

Michael Kelly
Sports Editor



NU 'Weak' Set Not So Strong

Lincoln — It was the big secret of spring and fall practice. If you heard about Nebraska's new backfield formation before Saturday's game, it's because someone couldn't keep quiet.

The formation goes by a funny name, considering it's run by one of the nation's most powerful running offenses: the "weak set."

"We'll keep looking at it," NU coach Tom Osborne said after the Huskers defeated Iowa 42-7 in the season opener.

"I was satisfied with the rotation today — at first glance. But after looking at the film and breaking down the stats, we might feel it wasn't that good."

Not That Good

Well... the truth is that as a running formation, it wasn't that good.

The Huskers ran up a lot of rushing yardage (343, compared to last year's regular season average of 330, which was second in the nation.) But they did it mainly out of the I, not the weak set.

The purpose of the new formation was to get Mike Rozier and Roger Craig alongside each other in the same backfield. Last year, they alternated at I-back and each ran for more than 1,000 yards.

Publicly, all Osborne has said in recent months was that Craig would play fullback while Rozier played I-back. And that's what they did part of the time Saturday.

But they opened the game in the new formation, with Craig at fullback behind quarterback Turner Gill, and Rozier off to one side. Craig ran the first play for five yards, and then Rozier took it for two yards.

That drive ended in a 3-yard touchdown run by sub fullback Doug Wilkening, a play run from the I. It was the 13th play of the drive, and six were out of the weak set.

By my unofficial count, the Huskers averaged only 3.6 yards per carry out of the new formation (54 yards on 15 runs). And that doesn't count 16 yards in losses on two fumbles that Nebraska lost on pitch plays out of the weak set.

For all rushing plays Saturday, including the weak set and the I-formation, the Huskers averaged 6.1 yards per carry.

Which isn't to say the Huskers should junk the formation. Because it did seem to have one advantage — it opened up the passing game. A beautiful Turner Gill to Irving Fryar touchdown play of 41 yards in the first quarter, and a 9-yard TD pass from Gill to Todd Brown in the fourth quarter came out of the weak set.

"By the way, it's called the "weak" set because Rozier lines up on the opposite side of the ball from the tight end, and in football terminology that's the weak side.

Surprise Sought

Nebraska, unofficially, lined up in the weak set for 27 plays, and in the traditional I-formation 46 times. But without looking at films, the Husker coaches used it less and less as the game went on (18 times in the first half, nine in the second.)

Osborne wanted to surprise Iowa with the new formation. Reporters who cover Nebraska could see it at practice, but never said anything about it; it's kind of like not reporting troop movements in wartime, to stretch the point a little.

Rozier almost let it out when the Big Eight Skywriters tour was in town a couple of weeks ago. In front of reporters from Kansas City, Tulsa and a couple of other towns, he mentioned a new formation in which he and Craig lined up more or less side by side, and even used the term "weak set."

As did other writers who cover the Huskers, I knew about the formation. But that was the first time I had heard the terminology. Osborne winced that day when I played the tape of Mike talking about it.

But Rozier had said it to a small group, and no one else seemed interested in it. So it stayed a secret. (We would have been obligated to report it if other papers wrote about it.)

So, was it a surprise?

"I don't know if we surprised them or not," Osborne said. "I don't think anybody from Iowa came over and skunked us. But we just had an awfully hard time closing this place down over here for practice. We'd have 150 to 200 people at scrimmages."

At least until after the coaches see the films this morning, the weak set will remain part of the offense. "Right now," Osborne said, "I'd say we plan to stay with it."

Overall, the Huskers looked like a national championship contender. They scored three out of the first four drives, and Iowa didn't get a first down until the last play of the first half.

The fourth TD at the end of the first half was the result of a lineman — defensive end Wade Praeuner — outracing Iowa quarterback Chuck Long to the end zone when a ball was snapped over Long's head in a shotgun formation. Sophomore Jeff Smith outraced everybody and turned on the crowd with an 80-yard TD run the first time he touched the ball.

Nebraska is sure to keep running the ball, but they'll probably pass more this year than usual. And maybe the weak set will help.

"I'm pretty pleased with the new set," Rozier said. "We showed today that we can pass the ball, too."

Norman, Okla. (UPI) — To West Virginia quarterback Jeff Hostetler, his team's stunning 41-27 conquest of eighth-ranked Oklahoma Saturday was the biggest game of his career.

And he said he had some help.

"I just threw 'em up and the good Lord collected 'em," Hostetler said of his 17 pass completions for 321 yards and four touchdowns.

