

"But you have to keep things in perspective. To have a personal Christian faith is more important."

Then he adds with a smile, "Don't get nervous now. Don't think I don't want to win or something."

On most days at most times, somewhere in the coaches' office, there's a film running, flickering against a wall, running, backing up, running again. What defenses do they use on the first down? On second? In short yardage situations? What's their blitz pattern?

On some days Osborne works on campus for 12 hours, then goes home to watch films for two more. When he's not watching films, he fills sheet after sheet of a note pad with diagrams of plays.

In the mornings, coaches meetings. At noon, lunch with the quarterbacks. In the afternoons, practice until dusk: Osborne in sweat clothes and baseball cap directing formation after formation, pass pattern after pass pattern. It all results in what is called a well-coached team. On Saturday afternoons it means that when a wide receiver races 20 yards down the field, cuts sharply right for five yards and turns in, he finds a football settling softly into his arms.

"To have a personal Christian faith is more important."

When the football season is over the coaches hit the road, recruiting across the country until mid-April. Osborne goes to parts of Kansas and mainly to California, where he competes for prospects with such football powers as UCLA and Southern Cal. Osborne thinks if he tries hard enough he can get a recruit from anywhere.

It's a matter of selling Nebraska: a state without a professional team to draw interest away; a state with as much or more interest in college football as anywhere else; a school with good facilities and the biggest stadium in the Big 8.

In August it's back to Nebraska and fall practice. And more films.

FIRST DOWN

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