

sports

Coach says team must play full hour of football

By Larry Sparks

Nebraska is going to have to play better than it did against Kansas if the Huskers want to hold onto their spot atop the Big Eight standings, Coach Tom Osborne said at Monday's Extra Point Club luncheon. "We've got to go out and play a complete football game. We can't go out there and play a half here or there," he said. "Hopefully, this week we'll go out and play 60 minutes.

"We didn't play exceptional football against Kansas in the first half. On the other hand, they played very well. We don't want to take anything away from their performance."

Osborne said the Jayhawks played better against Nebraska than they have in past years, but he said the Huskers made several mistakes in the first half which helped KU.

"The first four possessions we had of the ball, we either had a turnover or a penalty which allowed them to get the ball

back in good field position," Osborne said.

"We only had seven possessions in the first half. When you mess yourself up on four of seven possessions, you're not going to get a lot of points."

Osborne said he was most surprised by the play of the Jayhawk offensive line. He said part of that may be attributed to the fact that several players who had been out with injuries returned to the lineup Saturday.

Best offense

"They really came off the ball," Osborne said. "Talking to the defensive coaches, I think that they felt of the four Big Eight games we've played, Kansas, on the day we played them, was the best offensive team we've faced."

"I would imagine that their coaches and players would feel that was the best they've played offensively all year," he said.

Osborne said he expected the Jayhawk defense to play as well as it did. He also praised the kicking game which scored all 15 of KU's points.

There were some good things on the Husker side of the field too, Osborne said. He said the team did what it had to in coming back from a 9-3 half-time deficit.

"We didn't seem to lose our poise. We did not seem to lose our confidence," Osborne said. "We came back and played very

hard."

Bruises

There appear to be no serious injuries on the team, Osborne said. I-back Mike Rozier has a bruised knee and wingback Irving Fryar has a bruised shoulder but both are expected to be back in time for Saturday's game at Oklahoma State.

Nebraska faces another good defensive team in the Cowboys, Osborne said.

"It seems like we see good defense every week. I don't know if it's because the other teams are really that good on defense or if we're worried about our offense," Osborne said. "I choose to believe that there are a lot of teams with good defensive players."

"Usually by the time we've played seven or eight ball games, we start encountering teams that are 2-6 and have those kinds of records. At the present time, six of the eight teams in the Big Eight all have some chance to go to a bowl game. When you play teams like that, they're still going to give you a tremendous effort. They're not going to come in and lay down," he said.

"The next three teams are of that nature."

ABC Television announced Monday that Saturday's Big Eight match up between the Huskers and the Cowboys will be a regional telecast. Telecast is set for 11:30 a.m.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Nebraska cornerback Rodney Lewis (5) goes out of bounds after intercepting a Kansas pass. Lewis held onto the ball while he was in bounds and the Huskers took possession.

Bowl officials encounter dilemma in year's upsets

By Bob Asmussen

If the reactions of the Fiesta and Cotton Bowls are any indication, the Nebraska football team appears to be headed for its 13th straight post-season bowl appearance, regardless of the outcome of the Big Eight Conference race.

Fiesta Bowl Director Bruce Skinner said there's a good chance the Huskers will be invited to his classic if UNL doesn't earn an Orange Bowl bid. He said Nebraska is traditionally an attractive team to the bowls.

"When you have Nebraska you have a great national name," Skinner said. "They take a lot of people to their bowl game. For us, they'd be attractive because there are so many former Nebraskans who live in Arizona. It would create a lot of local interest if they were to come here."

The growth of the Fiesta Bowl can be traced to Nebraska's 1975 appearance in the game, Skinner said.

"When we were able to draw a team the caliber of Nebraska, it let everyone know we were for real," he said. "Since that game we've been able to expand the scope of the teams we invite."

Jim Brock, executive vice president of the Cotton Bowl, said Nebraska is usually on its list of teams.

"Right now we have 20 teams in our picture and Nebraska is one of them," Brock said.

Difficult choice

Brock said the rash of upsets this year will make it difficult for bowl committees to make team selections. He said his bowl is looking for the best possible team it can get.

"Lots of teams will be attractive with two or three losses," Brock said. "We want to get the team with the highest ranking. We could never go wrong in selecting Nebraska."

The Orange Bowl is in a situation this year where it will have a team with at least a loss and a tie. Stan Marks, chairman of team selection for the Orange Bowl, said the situation is a difficult one.

"There's nothing we can do about it," Marks said. "It's good that all three teams (Nebraska, Oklahoma and Iowa State) are rated. We're hoping somebody breaks away from the pack."

Marks said the possibility of a Penn State-Nebraska rematch in the Orange Bowl is remote. He said the committee would prefer not to rematch two teams.

"After the Nebraska-Oklahoma rematch we decided we'd be very careful before we did that again," Marks said. "We did that then because Oklahoma was the highest-ranked team available."

Marks said the committee has been satisfied with its agreement with the Big Eight. The contract was renewed for three more years after last season.

"It's been a healthy agreement," Marks said. "The Big Eight champion usually has a high national ranking."

Clemson looks good

Marks said possible opponents for the Big Eight champion are Pittsburgh, Penn State, Clemson, Georgia or Alabama. Marks said at this point Clemson looks most attractive to his committee.

"Clemson could end up being the national champions," Marks said. "They have rabid fan support. Their fans are a lot like the Nebraska fans."

Marks said he was impressed with this year's Nebraska team. He said he was very impressed with sophomore quarterback Turner Gill.

"I saw Nebraska's game against Missouri," Marks said. "I was very impressed with (Turner) Gill's pose, especially in the last few minutes of the game. It's quite an accomplishment for such a young quarterback to lead his team to such an important win."

The signing date for the bowl games this year is Nov. 21. That is the day Nebraska goes to Norman to play Oklahoma. Jeff Blaugrund, publicity chairman for the Sun Bowl, said the early date made it difficult for smaller bowls to get good teams.

"We have to take a chance on a team that still might have two more games to play," Blaugrund said. "We don't want to do it but we don't have much choice."

Blaugrund said the Sun Bowl would like to have another Big Eight team this year, but said it isn't likely Nebraska will come back.

"I don't think they would want to come back," Blaugrund said. "I'm sure they want to take their players to another bowl. We love everyone there and we hope they feel the same about us."

Blaugrund said the main attraction of the Sun Bowl was how well the teams are treated in El Paso.

"CBS has nicknamed our bowl the Fun Bowl because of how we treat the players and the fans," Blaugrund said. "We hope they spread the word about the good time they have at the Sun Bowl."

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