"Our receivers were great," Hostetler said. "I have a lot of confidence in them. Any time I see one of them with one man on them I think they're open."

"I guess this is the biggest game I've ever been involved in, even the ones with Pitt," said Hostetler, who transferred to West Virginia from Penn State.

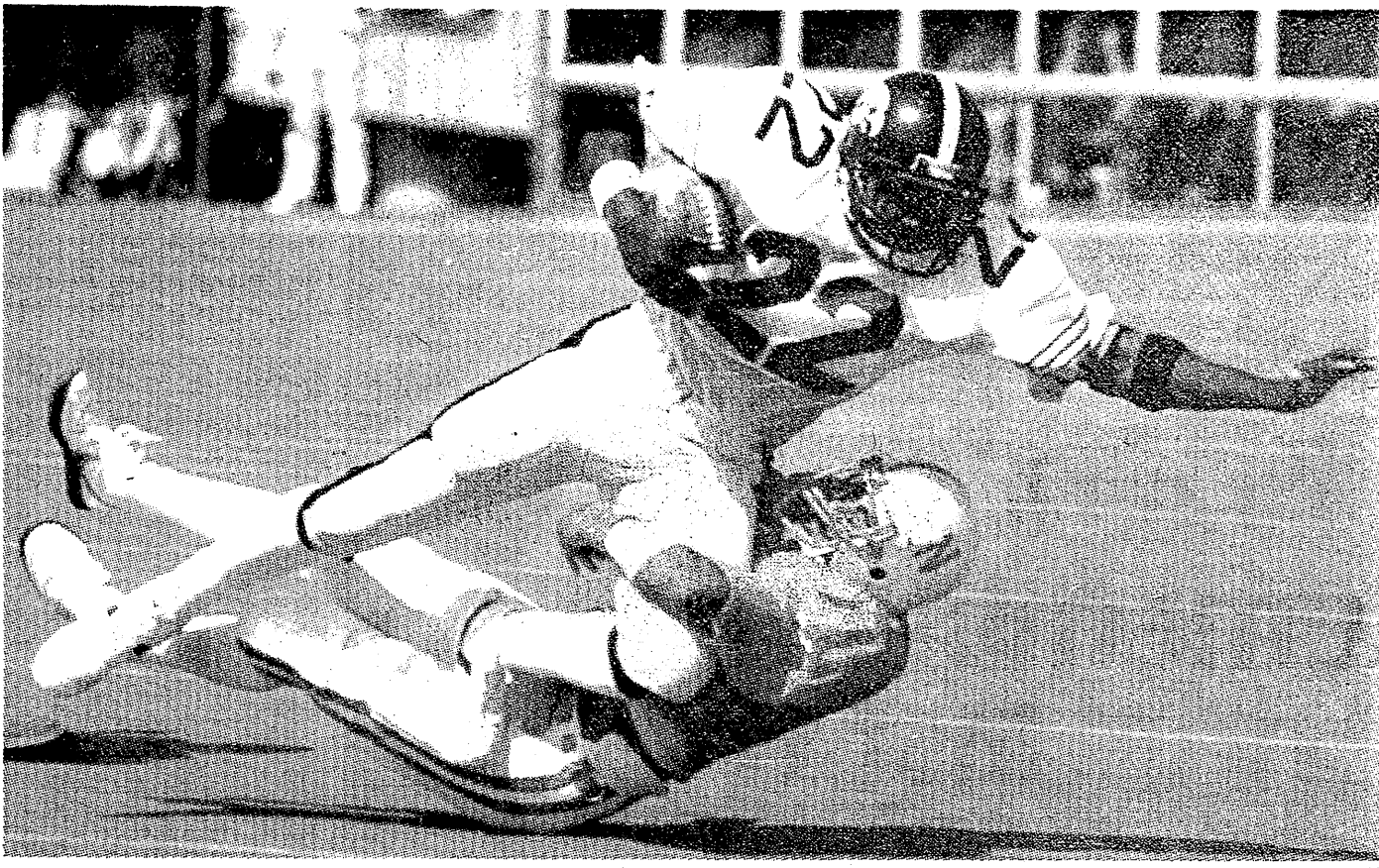
Hostetler completed 17 of 37 passes, including scoring strikes of 10 yards to Mark Raugh, 33 yards to Darrell Miller, 30 yards to Curtin Beck and 9 yards to Wayne Brown.

Mountaineer Coach Don Nehlen said, "The first time you win Wimbledon or the U.S. Open is really a thrill," Mrs. Lloyd said, "but I appreciate and maybe have a place in history by winning a sixth, so I can understand that a little bit better."

