

Nebraska 31 **FIESTA BOWL** Tennessee 21

NU Drives Point Home



FIRST SCORE: Nebraska 1-back Dan Alexander beats Tennessee defensive back Deon Grant to the end zone for the Huskers' first score, a 7-yard run with 11:34 to play in the first quarter.

Nebraska's offense puts together two marches of more than 90 yards to win in McBride's last game

BY STEVEN PIVOVAR
WORLD HERALD STAFF WRITER

Tempe, Ariz.—Nebraska opened a new century of football Sunday with a win that allowed a longtime assistant to close out his career in style.

The Huskers' 31-21 victory over Tennessee in the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl sent Charlie McBride, Nebraska's defensive coordinator for the past 18 seasons and a member of the coaching staff for the past 23, out on a winning note. The win, before 71,526 at Sun Devil Stadium, also capped a 12-1 season for the third-ranked Huskers.

"My first win came here on this field when I was at Arizona State, and my last win was here, too. It meant so much to me," said McBride, his voice choking with emotion. "I love this football team, and I also love my family very much. It's time for them, so I'm going to pull the plug."

The 60-year-old McBride, bothered in recent years by back and knee problems, had been non-committal about his future plans in the days leading up to the Sunday's game against the fifth- and sixth-ranked Volunteers, who closed out a 9-3 season.

"I didn't want to do anything to take away from this football team," McBride said. "They deserved this big win. As far as I'm concerned, they are No. 1. There's no question about it. I don't have any hesitation in my mind. Anyone who wants to step up against them, we can win."

Although the national championship will be awarded to the winner of Tuesday's Nokia Sugar Bowl game between Virginia Tech and Florida State, Nebraska made a strong final argument to be included on any short list.

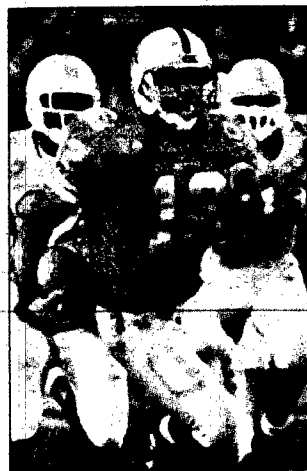
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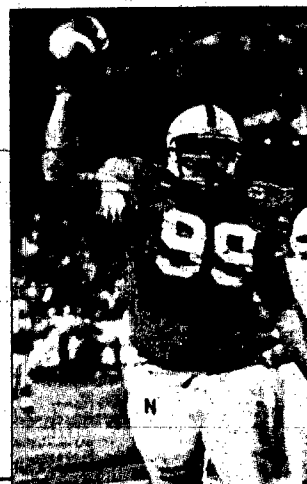
THE CROWD: 71,529 FANS



ERIC CROUCH: 212 TOTAL YARDS



BOBBY NEWCOMBE: PUNT RETURN TD



AARON COLLADAY: 13-YARD TD CATCH

NU Looks to Title Race Without Charlie

Tempe, Ariz.
So long, Charlie. Hello, Orange Bowl!

The Nebraska Cornhuskers won the Fiesta Bowl and lost a defensive coordinator, a warrior and true friend of the program on Sunday night. On a night of cheers and tears, NU Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride announced he was going to hang up his gray sweatshirt and give his aching back a rest.

The least the Huskers could do was go out in Uncle Charlie-like style. They beat Tennessee 31-21 in



a brawl that wasn't as close as the bruises indicated. The Huskers did McBride proud, holding down Tennessee quarterback Tee Martin and running over and through the

Vols in a punishing back-alley victory that was as old-school Nebraska as McBride.

The Huskers ran and ran and ran. They looked as if they could have run all the way to Miami, site of next season's national championship game.

The Nebraska football team can't win the national championship this season. In another galaxy, long, long ago, what the Huskers did to Tennessee on Sunday night might have been enough to cause some voters to lose some sleep, and

Florida State or Virginia Tech to lose some votes. Remember Jan. 1, 1998, and the miracle at midnight?

Those subjective, melancholy days are gone. Now, in the cyber age of college football, FSU and Virginia Tech are locked into the national title game, and even if Willie Miller ran to Tucson and back on Sunday, there was nothing the Huskers could do about it. The best the Huskers can do this season will be No. 2.

Next season is another story. The Huskers wrote the rough draft on Sunday night, sending the

college football world a message that was about as subtle as Dan Alexander going off tackle. Nebraska beat the Vols in a game that re-asserted the Huskers' swagger in their own minds and maybe even college football analyst Beano Cook's, too.

Frank Solich's third season as Husker head coach should begin with his team ranked somewhere in the top three. No. 1 seems about right.

The Huskers pointed that theme

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Northern Iowa Capitalizes At Line to Top Creighton

BY RICH KAIPUST
WORLD HERALD STAFF WRITER

Cedar Falls, Iowa — Creighton basketball players might be hearing whistles in their sleep for a few nights.

The Bluejays certainly heard enough Sunday to scar them for a while.

Creighton committed a season-high 29 fouls and Northern Iowa benefited from the accompanying free throws to pull away for a 77-75 victory at the UNI-Dome. The Panthers scored 10 of their last 14 points at the free-throw line in the Missouri Valley Conference game.

"That's just bad basketball on our part," CU junior Ryan Sears said. "We made a lot of stupid fouls that just gave them free throws. They didn't have to work for it. They didn't have to do anything. We just gave them to them."

