

# College Football

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**Tom Shatel**



## K-State Gap Stays Wide

Lincoln — Well, at least Kansas State is still in the running for that Mid-American Conference championship. But not the Big 12. Not now. Not Saturday night, when Nebraska brushed off some two-week-old cobwebs and pounded, pillaged and pummeled Kansas State, 56-26, in an FX show that looked like any rerun, from the Husker-Wildcat X files.

So now, enough about how this is the year Kansas State beats Nebraska. Enough about how this K-State is a realistic threat to Big Red security, how Kansas State is ready to "take the next step" and shock the nation. Enough about how this Kansas State is different.

Same old K-State?

### Cat Credentials

Not exactly. This is not your father's K-State. This is a Kansas State program that now gets accused of running up the score. A program that is one of just six schools in the nation to win at least nine games each season from 1993 through 1996. A K-State that has been to four straight bowl games, won two, and made it to a Jan. 1 (Cotton) bowl last season. Sellout crowds hold tailgate shindigs outside KSU Stadium that look like the elaborate pavement parties at Arrowhead Stadium. There are five starting offensive linemen who tip the scales over 300. K-State students who think Rolando Blackman, a former Wildcat basketball standout, was a great wide-out.

And a gap between Nebraska as wide as ever.

Same old K-State? Yes. For one game each year. The Nebraska game.

Here's a scary thought: Last week Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said Kansas State was "probably the most dangerous team we have left." If that's the case, then the gap between Nebraska and the rest of the Big 12 is bigger than a Texan's ego. Saturday night's 30-point spread was the widest in this series since 1990, and it wasn't that close. Coach Bill Snyder's Wildcats bumbled and stumbled as well as any team that Ellis Rainsberger, Jim Dickey, Lee Moon or Stan Parrish trotted out against NU: K-State beat Nebraska? The Wildcats never had a chance.

### Fast Start

The Wildcats never gave themselves a chance. After a rapid-fire, three-play scoring drive early that matched NU's opening touchdown, KSU folded up shop. Quarterback Michael-Bishop's arm burned NU's secondary early. But after two drives, K-State went to its running game (40 rushes, 98 yards). Then Bishop started running options. And it was checkmate, Big Red.

It was almost as if Kansas State came not expecting to win, just trying to avoid embarrassment, not get its psyche bruised and battered for those key games against Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas. It was obvious to NU defensive tackle Jason Peter, who said, "They still don't know if they can beat us or not."

And this is a program Snyder has built, brilliantly, on the power of belief. He schedules non-conference cupcakes that build strong egos. He has caught the Big Eight-Big 12 at the perfect time, with Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Missouri, Baylor, etc., down in the dumps. But who has K-State really beaten? Snyder's best win is Texas A&M, last year, but how good is that?

### Fragile Structure

For a K-State program so down for so long, it's something. But wouldn't a stronger schedule prime the Wildcats for "the next step" against NU or Colorado. Why does Snyder refuse to travel to play a Tennessee, a Washington, a Florida State, the way FSU Coach Bobby Bowden built his national power?

Because KSU football obviously is still a fragile structure. Snyder obviously fears that a crushing loss to a national bully would ruin, rather than build, K-State's psyche.

So the Wildcats will continue to beat up on the MAC, clean up the games they should win in the league, get their nine wins and go to a bowl and sell it to the world that they are a big-time program. As long as their fans buy it, this is not a bad thing. But when does that day come when every Wildcat starter expects to claim the scalp of a Nebraska or Colorado? When does the journey come with a ring?

The Wildcats have traveled far on smoke and mirrors. But not that far. When the smoke and the mirrors cleared Saturday night, Nebraska was still Nebraska, and Kansas State was still Kansas State.

# Green Gives K-State the Blues



**GREEN ON THE MOVE:** Nebraska I-back Ahman Green accelerates past Kansas State linebacker Travis Ochs, No. 50, for his 25-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. Green, who gained 193 yards on 20 carries, also scored on runs of 7, 59 and 50 yards to rush for a career-high four touchdowns.

I-back rolls for 193 yards and career-high four touchdowns in NU victory

BY STEVEN PIVOVAR  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Lincoln — Nebraska had expected a tough, four-quarter brawl Saturday night at Memorial Stadium.

Instead, the Huskers got another Kansas State team that showed it can't measure up to the challenge when it steps in against one of college football's heavyweights.

Nebraska combined a four-touchdown, 193-yard performance by I-back Ahman Green with a stifling defense to produce a 56-26 Big 12 Conference victory. The win, before the 217th sellout crowd of 75,856 and a national television audience, was Nebraska's 39th straight at home and extended the Huskers' string of victories over the Wildcats to 29.

