

Sports

Iba worried about cager's defensive plays

By Jeff Browne

UNL's men's basketball team set a Bob Devaney Sports Center scoring record Saturday and rolled over Augustana College, 113-69 in both teams' season opener. But coach Moe Iba said he's somewhat worried about his team.

Iba expressed particular concern about the defensive play of his team against the Vikings.

"I thought we were very out of position defensively," Iba said. "We reached for the ball too much."

While the defense may have been having its problems, the Husker's record-setting offensive performance was fueled by some torrid shooting. After falling behind 4-0, Nebraska put together scoring streaks of 10, nine, and 11 points to completely bury the Vikings by pushing the score to 34-10 with nine minutes left in the first half.

The Huskers hit on 23 of 34 first half shots, a 68 percent rate. They also set a record for most points in a half at the sports center with 61.

"There are going to be nights when we don't hit from the outside," Iba said. "If we don't, we're going to be in trouble."

The Vikings never came closer than 23 points in the second half as Nebraska continued its hot shooting and allowed Iba to clear his bench.

All but one of Nebraska's 13 players scored against the Vikings. Starting guard David Ponce injured his back early in the first half and didn't return to action. Iba is worried that Ponce's injury might be serious.

"If you have a bad back, you can't do anything," he said. "We can't afford to have David Ponce injured, we need him to get well."

In his place, freshman Brian Carr played 36 minutes and scored 16 points and had seven assists.

"When I go out in a situation like that," Carr said, "I'm supposed to take charge. I think they're trying to build me up to play point guard later."

Nebraska was led in scoring against Augustana by forward Stan Cloudy who tallied 22 points, 15 of them coming in the first half. Sophomore center Dave Hoppen took advantage of a much shorter Augustana front line and scored 21 points. Guard Eric Williams added 11 points and reserve Curtis Moore 10 for the Huskers.

Despite those plusses, Iba said his team may not be ready for tonight's game against Texas Tech.

"Texas Tech will be very slow, very patient," he said. "They'll be satisfied to pass the ball around. They'll expose all of our weaknesses defensively. If they're able to handle the ball, we're not going to be able to win."

Texas Tech lost its opener, 54-45, to Washington Saturday night in Seattle.

Viewers get 'fanatical' about NU-OU bouts

There are certain things you shouldn't do. You don't pull on Superman's cape, you don't spit into the wind, you don't pull the mask off the old lone ranger and if you're an obsessive fan, you don't watch the Nebraska-Oklahoma football game.

Scott Ahlstrand

The annual Nebraska-OU game is many things. It's a matchup between two of the nation's best teams. It's a field day for the members of the press, and it's an indication that winter is just around the corner. But more importantly, it's a day when my friends and I go crazy.

We started Saturday OK, no signs of lunacy. We worked out, and then went and shot some baskets. We then went to Greg's house, where he, his brothers, Brian and Steve, and our friend Bob were to watch the game. Up until the opening kickoff, we were just a normal group of guys, in the Midwest, ready to enjoy a football game. Kind of like something you'd see on "Happy Days."

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Mike Rozier breaks through the Sooner line at the beginning of his 63-yard run that set up the final Husker touchdown. Staff photo by John Zox

Osborne: 12-0 season 'tremendous feat'

In the days leading up to the Nebraska-Oklahoma game, Sooner coach Barry Switzer told every camera and microphone in sight that the Huskers could be beat, and that the Nebraska offense, which had managed to run over 11 opponents, would not go up and down the field on his senior-laden defense.

But the Huskers still got 206 yards from Mike Rozier, and even managed to pull off a defensive gem at the end to stop the Sooners and win 28-21. It capped off a 12-0 regular season, and sent warnings down to Miami, the Huskers' Orange Bowl opponent, that the Huskers could win a close one if they had to.

"To go 12-0 is a tremendous feat, but we've still got a tough game in the Orange Bowl," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said. "It was a well-played game on both sides. I think both teams gained a lot of respect for each other."

The game had enough fireworks and individual standouts to have been the bowl game the Sooners turned down for themselves after losing 10-0 at Missouri. Rozier's 205 yards, which gave him a season total of 2,148, made him only the second player in NCAA history to rush for more than 2,000 yards in a single season. He also broke the record for most consecutive games over 200 yards and tied the record for consecutive games over 100 yards (11), as well as the single-season touchdown mark with 29.

Aside from Gill, Tom Rathman, Bill Weber, Mark Schellen and Mark Daum were among those with big plays in front of the packed house at Owen Stadium, while Oklahoma's Buster Rhymes, Derrick Shepard and Spencer Tillman, whose 5-yard leap into the end zone will show up on highlight films for quite some time, had big plays for the Sooner side.

But the best one was saved for last. After Okla-

homa took over on the Sooner 26 with 5:12 to play, the Husker defense, which had held its own except for three big plays, suddenly gave. Earl Johnson and Tillman were handed the ball seven straight times, and between them worked it down to the Husker 39. Then, after a 5-yard scramble by quarterback Danny Bradley, the Sooner junior hit Shepard for a 27-yard gain to the Nebraska 10.

Johnson then went around left guard for nine, but an illegal motion penalty on guard Brent Burks pushed the ball back to the 7. Bradley was then caught behind the line of scrimmage by Weber, and on the next play, tried to hit Shepard near the Husker goal line. At the time, it looked like either Mike McCashland or Neil Harris knocked the Sooner freshman down, but no call was made. Later, it was clear that linebacker Mike Knox had tipped the pass at the line of scrimmage.

"Shepard was hit in the mouth by the defender with the ball in the air," Switzer said in his post-game interview. "It was interference, but they didn't call it."

That set up the fourth-down pass that made a hero out of Harris. The junior from Kansas City, Mo., leapt with the 1980 Husker antagonist Rhymes and knocked down the pass.

Statistically the game was the most even of any Nebraska game this season. Nebraska had 20 first downs to Oklahoma's 19, 424 total yards to the Sooners' 420, and a 56-second time-of-possession advantage. Despite a steady rain in the second and fourth quarters, a Gill interception was the only turnover in the game.

"Oklahoma's got a great football team, and any time you put that kind of talent on the field and they don't turn it over, you're in for a tough ball game," Osborne said.

Huskers win Invite; Coleman named MVP

By Scott Ahlstrand

A few more wins like Saturday's 83-81 come-from-behind victory against Central Michigan, and Nebraska women's basketball coach Kelly Hill, the youngest Division I coach in the nation, will start showing some gray hairs.

The 25-year-old Hill raised her first-year coaching record to 2-0 as the Huskers captured their own Husker Invitational. Nebraska reached the championship game by racing to a 91-50 victory against South Florida Friday night. The two-point win against the Chippewas however, was anything but easy.

The game was played at a fast pace throughout. Both teams utilized full-court presses and fast-break offenses. After playing to a 39-39 tie at the half, the Chips took a 81-76 lead with 37 seconds remaining. Guard Crystal Coleman then took control of the game.

The 5-7 junior converted both ends of a one-and-one to narrow the score to 81-78. Coleman followed with a layup and a free throw to tie the game. CMU had the ball with 23 seconds remaining, but Coleman tipped the ball out of the hands of a Chippewa player and into the hands of freshman Stacy Imming. Imming passed it back to Coleman, who was fouled as she attempted a layup. Coleman made both free throws to give Nebraska the lead and the championship.

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Freshman Stacy Imming fires from the baseline against South Florida Friday. Staff photo by Craig Anderson