

# Sports

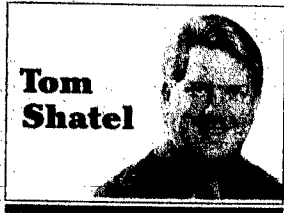
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**Prep Playoff Plan**  
Mead Football Coach Jon Dahl has devised a plan that would set up 32-team high school football playoffs in Eight Man-1 and Eight Man-2. Page 28.

**College Volleyball Tonight**  
College volleyball fans can take their pick of action tonight in Omaha and Lincoln as Nebraska, Creighton and UNO all play host to matches. Page 29.

**Dick Weber to Visit**  
Despite his busy schedule, professional bowling legend Dick Weber is to compete in this weekend's PBA regional tournament at Elkhorn's Gateway Lanes. Page 36.

**Lancers on Ice Tonight**  
It might be "just" an exhibition contest, but Omaha Lancers Coach Mike Hastings is serious about tonight's game at Des Moines. Page 36.



## Thumbs Up For No. 1

Lubbock, Texas  
Overrated? Well, yes, after two quarters and two minutes, when it was 14-9 — when No. 1 Nebraska wasn't worried about its shiny moniker, just winning the crazy game.  
But, well, no, not late in the third quarter, when the Big Red Machine was steamrolling on two straight scoring drives; when it had re-established its clout and had taken the game back away from a freshman quarterback named Zebbie Lethridge.  
Those Zebbies, they kill your ratings every time.  
And that's what Thursday night was all about, correct? Oh sure, a football game. Nebraska 42, Texas Tech 16 or whatever. But what about the ratings? Make no mistake: This was a ratings game. This was step one as No. 1, Nebraska's first walk down the runway of the annual beauty contest called the college football national championship race. The talent portion comes later, against UCLA, Colorado, Oklahoma. Thursday night was the swimsuit show with the judges watching at home. How good can you look when you're supposed to win?

**Glitches**  
The Huskers had 612 total yards. One turnover. They toyed with the Red Raiders, speeding away like the Roadrunner when necessary. But their performance also came with several glitches and moments when they looked downright human, if not No. 2. But what do you want, perfection? It would help.  
To be No. 1 is to live life on the edge. Every move, ebb and flow is scrutinized by the voters of Associated Press and CNN/USA Today polls, who often are as different as Siskel and Ebert. Nobody is ever certain what lurks in the hearts and minds of voters, except that it doesn't make sense.  
Ask Florida, which scored 70 points last week and dropped to No. 2 behind idle Nebraska. Thank goodness Brian Schuster didn't break that last up-the-gut run.  
So what will it be when the new polls come out on Monday? Will the Huskers stay No. 1? Or will the critics cancel them faster than Chevy Chase?

**Ups, Downs**  
You could almost predict the grades as they came down across the country:  
Thumbs up: Tommie Frazier's 58-yard touchdown run on the sixth play of the game. Showed quick-strike, big-play ability early. This is going to be a rout.  
Thumbs down: NU leads 7-0 at the end of one quarter. Florida would be up 28-0.  
Thumbs up: Nebraska goes for fourth-and-one at its 46 on the second series. This shows guts, killer instinct and the all-business approach No. 1 has to have.  
Thumbs down: Lawrence Phillips is stopped short.  
Thumbs up: Frazier practically yawns on a 3-yard score in the second quarter, which is how No. 1 quarterbacks do it.  
Thumbs down: 14-3 lead at the half, meaning Tech fans are not only still in the stadium, they're in the game. All across the country, voters shake their heads.  
Thumbs down: third quarter and the freshman named Zebbie has the No. 1 team in the country on the run.  
Thumbs up: NU flexes muscles, going up 35-16 on a scoring pass from Frazier to tight end Eric Alford. Crowd begins to leave with 10:56 to go, backup quarterback Brook Berringer comes in with 9:06 to go. Two traits of a No. 1 team.