McEnroe saw his bid for a fourth straight men's crown disappear when he was stopped by his nemesis, Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia, 6-4, 6-4, 7-6. McEnroe's three consecutive championships were the most since Bill Tilden captured six straight U.S. national titles from 1920-25.

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Huskers Roll in Steel-Belted Style



Jim Bumett/World-Herald

Cornerback Allen Lyday tackles Iowa's Eddie Phillips for a 2-yard loss after a pass completion... Defensive plays like this one allowed the Hawkeyes only one net yard in total offense in the first half.

Gill Says New Offense Tailor-Made for NU

By Dave Sittler

World-Herald Staff Writer

Lincoln — Since November, Nebraska fans have worried about Turner Gill's leg. After Saturday's win over Iowa, Gill said he hopes people will think more about his arm.

He completed 9 of 16 passes for 144 yards and two touchdowns, and directed the Huskers in their new "weak set" formation, which NU has practiced in secret. The new formation, Gill said, should demonstrate the strength and versatility of Nebraska's offense.

"It really opens things up for us," Gill said.

The junior quarterback said he hopes the game proved his injured right leg is

Sacking Good Time

Iowa	0	0	0	7
Nebraska	14	14	0	14-42
NU—Wilkening 3 run (Seibel kick)				
NU—Fryar 41 pass from Gill (Seibel kick)				
NU—Craig 6 run (Seibel kick)				
NU—Praeuner recovered fumble in end zone (Seibel kick)				
Iowa—Grosan 4 run (Nichol kick)				
NU—Brown 9 pass from Gill (Seibel kick)				
NU—Smith 80 run (Seibel kick)				
A—76.013				

	Iowa	NU
First downs	11	24
Rushes-yards	37-97	56-343
Passing yards	93	160
Total yards	190	503
Return yards	3	91
Poses	10-21-3	10-18-0
Sacks by-yards lost	2-7	4-32
Fumbles	8-51	5-45
Penalties-yards	2-1	2-5
Time of possession	4:29	4:40
	27:24	32:36

strong again. He took several hard hits, but held up well.

Nebraska showed several variations of the new set against Iowa. The fullback — Roger Craig and Doug Wilkening played the position most of the time Saturday — lined up behind the quarterback. But Rozier lined up to the side the fullback, behind a tackle; sometimes he was even with the fullback, sometimes a step forward and sometimes a step back.

Sometimes he was on the left side, sometimes on the right — but always on the side of the field opposite where the tight end lined up.

"I have five different ways I can line up and Roger has two," Rozier said. "But I don't want to talk about it too

much because we still have 10 games to play."

Gill said that while the Huskers ran their usual I-formation about 70 percent of the game, the weak-set played a vital role in the team's ability to amass 503 yards of total offense.

"It's really kind of tailor-made for everything we've got — good receivers, good running backs and a quarterback who can run and throw the ball," Gill said.

Gill demonstrated that he's bounced back from the nerve damage he suffered in his right leg last year. Besides passing, handing off and pitching out,

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Big 8 Shockers... Mountaineer QB Riddles O.U.

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Oklahoma Coach Barry Switzer, who never before had lost a season opener in his 10 years at Oklahoma, said he did not expect the Mountaineers to "throw

own zone moments earlier when All-Big Eight punter Bucky Scribner's 60-yard kick left them on the 16 with five minutes left.

But McJunkins moved Wichita State into position with two completions to Ruebin Eckles covering 34 yards that put the ball on the 50.

McJunkins followed with his third touchdown pass of the season and second to Dreher as Wichita State improved its record to 2-0.

The Jayhawks, 0-1, held McJunkins to 50 yards total offense in the first half. But he completed six of nine passes for 139 yards and also rushed for 26 yards in five carries after the intermission.

Dreher was all alone in the middle, 30 yards downfield, and dove over line-backer Elvis Patterson at the goal line for the winning score.

The Shockers looked buried in their

Late Wichita Bomb Floors K.U.

Lawrence, Kan. (UPI) — Prince McJunkins hit Don Dreher with a 50-yard touchdown pass with 3:08 left Saturday to give Wichita State a 13-10 triumph over Kansas in the first meeting between the two interstate rivals in 36 years.

The Missouri Valley Conference Shockers rallied from a 10-0 deficit on field goals by Sergio Lopez-Chavero of 47 yards in the second quarter and 33 yards in the third period before McJunkins electrified the crowd of 41,500 with the longest pass play of the day.