The points weren't exactly "free" as Northern Iowa made just 23 of 36 attempts (63.9 percent), but the free throws came often enough to keep Northern Iowa in the lead over the final 10 minutes. The Panthers helped themselves by also shooting a season-high 59.5 percent from the field.

"We were trying to make something go with our defense, we just had a hard time with it," CU Coach Dana Altman said. "We fouled too much and we just didn't get any stops."

Creighton dropped its third straight game since a 9-0 start. Another potential problem popped up with 2:25 left when senior forward Dornie

Johnson injured his right knee scrambling for a loose ball near midcourt.

Altman said CU won't know the extent of Johnson's injury until this morning. Johnson was visibly in pain and left the floor with his knee in a brace.

"I'm sure our confidence is shaken a little bit," Altman said. "They're just going to have to bounce back and try to do some things a lot better than the way we're doing them right now."

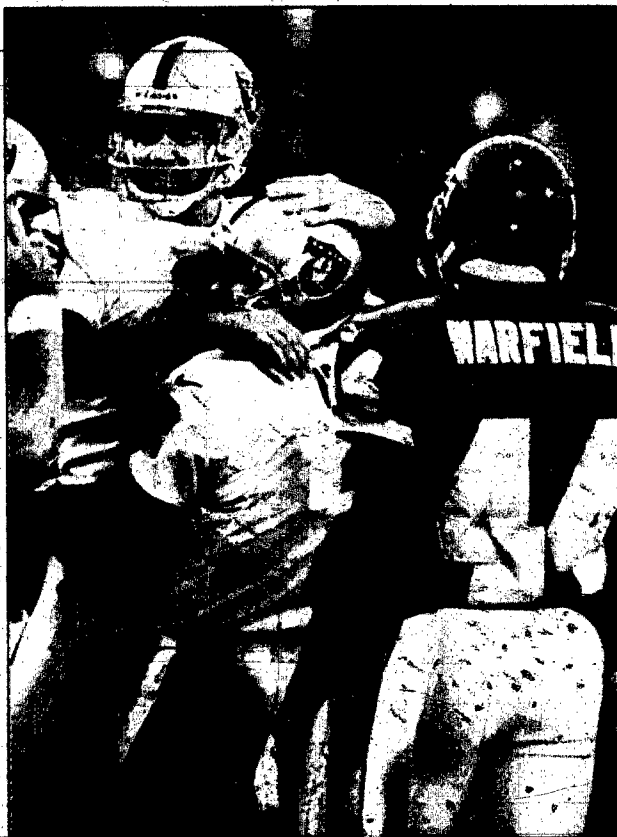
Creighton (9-3 overall, 1-2 in the MVC) had taken a 38-34 halftime lead and built it to 42-34 on Matt West's four-point play to start the second half. The Bluejays were still ahead 51-48 after a basket inside by Livan Pyfrom with 11:11 left in the game.

But Northern Iowa (8-3, 1-0) took control the rest of the way before a crowd of 2,125. The Panthers produced points on 16 of their final 22 offensive possessions, making 14 of 19 free throws in that time.

"It was a good win for us," UNI Coach Sam Weaver said. "With two straight losses and then to come back against a quality team like Creighton... I thought that was excellent."

Northern Iowa wiped out the 51-48 deficit by going on an 11-0 run, which was capped by Kelvin Hill's basket with 8:34 remaining. The Panthers worked their lead up to 79-62 when Robbie Sieverding made two free

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THE WINNERS: Oakland holder Leo Araguz, center, lifts kicker Joe Nedney after the winning field goal. Ex-Husker Eric Warfield of Kansas City is at right.

K.C. Kicking Itself After Loss to Raiders

Place-kickers' mistakes help Oakland knock the Chiefs out of the playoffs

BY COREY ROSS
WORLD HERALD STAFF WRITER

Kansas City, Mo. — In one of the NFL's ultimate all-or-nothing situations, the Chiefs came away with nothing on Sunday.

No AFC West title. No home playoff game. No playoff game, period.

It was all lost on Joe Nedney's 33-yard field goal in overtime. The kick gave Oakland a wild 41-38 victory over the Chiefs before a stunned crowd of 79,026 at Arrowhead Stadium. A win or tie would've given the Chiefs the AFC West crown after Seattle lost to the New York Jets 19-9. Instead, the Chiefs' season ended in disappointment at 9-7.

Nedney helped send the game to overtime with a 38-yarder that tied the score at 38-38 with 45 seconds remaining in regulation. Then back-to-back wide-lefts by Kansas City kickers left the Chiefs kicking themselves.

First-place kicker Pete Stoyanovich yanked a 44-yarder left at the end of regulation that would've won the game for Kansas City. Then Jon Baker

NFL Playoff Games

This weekend's matchups:

SATURDAY

Buffalo at Tennessee
11:30 a.m. (ABC)

Detroit at Washington
3:05 p.m. (ABC)

SUNDAY

Dallas at Minnesota
11:35 a.m. (Fox)

Miami at Seattle
3:05 p.m. (CBS)

First-round bye: Jacksonville, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Tampa Bay

booted the opening kickoff of overtime out of bounds, putting the Raiders on their own 40 to start their game-winning drive.

The errant kickoff was the third ball Baker booted out of bounds into a swirling wind. It was the final, and most fatal, of the Chiefs' season-long kicking woes, which also included a blocked punt that was returned for a touchdown on Sunday.

Sloppy special teams and a defense that surrendered its highest point total of the season led to the Chiefs

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