."

True freshman defensive tackles Jeremy Slechta and Jason Lohr recorded two of Nebraska's six sacks Friday. Lohr's sack marked his career first, while Slechta notched his second of the season. Slechta also recovered a fumble.

"Everybody on the defense played great," senior rush end Chad Kelsay said. "Everybody was making plays."

Javon Green's first-quarter touchdown was the first for Colorado in Lincoln since 1994 ... Marlon Barnes, who has played in just five games this season because of injury, rushed for more than 100 yards for the third time this year ... freshman Andy Peeke's touchdown reception in the third quarter was the first of his career.

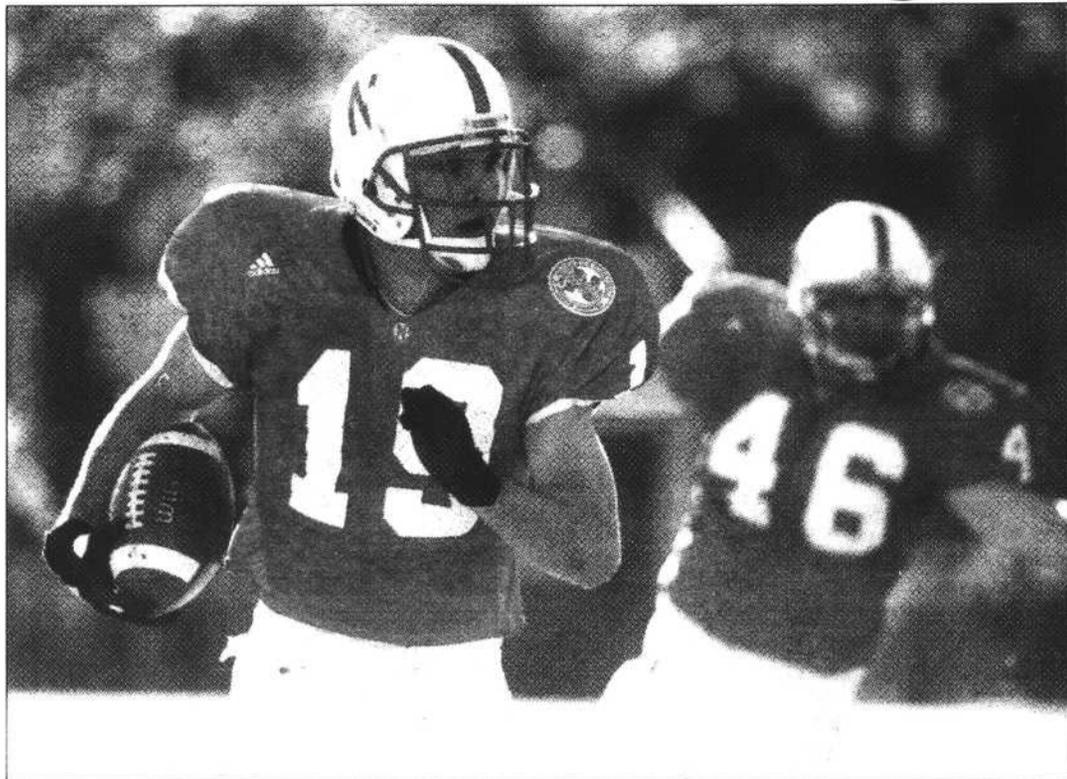
Colorado tackle Shane Cook said the Buffaloes' game plan to run right at the Huskers worked only sporadically.

"We thought we'd come in here and dominate the line of scrimmage, which we did at times," Cook said. "But they came up with more big plays. At the end, it seemed like someone got through every time. One guy would make Moschetti step somewhere, and the other guy would get him. It seemed like every play, someone was coming free or someone didn't get their assignment."

CU finished with 112 yards on the ground.

Gameday notebook compiled by senior staff writers Shannon Heffelfinger and David Wilson

Gameday:



SCOTT McCLURG/DN

NEBRASKA FREE SAFETY Clint Finley returns an interception from Colorado quarterback Mike Moschetti during the first quarter giving Nebraska its only touchdown of the game.