**Overall Grade**  
Thumbs up: NU scores last touchdown while going for fourth down with 35-16 lead. The bigger the margin of victory, the better. Voters note how the score shows you didn't run it up, but could still score at will.  
Overall grade: No. 1.  
The rule of thumbs in this space is you don't drop a winner, except for unusual circumstances. But not everyone votes that way. Thursday night wasn't unusual. Just a lackluster blowout. Nebraska may lose some votes for sloppiness, lack of a balanced attack (88 yards passing) and its inability to put the game on ice by the Halftime Blitz. That's not giving Texas Tech respect, which is the point.  
As for the No. 1 team in the nation, it trudged off into the Texas night, 2-0 and waiting to see if it earned enough style points and if Florida or Notre Dame can outclass it this weekend. Wondering if you can ever do enough. Just another game in the life of No. 1.

# Huskers Come On Strong



**SOMETHING'S POPPING:** Nebraska I-back Lawrence Phillips loses his helmet but gains 13 yards on a first-quarter run with 0:28 left, as Texas Tech's Robert Johnson delivers the hit. Phillips finished with a career-high 175 yards rushing.

## Long Drives Doom Raiders In 2nd Half

BY LEE BARFKNECHT  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER  
Lubbock, Texas — It was neither pretty, nor perfect.  
But Nebraska's 42-16 win Thursday night over Texas Tech was good enough to keep the nation's top-ranked team undefeated and in contention to stay atop both major polls.  
"We did a job tonight, but that was about it," NU Coach Tom Osborne said after the Huskers used two 82-yard touchdown drives to blunt a rally that brought the 24-point underdog Red Raiders within five points in the third quarter.  
"We played good football, but not inspired football."  
As for whether it was good enough to keep Nebraska No. 1, Osborne indicated that he didn't care.  
After revealing that he voted Florida No. 1 on his coaches' poll ballot last week, he said he hoped the struggle with Tech might cool some of the No. 1 fever.  
"I think people have gotten awfully excited awfully fast," Osborne said. "I've been real concerned about that. I can't seem to settle them down. Maybe we can settle them down on the field."  
"We're very mortal. We have a good football team. But we've got a long way to go, and a lot of things to prove."  
Nebraska proved to 32,768 fans at Jones Stadium and an ESPN television audience that it can run the ball.  
The Huskers' 524 rushing yards were the most since gaining 529 in a 1991 victory over Colorado State.  
I-back Lawrence Phillips ran for a career-high 175 yards in 19 carries and touchdowns of 56 and 2 yards. Fullback Cory Schlesinger ran for a career-high 84 yards in six carries. Quarterback Tommie Frazier ran for 84 yards in 13 carries, including a 58-yard touchdown run in the first quarter that matched the longest of his career.  
The passing wasn't as pretty. Frazier and backup Brook Berringer were 5 of 17 for 88 yards with one interception.  
"We need to throw and catch the ball better," Osborne said. "When we have as many guys running loose as we did, we've got to capitalize."  
Defensively, the Huskers gave up their first points of the season. But arguable calls on a 43-yard pass completion and a pass interference penalty near the end zone kept Tech drives alive that produced its first nine points.  
Osborne said the biggest negative on defense was losing starting free safety  
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## Huskers' Phillips Is Back on Track

BY ERIC OLSON  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER  
Lubbock, Texas — This time, Lawrence Phillips was happy.  
The Nebraska I-back was down in the mouth Aug. 28 after opening the season with a 126-yard rushing day against West Virginia in the Kickoff Classic. He said he and the rest of the offense made too many mistakes, mentally and physically, against the Mountaineers.  
But after running for a career-high 175 yards and two touchdowns in Thursday night's 42-16 victory over Texas Tech, Phillips said he was back on track.  
"I guess I had a lot of opportunities in the West Virginia game that I didn't take advantage of," said the 6-foot, 200-pound sophomore from West Covina, Calif. "I wanted to come back this game and take advantage of them, and I think I did."  
Assistant Head Coach Frank Solich, who's in charge of the running backs, said Phillips stepped his game up to a higher level against Tech. Not that it was much lower against West Virginia, Solich said.  
"I think he was down a little bit after the first game, to be honest with you," Solich said. "I wasn't. I thought he played well in that first game. But he had a very good spring and a very good fall,

