

Magic in Orlando
While it's far too early to crown the Orlando Magic anything, including NBA Eastern Division champions, it's not too early to say Orlando is for real. Page 15.

Tide Prepares
Alabama Offensive Coordinator Homer Smith is preparing the Tide for a winning effort against Ohio State in the Florida Citrus Bowl today. Page 19.

McCartney's Plans
Retiring Colorado Football Coach Bill McCartney will stay at the university to work in a fund-raising capacity, according to a published report. Bowl Notes, Page 19.

NU Women Romp
In its final game before starting Big Eight play, the Nebraska women's basketball team gets double-figure scoring from four players and routs Colgate 95-52. Page 20.

Sports

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Tom Shatel

An Unbeatable Finish

NU Exorcises Bowl Ghosts

Miami
Joe Paterno was right. Coach Tom Osborne won his first national championship when he least expected it. And where he least expected it.
In the east end zone of the Orange Bowl.
The ghosts of the 1983 season, and the east end zone, were exorcised Sunday night. There, in the place where so many Nebraska national championship dreams have died, Nebraska beat Miami 24-17 to hand Osborne his first national championship in a storied and often-frustrating career.

The east end zone can vouch for the latter.
There, where Turner Gill's pass to Jeff Smith Jan. 2, 1984, was tipped against Miami, quarterback Tommie Frazier hit tight end Eric Alford with a 2-point conversion pass that tied Sunday night's game with the Hurricanes at 17 with 7:38 to play.
There, where Byron Bennett's long field goal try went wide left last year, Nebraska scored twice up the middle. There, where Florida State's William Floyd scored a controversial touchdown last year, Nebraska fullback Cory Schlesinger twice went in untouched.

Gambling Game

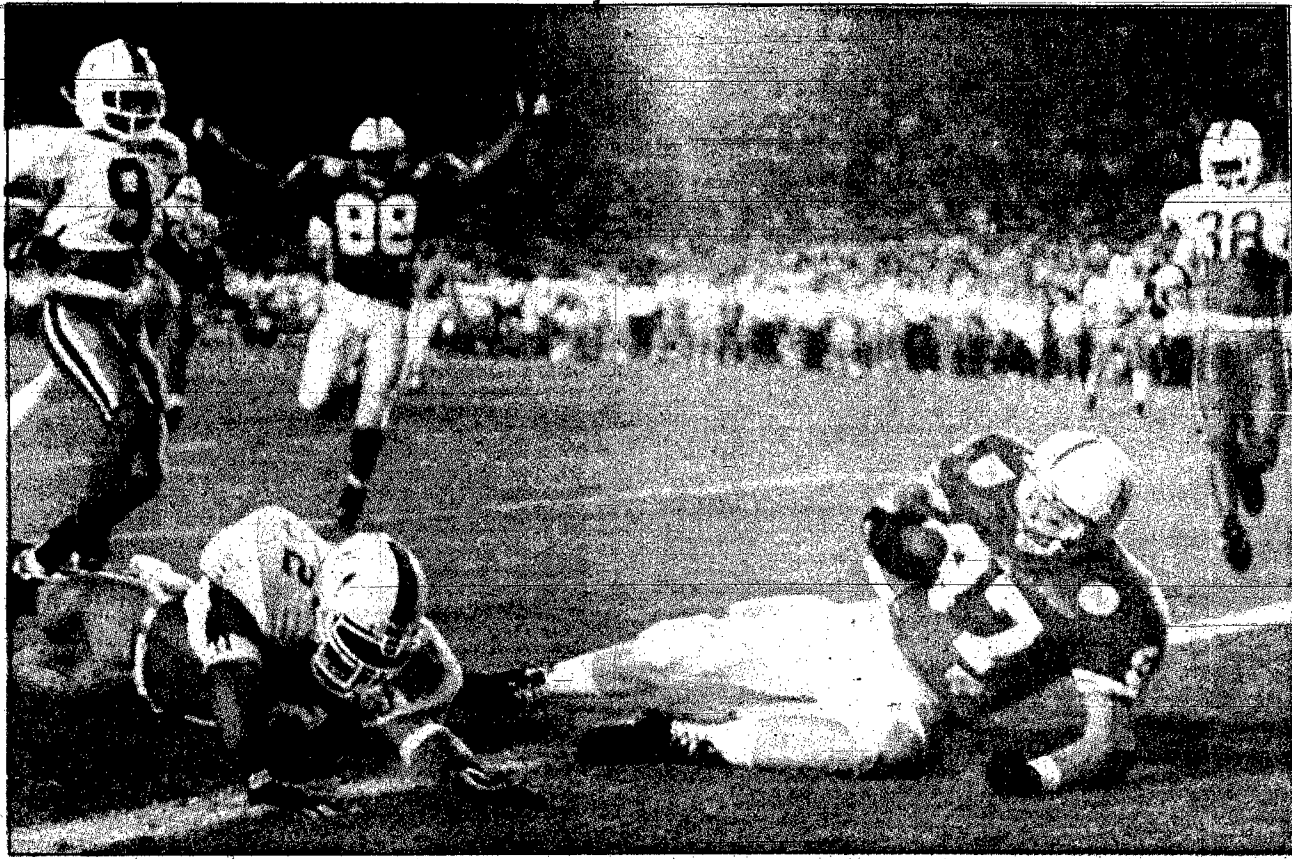
Just like Nebraska at 13-0.
The Cornhuskers will have to wait one day for the final verdict to come from both The Associated Press and USA Today/CNN polls. But it will be easy, compared to the wait of 22 years for Osborne.
He overcame Miami in Miami. He overcame a 10-0 deficit in Miami. He overcame the Quarterback Shuffle. He overcame elephant tracks.
Mostly, he overcame his own bone-headed call in the fourth quarter.
This was a gambling game for Osborne. He gambled by starting Frazier. He gambled by inserting Brook Berringer. He downright played with fire at the beginning of the fourth quarter when the Huskers got the break they had desperately needed.
Miami center Jeffrey Taylor snapped the ball over punter Dane Prewitt's head. As the ball bounced toward the east end zone, Prewitt ran back and kicked the ball out of the end zone and was penalized for an illegal kick. Nebraska got the ball at the Miami 4-yard line with 14:02 left.
And Osborne promptly had Berringer throw the ball. Huh?
Berringer's pass for Alford was intercepted.

