

Sports

Osborne: Missouri not a 'dirty, cheap shot' team

By Larry Sparks

The controversial tackle that left Nebraska quarterback Turner Gill with a concussion in Saturday's 23-19 victory against Missouri shouldn't distract from what was otherwise a great football game, Husker football Coach Tom Osborne said at Monday's Extra Point Club luncheon.

"I don't believe that Missouri is a dirty football team. I don't believe that Missouri is a cheap shot football team," Osborne said in reference to Husker fans' accusations about the second-quarter hit by MU defensive tackle Randy Jostes.

Osborne said he has heard from the Missouri coaches that Jostes' family in Ralston has been the subject of several harassing phone calls since Saturday.

"That's really inappropriate because the family did not do anything, it is a game and Turner Gill is going to be fine," he said. "It isn't like we ought to start

some kind of civil war."

Osborne declined to discuss the controversy further but did say Saturday's victory was a satisfying one for him.

"I don't think there's any team that I enjoy a win over more than Missouri," Osborne said. "I don't mean anything negative toward Missouri. They're just a team that always seems to play us tough. They're very competitive and we really do enjoy it (beating the Tigers)."

Mizzou's best performance

Saturday's game probably was Mizzou's best performance of the year, he said, adding that he had expected the Tigers to be good because they had been improving all season.

"I thought they'd be the best defense we had seen and they were. They're a great defensive team and they're the type of offensive team that gives us trouble — they throw the ball well," he said.

Osborne had praise for the performance

of several Husker reserves who came through with crucial plays when called upon. He singled out fullbacks Mark Schellen and Mark Moravec, I-back Jeff Smith and quarterback Bruce Mathison.

He said he was pleased by the performance of starting I-back Mike Rozier, who picked up 139 yards despite playing with a hip pointer. Rozier played in so much pain that he wasn't able to get down into a three-point stance when the Huskers ran out of the weak-set formation, Osborne said.

"I would have to say that it was probably as remarkable of a performance as I've ever seen," Osborne said.

Husker defense improved

Osborne said that if the Huskers had not allowed the Tigers to score on their final drive, he would have termed the game an "outstanding defensive performance." He said the Blackshirts have

improved the past two weeks, but they still have to get better.

"We're going to have to improve in order to win the Big Eight championship or even have a chance at it," he said.

The Cornhuskers will have to be well prepared again this week when they play at Kansas, Osborne said. He said the Jayhawks can be a dangerous team because they can move the ball well.

"They have, potentially, a very explosive football team," Osborne said, pointing out that KU has many of the players back that led KU to a 9-3 halftime lead against the Huskers last year before NU came back for a 31-15 win.

The Jayhawks have been plagued by injuries on defense, especially the line, but some of those players may be back this week, he said.

"If they get some of those defensive linemen back, they could be very strong," Osborne said.

Lettermen strengthen swimming, diving team

By Jack Denker

Thirteen returning lettermen are on hand to lead the Nebraska men's swimming and diving team as it prepares to begin the 1982-83 season and defend its three straight Big Eight championships.

"I feel we're a stronger team than last year in terms of returning athletes and good team depth in all events," Coach Cal Bentz said. "As a group this is not only the best talent we've ever had, but they're a serious-minded group of athletes and also more dedicated."

When talking about standout individuals, one has to mention all-American Cliff Looschen. Last year, in his freshman season, Looschen was a conference champion in three events (50-yard freestyle and the 100- and 200-yard backstrokes), was a member of all three national qualifying relays and broke numerous school records.

He also was recognized as the outstanding swimmer in the Big Eight meet and placed ninth nationally in the 100-yard breaststroke, making him an all-American.

Dedication important

"At all levels of competition one depends on dedication and working to achieve goals," Bentz said. "If Cliff continues his work habits and if he stays on track toward his goals, then I don't know what his limits are. But that same thing holds true for everyone."

Bentz was quick to point out that the Huskers have other capable swimmers in addition to Looschen who will give the team depth.

Lettermen Matt Rye, Earl Welliver, Kevin Weires and Rick Gilbertson, plus captains Jim Korff and Bill Booth were singled out by the coach as strong swimmers.

