

nebraskan sports

Both teams give; Oklahoma receives

Analysis by Larry Stunkel

Norman, Okla. — That ol' holiday giving spirit may be in the air, and the UNL football team must have had a whiff Saturday of that which characterizes Christmas. The Huskers' gifts to the Oklahoma University (OU) Sooners included four fumbles, two interceptions, an Orange bowl trip and a 35-10 win.

It wasn't as if Oklahoma didn't feel charitable—the Sooners exemplified the giving spirit all season and gave the Huskers three fumbles, two in the first quarter. But OU found it more blessed to receive, and capitalized on each of Nebraska's fumbles for touchdowns.

Meanwhile, the Sooner defense refused to let the Huskers benefit from miscues.

The Huskers managed only one first-quarter field goal despite good field position throughout the first half.

"Naturally we're tremendously disappointed," said head coach Tom Osborne. "But I told the players when they came in not to be ashamed. This group of players has played as close to their potential as they could. But I don't think they did today. However, it was not a matter of being ready.

Turning points

"There were a couple of turning points," he continued. "The first one came when we fumbled leading 10-7. We lost the ball and they went in to score. The turnovers from that point on—especially the fumbled punt (by Jim Burrow on the UNL 12-yard line when OU scored to make the score 21-10 in the fourth quarter)—caused our downfall, and that's one thing we haven't done much of this year. We emphasized it would be one important part

of the ball game."

The Huskers started as if they would blow OU out of the stadium, driving 67 yards in 14 plays to the Sooner 13-yard line. On fourth-and-one, Osborne elected to go for the field goal, but Mike Coyle's kick was wide to the left.

"We just wanted to get on the score board," Osborne said. "It was a gamble that could've gone either way. We feel if you can get something on that first drive then you've accomplished one objective."

The Husker blackshirts were able to hold the Sooners on their side of the 50-yard line for part of the game, but couldn't keep them from scoring once they crossed into Nebraska territory.

Davis gave fits

"As long as we were hanging onto the ball our defense was playing very well," Osborne said. "When we had turnovers it takes something out of the defense. In the second half it was field position and turnovers."

As in the last three UNL-OU meetings, it was Sooner quarterback Steve Davis who gave the Huskers fits. Davis rushed for 130 yards and two touchdowns, the first after the blackshirts held OU for three downs on the one-yard line.

But, vaunted Oklahoma back Joe Washington managed only 35 yards.

"We had the pitch man very well played," Osborne said. "But we had some missed tackles at times (against Davis)."

Osborne praised the Oklahoma coaches saying, "They had a good game plan. They gambled well defensively and at some key times."

It was the gambles, especially linebacker and safety blitzes, that caused two of

Nebraska's fumbles and contributed to the Huskers' failure to score on the last play of the first half from the one-yard line.

Failed to score

With seven seconds left in the half, UNL got the ball on the Sooner one-yard line after a pass interference call in the end zone. One running play to Monte Anthony failed to get the ball in the end zone and the Huskers didn't have any time-outs to stop the clock.

Nebraska had used its time-outs earlier in the quarter when Vince Ferragamo had

to discuss the changing OU secondary with Osborne.

"It was real disappointing not to score at the end of the first half," Osborne said. "If I had it to do over again I'd probably throw the ball in that situation. We might have won if it hadn't been for that and a few turnovers.

"But football is that way," he added. "Sometimes it bounces your way, sometimes it doesn't. It's been bouncing pretty good for us this year, but today (Saturday) it didn't."

Huskers grab Fiesta bid

Cactus flowers in Arizona instead of orange blossoms in Florida characterize the UNL football team's bowl plans after a 35-10 loss Saturday to Oklahoma University (OU) in Norman, Okla.

Reconsidering last Monday's refusal of a Fiesta Bowl bid Sunday morning, the Huskers voted overwhelmingly to accept the bid and play the Western Athletic Conference champion (either Arizona or Arizona State) in Tempe, Ariz., Dec. 26.

Although the Huskers tied with OU for the Big 8 title, the Orange Bowl had announced a week ago that the winner of the UNL-OU clash would go to Miami.

Acceptance of the Fiesta bid cannot become official until approved by the NU

Board of Regents, but the regents are expected to approve the bid.

"I'm really pleased that the players felt they wanted to play in the Fiesta Bowl," Osborne said. "We're also very happy that the Fiesta Bowl held open their offer after we voted not to go before the Oklahoma game."

The game will mark the Huskers' seventh consecutive bowl appearance. Nebraska can become the first team in history to win seven straight postseason bowls. The team is now tied with Georgia Tech with six straight wins.

The Fiesta Bowl will be televised nationally by the CBS television network. Kickoff will be 2 p.m. CST, Dec. 26.

Vargas pockets billiards crown two years in a row

For the second consecutive year, Richard Vargas topped UNL competitors in a pocket billiards tournament earning him the right to represent the university in the regional tournament.

Vargas will travel to Springfield, Mo., in February to compete in the International (ACUI) regional tourney. If he wins, he may compete in the national championships at Milwaukee, Wis., in March.

Rollie Hughes, Nebraska Union recreation manager, reported that Vargas beat 10 pool players.

"I think we would have had more participants," Hughes said, "but many people who play just don't have confidence in themselves."

