

athlete of century

as the quarterback's legs keep pumping.

The Huskers marched through their 1995 campaign with 12 consecutive wins, including a 62-24 romp over Florida for yet another national title. It might have been the best team in Nebraska history. Many believe it to be the best team in the history of college football.

"With so many guys on the team with the same attitude, it funnels down to everybody," Frazier said. "We had everything going — all the pieces to the puzzle — and we just kept it going."

Frazier finished with 1,966 yards of total offense, including 604 yards on the ground. Through the air, he completed 56 percent of his passes for 1,362 yards.

In the end, he earned the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and finished second in the Heisman Trophy race behind Ohio State's Eddie George.

And though he said finishing behind George didn't bother him, he quickly rationalized the decision.

"I don't dwell on that," Frazier said. "That's something that's out of my control. I only get upset over things I can control. I don't even like talking about it because everybody says, 'You should have won.' Well, I feel all those awards are opinionated."

"If you look at the voting and how it's set up, certain people are going to win it every year. I don't worry about

individual awards. If I would have won, I would have won. If I lost, I lost. And even though I didn't win, I probably have something that Eddie George wants, and that's a national championship."

But did Osborne think Frazier should have earned the honor?

"If you're talking about the best football player, the guy that accomplished the most, I would say, 'Yes,'" Osborne said. "There was no question in my mind. He was a catalyst and a guy that held everything together."

Cutting to the right sideline, he's home free. Sprinting over hash marks, he thrusts his right arm into the air and extends his pointer finger. No. 1. Fifty-three yards later, he slows down and jaunts into the end zone where he drops the ball and looks up to the crowd. It's over.

Currently the Running Backs Coach at Baylor, Frazier didn't have the opportunity to play in the NFL, but said he doesn't regret anything that has happened in his career.

And no matter what happens in his future, the Bradenton, Fla., native will always carry with him the things he learned in Lincoln.

"I learned that hard work pays off," Frazier said. "I learned to have faith in everyone, to be true to everyone, and don't take anything for granted."

One of 11 Huskers to have his jersey retired, Frazier said he has yet to reminisce about the career that shaped him.

When and if he does ("Maybe in 10 years," he said), Frazier will no doubt look back at the careerlong 75-yard run he made against Florida in the final game of his career.

The game was already out of reach, but Frazier capped things off with an option run to the right.

This time, he went the right way. Touched 10 times by UF defenders, Frazier broke at least seven tackles before scoring his final career touchdown.

"I think the fans and the media make it more than I did," Frazier said. "It's one of those rules that any football player can tell you. When you're smart, you're taught to always keep your legs going when you feel contact. That's all I did. I don't think I really did anything special. I just followed the rules I was taught when I was seven years old."

"It was something that just happened that one time. If you put me in the same scenario five other times, I'd probably never do it again."

But Gill knows better.

"That one run kind of gives a symbol of what Tommie Frazier was all about," Gill said. "That signifies him as a runner and that signifies him as a competitor. He never quit. He's never going to give up."

"If he starts something, he's going to finish it."



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