

QB Jerry Tagge (14) Sticks Ball Into End Zone for Winning TD

—Photos by Charles Gerald and John Boss

—CLAIM 17-12 VICTORY IN ORANGE BOWL CLASSIC—

'Huskers Beat Tigers, Bid for No. 1

By DAN HARDESTY

State-Times Sports Editor

MIAMI — The Nebraska Cornhuskers, presented with the opportunity they had dreamed of when both Texas and Ohio

State were upset in afternoon bowl games, made the most of it last night in the Orange Bowl. Nebraska made its bid for the national championship with a 17-12 victory over LSU's Tigers in a bitterly contested

game before a Miami record crowd of 80,699. The Cornhuskers, No. 3 in the polls going into today's action, appear certain to win the crown in any ballots conducted after the New Year's Day action.

The defeat was the first suffered by one of Coach Charles McClendon's LSU teams in a New Year's Day bowl. The only other bowl loss in the last nine years was in a Bluebonnet game played in December.

Nebraska, which all season has erupted with an explosive scoring drive immediately after an opponent scored to press

them or go ahead of them, did exactly that to win last night. The Tigers took the lead 12-10 on the last play of the third quarter on a pass from Buddy Lee to Al Coffee, and Nebraska took the fourth quarter kickoff and drove for the winning touchdown.

Quarterback Jerry Tagge, named the game's most outstanding back, pushed his way into the end zone for the decisive touchdown on a one-yard quarterback sneak.

The top lineman award went to defensive end Willie Harper, who hounded Tiger passers and runners all evening and recovered two LSU fumbles and partially blocked a punt just when LSU had a chance to put Nebraska in a hole shortly after the Big Eight champs had taken the lead in the final period.

LSU had all sorts of trouble getting its offense going, partly—and perhaps largely—because most of the LSU offense was sitting on the bench all evening. Tailback Art Cantrelle, the top Tiger runner all season by a wide margin, suffered a sprained ankle on LSU's second offensive play and never returned to action. Chris Dantin did a good job with all the burden on his shoulders, aided briefly by Del Walker who switched from fullback to tailback, but the offense just wasn't able to get the job done.

LSU, which had been able to shut off its opponents' running game all season, had this done to them last night. Nebraska gained a net of 132 yards, thus becoming only the second team to pass the century mark in yardage against LSU on the ground this season, and the Tigers were held to a net of only 51, partly because of numerous losses by passers.

Almost as soon as the game started, the Tigers ran into trouble when Cantrelle sprained his ankle, after Nebraska had put the Tigers in poor field position with a short drive and a good punt. Then LSU, which had fumble problems in the first quarter of its final regular season win over Ole Miss, ran into the same thing here.

Midway the quarter, Chris Dantin bobbed the ball after Buddy Lee had pitched to Jay Michaelson and Andy Hamilton for a pair of first downs, and star Nebraska tackle Dave Walline fell on it on the Nebraska 44.

Despite being set back twice by illegal motion penalties, Nebraska drove the ball to a first down on the LSU eight. Jerry Tagge found Guy Ingles blanketed by Tommy Casanova and threw the ball far over their heads on first down. Then John Sage nailed Tagge for a seven-yard loss. A third down pitch to Johnny Rogers gained five, and placekick specialist Paul Rogers put the game's first points on the board with a 26-yard field goal.

Disaster followed quickly for the Bengals, as Buddy Lee was hit by Larry Jacobson and fumbled on an option play, with Willie Harper recovering for Nebraska on the 15. Joe Orduña followed a wave of blockers around right end for 12, and then punched through the left side of the line for a touchdown. Rogers added the point, giving Nebraska 10 points in the space of 34 seconds.

Bert Jones took his turn with the Tiger attack but was repeatedly swarmed under by the strong Cornhusker defense. Several times it appeared he had at least enough time to throw the ball away but tried to elude the rush and only ended up taking bigger losses.

LSU got its first big break after being backed up to its own five, when Wayne Dickinson's punt was fumbled by Rogers on a fair catch, and Gary Elkins recovered on the LSU 40. But LSU couldn't move and punted again.

Then the Bengal defense started making itself felt, as quarterback Van Brownson's first pass was intercepted by Bill Norsworthy on the LSU 43. Nebraska showed that it could do things on defense, too, by backing the Bengals so far that their next punt barely passed the first down marker.

With John Sage, Mike Anderson and the other Bengal defenders continuing the pressure on the Cornhusker attack, LSU stopped Nebraska and Jeff Hughes punted to Tommy Casanova, who was downed in his tracks on the LSU 24 with 3:46 remaining in the half.

At long last, LSU got its offense out of reverse gear, largely on passes from Lee to Andy Hamilton, and drove strongly to the Nebraska 10. Then the same old problem reared its head again—a Nebraska pass rush which smeared a Tiger quarterback, Lee this time, for a 10-yard loss.

