

Big 12 in national spotlight Saturday

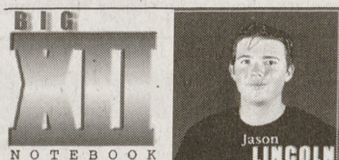
BIG 12 CONFERENCE

Standings after
October 21, 2000

NORTH	Conference Record
Nebraska	4-0
Kansas St.	3-1
Iowa St.	2-2
Kansas	2-2
Missouri	1-3
Colorado	1-3
SOUTH	
Oklahoma	3-0
Texas	3-1
Texas A&M	3-1
Texas Tech	1-3
Oklahoma St.	0-3
Baylor	0-4

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Four games down and only four to go: The Big 12 football season is at the halfway point and there is still no clear-cut favorite, with three Top-10 teams and two others with only one conference loss. The homestretch not only will decide who will represent the North and South divisions in the Big 12 Championship game, it likely also will decide who competes for the national championship and the country's most prestigious bowl games.



Big 12 North
Nebraska is on top of the list with the fast track to the Big 12 Championship game. But it is not quite that simple, as it will have to get through first No. 3 Oklahoma and then No. 10 Kansas State.

Meanwhile, KSU is already preparing for the 'Huskers' return to Manhattan. In 1999, both teams were in position to win the North division. Nebraska won in Lincoln and went on to win the Big 12 Championship.

The season before, it was the same situation but at Kansas State. Kansas State won, only to be defeated in overtime by Texas A&M in the Big 12 Championship game, ending its hopes for a national championship.

The Wildcats are ready to go back to the championship game and try to change the result at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City Dec. 2.

Big 12 South
Oklahoma has been ripping through conference plays with a big win over Big 12 South favorite Texas and then handing the Wildcats their first loss. As the only undefeated team in the Big 12 South, the Sooners are in solid contention, but the race for the South is far from over.

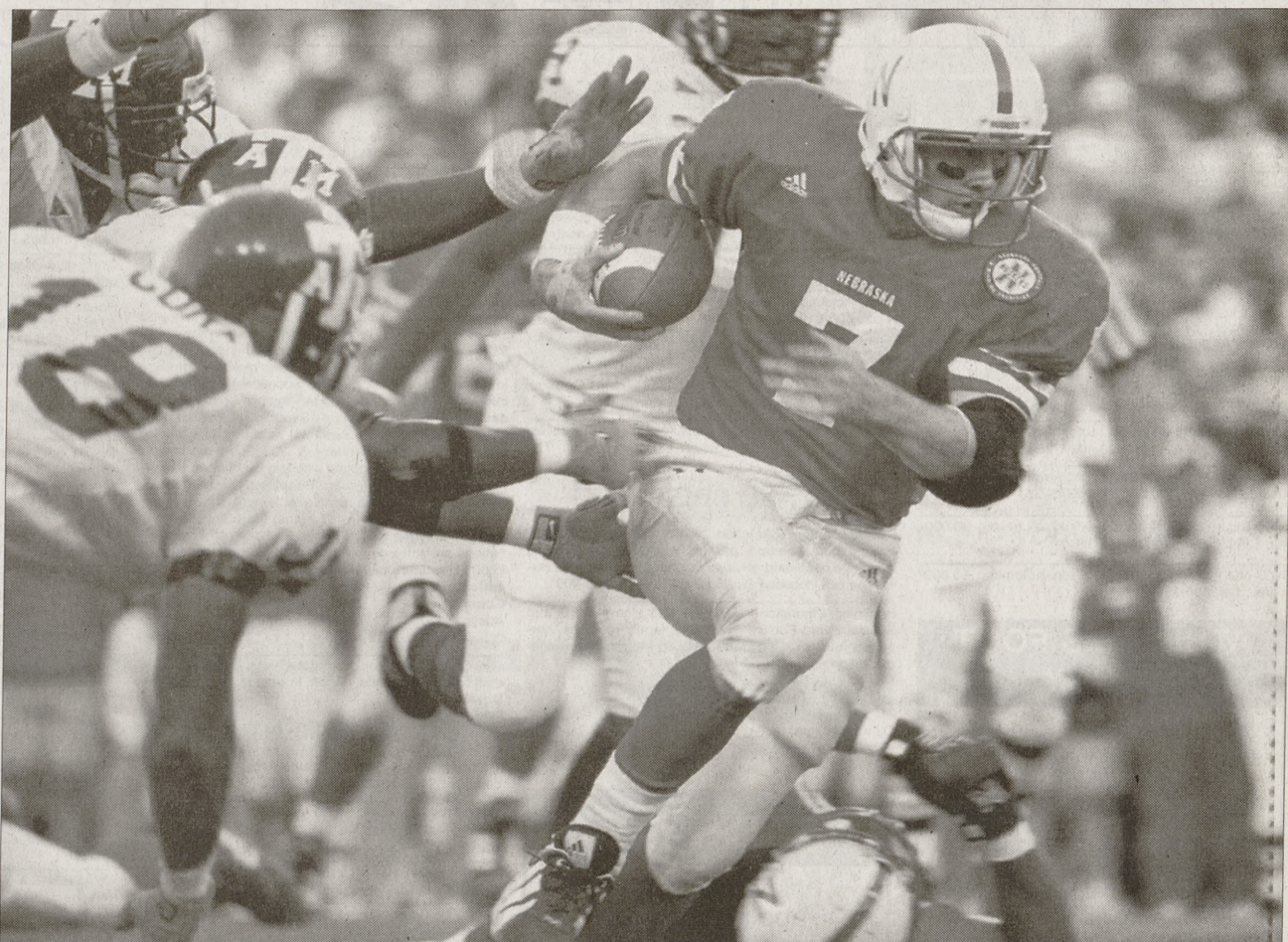
Texas A&M's near shutout of Iowa State puts it in control of its destiny because as it has yet to face either the Longhorns or the Sooners. A&M will go to K.C. if it wins its remaining three games in the South against Oklahoma State, Oklahoma and Texas.