Combine them with a talented group of incoming transfers and freshmen — including California junior college state champions Keith Moore and Bob Snodgrass, Nebraska high school state champion Brian Brejnik and Tim Brenner, an Oklahoma state high school champion — and the Huskers should prove to be quite a competitive swim team.

Nebraska diving coach Jeff Huber said he thinks his group of divers could be a very strong part of the overall team this season because of the return of co-captains Dave Goodwin and Reynaldo Castro, along with the signing of Texas state champion Eric Ognibene.

Huskers strong in relays

Another one of the strengths on the Husker team this year should be its relays, where at least three swimmers return to pace all three record-setting, conference championship relay squads.

Looschen, Rye, Welliver and Weires return on the medley relay team and Looschen, Weires and Welliver are back on the 800-yard freestyle relay. Looschen, Korff and Weires will lead the 400-yard freestyle relay. All these men qualified for nationals last year.

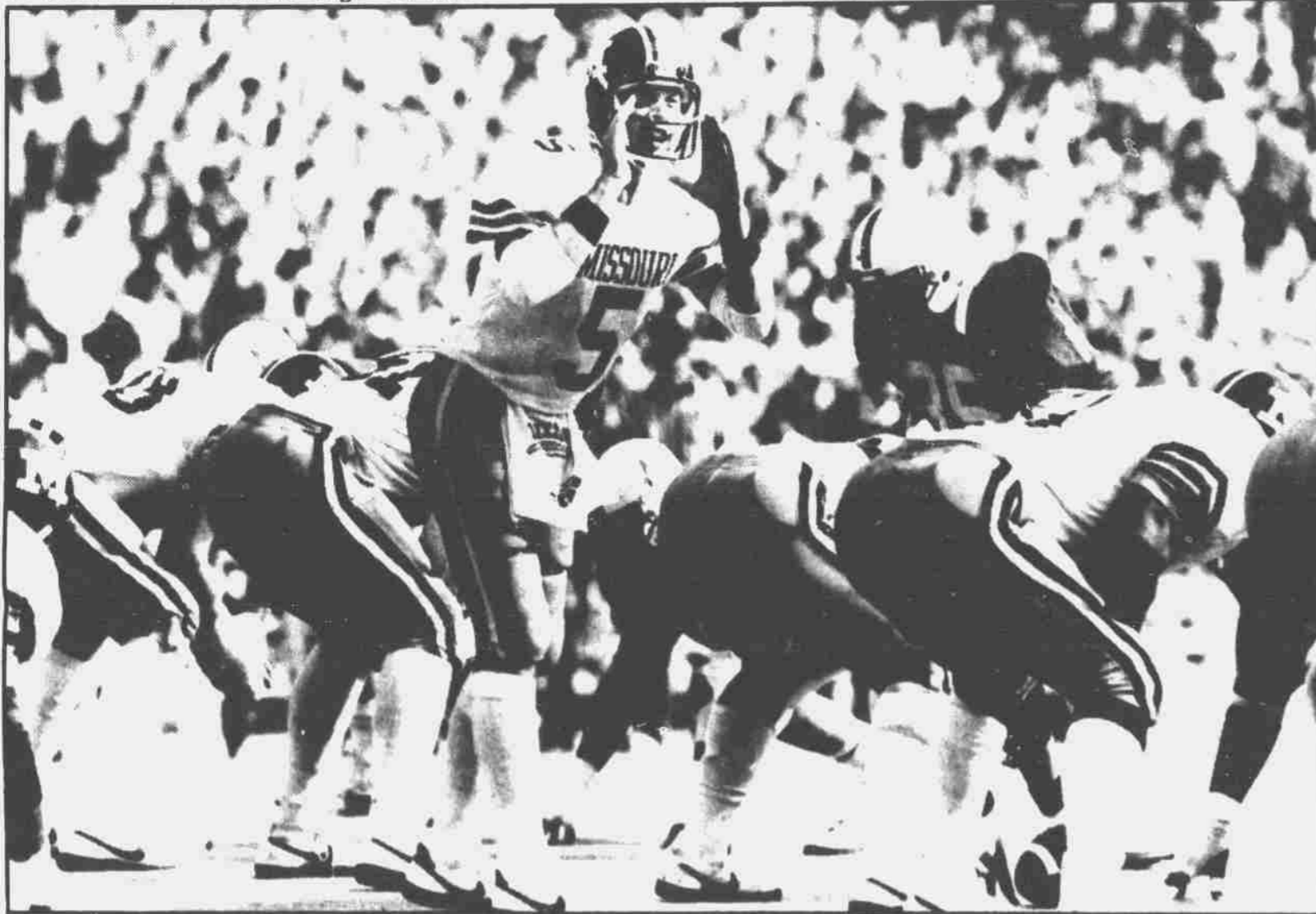
The team has listed another Big Eight championship, an undefeated dual meet record and finishing high at the national meet as its goals for the new season.