On third down, a pass from Lee was dropped by Hamilton as he broke past the last defender. The ball was just slightly behind Hamilton and he couldn't hang onto it.

Then followed a most unusual sequence of events, with Mark Lumpkin booting a 37-yard field goal on fourth and 10 with the scrimmage line just outside the Nebraska 20. Nebraska was detected holding on the kick. It's an automatic first down in the pro league but the colleges just award the yardage, and because of the location of the ball, the penalty was half the distance to the goal rather than 15 yards.

After a long debate and some careful measuring, it was determined that the penalty would leave LSU about a foot short of a first down. The Tigers obviously intended taking the three points off the board to try to go for seven if they had made the first down, but with only 49 seconds remaining in the half, Coach Charles McClendon made what the press box crew agreed was the right decision, and took the three points, going to the half trailing 10-3.

It looked like a different Tiger team which took the field in the second half and took the kickoff explosively downfield, mainly on two twisting runs of 25 and 17 yards by Dantin, who was carrying the full burden at tailback. But they were stopped near the goal and Lumpkin came in again to boot his second field goal, this one for 25 yards.

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'Pope Would Have to Vote Us No. 1', Claims Devaney

By SAM KING

State-Times Sports Writer

MIAMI, Fla. — Coach Bob Devaney says his "Big Red" is number one.

Coach Charles McClendon will also vouch for that.

And, "even the Pope would have to vote us No. 1," the winningest coach in America said in the Cornhusker dressing room after posting a 17-12 decision over Louisiana State University in the 37th Orange Bowl Classic here last night.

However, Coaches Devaney and McClendon, along with the Pope, will have to wait until next week to find out who the Associated Press poll will name the number one collegiate football team.

Coach McClendon, suffering his first bowl defeat as a head coach, had said earlier in the week at a press conference he liked polls. But after Nebraska saw Notre Dame stun previously Number One Texas, 24-11, and Stanford sock Number Two Ohio State, 27-17, the Cornhuskers found themselves in a position to fulfill a dream of becoming Number One. Coach Mac might feel a bit differently.

Coach Devaney, when asked if the upsets might have helped his team get fired up for a big effort, said, "There's no doubt about it, 'those two games certainly gave our team a little more motivation tonight, but I must say this bunch motivated themselves pretty well all year.'"

The triumph boosted the Cornhuskers' mark to 11-0-1, while Louisiana State, is 9-3.

Coach McClendon, who had been worried about the "leverage" of the taller—and heavier—Cornhuskers, said the advantage of Nebraska told the story.

"They were a head taller than us and we found it hard to find the ball," Coach Mac claimed.

He also pointed out, "Chris Dantin played a fine game for us, but it sure is a shame your Number One tailback is out after two plays. He's on the sideline with, I guess, an ankle injury."

Coach Mac said there was a turning point at the last of the game.

"I thought there should have been a roughing the kicker call," he said, referring to Wayne Dickinson being smashed by an onrushing Husker lineman while kicking the ball.

"When that ball's in the air," he said, "you can't touch the man."

Was the ball touched by the onrushing lineman?

"No sir! Dickinson said he did not touch the ball. No touching the ball at all," Mac emphasized.

McClendon had praise for Dantin's play, gaining 79 yards on 20 carries, along with Buddy Lee, the Tiger quarterback who had passed little, if any, during the final practices after suffering a finger injury.

Lee, following through on a pass, hit a headgear and the injury was reportedly very painful.

Coach Mac said, of the Cornhuskers, "They kinda engulfed us there a little bit."

Middle guard Ed Periard and end Willie Harper led a rugged Nebraska defense that took away the Bengal running attack in much the same fashion LSU had stymied other teams this year. Having an embarrassing 45-yard rushing at halftime, the Bengals started moving a bit better in the final half.

Harper was named the Outstanding Lineman by scribes and sportscasters covering the event. Quarterback Jerry Tagge, finding the Bengal defense vulnerable to his accurate tosses, as well as a number of sweeps, was named the Outstanding Back in the contest.

Tagge connected on a dozen passes in 25 attempts for 153 yards. One spiral was intercepted. Tagge lugged the leather 16 times for a net of 40 yards and led the Huskers to the winning touchdown on a 66-yard march at the start of the fourth quarter, eventually scoring the winning touchdown.

Nebraska trailed the Tigers only at the end of the third quarter and during the final TD drive.

The Bengals fell back 10-0 and trailed by 10-3 at the end of the first half.

"I just felt like if we could have been able to do anything, anything at all in the first half," Coach Mac said, "It would have been a little different situation."

"If I had to lose, though, it couldn't have happened to a nicer guy. He's a real fine man and fine coach."

"Don't you think I'm happy with losing, though," Mac emphasized. "That hurts."

He added, "We came to win and didn't."

How did Nebraska stop the LSU punt return game?

