

# 1995 National Champions – 12-0

Tom Osborne's 23rd Nebraska team was arguably his best. The 1995 Cornhuskers were among the best in college football history.

Though such a sweeping assertion cannot be proven, it can be supported. Nebraska's 1995 national championship team was No. 1 on a list of the top major college teams since 1956. The list was compiled by computer analyst Jeff Sagarin,

whose rankings are regularly published in USA Today.

The 1971 Cornhuskers were No. 2 according to Sagarin's power ratings. Both were well ahead of the other teams on the list, which also includes the 1997, 1972 and 1970 Huskers among the top 26.

Nebraska was never seriously challenged in 1995, as it extended a school-record winning streak to 25 games and repeated as national champion — something that has been accomplished only eight other times since the Associated Press initiated its national college football rankings in 1936.

The closest any opponent could come to the Cornhuskers was 14

1995 National Champions (12-0)		
<b>Head Coach:</b> Tom Osborne		
<b>Captains:</b> Phil Ellis, Mark Gilman, Aaron Graham, Christian Peter and Tony Veland.		
Date	Opponent	Result
A 31	at Oklahoma State	W, 64-21
S 9	at Michigan State	W, 50-10
S 16	Arizona State	W, 77-28
S 23	Pacific	W, 49-7
S 30	Washington State	W, 35-21
O 14	Missouri	W, 57-0
O 21	Kansas State	W, 49-25
O 28	at Colorado	W, 44-21
N 4	Iowa State	W, 73-14
N 11	at Kansas	W, 41-3
N 24	Oklahoma	W, 37-0
<b>Fiesta Bowl</b>		
J 2	Florida	W, 62-24

points. But even that was deceptive. Washington State trailed Nebraska 28-7 after three quarters, in the fifth game of the season. The Cornhuskers scored 20 points in the second quarter to overcome a 7-0 first quarter deficit.

After that, the outcome was never in serious doubt. The final score was 35-21.

Nebraska, which began the season ranked No. 2 by the Associated Press, didn't move to No. 1 until back-to-back victories against No. 8 Kansas State (49-25) and No. 7 Colorado (44-21). After completing a third consecutive undefeated and untied regular season and winning a fifth consecutive Big Eight championship, including four in a row outright, the Cornhuskers eliminated any doubt about their claim to a second consecutive national title by overwhelming No. 2 Florida, 62-24, in the Fiesta Bowl.

Despite the Cornhuskers' success, the 1995 season was one of mixed emotions, resulting from much-publicized off-the-field problems.

"It was a terrible year, and it was a great year," Osborne said after the Fiesta Bowl. "It was taxing. On the other hand, it was very gratifying to work with a group of players who had the kind of focus and drive to carry them through. That was the redeeming factor.

"There were times I was running on empty. I take my spiritual life very seriously. I relied on my faith more than I ever have. I was grateful for the sustaining strength that was there."

The star-crossed nature of the 1995 team was further underscored in the spring, when Brook Berringer, a quarterback who had just completed his eligibility, died in the crash of a light plane.

Osborne again had to turn to his faith to handle the tragedy.

"The Brook I knew, there was nothing he could have done better," Osborne said. "The length (of his life) was not what you would have liked. But the quality couldn't have been better."

Berringer, who had stepped in for an injured Tommie Frazier during the 1994 national championship season, accepted his role without complaint and contributed as a proven backup in 1995.

Frazier, fully recovered from the blood clot problems that sidelined him much of his junior season, set the Husker career record for total offense (5,476) and touchdowns produced (79), which were later broken by 2001 Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch. Frazier earned All-America recognition, finished second to Ohio State's Eddie George in balloting for the Heisman and received the most valuable player award in the Fiesta Bowl game.

Frazier, whose record in four years as a starter was 33-3, established himself among the best quarterbacks in Cornhusker history.

"I would say if I were to choose one player who has had the most impact on the outcome of the greatest number of games over the longest period of time since I've been at Nebraska, it would be Tommie Frazier," said Osborne, who began as a graduate assistant in 1962.

Under Frazier's direction, Nebraska's offense was even more productive than that of the "Scoring Explosion" team in 1983. The Cornhuskers ranked No. 1 in the nation in both rushing (399.8) and scoring (52.4) and No. 2 in total offense (556.3). The 1983 team was slightly better rushing the ball, averaging a school-record 401.7 yards, but it averaged slightly fewer points (52.0) and total yards (546.7).

