

Nebraska 24,

Newcombe saves game for NU

BY DARREN IVY
Senior staff writer

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Nebraska got an early Halloween scare Saturday night from some guys dressed in Jayhawk costumes.

That's when junior wingback Bobby Newcombe decided to put on his Superman costume a day early and come to the rescue with an 86-yard punt return for a touchdown and a 49-yard reception for the game-winning touchdown in the fourth quarter.

"Without Bobby, I don't know what we would have done today," said senior linebacker Eric Johnson. "Bobby is one of the most underrated players in this country. Bobby is a great player. He is a play maker."

The Huskers, 7-1 and 4-1 in the Big 12 Conference, needed Newcombe's heroics to offset a lackluster first half and an inspired Jayhawk team seeking to erase the haunting of 30-straight losses to its northern neighbor. It wasn't until the clock ran out on a scramble by KU quarterback Dylan Smith that NU players and fans could relax with a 24-17 victory.

"This is a big relief," said junior safety Clint Finley. "I am so glad that we won because KU played real hard and tough. We are lucky to come out with a win."

NU was lucky indeed.

The Jayhawks, 3-6 and 1-4, played like the other Big 12 team in Kansas Saturday night. Meanwhile, NU appeared to have a Texas hangover in the first half as the offense had just 69 yards of total offense and the defense gave up 184 yards of total offense. The 95th-ranked KU defense and 91st-ranked offense looked like a top-10 team in both categories.

Freshman running back Matt Jordan gave the Jayhawks a 2-0 lead when he blocked Dan Hadenfelt's punt out of the end zone. The difference remained two points until KU tight end

"Without Bobby, I don't know what we would have done today. ... Bobby is a great player. He is a play maker."

ERIC JOHNSON
Nebraska linebacker

David Hurst tacked on a 22-yard touchdown reception with nine minutes and 12 seconds remaining in the second quarter.

The catch capped off an impressive seven-play 79-yard drive in which Smith completed 5-5 passes for 58 yards. His accuracy caught NU players off-guard, but not defensive coordinator Charlie McBride.

"Coach McBride was right when he said this wasn't going to be the same Kansas team we had played years ago," Johnson said. "They have a nice quarterback. The quarterback was throwing really well, and they were clicking on offense. They were doing things we hadn't seen on film. They really outplayed us that first half."

Trailing 9-0 at halftime, Coach Frank Solich knew NU had its back to the wall and had to execute better in the second half. He challenged the players to do better in the second half, Newcombe said.

NU's fortunes appeared to change almost immediately in the second half as Eric Crouch hit Matt Davison on a 63-yard bomb on the initial play of the half. It set up the Huskers at the 20-yard line, but two plays later the fumble gods struck NU again as Dan Alexander coughed up the ball at the 10-yard line. Andrew LeClair recovered the ball at



MIKE WARREN/DN
MICHAEL WEGENER, a native of Omaha and a student at KU, decided he would don the scarlet and cream of Nebraska and root for the Huskers even while sitting in the Kansas student section.

the 1-yard line.

The defense, however, rose to the occasion, stuffing KU on three-straight plays. Then the special teams came up with a blocked punt by Gregg List. It set up NU at the 23-yard line.

The Huskers moved the ball to the 8-yard line, but the Huskers killed themselves with an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. It stopped the momentum, and NU had to settle for a 31-yard Josh Brown field goal.

It was Newcombe's punt return later in the quarter that finally gave NU the break it was looking for.

The Huskers added another score in the fourth quarter on a Crouch eight-yard run to take a 17-9 lead. But Kansas still had some tricks left in its goody bag of plays. On the first play after the NU touchdown, Smith continued to make big plays hitting Michael Chandler for a 76-yard bomb. Smith found Chandler again on the two-point conversion to tie the game at 17-17 with 11:44 remaining.

"It just felt a lot like last week, looking at yourself and saying, 'Damn, what is going on here?'" said defensive tackle Loran Kaiser about the touchdown.

That set the stage for Newcombe's 49-yard game-winning touchdown catch.

"Great players make great plays," said Mike Brown. "He's a special player, and everyone knows it."

While every NU fan may know about Newcombe's ability, throughout much of the season he has taken a back-seat role to Crouch in terms of media exposure and big plays. But the wingback from Albuquerque, N.M., got his chance to shine on Saturday night.

It was a far cry from last week, when Newcombe almost vanished in the second half against Texas. The coaches didn't forget about him this week.

"Tonight a lot of opportunities came my way," said Newcombe, who finished with 89 receiving yards on four catches and 115 yards on two punt returns.