"I think some of that is a little bit of what we did, too," Mac declared. "The time we had a real rush on the ball was kicked real short but went bouncing

way over there and out on deep in our territory."

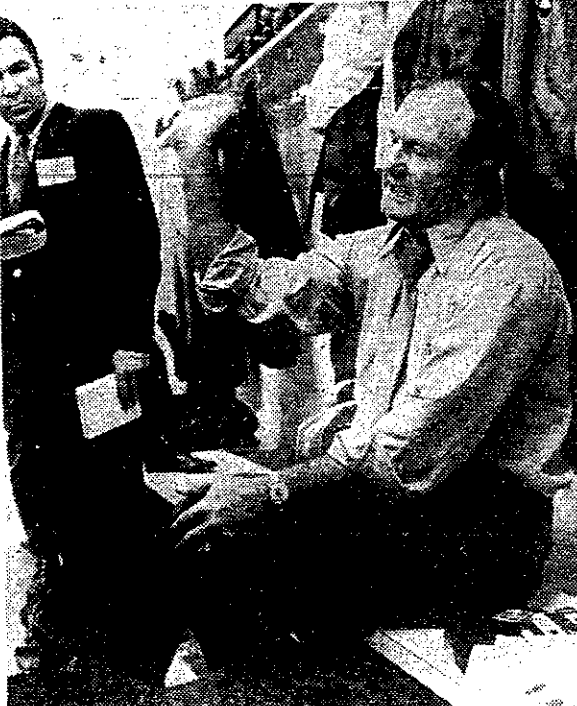
And he added, "I tell you what, that young rug out there . . . that ball sure does take some funny bounces."

"We slipped down on a third-and-one situation. We were going to make a first down, maybe four or five

yards more," Mac claimed.

With the victory Nebraska squared its Orange Bowl record at 2-2 and Devaney stretched his 14-year coaching record to 114-23-6.

Louisiana State University, on the other hand, now stands at 2-1 in the Orange Bowl.



COACH MAC MAKES A POINT
'He Didn't Touch the Ball!'



MAC IS DISAPPOINTED
'That Young Rug Is Something Else'



Orange Bowl Notes

MIAMI — In the Cotton Bowl game on Jan. 1, 1966, LSU's Tigers upset an undefeated Arkansas team and knocked the Razorbacks out of a national football championship.

Here last night in the Orange Bowl, the Tigers had another chance to knock off an undefeated opponent—but this time Nebraska beat them and almost surely won the national championship in the post-bowl polls.

Nobody watched the afternoon bowl games any more anxiously than the Orange Bowl officials. When Texas was beaten and Stanford jumped out in front of Ohio State in the first minutes of their game, one of the Orange Bowl executives exclaimed, "If they keep it up, we've got a national championship game here tonight." And that's the way it turned out.

Nebraska, No. 3 in both polls at the end of the regular season, had been hoping for a month that they would have a chance to shoot for No. 1 last night. This had been billed as a possible major psychological factor in the Orange clash, and the Cornhuskers were obviously fired up.

The game drew the largest crowd ever for an Orange Bowl game, due to the addition of 4,000 bleacher seats at the open end of the stadium. Part of these seats were occupied by several Miami high school bands, which participated in the pregame show.

The football teams of LSU and Nebraska met here twice this week, once on the dark green Polyturf gridiron and once at one of the entertainment functions during the week. Somebody wanted to know what the players talked about in their social meeting. The answer: the weather!

Speaking of the weather, it has been just about ideal in Miami, although not always exactly suited for bathing suits and beaches. It was almost cold when the Tigers first arrived last weekend, then it warmed up to normal Miami standards, and finally turned pleasantly cool again just before the parade Thursday night. For the football game, it was perfect.

This will go down as the wildest bowl day in history, and particularly the first quarters of the afternoon games.

Tennessee, cashing in on their own power and Air Force's mistakes, shot down the Falcons with a terrific scoring barrage in the first period of play.

Notre Dame, in snapping the longest winning streak in major college football, scored two touchdowns against Texas in the first 10 minutes of the game at Dallas. Then they got another one early in the second quarter. This was the Notre Dame team that couldn't score a touchdown against LSU.

Stanford started the same way, getting a lightning touchdown after the kickoff, and adding a field goal.

Governor John McKeithen, here for the game, was joking with a group of sports writers yesterday morning about the recent accusation by former Tulane Coach Jim Pittman that he had been recruiting for LSU and had hurt Tulane's recruiting.

"I got a phone call from a boy in Virginia the other day," the governor said. "He told me he had read that I was recruiting for LSU and he wanted to talk to me about coming to LSU."

If there was any doubt that Nebraska and LSU have some top-rank football players, the presence of 15 professional team scouts in the press box settled it. The talent seekers clearly figured some of the Tiger and Cornhusker names might belong high on the draft list later this month.