

Lobo coach says turnovers, injuries contributed to loss to Cornhuskers

By Chuck Green
Staff Reporter

New Mexico coach Joe Lee Dunn blamed the Lobos' 38-7 loss to Nebraska on Saturday on the same problem they've had all season.

"We just can't seem to score many points," Dunn said. "We feel like we can move the ball, and we did, but we only scored seven points. Our problem is not moving the ball, but putting the ball in the end zone. It's just one of those things."

Dunn said one of the Lobos' main problems was mistakes.

"We turned the ball over too many times," Dunn said. "We threw too many interceptions. The turnover with less than two minutes left in the first half didn't help us much, either. But give Nebraska credit. They utilized their time well."

"We had a lot of injuries, too. We had four concussions, and we were playing people who had never practiced at their positions. It was a very physical football game."

In the third quarter, a controversial call ended New Mexico's momentum.

The Huskers led 21-7 when Lobo quarterback Ned James completed a sideline pass to receiver Terance Mathis. Mathis ran 79 yards for an apparent score, which would have cut Nebraska's lead to eight, or seven with an extra point. But an official ruled that Mathis had stepped out of bounds before catching the ball, therefore nullifying the play.

"The official said he ran out of bounds on his own," Dunn said, "but he (Mathis) said he was pushed out by a defender."

If Mathis was pushed out of bounds by a Cornhusker defender, the play should not have been called back. Receivers are allowed to return to the field of play only if they are pushed or blocked out of bounds.

"The official didn't throw the flag until Mathis had crossed into the end zone," Dunn said. "We called time out to talk to the official, to make sure he understood the situation. It was a big downer to get back into the game and then, all of a sudden, have it taken away from us."

Dunn said he was impressed with the Huskers, as well as the Nebraska fans.

"Nebraska was definitely the best team out there today," Dunn said. "I won't deny that. But we weren't a bunch of pushovers either. We got in a lot of good licks, and I think they found out it wasn't going to be as easy as they thought it might be. We sort of got the upperhand on defense early in the game, but Nebraska was just a better team."

"Nebraska is one of the premiere places to play football in the country. Their team is a class act and so is (Husker coach) Tom Osborne. They were helping us up after each play and showing great sportsmanship. That's what football is all about. Nebraska's fans even clapped for our kids as they left the field, and that really impressed me."

Even though New Mexico played Nebraska much closer than expected, it is no consolation for Dunn.

"There's really no such thing as a moral victory," Dunn said. "We ran out of people due to injuries, and that could be a big problem down the road this season. We're a very disappointed team right now."

Injured quarterback leads OSU win

The Associated Press

STILLWATER, Okla. — Quarterback Ronnie Williams, out two games with a broken jaw, came off the bench Saturday to spark sixth-rated Oklahoma State to a 25-13 victory over Tulsa. The Cowboys play Nebraska Saturday in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma State, 4-0, trailed 10-0 in the first quarter before Williams replaced Rusty Rankin. The Cowboys immediately moved 79 yards on eight plays for a touchdown. Tailback Thurman Thomas scored on a 54-yard run 2:39 into the first quarter.

Thomas, the nation's second leading rusher with an average of 173 yards a game, finished the first half with 157 yards. Thomas suffered a bruised thigh and didn't play the second half.

Oklahoma State trailed 13-12 at halftime, but took the lead at 8:47 of the third quarter when tailback Mitch Nash scored from 11 yards out to give the Cowboys their first lead of the game.

Williams, who completed 13 of 26 passes for 142 yards, later hit tight end J.R. Dillard with a 9-yard touchdown

pass to make the score 25-13.

Tulsa, 1-4, got a 1-yard touchdown run from quarterback Steve Gage and field goals of 40 and 44 yards by Jason Staurovsky.

The Oklahoma State defense played another outstanding game, intercepting two Gage passes and scoring a safety.

The safety came during the second quarter, when tackle Leslie O'Neal blocked a Richie Stephenson punt out of the end zone to cut Tulsa's lead to 10-9.

Freshman's debut successful

HUSKERS from Page 6

After Miles' touchdown and New Mexico's controversial pass play, Washington intercepted a pass intended for Lobo running back Glenn Rogers at the New Mexico 29-yard-line.

Nebraska then drove to the Lobo 18. But a holding penalty, a 2-yard loss by Miles and an incomplete pass stopped the drive at the New Mexico 25.

Enter freshman kicker Chris Drennan. Drennan, from Cypress, Calif., ended a Husker streak of four consecutive missed field goals when his kick bounced off the crossbar and through the uprights to give the Huskers a 24-7 lead. He said he was told he would get a chance to kick after Klein missed the field goal in the first half.

Drennan, who kicks with his left foot, said he normally doesn't watch the ball after he kicks it, and he thought his first collegiate field goal sailed cleanly through the uprights.

"I didn't watch it," he said. "I didn't know it hit the crossbar until I was over on the sidelines for a couple of minutes."

Nebraska put the game out of reach in the fourth quarter. Travis Turner hit

tight end Tom Banderas for a 14-yard scoring strike to give the Huskers a 31-7 advantage with 7:36 remaining. That catch was his first collegiate reception.

Nebraska capped the scoring with 3:13 remaining when fullback Ken Kaelin rambled into the end zone from 14

yards out.

"I don't think we panicked," Osborne said of the Huskers' slow start. "But we didn't have the emotional buildup and we were not quite ready to play. I'm really pleased that we were still able to go ahead and win the game by a fairly comfortable margin."

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