

Sports

Kicker Klein silences critics

Huskers throw surprise party at OSU

By Bob Asmussen
Senior Editor

STILLWATER, Okla. — Nebraska's offense broke down Oklahoma State's defense with a surprise weapon Saturday night: the pass.

Cornhusker quarterback McCathorn Clayton completed eight of 16 passes, including six of eight in the first half, as Nebraska thrashed the Cowboys 34-24.

Split end Robb Schnitzler was Clayton's favorite target. He caught four passes for 119 yards. Clayton's 38-yard completion to Schnitzler in the first half was his first touchdown pass of the season.

Nebraska led 20-17 with 13:13 to play when Cowboy quarterback Ronnie Williams rolled out on third down. Williams was pressured by Nebraska's Jim Skow and Chris Spachman and threw the ball to Nebraska linebacker Marc Munford for an interception at the OSU 7-yard line.

On third down and goal after the interception, Tom Rathman ran in from the 4-yard line to give Nebraska a 27-17 lead. Nebraska would score later in the quarter on a McCathorn Clayton touchdown to seal the victory.

Despite Williams' crucial fourth-quarter mis-

take, Nebraska defensive tackle and co-captain Skow said he was impressed by Williams' play. It is the second game Williams has played since suffering a broken jaw against Washington.

"He (Williams) has a broken jaw, but he sure doesn't throw like it," Skow said. "He steps out of bounds like a good quarterback should."

Oklahoma State trailed 20-3 midway through the third quarter. Williams then led the Cowboys on an 11-play, 80-yard drive, culminated by Williams' touchdown pass to tight end J. R. Dillard.

After Nebraska punted on its next possession, Oklahoma State scored again to close the gap to 20-17. The big play of the 65-yard touchdown drive was a 49-yard completion from Williams to Bobby Riley.

Skow said he didn't know why the Oklahoma State offense was able to drive on the Nebraska defense in the third quarter.

"I don't really know what happens to a team when they break down," Skow said. "We had some breakdowns on defense."

Another surprise weapon that Nebraska used Saturday was the kicking game — or, more specifically, the field goal.

Dale Klein, relegated to a backup role after last week's game with New Mexico, came on to kick two 40-yard field goals. For Klein, a sopho-

more from Seward, it was a dose of much-needed confidence.

"I was kicking the ball great down here," Klein said. "The ball floated really well. A lot of the guys were telling me it was the best they'd ever seen me kick."

Klein said he knew before the game that he would be kicking extra points and short field goals and that freshman Chris Drennan would be kicking longer field goals. When Drennan missed a 47-yard attempt in the first half, Klein was called in on the next try.

"I think it maybe took a little pressure off," Klein said of the unexpected assignment.

Klein said he has heard some negative comments about his kicking. He said kicking at an away game took some pressure off of him.

"I was kind of hoping for an away game," Klein said. "I've had enough boos in my lifetime. A lot of games they'll blame on the kicker. Either you're the hero or you're the goat."

Klein's first successful field goal in college was last season against Oklahoma State.

Doug DuBose led the Nebraska rushing attack with 139 yards on 16 carries. Nebraska gained 256 yards on the ground to 57 yards rushing for Oklahoma State. The Cowboys outgained Nebraska in total yards 420-417.