Frazier's 2nd Shot

The air immediately let out of the north stands, where the majority of Nebraska's fans sat stunned. You felt this was a turning point. You felt Nebraska had blown it. You felt Osborne had really outsmarted himself this time.
Did he want to win the national title, anyway? Or maybe it was just the magnetic force of the east end zone, driving him away.
Osborne quickly regrouped.
Our ramblin', gamblin' coach reached for the dice and gave them another roll. Maybe that's what Paterno, the Penn State coach, meant by "when you least expect it." Who could expect so much Osborne caution being tossed to the Biscayne breezes?
He put Frazier back into the game for the first time since Nebraska's second series. And suddenly it all changed.
Nebraska's options worked. Nebraska moved the ball. Nebraska scored. In the east end zone.
Twice.
It actually started after Frazier's first fourth-quarter series — an unimpressive three-and-out series. Starting at the Miami 40, I-back Lawrence Phillips went 25 yards to the 15 on an option pitch. Yeah. An option against Miami. Go figure.

Rough Start

After tying the game at 17, Osborne stayed with Frazier and the option and it paid off — big time. Both on third downs. A Frazier option keeper for 25 yards. A Frazier option keeper for 6 on third-and-3 to the Miami 14.
The options set up Schlesinger's runs. And suddenly, in a fourth quarter of an Orange Bowl, Miami was on the run. And on its back.
The east end zone was quivering. It had no chance. This was Osborne's night.
It began like Miami's night. Again. This year was supposed to be different. A better, quicker, saltier Nebraska team. Miami not as dangerous.
But the Hurricanes darted out to a

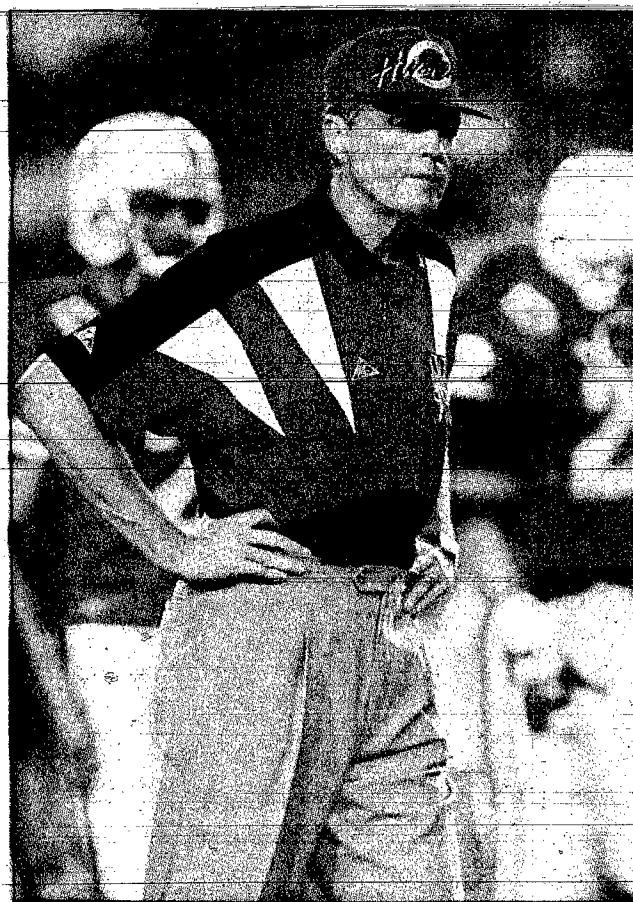


HUSKERS SCORE: Tight end Mark Gilman dives into the end zone to score on a 19-yard pass from Brook Berringer, with Miami's Ray Lewis, No. 52, and Chad Wilson, No. 9, arriving too late. The touchdown drew Nebraska within three points, 10-7, with 7:54 left in the first half.