Other than Nebraska, Bentz said that based on media information he has received, Kansas appears to be the team to beat in the Big Eight race because of several returning seniors.

"We're really looking forward to a great year," Bentz said. "We're moving onward and upwards."

The Huskers' first taste of competition for 1982 will be their annual intrasquad meet Friday at 4 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center pool.

The regular season begins for the Huskers the following weekend when they will be the hosts of the U.S. Swimming Meet at the sports center.



Staff Photo by Dave Bentz

Missouri quarterback Brad Perry (5) tries to yell an audible to his teammates over the roar of the Memorial Stadium crowd of 76,406 Saturday. Nebraska defeated Missouri 23-19 to advance to 6-1 for the season and 3-0 in Big Eight play. The Cornhuskers play at Kansas this Saturday.

Praise for Blackshirts long overdue

Plenty has been written and said about the officiating at Penn State and the alleged "cheap shot" that Missouri tackle Randy Jostes gave Turner Gill in Saturday's game. Let's talk about something positive for a change. Defense.

Before the 1982 Nebraska football season opened against Iowa Sept. 11, Coach Tom Osborne was uncertain how well the young, untested Blackshirts would perform.



Cindy Gardner

Gone after the 1981 season were defensive standouts like end Jimmy Williams and four starters from the secondary. The 1982 defense edition was full of question marks.

After the Huskers' 42-7 win against Iowa, Osborne said the defensive performance was the most pleasing part of the victory.

In later weeks, however, the Blackshirts faced criticism, mostly from the fans and mostly for pass defense. Osborne continued to defend his defense, saying that while there were some problems, the players were performing well and grading high.

Even though not all the wrinkles have been worked out yet, the defense certainly deserves much of the praise for Saturday's 23-19 win against Big Eight rival Missouri.

All the talk about cheap shots and the well-deserved praise given to second string quarterback Bruce Mathison and gutsy I-back Mike Rozier over shadowed what was perhaps the best Blackshirt performance of the season.

The Huskers kept the Tigers out of Nebraska territory for the first period of play, and while Mizzou was able to move the ball at times, the Blackshirts came up with the big play and held their ground when it counted most.

"I think if we could have kept Missouri from scoring on the last drive last week, then I would have termed it a real outstanding defensive performance," Osborne told

the Extra Point Club Monday. "We put some heat on our defense with a few turnovers and they responded pretty well."

The defense's biggest plays Saturday came while defending the pass. Three times Husker linemen cracked through the Missouri offensive protection to sack quarterback Brad Perry. Twice the Huskers came up with the interception — three times if you count one that was later fumbled away.

Linebacker Brent Evans, who finished second in tackles with 107 last season, came up with what he called his biggest moment ever at Nebraska when he intercepted a Perry pass to set up what proved to be the game-winning touchdown.

Evans said Saturday's defensive stand may restore some of the public's confidence in the Blackshirts.

"I think the defense has had a lot of confidence. I just think other people haven't had it (confidence) in us," Evans said. "Maybe it's allowed the defense to maybe get a little bit closer and have a total feeling that we really contributed to the victory which I think it needed as a whole."

Nebraska defensive tackle Toby Williams added that what really matters is the confidence the Blackshirts have in themselves.

"I think the most important thing probably is that the defense have confidence in itself. I think we have all year and it's increased for every game," Williams said after Saturday's win. "There've been some low points and some high points. Right now, I'd say we're playing real well and realistically expect to get better."

So, maybe it's time to quit talking about cheap shots (Gill is out of the hospital and expected to play Saturday against Kansas) and listen to Missouri Coach Warren Powers who said Nebraska fans have underrated the Blackshirts.

"Nebraska's got a good defense. People worry about stats too much. Worry about the points that people score on you and not the stats and you'll be better off."