Defense rescues NU in tight win over Buffs

By DAVID WILSON
Senior staff writer

No one was going to let this one slip away. Not Frank Solich, who already had lost more games in his first head coaching season at Nebraska than Tom Osborne lost in his final four. Not the young Cornhusker players, who didn't know what it was like to lose a regular-season conference game until early this year. And especially not the 21 NU seniors, who were playing their final game at Memorial Stadium and had never lost to Colorado.

They did, however, manage to keep things interesting.

Trailing by two with just under three minutes remaining, Colorado's final drive was cut short as Nebraska preserved a 16-14 victory over the Buffaloes before 75,958 fans.

"We weren't going to lose," senior rush end Chad Kelsay said. "You cannot go out a loser."

Kelsay sacked CU quarterback Mike Moschetti on a second-down play with one minute and 53 seconds remaining, setting up two incomplete passes on third and fourth down, which gave the ball back to Nebraska, sealing the win.

"Being the last game in the big house, you always want to go out with a 'W,'" said senior rush end Mike Rucker, who recorded 1½ sacks and seven tackles. "Just knowing that you're one play away from losing the game, it felt great to get off the field and let the offense go out there and run the clock down."

While most of the seniors who weren't on the field for NU's final defensive stand watched anxiously, senior center Josh Heskew could not.

"I don't think I watched a single play," Heskew said. "I was sitting on the bench just hanging my head down. If I heard a big roar, then I knew we did something good. If I didn't, I knew it wasn't good."

One minute after taking a seat, Heskew was back on the field as NU wrapped up its ninth victory of the season. The Huskers improved to 9-3 overall and 5-3 in the Big 12 Conference, while the Buffaloes fell to 7-4 and 4-4.

The nine-win monkey finally jumped off Solich's back as this year's Nebraska squad followed suit with every other Husker team since 1968.

"It seems like every time they stepped on the field, someone was talking about this string or that string that was in jeopardy," Solich said. "That never makes it easy on anybody."

"Right now, 9-3, to me, sounds pretty good. You have to go back quite a ways - back to my era, almost - to find a team that didn't get nine wins. That was weigh-

ing heavy on them, and they were reminded of that every time they turned on the TV or every time they read the paper."

Nebraska jumped out to an early lead four minutes into the contest when free safety Clint Finley intercepted a pass and returned it 42 yards for a touchdown.

The score marked the Huskers' only touchdown of the game as NU's offense finished with three field goals on four trips inside Colorado's 20-yard line.

"It was frustrating for us to settle for field goals," 1-back Correll Buckhalter said. "But we were thankful for what we got. It wasn't anything Colorado did. We kept ourselves from scoring six points every time we were inside the 20."

Buckhalter finished with 92 yards on the ground, highlighted by a 52-yard scamper in the third quarter,

which set up senior kicker Kris Brown's second field goal of the game.

The Husker rushing attack was slowed from the beginning as Nebraska was held to -2 yards on the ground in the first quarter. NU put up 19 yards rushing in the second quarter and entered the locker room at halftime with a 10-7 lead.

Finding motivation for the second half wasn't difficult, senior fullback Joel Makovicka said.

"A lot of the guys stepped up," Makovicka said. "The

senior class, we weren't going to go out losing on our field for the last game. I think the younger guys stepped up and realized they didn't want to send us out that way. Everybody kind of took it upon themselves to get ready to play in that second half and not let the fans, the state and the Nebraska tradition down."

Brown's third-quarter field goal was matched by a Moschetti touchdown pass with just over two minutes left in the quarter. The score gave the Buffaloes a 1-point lead.

But two possessions later, redshirt freshman Eric Crouch led the Huskers on a 10-play, 49-yard drive that ate nearly five minutes off the clock, ending with a 25-yard Brown field goal. The boot gave NU its final lead.

"It's been some year," Solich said. "(This game) was similar to many of them. It came down to the end. It was a tough one all the way through."

Now the Huskers are left to prepare for a bowl game - likely the Holiday Bowl in San Diego on Dec. 30.

"One of our goals was definitely to win the national championship, win the Big 12 Championship and have an undefeated season," said Crouch, who completed 10 of 22 passes for 123 yards. "But as you know, those things aren't going to happen this year."

"One thing that we talked about as a team is, 'Let's try to go out on top this year.' We thought that just going out and being the best team at the end of the year is a way to show the Nebraska pride."

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JOEL MAKOVICKA
NU fullback