Osborne's Big One Doesn't Get Away

BY TOM SHATEL
WORLD-HERALD SPORTS COLUMNIST
Miami — Always, Tom Osborne has been the fisherman. In his boat and on the football field. In real life and as a symbolic figure in the play that has been his coaching career.
On Sunday night the old man went out to the sea again, venturing into the familiar, dangerous waters of an Orange Bowl under the lights against the Miami Hurricanes. With a rod of integrity and longevity as bait, he pulled out the catch of his life.
A national championship.
It was a beauty.
Nebraska defeated Miami 24-17 on Sunday night, all but guaranteeing Osborne his first national championship in 22 years as Nebraska head coach. The polls will come out Tuesday, but when you beat Miami in Miami, and you've gone so many years pulling up an empty hook, you can be assured the tide of sentiment will come toward you. People want this for Osborne.
Osborne just wants to fish.
The fisherman has always said it wasn't the national championship that lured him out to the sea. It was the competition, the chess match of preparation, the idea of laying your best out on the field for 60 minutes and walking away with your head held high.
Fishing for the sake of fishing.
We want to believe him. But how could anyone be so corny? So outdated? In a society where Tonya Harding takes out Nancy Kerrigan, where's the gratifica-

tion in simply doing your best? Where's the reward without the ring?
We want to believe him. But there have been too many disappointments since he took over for Bob Devaney in 1973. Too many times when doing his best wasn't enough. Too many times when Nebraskans had their hearts broken and everyone assumed he did, too.
There were the games against Oklahoma, his first nemesis, in the 1970s. It took him six tries just to beat Barry Switzer and win the Big Eight.
And when he finally did beat Oklahoma, in 1978, there was the image of James Wilder and Missouri upsetting NU one week later, and with it Osborne's first bid at No. 1. His consolation: He got to play Oklahoma again in his first Orange Bowl. Ugh.
There was the controversial Penn State catch out-of-bounds that beat Nebraska in 1982 and kept Osborne from reeling in The Big One.
And there was the unforgettable Jan. 2, 1984, night in Miami, when the fisherman could have reeled in the championship with a 31-31 tie. But instead he chose to do it right, to win outright, and The Big One slipped away again.
He has been through 28 Big Eight coaches. Been to 22 straight bowl games. Won more than 200 games. Won nine Big Eight championships. Graduated most of his players. He outlasted Switzer. He has outlasted Colorado Coach Bill McCartney. He has tinkered with his offense and defense, brought them



ON THE SIDELINES: Nebraska Football Coach Tom Osborne saw his bowl losing streak end at seven games. The Cornhuskers finished 13-0.

Walsh, 'Underdog' Bears Shoot Down Moon, Vikes

Minneapolis (AP) — The team that wasn't supposed to be in the playoffs stunned the quarterback who was supposed to go so much further.
Steve Walsh led a precise offense with two touchdown passes Sunday and the Chicago Bears forced four turnovers in a 35-18 victory over Minnesota, continuing the postseason futility of the Vikings and Warren Moon.
Few people expected the Bears to reach the playoffs when the season began. After snapping its six-game losing streak to Minnesota, Chicago is off to San Francisco for Saturday's divisional playoff game — a game few will expect it to win.
"That's nothing new to us," Bears receiver Curtis Conway said. "We've been underdogs all year. A lot of people said we couldn't beat the Vikings. We won when we needed to win."
The Vikings, NFC Central champions for the second time in Dennis Green's three seasons as coach, still haven't won a playoff game under Green and have lost five in a row dating to 1988.
Moon lost his fourth straight National Football League playoff game.

He offset his two touchdown passes with two interceptions, and was replaced by Sean Salisbury in the final minutes. Despite his outstanding 11-year NFL career, Moon's record remains tainted by his "playoff" failures as does Green's Minnesota tenure.
"It's frustrating this year, because it's right here and right now," said Moon, 3-6 in the playoffs during his 10 seasons in Houston. "This is a game we felt we should have won. There's no question we're all disappointed."
Moon limped into the interview room on the injured left knee that kept him out of the final regular-season game last week. He showed no signs that the knee bothered him during the game, but the Super Bowl hopes Moon brought with him from Houston during the offseason may have evaporated with the week and a half of practice he missed to end the regular season.
Moon's timing was off all day against a fired-up Chicago defense, while Walsh confused the Vikings with a mix of long and short passes.
Forced to throw once the Bears got



STEVE WALSH: The Chicago Bears quarterback completed 15 of 23 passes for 221 yards and two touchdowns.

