

Sports

Huskers' Joseph plans to redshirt

By Mark Derowitsch
and
Kyle Schurman
Staff Reporters

Nebraska freshman quarterback Mickey Joseph solved a quarterback dilemma Thursday when he announced he will redshirt this season.

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said Joseph made the decision on his own. He said he told Joseph and fellow quarterback Gerry Gdowski that one of them needed to redshirt.

Joseph and Gdowski were both listed as Nebraska's No. 3 quarterback behind Steve Taylor and Clete Blakeman.

"He (Joseph) just feels that (redshirting) would be best for him right now," Osborne said. "He would have been third (string) at best, therefore there might be some advantage to redshirting."

Joseph said he chose to redshirt because he isn't learning the Nebraska offense as fast as he would like. He said he is using his athletic ability to overcome his mistakes.

"I get disgusted with myself sometimes," Joseph said. "I'm not learning (the offense) quickly enough to please myself. I need to learn more of the system."

Nebraska freshman coach Shane Thorell agreed.

"He has a lot of talent, but he is still a freshman and he still has a long way to go," Thorell said.

Joseph said the redshirt year will also be beneficial because it will allow him to start for the 1988 freshman team. He said he plans on starting for the Husker varsity after that.

"I want to start three years here after Steve (Taylor) leaves and play a lot as a freshman next year," Joseph said. "I also want to win a national title. I think Steve will win one this year and probably next year, too. I want to continue that."

But Osborne said Joseph doesn't have any future starting position assured. He said Nebraska has good quarterback prospects in Gdowski, Keithen McCant, Jeff Miller and Jerry Dunlap.

"Nobody's got anything locked up," Osborne said.

Joseph, a Parade magazine high school All-America from Marrero, La., rushed for 947 yards and 14 touchdowns to lead New Orleans

Shaw High School to an 11-1 record last season. He also completed 62 or 115 passes for 1,135 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Joseph finished his high school career with 2,432 yards passing and 2,609 yards rushing. He said he chose Nebraska over Oklahoma and Notre Dame because of the Huskers' honest recruiting approach.

"Nebraska did what they said they would do," Joseph said. "Almost everyone lies to you; they tell you a lot of fibs. With Oklahoma, many things didn't go the way they said they would."

In a related matter, Osborne announced that Dante Wiley would not play this season because of grade problems.

Osborne said he and Wiley "parted company" because the junior from Jeanette, Pa. went home for two weeks instead of completing correspondence work.

"I told them all (players) to stay here until they got their work done," Osborne said. "If he (Wiley) stayed here, he probably would have finished before we started practice. So I felt that since he did that, I would not let him play."

Osborne said even if Wiley were allowed to practice, it is unclear if he would be eligible for scholarship because he needs six hours of B plus work.

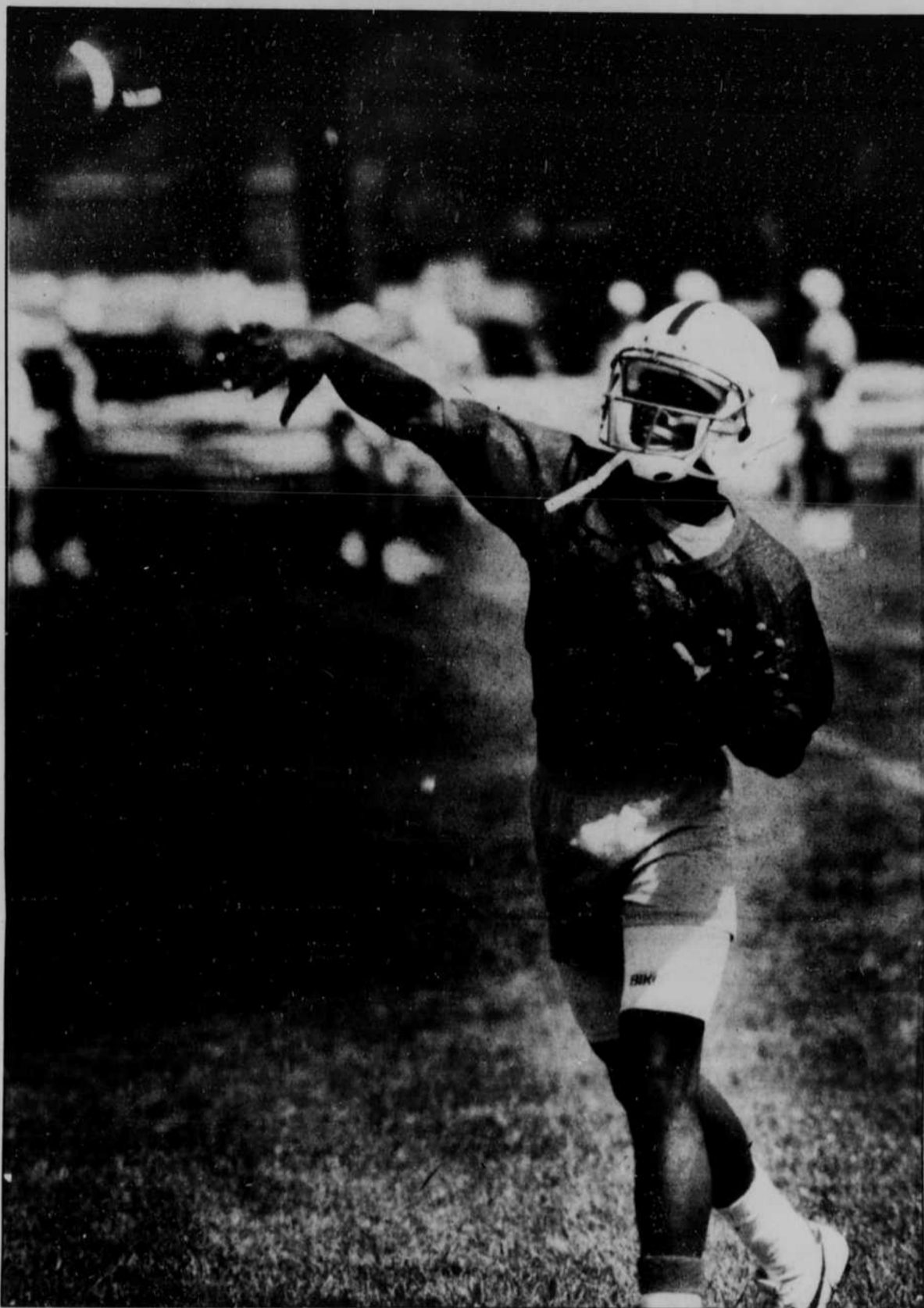
"I don't whether he's got it (six hours of B plus) or not," Osborne said. "So I couldn't tell you whether he's got what he needs to stay in school or not."