Stanford's upset of Texas dropped the Longhorns out of the Top 10. Then Oklahoma's blowout in the Red River Classic at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas dropped the 'Horns from the polls completely. Now Texas must play perfectly and hope someone from the South beats Oklahoma and A&M if it is to represent the South for the second straight year.

Bowl Watch
The Big 12 has a record seven guaranteed bowl invitations this season. This Saturday, conference schools claimed three of those spots and are all-but-guaranteed to fill another three before the end of the season.

No. 1 Nebraska's 59-0 shutout against Baylor gave it its seventh win of the season, keeping it on pace for the Orange Bowl. Meanwhile, the conference's other undefeated team, No. 3 Oklahoma, had an off week but secured its bowl eligibility with a win over Kansas State. No. 10 Kansas State rounds out the teams that have qualified, holding a 7-1 record of its own.

A trio of teams is right on the bubble with five wins. Texas and A&M both are 5-2. Iowa State's fast track to qualify for its first bowl game since 1978 was put on hold by the



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

Nebraska quarterback Eric Crouch will lead the No. 1-ranked Cornhuskers into another battle royal against rival Oklahoma this weekend. The winner will not only be a frontrunner for the Big 12 title, but for the national title, as well,

could be a prelude to the Big 12 Championship game.

Because it pairs two of the top three teams in the country in a regular season battle, it most likely will be one of the highlights of the 2000 college football season.

The game will feature two of the country's top quarterbacks — the Cornhuskers' Eric Crouch and the Sooners' Josh Heupel. Heupel is the fifth most proficient passer in Division I-A. Crouch is not currently in the ratings, partially because he is below the minimum attempts per game (15) and because he is just as likely to win a game with his quick feet as he is with his arm.

The OU-Nebraska matchup has a history of classic duels. In 33 of the last 36 meetings, one of the two has been in the Top 10. In both 1987 and 1971, Nebraska was ranked No. 1 and Oklahoma No. 2. The Sooners won in Lincoln in 1987, 17-7. But in 1971, the Huskers won the "Game of the Century," 35-31, at Norman.

This one promises to carry on the storied tradition.

Aggies Saturday, but the Cyclones will have plenty of opportunity to gain the one additional win needed.

Meanwhile, Texas Tech, despite claiming five wins this season, must win an additional two games to be eligible. Its season opener against New Mexico in the Hispanic College Fund Classic does not count toward eligibility.

Kansas is the only other team with strong contention for a bowl. The Jayhawks need to add two wins to their 4-3 record to qualify. Oklahoma State, Baylor and Missouri are in mathematical contention with two wins, but the Bears and Tigers will have to win out to qualify.

Even though two of the favorites to compete in the national championship come from the Big 12 North, the divisions are proving to be quite evenly matched. Both should send at least three of their six teams to postseason play and each has an undefeated team.

Championship Preview
Saturday, those two undefeated teams, No. 1 Nebraska and No. 3 Oklahoma, will face off in a showdown of what

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Aggies shut out Cowgirls, 5-0

STAFF AND WIRE

Texas A&M completed their sweep of the state of Oklahoma Sunday by shutting out the Oklahoma State Cowgirls, 5-0.

With 11:28 remaining in the first half, Alison Peters hit a volley from the right side of the penalty box off a cross from the left flank by Juli Goin. The goal was Peters' second and the assist was the fifth of the year for Goin.

A&M made the score 2-0 just before halftime when Heather Ragsdale scored her team-leading 12th goal of the season from 12 yards out.

In the 61st minute, Heather Williams was tackled from behind inside the penalty box and connected on the ensuing penalty kick for her third goal of the season.

Cameron Chorn scored her first goal of the season to give the Aggies a 4-0 lead with 22:30 left on the game clock. Adrienne Dillard played a ball from the midline to Peters on the right flank. Peters crossed the ball inside the 6-yard box, where Chorn hit a half-volley just inside the back post.