so he was expecting to do some special things in there.  
"Now we're getting to the point where when he touches the ball, we expect some special things to happen. He played well in that first ballgame, but he certainly played better tonight."  
Phillips, whose best game previously was a 137-yard outing against UCLA last year, turned NU's nail-biter into a breeze in the third quarter after Tech had scored on its first possession of the second half to close within 14-9.  
He capped an eight-play, 82-yard drive with a 2-yard touchdown run. And on the Huskers' next series, he ran for 76 of their 82 yards on a march he highlighted with a 56-yard burst up the middle that opened up NU's lead to 28-9.  
"I saw our defense was tired when they

came out and scored," Phillips said. "If they scored, we wanted to score, too. We wanted to help the defense. They've helped us a lot this season."  
Phillips, who averaged 9.2 yards on his 19 carries, broke four runs of 13 yards or longer. He also caught three passes for 39 yards.  
Phillips ran for 39 yards on seven carries and picked up 24 yards on a screen pass from quarterback Tommie Frazier during a 15-play, 98-yard scoring drive that put NU up 14-0 early in the second quarter.  
Still, Phillips hesitated to say it was his best performance as a Husker.  
"It depends on how you look at it," he said. "I got the most yards in my career at Nebraska, so yeah, if you look at it that way, it's my best game."

## Stich Wants Glory After Making Semis

THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS  
New York — Michael Stich is still just the other German tennis player, and he is not happy about it.  
Tired of trudging in the oversized shadow of Boris Becker, Stich ripped his compatriot Thursday night after reaching the U.S. Open semifinals with a tough 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (7-9), 6-4 victory over Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden.  
Stich had praise for Bjorkman. He had condemnation for Becker, his least-favorite rival.  
"Here's a guy who makes one semifinal, doesn't play in two Grand Slams and gets knocked out in the first round here," Stich said. "He shouldn't be in the top 10."  
Becker had suggested that Stich did not belong in the top five in the world because of recent failures in Grand Slams. Becker, seeded seventh here, is long gone from the Open. Stich closed out Bjorkman in 2 hours, 51 minutes to avoid the same fate.  
"Today was my worst match, but I survived it," Stich said. "He never gave up. He understood what was at stake, a quarterfinal of a Grand Slam event."  
Bjorkman showed little respect for

Stich's vaunted serves, chipping them back and charging the net off the return.  
"Usually, I hit a serve like that and the return either hits the fence or goes into the net," Stich said. "I was serving very badly, and then when I sneaked one in at 120 miles an hour, he returned it like it was a third serve."  
Saturday morning, Stich faces unseeded Karel Novacek in what is expected to be the first, unglamorous semifinal on Super Saturday. Stich leads their head-to-head series 4-2 and has won the last three meetings.  
Novacek, a 29-year-old from the Czech Republic who logs more miles and plays more tournaments than anyone else, relied on his serve to get him out of trouble as he scored a 6-2, 6-7 (7-9), 6-1, 5-7, 6-3 victory Jaime Yzaga.  
Stich is the fourth seed in the tournament, the highest-ranked player left in the semifinals after a slew of early upsets. He also owns the hardest first serve and the most practiced volleys.  
He could win the U.S. Open while playing only one seeded player: Yevgeny Kafelnikov. Stich won 14 straight sets at this Open before dropping the third-set tie-breaker to Bjorkman, ranked 71st in the world.