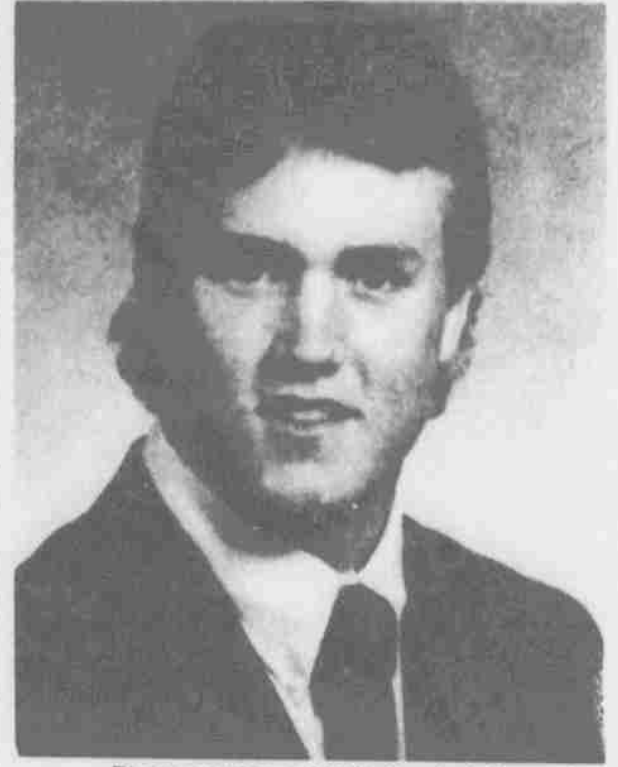


Photo courtesy of UNL Sports Information

Marc Munford

Munford halts OSU comeback

By Chuck Green
Staff Reporter

STILLWATER, Okla. — Mistakes don't produce conference champions. Just ask Oklahoma State coach Pat Jones.

Jones looked on helplessly Saturday as his fifth-ranked Cowboys committed four turnovers and lost to the Cornhuskers 34-24.

"You can't have crucial turnovers and expect to be good," Jones said. "We helped them (Nebraska), but they didn't help us at all."

The game's key turnover was an interception by Marc Munford early in the fourth quarter. The interception led to a 4-yard touchdown run by Tom Rathman that put the Huskers ahead, 27-17.

"When you throw an interception on the 7-yard line," Jones said, "You can't expect to stop them very often."

Despite Oklahoma State's turnovers, Jones said he was pleased with the way the Cowboys moved the ball.

Freshmen team burns Coffeyville after long layoff

Nebraska's Dan Young finally let his football team vent its frustrations — pent up for nearly a month without a game — when the Cornhusker freshman team crushed the Coffeyville Red Ravens 30-7 Friday at Memorial Stadium.

"It was like going into the first ball game, we hadn't played a game for so long," Young said.

Nebraska scored on its opening drive of the game when quarterback Steve Taylor raced 62 yards for the touchdown and Chris Johnson added the extra point to give Nebraska an early 7-0 lead.

Coffeyville tied the game 7-7 when running back Keith Washington broke loose for a 58-yard touchdown run.

After an exchange of possessions, Nebraska mounted its second scoring drive when I-back Tyreese Knox capped off a 52-yard drive with a 1-yard touchdown plunge that gave the Huskers a 14-7 lead.

Coffeyville's Mark Stevens fumbled the ensuing kickoff and it took the Huskers only one play from scrimmage as Taylor hit tight end Bump Novacek with a 27-yard touchdown pass to give Nebraska a 21-7 lead.

After a scoreless fourth quarter, Nebraska scored its final touchdown of the game when Coffeyville fumbled its second punt of the game on its own 9-yard line.

The game's final score came when Knox crashed through the right side of the line for the touchdown, but Dave Payne's extra point failed.

"When it was 20-17, I thought we'd come back," Jones said. "But the interception killed us. It hurt the hell out of us. But we moved the ball well — probably the best that we've moved the ball against Nebraska since I've been here — but we just stopped ourselves."

Oklahoma State gained 363 yards passing, but was held to 57 yards rushing on 31 attempts.

"You're not going to line up and throttle Nebraska," Jones said. "Nobody is. But I feel we played well."

Cowboys' running back Thurman Thomas echoed his coach's thoughts.

"We had a couple of breaks go against us," Thomas said, "but they were mostly mental mistakes on our part. Without the turnovers, I think we could have beat them."

Thomas, the nation's second-leading rusher behind Auburn's Bo Jackson, was held to 81 yards on 22 carries. His longest run was 11 yards.

Jones said he was impressed with

the quality of play by Husker quarterback McCathorn Clayton.

"Clayton gives Nebraska a dimension they haven't had since Turner Gill graduated," Jones said. "Not to take anything away from (Craig) Sundberg and (Travis) Turner, but I think they've been limited at quarterback. Clayton is very gifted."

Oklahoma State offensive tackle Paul Blair said he thinks the Cowboys "are a much better team this year in 1984."

"We've got to take care of the team problems," he said. "The turnovers and penalties just killed us tonight." Jones said he thinks not playing a game next Saturday will help the Cowboys.

"We'll use the time off to regroup," he said. "The lack of things to work on is not one of our problems. But we can't let it get us down. We play for the Big Eight title every week, so we've got to bounce back. We've got no damn choice."

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