



Members of the Husker defense engulf Oregon back Rick Kane (23) during Saturday's 61-7 victory.

Defense displays team effort, Kiffin satisfied with performance

By Larry Stunkel

One would think the UNL football team's performance in the 61-7 shellacking of Oregon University last Saturday answered many of the questions concerning the quality of the blackshirts.

"But more than likely, we'll have to do most of the answering this weekend against Wisconsin University," said John Lee, the Husker's 252-lb. middle guard from Red Bank, N.J.

Lee, who received a high individual rating from Husker coaches for his overall game performance Saturday, said Oregon didn't give the defense a true test because their offensive line executed poorly.

Monte Kiffin, the Husker's defensive coordinator, agreed Wisconsin will be their biggest test, admitting "Oregon didn't have the best offense in America."

Kiffin said he was satisfied with the blackshirt's hitting and hustle against the Ducks and credited the defense with

having more overall quickness and aggressiveness than previous Husker defenses.

"We thought all along we'd have a good defense," said Kiffin. "We weren't too concerned because we figured the kids had a lot of pride and would keep up our tradition of good defense."

Lee called Saturday's route a team effort because "we're not playing for ourselves, we're playing for our teammates."

Kiffin described this as the great unity that exists not only between the blackshirts, but throughout the entire defense roster.

Kiffin said because of this unity, each player is giving 100% with less tendency to let up for fear of letting his teammates down.

"I don't want them to play for me, the other coaches, themselves or the crowd," said Kiffin. "I want them to play for their teammates."

Right Guard effective

Mention the words offensive right tackle to most people, and they are likely to think of a foul-smelling antiperspirant. But mention those same words to a Husker football fan, and offensive right guard Stan Hegener is likely to come to mind.

Hegener, a senior, earned his first starting assignment against Oregon, after lettering two years in a backup role.

"A lot was expected of me," said the 6 ft.-4 in., 233-lb. Hegener, who is sandwiched between pre-season All-Americans Rik Bonness at center and Marvin Crenshaw at tackle.

"It makes it harder because I have to stay up with those two."

Although the 61-point onslaught against Oregon Saturday was more than he said he expected, Hegener warned about judging the team from just that one game. He said fans should be able to get a truer picture of the Huskers once Big 8 play starts.

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Hegener said he made a few mistakes in the game some of which may have been caused by first-game jitters.

"Everything was going so fast, I was kind of up in the air," he said. However, by the second half, he had calmed down, he said.

Oddly, Hegener never played offense in high school, starring as a defensive back at Lincoln East. As a Husker freshman in 1970, he played both offense and defense. Then he was switched to offense permanently the next season, when he was redshirted.

His redshirt season was important, Hegener said, because he picked up a lot of technique and experience. Especially valuable, he said, was the practice time logged against then-defensive tackle Larry Jacobson, winner of the 1971 Outland Trophy as the nation's outstanding interior lineman.

Hegener said his main duties are helping the center and tackle with their blocking assignments and pulling for running plays around the ends.

"You've always got to be moving," he said.

Pass blocking is the hardest, he said, because the defensive player has the advantage of a running start and the ability to use his hands to push the blocker out of the way. While the quarterback supposedly should have three seconds to get a pass off, Hegener said the Husker offensive line likes to give him four or five seconds.

According to Hegener, the lack of publicity common to almost all offensive linemen doesn't bother him.

"You get your picture in the paper now and then," he said. "You don't need publicity to know you're good."

After graduating this semester, Hegener said he hopes to find a job within construction management, preferably somewhere close to Lincoln.

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