"Those guys still don't know if they can beat us or not," Nebraska defensive tackle Jason Peter said. "They still have that in the back of their mind. When we jumped out on them early there, I think that was a real positive thing."

Kansas State, its record and national ranking bloated by an early season big-MAC attack, was behind from the start. The Huskers used ball control on offense and big plays by rover Eric Warfield and wingback Bobby Newcombe to build a 20-6 lead at halftime.

Nebraska then buried the 16th- and 17th-ranked Wildcats with a three-touchdown blitz in the opening 10 minutes of the third quarter. Ahead by 35 points, Nebraska then coasted through the final 20 minutes of the win that left the Huskers 4-0 and solidified their standing as a major player in the chase for the national championship.

"We're a good team, and I'm not afraid to say that," Husker quarterback Scott Frost said. "I think we're as good a team as there is out there. If we keep playing hard and winning ball games, everything is going to shake out in the end."

Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne also likes what he sees. Before Saturday's game, Osborne had said he considered Kansas State to be the toughest remaining regular-season game on the schedule.

"I feel better about us than I do worse because I think we played a good team, and we beat them soundly." — OSBORNE  
See **HUSKERS** Page 6

## Buffaloes Fizzle Again at Home in Loss to Aggies

BY LEE BARFKNECHT  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Boulder, Colo. — Colorado officially lowered its sights for the 1997 football season Saturday after becoming a 500 team with a 16-10 home loss to Texas A&M.

"It's not going to be one of those years where everybody is talking about how great the Buffaloes are," CU Coach Rick Neuheisel said. "It's going to have to be one of those years where you have to scratch, claw and eke out wins."

It wasn't the loss alone that has forced a rethinking of goals for the No. 16 and 18 Buffaloes (2-2, 0-1 in the Big 12's North Division).

It was more the dazed-and-confused way that this senior-dominated team — 19 players in their final season are first or second on the depth chart — fell to the No. 17 and 21 Aggies (4-0, 1-0 in the South).

Twice in the first quarter, Colorado had first-and-goal situations — and scored just three points, partly because Phil Savoy dropped a pass while wide-open in the end zone. In the second

quarter, three illegal-procedure penalties in four attempted snaps followed by a 23-yard punt set up an A&M field goal that gave the Aggies a 6-3 halftime lead.

By the end of the third quarter, CU was down by 13 points, had as many penalties as first downs (eight) and had converted none of its eight third-down tries.

In the fourth quarter, the Buffs scored just their second offensive touchdown in the past 13 quarters to cut the deficit to 16-10, then moved into position to score again in the final

three minutes. Junior split end Darrin Chiaverini stole a jump-ball pass from a defender for a 37-yard gain to the A&M 28.

But fifth-year quarterback John Hessler, who entered 1997 with 10 career interceptions, threw his eighth of this season at the Texas A&M 14-yard line with 2:15 left to end the threat.

Colorado might have had a chance to get the ball back had it saved its timeouts.

But for the second straight week, the Buffaloes burned all three second-half timeouts before the final few minutes

of play. Most stunningly, one timeout had to be used early in the third quarter when Colorado lined up on defense at its own 1-yard-line with 10 men on the field.

That game-long series of bogers led to booing from some fans in the crowd of 50,877 at Folsom Field. The Buffaloes also were booed at home last week for their shoddy execution in a 20-19 comeback victory over Wyoming.

"It's never been like this here before," Chiaverini said. "I don't want to point fingers, but people on this team. See **COLORADO** Page 2

## UNO Defense Slips In Loss to N. Dakota

BY RICH KAIPUST  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Grand Forks, N.D. — North Dakota threw up a stop sign Saturday that UNO hadn't seen in a while.

The Fighting Sioux curbed a number of different streaks by the Mavericks with a 35-24 victory at Memorial Stadium. It also left North Dakota alone atop the North Central Conference after three weeks.

"We got back on our heels there at the beginning of the game with field position and everything, and that wasn't a great start," North Dakota Coach Roger Thomas said. "But I'm happy with the way our guys came back and responded."

North Dakota, ranked No. 13 in NCAA Division II, scored 28 straight points after falling behind 9-0 before a Homecoming crowd of 11,561. It was too much to overcome for No. 9 UNO, and the Mavs had the following streaks disrupted:

- Twelve straight wins in regular-season games.
- Ten consecutive wins against NCC opponents.
- Seven straight wins on the road.

"Obviously it kills you to lose the game," University of Nebraska at Omaha Coach Pat Behrns said. "Our players all feel bad about losing the game. But in no way are we out of this conference race. In no way have we just ruined our season."