8-1 Northeast, Ralston Keep Top Ratings

Lincoln Northeast remains No. 1 in The World-Herald's Top 10 boys basketball ratings despite its 75-65 loss to Alta, Utah, in the finals of the Nebraska Holiday Prep Classic.
The 8-1 Rockets are unbeaten against Nebraska competition, with three wins against Top 10 opponents — No. 3 Lincoln Southeast, No. 7 Bellevue East and No. 8 Ralston.
Ralston lost to Bellevue East in the Metro Conference's holiday tournament, but stays No. 1 in the Class B ratings. Wahoo won the small-school division of the Nebraska Holiday Prep Classic to remain atop Class C-1 with a 9-0 record.
At No. 2 in the Top 10 is Columbus, one of three teams in the 24-team Class A that won a holiday tournament. The 6-1 Discoverers won the Columbus Holiday Tournament with a 71-55 victory over then-No. 4 Norfolk, avenging a three-point loss to the Panthers.
Norfolk fell to sixth.
Other holiday-tournament winners from Class A were Metro champion Omaha Burke and North Platte. Burke (5-3), which rose from seventh

Schlesinger Caps Rally With 2 TDs

BY LEE BARFKNECHT
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER
Miami — Throughout his 22 years as head football coach at Nebraska, Tom Osborne has stressed that it's the journey each season that stirs his juices, not the destination.
True to form, Osborne barely smiled early Monday morning as the final seconds ticked away in the top-ranked Huskers' 24-17 comeback victory over Miami in the FedEx Orange Bowl — a win that broke NU's seven-game bowl losing string and should lead to his first national title when the final polls are released Tuesday.
But when Osborne closes the door to the film room and reviews the 60-minute roller-coaster ride Nebraska (13-0) took through Orange Bowl Stadium to lay claim to staying No. 1, quarterback Tommie Frazier predicts his coach might cut loose a little.
"He's the type of person who doesn't show his feelings," said Frazier, who came off the bench in the fourth quarter to lead two touchdown drives in the final eight minutes.
"But I guarantee you that once it sinks in for him, you'll see a couple of tears and a smile."
Osborne saw his team trail 10-0 into the second quarter and 17-9 into the

NU's Frazier Gets the Save From 'Bullpen'

BY ERIC OLSON
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER
Miami — Nebraska's Orange Bowl quarterback rotation couldn't have worked out better, Tommie Frazier and Brook Berringer said after teaming up to lead the Huskers to the 24-17 victory over Miami that is expected to give them their first national championship since 1971.
Frazier started, got relief help from Berringer in the second and third quarters and then came back in the fourth to direct the Huskers' game-tying and winning touchdown drives Sunday night.
"I sat out a lot of the game after the first quarter," Frazier said, "and I was the freshest one out there on the field when I came back. That's what you want — to have your first man in there when the defense is worn down."
Frazier, who left the game after Miami's Carlos Jones intercepted his pass intended for wingback Abdul Muhammad with 2:39 to play in the first quarter, returned for NU's second offensive series of the fourth, after Berringer was picked off in the end zone by safety Earl Little with 13:54 left in the game.
Berringer, who completed 8 of 15 passes for 81 yards, including a 19-yard touchdown pass to tight end Mark Gilman, said he had no problem with coming out of the game.
"Sure, it's a tough situation when you know that if you make a mistake you're going to get pulled out," said Berringer, a junior from Goodland, Kan. "Tommie and I did a good job of keeping our heads

W-H Boys Basketball Ratings

By Stu Pospisil

Nebraska Top 10			
	Record	Avg. Pts.	Opp. Pts.
1. Lincoln NE	8-1	75	62
2. Columbus	6-1	70	51
3. Lincoln SE	6-2	69	59
4. Omaha Burke	5-3	62	58
5. Millard South	6-3	63	57
6. Norfolk	4-2	66	62
7. Bellevue East	5-4	71	69
8. Ralston	5-2	71	62
9. Bellevue West	4-2	76	69
10. Om. Cre. Prep	6-3	63	55

to fourth in the Top 10, won its first Metro crown since its 1985-86 state-championship season by defeating Millard South 54-45.
The Bulldogs avenged one of their three losses by beating Millard North 62-51 in overtime in the quarterfinals. And they beat defending state champion Omaha Creighton Prep for the second time in two weeks.
North Platte (5-2), is not ranked below.