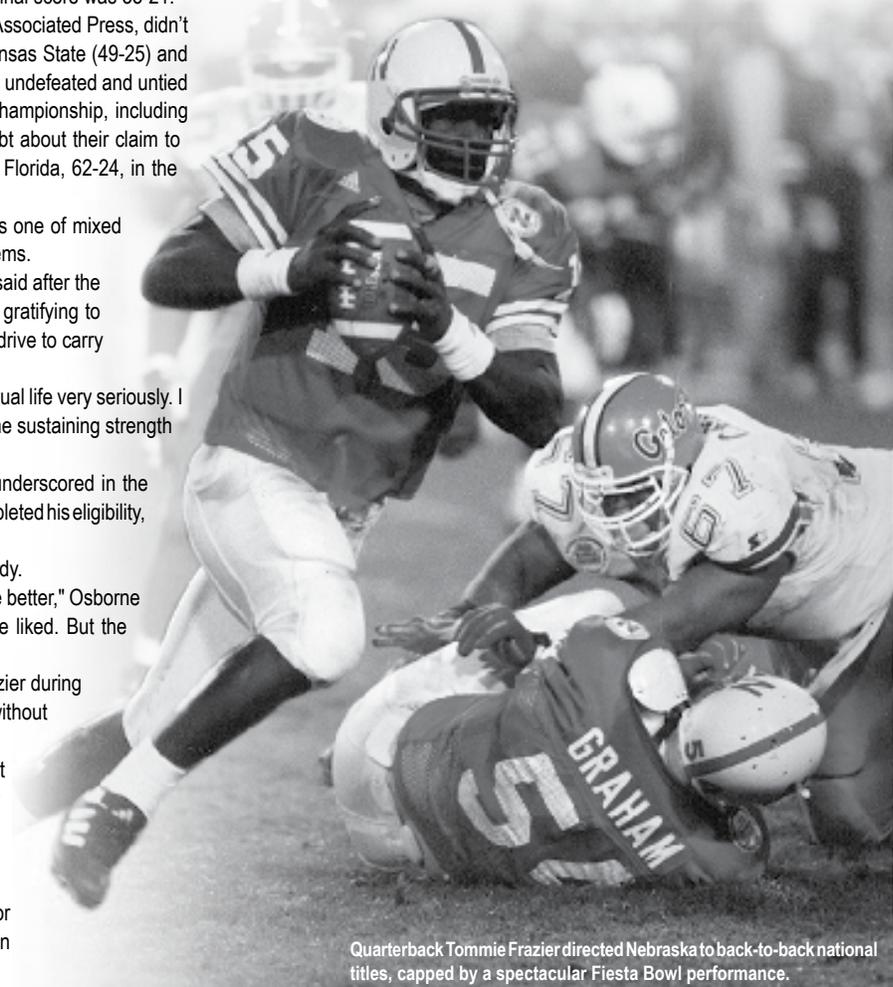
Ahman Green, who began fall camp down the list on the depth chart, became the starting I-back and broke the school rushing record for a freshman. He gained 1,086 yards and scored 12 touchdowns.

Green would have broken the school scoring record for a freshman were it not for Kris Brown, the place-kicker. Brown, like Green a true freshman, scored 97 points — a school record for kicking.

In addition to Frazier, center Aaron Graham and rush end Jared Tomich earned first-team All-America honors. Graham also was a Cornhusker co-captain, along with tight end Mark Gilman, defensive tackle Christian Peter, safety Tony Veland and linebacker Phil Ellis.

Tomich, a junior who originally walked on, was among five Blackshirts who received first-team all-conference recognition. The other defensive players were Peter, linebacker Terrell Farley, rush end Grant Wistrom and cornerback Tyrone Williams. Frazier and Graham were joined on the All-Big Eight first-team offense by Green, tackle Eric Anderson and guards Chris Dishman and Aaron Taylor.

Rarely has college football seen such a team. Maybe never.



Quarterback Tommie Frazier directed Nebraska to back-to-back national titles, capped by a spectacular Fiesta Bowl performance.