North Dakota junior Phillip Moore rushed for a season-high 216 yards and two touchdowns Saturday to knock UNO into a five-way tie for second in the NCC. The 433 total yards for the Fighting Sioux were the most allowed by the Mavs this season.

"We thought it would be a physical game, a lot of power ball," UNO linebacker Cedric Welch said. "But in no way did we think the score would be 35-24. If you told me before the game they were going to score 35 points, I would have laughed at you. It just turned out that way."

North Dakota (4-0 overall, 3-0 in the NCC) used two crucial second-half possessions to control the game — even though neither resulted in any points.

UNO (4-1, 2-1) had pulled within 28-16 with 4:14 left in the third quarter on an 18-yard touchdown pass from Ed Thompson to Yano Jones. The Mavs had moved 80 yards in 18 plays, holding the football for 8½ minutes, and appeared to be regaining momentum.

North Dakota then bought its tiring defense some time. The Fighting Sioux held the ball for 6½ minutes and for 5½ minutes on its following two series, leaving UNO in its own territory when it gave up the football.

UNO was stopped both times, and North Dakota followed by tacking on a scoring drive that resulted in a 2-yard touchdown run by Mike Hoefs with

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**SWEET WIN:** Coach Bob Simmons celebrates after Oklahoma State's 42-16 win over Texas. Page 2.

### Football Inside

- Todd Schultz matches a career high with three touchdown passes to lift Michigan State past Minnesota 31-10. Page 5.
- Matt Reiling fires up Doane's arsenal in a 35-16 win over Hastings. Page 9.
- Justin Coleman posts the best day ever for a Loper quarterback in the University of Nebraska at Kearney's 50-36 win over Fort Lewis. Page 10.

### How The AP Top 25 FARED

1. Florida (5-0) beat Arkansas 56-7.
2. Penn State (4-0) beat Illinois 41-6.
3. Nebraska (4-0) beat No. 17 K-State 56-26.
4. Florida State (4-0) beat Miami 47-0.
5. No. Carolina (5-0) beat TCU 31-10.
6. Michigan (4-0) beat Indiana 37-0.
7. Ohio State (5-0) beat No. 11 Iowa 23-7.
8. Auburn (5-0) beat S. Carolina 23-6.
9. Tennessee (3-1) beat Mississippi 31-17.
10. Washington (3-1) beat No. 25 ASU 26-14.
11. Iowa (4-1) lost to No. 7 Ohio State 23-7.
12. Michigan State (4-0) beat Minn. 31-10.
13. LSU (4-1) beat Vanderbilt 7-6.
14. Va. Tech (4-1) lost to Miami (Ohio) 24-17.
15. Wash. State (5-0) beat Oregon 24-13.
16. Colo. (2-2) lost to No. 21 Texas A&M 16-10.
17. K-State (3-1) lost to No. 3 Neb. 56-26.
18. Georgia (4-0) beat Miss. State 47-0.
19. Stanford (4-1) beat Notre Dame 33-15.
20. Alabama (3-2) lost to Kentucky 40-34 OT.
21. Texas A&M (4-0) beat Colorado 16-10.
22. UCLA (3-2) beat Houston 86-10.
23. Air Force (6-0) beat The Citadel 17-3.
24. BYU (3-1) beat Utah 42-35 Friday night.
25. Ariz. St. (3-2) lost to No. 10 Wash 26-14.

## Ohio State Stuffs Banks, Cooks Hawks

BY ROB WHITE  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Columbus, Ohio — For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. For every action of Tavian Banks on Saturday, there was an equal and opposite Andy Katzenmoyer.

Katzenmoyer — Ohio State's brilliant sophomore middle linebacker — used his unique combination of size, speed and instincts to single-handedly shut down Iowa's rushing attack, and his Buckeye teammates provided more than enough offense for a 23-7 victory in a battle of Top 10 teams from the Big Ten Conference.

"He's a great player and a very fast linebacker," Banks said. "He probably won the Butkus Award today. I don't think we blocked him all day." Seventh-ranked Ohio State (5-0) won its conference opener and got the first leg up in what appears to be a five-way race for the league's Rose Bowl berth. Meanwhile, eighth- and 11th-ranked Iowa (4-1) suffered the first misstep among the serious contenders for a trip to Pasadena, Calif., for the league champion.

While Banks was held to 11 yards on 10 first-half carries, Ohio State built a 10-0 lead. It grew to 16-0 just 4½ minutes into the second half before the Hawkeye offense finally showed signs

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