The pocket billiards game played in the UNL tournament was called "14.1," in which players attempt to call shots for any of the six pockets and sink 14 balls. A player has three options to sink the fifteenth ball.

After racking the 14 balls shot from the previous series, players may sink the 15th ball in a "safe" call, sink the 15th ball while breaking the racked balls or calling and shooting one of the 14 racked balls in a pocket, Hughes said.

But players may shoot only when they have successfully called and sunk a shot, Hughes said, earning points for each ball they sink.

"If you let your opponent get a run, there's no way to stop him," Hughes said.

In winning the tournament, Vargas drew a bye for the first round because of his previous championship, beat Rick Plooster 75-17 in the quarter-finals and John Bates 75-11 in the semi-finals. He then beat Bob Gebler in the finals with a score of 75-33.

Big 10 foes to test cagers

By Jim Hunt

Games with two Big 10 conference schools will open UNL's 1975-76 basketball season this weekend.

The Huskers will host Illinois Friday night and Northwestern Saturday. Tipoff is at 7:35 both nights in the Coliseum.

"The Big 10 has always had good teams and players," said UNL head coach Joe Cipriano. "One of the reasons they decided to play us was because they thought the new fieldhouse would be finished."

Cipriano said probably starters for UNL would be Jerry Fort and Steve Willis at guard, Larry Cox at center, and Bob Siegel with Rickey Harris, Curt Hedberg or Alan Holder at forward.

All-Big 8

Fort averaged 20.2 points a game last year as a junior and was named to the all-Big 8 team for the second consecutive year. Willis, also a senior, averaged 10.3 points a game his first year at UNL after transferring from North Idaho College in Couer d'Alene.

Cox, a 6 ft. 6 in. center, averaged 10.2 points a game last season. He led the Big 8 in field goal percentage, hitting at .589.

Siegel, a 6 ft. 7 in. forward, led Big 8 forwards in rebounds with 8.7 a game. He averaged 10.3 points a game. Harris, a 6 ft. 7 in. junior, played in all 26 of the Huskers' games last year and averaged 4.3 points a game.

Hedberg played in 17 games last year as a freshman. Holder, a 6 ft. 3 in. junior, is in his first year at UNL after transferring from Seminole Junior College in Seminole,

Volleyball players earn spot in national tourney

UNL's women's volleyball team qualified for the national tournament by placing second in the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIWA) tournament in Columbia, Mo., Saturday.

UNL, along with first-place Southwest Missouri State, will represent Region 6 at the national tournament in Princeton, N.J., Dec. 10 to 13.

The team won seven of eight matches in the three-day event that featured 12 teams.

UNL lost in the finals to Southwest Missouri, 15-12, 15-7, after defeating Augsburg College of Minnesota 15-8, 15-12 and Missouri 15-5, 10-15 and 15-10 to gain a berth in the finals.

UNL coach Pat Sullivan told the Lincoln Journal that a tough semifinal match with Missouri took a lot out of the team. "They were a tough fine defensive unit, and we had to do a lot of coming from behind to win," Sullivan said.

According to the Journal, UNL Womens Sports Information Director Jay Davis cited seniors Jan Zink and Laury Harmon, junior Janice Kruger and sophomores Paula Walberg and Nancy Hamilton for fine play.

"Our goal for the season was to go to nationals and we reached that goal," Sullivan told the Journal. "I couldn't be any prouder of them than if they had won it."

Okla. Cipriano said he will know more about how his team reacts in a game situation after the Red-White intersquad scrimmage in Grand Island tonight.

New coach

Illinois, 8-18 last year, enters the season under a new coach, Lou Henson. Henson coached at New Mexico State for nine years before he replaced Gene Bartow, now head coach at UCLA.

Top returnees for the Illini, who finished with Northwestern in a tie for ninth place last year in the Big 10, are Otho Tucker, Nate Williams and Mike Washington. Tucker, a 6 ft. 6 in. guard, averaged 11.8 points a game last year. Williams, a 6 ft. 4 in. guard, averaged 10.7 points a game.

Washington, a 6 ft. 7 in. forward center, averaged 7.9.

Illinois leads the series between the two schools 5-2.

Northwestern, coached by former Kansas State coach Tex Winter, returns nine lettermen from last year's 6-20 team, including Bill McKinney, Tim Teasley and Jim Wallace.

McKinney, a 6-foot guard, averaged 18.2 points a game last season as a sophomore. Teasley, a 6 ft. 1 in. guard, averaged 6.6 points a game. Wallace, 6 ft. 10 in. center, averaged eight points a game last season.

Cipriano said the Big 10 allows its schools three intersquad games, which, he said, could be an advantage to them.

sports shorts

The all-university finals for the men's intramural volleyball championships between Alpha Tau Omega and the Space Kadets are at 6 p.m., today, in the Men's Physical Education Bldg.

UNL's wrestling team dropped its opening dual to the Air Force Academy 22-20 Saturday in Colorado Springs, Colo. The team's next meet is the Oklahoma Open, Friday and Saturday.

The Midwest Open in Chicago, Ill., Friday and Saturday, marks the next competition for UNL's gymnastics team.



Photo courtesy UNL

Jerry Fort, senior guard from Chicago, Ill., is the Huskers leading scorer and twice all-Big 8.