KU loses grip on Huskers in 2nd half

BY BRANDON SCHULTE
Staff writer

If a camera was focused on Kansas Coach Terry Allen during the Kansas vs. Nebraska game on Saturday, it would have told the story.

His body language on the sideline during the game and in the locker room afterward showed the roller coaster of emotions the KU football team went through in its 24-17 loss to the Cornhuskers. The team's spirit and ultimately its defeat were best reflected in the actions of Allen.

After the game, a visibly disappointed Allen came out of the locker and barked "let's go" at players who took time speak with friends and family before going into the changing room.

He also refused to laud his team's play in the near win against No. 8/9 Nebraska.

"You don't give congratulations," Allen said. "Sure, they gave a great effort. We came to play and came to win. It's frustrating, and it's disappointing. You have to play all facets of the game. I'm pleased and proud of their effort, but you don't give congratulations when you get beat."

That contrasted with a vibrant Allen, seen early on as he paced the sidelines with a spring in his step, cheering on his players. He could be seen celebrating after every first down or great defensive play as his team took a 9-0 lead.

And unlike its first six games of the season where the Jayhawks, who fell to 3-6 overall and 1-4 in the Big

12 Conference, were outscored 144-96 in the first half and 60-26 in the first quarter, responded to Allen's exuberance in the first half against Nebraska (7-1, 4-1).

"I thought our kids believed they could win," said Allen, who had 56-1 record when leading at halftime. "And that was demonstrated in the first half when we talked about trying to make things happen."

Using an open offense, staunch defense and a blocked punt for a safety, Kansas, not Nebraska, was the better team in the first half.

Allen's offense had him pumping his fists into the air after quarterback Dylan Smith hit David Hurst on a 22-yard touchdown pass to give the Jayhawks the nine-point margin.

Using formations, which used several receivers to spread out a sluggish NU defense, Kansas picked at the Nebraska defense in the first half for 184 yards and 12 first downs.

At the same time Allen had reason to applaud his defense. The same unit that had been scorched for 412.8 yards per game in 1999 had yielded only 69 yards and zero points to Nebraska in the first half.

Free safety Carl Nesmith said the defensive effort was one KU's finest this season.

"The defense played great," said Nesmith, who led the team with 11 tackles. "Everybody did their job tonight. And the whole team played well."

"The defense has a lot of confidence now. We should have shut them down. We should have won the game."

Football Game Review

Nebraska 24
Kansas 17

Rushing

No.	Name	Yds	Avg	TD	No.	Name	Yds	Avg	TD
38	C. Buckhalter	118	5.3	0	33	M. Norris	80	4.7	0
30	D. Diedrick	27	9.0	0	22	D. Winbush	20	4.0	0
38	D. Alexander	21	6.7	0	20	M. Bowles	13	2.6	0

Receiving

No.	Name	No	Yds	TD	No.	Name	No	Yds	TD
3	M. Davison	6	106	0	86	M. Chandler	4	106	1
12	B. Newcombe	4	89	1	1	H. Hill	3	23	0
36	C. Buckhalter	1	4	0	88	D. Hurst	2	31	1

Passing

No.	Name	Att	Cmp	Int	Yds	TD	No.	Name	Att	Cmp	Int	Yds	TD
7	Eric Crouch	20	11	0	193	1	4	D. Smith	30	16	0	217	2
							28	H. Childs	1	0	1	0	0

Game Stats

Nebraska	KU	Nebraska	KU		
First downs	15	17	Fumbles lost	1	0
Rushing attempts	42	39	Interceptions	1	0
Rushing yards	173	117	Penalties / yards	8 / 59	4 / 35
Passing attempts	20	70	Punt returns / yards	8 / 199	4 / 16
Passing completions	11	16	Kickoff returns / yards	1 / 13	5 / 97
Passing yards	193	217	Time of possession	28:18	31:42
Total plays	62	70	Third-down conversion	2 of 14	3 of 15
Total yards	366	334	Fourth-down conversion	1 of 1	0 of 0
Average yards per play	5.9	4.8	Sacks / yards	5 / 50	2 / 4

Scoring summary

Team	Qtr.	Scoring play	Plays - yards	Score
KU	1	J. Pallares 37yd pass to NU J		0-2
KU	2	D. Hurst 22yd pass from D. Smith (J. Garcia)	79 - 7	0-9
NU	3	B. Newcombe 86yd return of 48 yd Delfanio punt		10-9
KU	4	M. Chandler 77yd pass from Smith	77 - 1	17-17
NU	4	B. Newcombe 49yd pass from E. Crouch (J. Brown kick)		24-17