Wiley could not be reached for comment.

Practice Notes:

Osborne said five walk ons were awarded scholarships either at mid-semester or this fall. The five include tight end Keith Neubert, linebacker Doug Welniak, center Mark Antonetti, defensive end Jon Marco and offensive lineman John Nelson. He said the Huskers had to give Neubert a football scholarship because the former Nebraska center lost his basketball scholarship.

Osborne also said center Jake Young, offensive lineman Andy Keeler, wingback Hendley Hawkins and I-back Terry Rodgers missed Thursday's practice. Young is suffering from a sore ankle, Keeler and Rodgers have knee strains and Hawkins has a pulled muscle in his back.



Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska freshman quarterback Mickey Joseph.

Quarterbacks never safe, players say

By Tim Hartmann
Senior Reporter

As the three freshman football players of 1983 can attest, quarterback is not the safest position.

"You're never safe," said Jeff Taylor, one of the quarterbacks that season. "They're always bringing someone in behind you, and just because you are older doesn't mean the job is yours."

Taylor alternated at quarterback in 1983 with McCathorn Clayton and Hendley Hawkins. The trio combined to lead the Husker freshmen to a 5-0 season.

This season, as they enter their senior year, none of the three are still quarterbacks.

"It just shows how competitive the position is," said Dan Young, Nebraska's kicking and offensive line coach who coached the freshmen in 1983. "There's always someone coming up behind you."

"They were very good players," he said. "We had four good quarterbacks that year, including Clete Blakeman (who was injured and did not play), who still plays there (at quarterback)."

Clayton, Hawkins and Taylor all said the move from quarterback has helped them in the long run. Clayton shares the No. 1 spot at cornerback with Lorenzo Hicks, Hawkins works with the No. 1 offense at both split end and wingback, and Taylor has made significant contributions to the baseball team the last two years.

In fact, Clayton said he wishes he had made the switch earlier in his career.

"If I had a chance to do it all over again, I probably would have played cornerback, because as quick as I've learned it and with my athletic ability, it seems like the position for me," he said.

Clayton redshirted after his fresh-

man year and then played quarterback as a sophomore and junior. Steve Taylor

took over the quarterbacking duties last fall, so Clayton decided to switch to defense in the spring. Clayton said the transition was not easy, but he did it to help the team and himself.

"All my life I've been a team-oriented player, and right now I'm happy with the way things are going," he said. "I have no regrets about choosing Nebraska over any other school. Things are going really good for me."

"I knew I was a pretty good athlete coming out of high school, so I would say whatever fits the team and whatever fits me, that's what I will play."

There is another advantage to playing defense, Clayton said.

"I definitely don't like being hit, but I enjoy hitting the guy with the ball," he said. "It's a little excitement, it gets your eyes red right before you hit him

and gets a little aggression in you.

"Growing up in high school I never thought I was a soft quarterback anyway," Clayton said. "I always lifted weights and tried to be pretty aggressive, so making the transition to aggressive is no factor to me."

Hawkins said his experience at quarterback helped him switch to receiver.

"It's gone pretty good, and by playing quarterback, it's easy to pick up," Hawkins said.

Another benefit from his move, he said, was that now he can concentrate on his own game.

"I'm pretty happy at split end and wingback," Hawkins said. "It takes a little pressure off you not having to worry about everybody else and just worrying about yourself."

Taylor said he wishes he had had more chances at quarterback, but he's happy with the way things worked out in baseball.

"Sure, I'm disappointed," he said. "I had a lot of confidence, and I really thought I could do the job once I learned the plays."

After his freshman season Taylor joined Hawkins and Clayton as a red-

shirt. He said he "really didn't get much of a chance" after that.

During the spring of his sophomore year, Taylor said he decided to give baseball a chance.

"The first year it was hard to get in the swing of things," he said. "I did get to play a lot and I ended up hitting around .250. Last season I got that up to about .315 and I was named to the all-tournament team. I hope this year I can continue to improve."

Both Clayton and Taylor said they would like to try professional sports next season.

"If I had a good year this season I may get drafted and have a shot at professional baseball, which I would never turn down," Taylor said.

"Every amateur athlete wants to be a professional," Clayton said. "Every high school player wants to play in the NFL, and that's one of my dreams. I'm just going to do the best I can. Right now if I stay healthy and have a good senior year, I may have the possibility of being drafted."

"I really would like that, but if not I'll have to fall back on my degree," said Clayton, a speech communications major.



Taylor



Clayton



Hawkins