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Chris Captures 6th Open; Lendl Will Meet Connors

New York (AP) — While Chris Evert Lloyd was busy rewriting history on the tennis courts, John McEnroe lost his chance at joining her in the record books.

Mrs. Lloyd, the winningest woman in U.S. Open history, captured her sixth singles title Saturday, disposing of Hana Mandlikova of Czechoslovakia 6-3, 6-1 in just 64 minutes.

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against Jimmy Connors, who is seeking his fourth U.S. Open title in today's nationally televised final. Connors eliminated Guillermo Vilas of Argentina 6-1, 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

Mrs. Lloyd now has won 66 matches in America's premier tennis event, the most ever for a woman. She has won the singles title in six of the last eight years and has reached at least the semifinals in each of the 12 years she has competed here.

Only two women have won more U.S. Open titles — Molla Mallory with eight from 1915 to 1926, and Helen Wills Moody with seven from 1923 to 1931.

"I'm not driven by it," Mrs. Lloyd insisted when asked if being in tennis history compelled her to victory.

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How the Top 20s Fared

AP/UPI	Opponent This Week
1/ 1 — Pittsburgh (1-0) beat North Carolina 7-6 Thursday	Florida State
2/ 2 — Washington (1-0) beat Texas-El Paso 55-0	Arizona
3/ 3 — Nebraska (1-0) beat Iowa 42-7	New Mexico State
4/ 4 — Alabama (1-0) beat Georgia Tech 45-7	Mississippi
5/ 6 — North Carolina (0-1) lost to Pittsburgh 7-6 Thursday	Vanderbilt
6/ 7 — Georgia (2-0) beat BYU 17-14	Idie
7/ 5 — Penn State (2-0) beat Maryland 39-31	Rutgers
8/ 11 — SMU (1-0) beat Tulane 51-7	Texas-El Paso
9/ 8 — Oklahoma (0-1) lost to West Virginia 41-27	Kentucky
10/ — Southern Cal (0-1) lost to Florida 17-9	Indiana
11/16 — Florida (2-0) beat Southern Cal 17-9	Idie
12/10 — Michigan (1-0) beat Wisconsin 20-9	Notre Dame
13/12 — Arkansas (1-0) beat Tulsa 38-0	Navy
14/14 — Ohio State (1-0) beat Baylor 21-14	Michigan State
15/ — Arizona State (2-0) beat Utah 23-10	Houston
16/ 9 — Clemson (0-1) did not play	Boston College
17/13 — Texas (0-0) did not play	Utah
18/17 — UCLA (1-0) beat Long Beach State 41-10	Wisconsin
19/15 — Miami, Fla. (1-1) beat Houston 31-12	VPI
20/18 — Notre Dame (0-0) did not play	Michigan
/19 — Brigham Young (1-1) lost to Georgia 17-14	Idie
/20 — Texas A&M (0-1) did not play	Texas-Arlington

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Hero Naran Says Mavs Couldn't Fail

By Jerry Fricke

World-Herald Staff Writer

Sophomore quarterback Randy Naran finally got his "complete game" for the UNO Mavericks Saturday night.

It was an impressive 35-3 victory over Kearney State before an estimated 10,000 fans at Al Caniglia Field. Only several hundred remained at the end after rain began to fall in the second half and the game was no longer in doubt.

Naran finally did the job that UNO Coach Sandy Buda knew he could do. The 6-1, 190-pound Naran completed 17 of 28 passes for 223 yards and two touchdowns and ran for 31 more to total 254.

All told, the Mavs piled up 499 yards, including 234 rushing, and 31 first downs, their most productive game since 1979.

Kearney, meanwhile, labored for 187 total yards and suffered its worst defeat since a 41-7 setback by Moorhead (Minn.) State in 1972.

"I knew we couldn't lose," Naran said. "I know I certainly didn't want to lose again. This is the third game I've started at UNO, and it's the first time we've won and the first time I didn't get injured. I finally got a complete game."

Last season, Naran started the third game against Morningside, a 3-0 loss; he suffered a thumb injury and was out for the rest of the year. A week ago he suffered a concussion and missed most of the second and third quarters against Northeast Missouri as UNO lost 33-14.

"I think we were much more emotionally ready for this game," Naran said. "It was before the home fans, we were playing Kearney and we didn't want to lose again."

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Inside

Herschel's Back

Herschel Walker returned to Georgia's starting lineup Saturday and rushed for 124 yards on 31 carries as the sixth-ranked Bulldogs edged Brigham Young 17-14 at Athens, Ga. Walker, used sparingly in Georgia's opener because of injury, powered for 4 yards on this play. Story on Page 15.



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