## Graf Ready For Semis

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE  
New York — The U.S. Open tennis tournament has become Steffi Graf's playground.  
Heading into today's semifinals, Graf has been fast and undaunted as the No. 1 seed. She'll meet Jana Novotna in one semifinal, and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario faces Gabriela Sabatini.  
Graf on Wednesday trounced No. 11 Amanda Coetzer in a quarterfinal match that took just 55 minutes.  
"Right now, I'm just feeling happy about the way things are going, really every match," Graf said. "I've been playing some good tennis. My serve is working very well, and the last two matches my concentration was right on."

## Players Offer Tax Plan To Baseball's Owners

New York (AP) — With the World Series just a day away from being wiped out, striking baseball players delivered a "taxation" plan to owners Thursday and hoped it would be accepted in place of a salary cap.  
Owners said they will study the plan and respond today, the deadline for canceling the rest of the season.  
The plan calls for a 2 percent payroll tax and for clubs to split 25 percent of gate receipts, according to people close to the talks, speaking on the condition that they not be identified.  
Under the proposal, 16 clubs would contribute revenue to the other 12. The union suggested that clubs be required to maintain minimum payroll levels and that teams be prohibited from receiving money for more than three consecutive years.  
Union head Donald Fehr said players wouldn't agree to any large tax that might be "inhibiting" in the free agent market.  
If there is a deal today, players probably would return to the field on Sept. 16 or Sept. 19, depending on how many days of workouts the sides agree to.  
The proposal, according to the union, is based on a framework similar to the revenue-sharing agreement owners



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
**DONALD FEHR:** The union head said the new taxation proposal doesn't change the basic structure of free agency and salary arbitration.  
adopted last January. Instead of a salary cap, however, it includes a taxation concept in which clubs could have any payroll they wanted but would be forced to share a larger amount of locally generated revenue as their payrolls increased.

### IOWA STATE FOOTBALL

#### Walden Resolution Fails

Ames, Iowa (AP) — A resolution calling for the firing of Football Coach Jim Walden failed to get consideration by Iowa State's student government.  
"I couldn't even read it," said Michael Heath, a student senator from Geneseo, Ill., and a co-sponsor of the resolution.  
The resolution was not allowed to come to the floor during a meeting of the Government of the Student Body on Wednesday. Student senators said the resolution was disrespectful.  
Heath said he wrote the resolution after Iowa State lost to Northern Iowa 28-14.

### MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

#### Cubs, MacPhail on Hold

Minneapolis (AP) — Andy MacPhail had to wait at least one more day to find out if he would be allowed to run the Chicago Cubs.  
MacPhail, the Minnesota Twins' general manager, won't meet with team owner Carl Pohlad until this morning. MacPhail, who has two years remaining on his contract, can't go to Chicago without Pohlad's permission. The two were unable to talk on Thursday.  
MacPhail was offered the jobs of Cubs chief executive officer and president on Wednesday.  
"I'm waiting to find out, just like everyone else is," MacPhail said.

### PGA GOLF

#### O'Meara, Mast Share Lead

Oakville, Ontario (AP) — Mark O'Meara and Dick Mast each shot 6-under-par 66 on Thursday to become co-leaders of the Canadian Open.  
O'Meara, buoyed by his best performance of the year in his last outing, and Mast, 43, a career struggler still chasing his first victory in a tour career that began in 1974, both birdied the final hole.  
Mark Calcavecchia was among the group of four that stood one stroke behind at 67. Nick Price, Lee Janzen and Gary Hallberg also shot 67.  
Payne Stewart was among six at 68. Omaha's Tom Sieckmann shot 77.

### NBA

#### Pippen Game Eyes Jordan

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
Chicago — Less than a week after Michael Jordan tried to squelch rumors that he would play in the Scottie Pippen Ameritech All-Star Classic tonight, Pippen announced at a press conference that Jordan would play in the final game in the building where he led the Bulls to three titles.  
A little more than a month ago, Jordan said he would like to play one final time at Chicago Stadium and not have to deal with all the hoopla and speculation about his possible return to the Chicago Bulls.