A&M scored its final goal when Dillard headed a shot that nicked the crossbar and found the net. Amber Reynolds was credited with her third assist of the season as she hit a cross from the left flank. The goal was Dillard's first of her career.

"I thought we had a good performance by our entire roster today," said A&M head coach G. Guerrieri. "The referee did a great job of keeping the game flowing, which played to our advantage. It allowed us to serve and finish well today."

Goalkeeper Esther Thompson earned the shutout, bringing her season total to 4.5. Thompson saved three Cowgirl shots in the game.

With the win, A&M improves to 13-5-0 overall and 7-2-0 in Big 12 Conference play. The loss drops Oklahoma State to 3-14-1 on the year and 0-8-1 in the league.

The Aggies return to action Thursday when they host the University of Texas at the Aggie Soccer Complex.

Both teams have identical 7-2 league marks, and the winner earns the second seed in the upcoming Big 12 Conference Tournament. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.



BERNARDO GARZA/THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M soccer team swept the state of Oklahoma last weekend, finishing up with the OSU Cowgirls Sunday.

A&M shows good english Aggie English riders tally win at OSU

STAFF AND WIRE

The English portion of the Texas A&M equestrian team traveled to Stillwater, Okla., last weekend to compete in its first competition of the season.

The Aggies won their second straight show, narrowly defeating West Texas A&M University and Kansas State at the Animal Science Arena on the campus of Oklahoma State University.

The Aggies defeated West Texas by a score of 28 to 27, and Kansas State took a close third place with 26 points on Sunday action.

A&M scored 90 points on the weekend, ahead of the Wildcats' total of 85. West Texas A&M was third with 65.

Catherine Crisp's third-place finish in intermediate flat riding gave the Aggies the points they needed to push to the top of the final standings.

"We knew coming into this weekend that we were going to have a strong team," said English coach Meghan Nolan. "It surprised me to see how much stronger some of the oth-

er teams have gotten and it pleases me even more to see that we're better."

Individually, Meredith Houx took high point rider honors with a win in open fences and a runner-up finish in open flat.

A&M took five first-place finishes in the 16 contested classes, including wins in three of the four fences classes.

Among those capturing fences titles were: Houx; Beth von Brecht, intermediate fences; Bonner Wimberly, novice fence.

Other Aggies claiming wins on the day were Germaine Dougherty in open flat and Keyea Webster in intermediate flat.

Four Aggie riders finished in the runner-up position on Sunday, including Houx and Stacy Kaber in open flat and Krys Ruppert and Jayme McCarthy in advanced walk-trot-canter.

The Aggie English team will not compete again until Dec. 2.

A&M's Western riders will hit the road next Saturday to compete in two shows at West Texas A&M in Canyon.



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M English team won their first competition of the season on Sunday by defeating West Texas A&M at Oklahoma State University.

Texas A&M women's golf struggles on West Coast trip

STAFF AND WIRE

The Texas A&M women's golf team had a bad weekend in California at the Stanford/Pepsi Women's Intercollegiate, and their final-round performance on Sunday made it even worse, finishing in a tie for 15th place with a score of 312-314-321=947.

"We didn't play very well," said coach Jeanne Sutherland. "We know exactly what we have to do to improve. But we just aren't focusing."

Mimi Epps led the Aggies in all three rounds with a 14-over-par total of 76-78-76=230, putting her in 35th place in individual standings.

Anna Jonsson took 52nd place at 78-78-78=234, McKenzie Dyslin carded a score of 77-81-83=241 (72nd), Jennie Poth shot 81-81-84=246 and Mira Bendevis posted 84-77-85=246 for a tie at 87th. Marta Ostos, competing as an individual, shot a 77 and an 80 in the first and third rounds, respectively, but did not finish play in the second round.

In team standings, No. 2-ranked Arizona stayed on top the entire tournament, taking first place with a six-stroke lead over the nearest competition at 277-293-303=873. No. 3-ranked Southern California grabbed second place at 296-286-297=879 followed by No. 5-ranked Stanford in third place at 292-290-304=886. No. 11 Tulsa (894), No. 21 New Mexico State (896), Pepperdine (902), No. 19 Arizona State (914), No. 17 UCLA (918), No. 18 San Jose State (923), New Mexico (924), Texas Tech (931), California (932), Indiana (935), Oregon State (939), Texas A&M (947), Washington (947), Washington State (949) and Oregon (955).

After a three-way tie for first place in individual standings headed into the final round, Tulsa's Stacy Prammanasudh emerged as the winner firing a 72-68-70=210 (-6).

Arizona's Lorena Ochoa took second place at 66-74-73=213 followed by Leila Chartrand of USC at 71-71-72=214.

The Aggies will look for brighter days at the Rainbow Wahine Fall Classic from Oct. 31-Nov. 1, at the Kapolei G.C. in Honolulu, Hawaii.