

Linebacker Knox hits the right spot

By Kirk Zebolasky

Mike Knox leads Nebraska in interceptions and unassisted tackles, with



Staff photo by Craig Anderson
Mike Knox

three and 26, respectively. From those statistics, it appears that the junior linebacker from Castle Rock, Colo., is having an exceptional season. Knox perhaps, is not as sure.

"I've played some good ball, and some ball not up to my potential," Knox said. "I can't be totally satisfied with my performance."

Knox's 16 tackle performance against UCLA helped Nebraska hold UCLA to just 10 points. Against Syracuse Knox pulled down his third interception and returned it 45 yards. Knox said returning that interception "was a great feeling." Knox attributes his interceptions to "being in the right spot. Plus the defensive backs are covering the people a lot better than they did last year, which forces the quarterback to throw underneath more."

Knox said the Nebraska defense expects a battle from Oklahoma State. "They're going to be really tough. It'll be a true test." Although Ernest Anderson, last year's national leader in yards per game, is injured, Knox said that Anderson's backup is a "real good back."

Knox made his name as a backup his freshman season with a hit on a Florida State punt returner. The runner fumbled, and Tony Felici returned the fumble for a touchdown. Knox played a lot last season, making 42 tackles and breaking up three passes as alternate behind Steve McWhirter. This sea-

son Knox is a full-time starter.

Knox said he doesn't feel any added pressure being the top returning linebacker, but that this year's inexperienced linebacker corps wants to show people that they can get the job done.

"We're just trying to prove that we are good backers, that we can play."

There is not much doubt that Knox can play. According to linebacker coach John Melton, "he's playing very good football." Melton declined to compare Knox with Steve Damkroger, McWhirter, and Brent Evans, last year's crew. "I think we're just glad he's playing as good as he is."

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