

SPORTS

Wednesday, September 14, 1994

Page 7

Shuffled Husker secondary will debut against UCLA

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Just when Nebraska may need its secondary to be at full strength, the Cornhusker coaching staff will have to switch around the secondary because of free safety Mike Minter's season-ending injury against Texas Tech.



Osborne

Minter's injury forces Coach Tom Osborne to start former quarterback Tony Veland at the free safety spot, while Eric Stokes will move to safety as Veland's backup.

Octavious McFarlin will switch to rover back, where he will back up Karcem Moss.

All the shuffling in the secondary comes just before the arrival of the UCLA passing attack, which consists of quarterback Wayne Cook and his receiving tandem of J.J. Stokes and Kevin Jordan.

At his weekly press conference on Tuesday, Osborne said the UCLA game was not the ideal time to break the players into their new positions.

"The main shuffling we're trying to do on our football team probably involves our secondary," he said. "Their (UCLA) two wide receivers — Stokes and Jordan — are very impressive players. The quarterback, Cook, has got nice size, he throws the ball well, and he's experienced. Obviously, they'll give us a test as far as our pass coverage is concerned."

Stokes, a Heisman Trophy candidate, caught 82 passes for 1,181 yards and 17 touchdowns in

1993.

The 6-foot-5, 223-pound senior did not play in UCLA's victory over Southern Methodist on Saturday, but he caught six balls for 84 yards in the Bruins' opening win against Tennessee.

Osborne said he doubted the Husker secondary or any other secondary could completely stop Stokes.

"He's a big, strong receiver, and he's a guy you're going to have to wrap up, certainly," he said. "If your coverage is good, and you have a bunch of people around him, hopefully it won't be that big of a factor. To say you're going to shut him down, I think, would be rather foolhardy."

"I think he's a great player. You just hope to maybe contain him and slow him down a little bit."

The duty of containing Stokes lies with the entire secondary, including Veland, who last season was a backup quarterback until an injury forced him to change to defense.

Osborne said the Texas Tech offensive schemes challenged the Nebraska safeties, so he expected Veland to play well against UCLA.

"I think Tony is a great athlete, and he's a very smart individual," Osborne said. "He's a physical guy. He's one of the best hitters on this football team, and that's what your safety has to be. I don't think it (UCLA offensive formations) will be any tougher than (Texas) Tech, and Tony did real well there. He played for quite a few snaps down there."

Osborne said Nebraska would keep plugging along even without Minter and with the shuffling of players.

"It's been a distraction, but it's something we have to do," Osborne said.

NU baseball coach expects strong fall, spring seasons

By Jeff Griesch
Staff Reporter

While the major league baseball season is still on hold and maybe permanently finished for the year, Nebraska opened its fall baseball season on Tuesday.

Nebraska's recruiting class this season consists of seven freshmen and six junior college transfers, including four players from Riverside Community College in California.

Along with the new players, Nebraska coach John Sanders also has an entirely new coaching staff, as Paul Meyers and Tim Seaton left the staff this summer.

Despite the changes, Sanders said he expected the Huskers to have a strong fall season that would continue into the spring.

"We do have a lot of new faces, but we know

what we have, and we like it," Sanders said. "The names have changed, but the system is the same, and we feel like we have a chance to be a very good team."

While many of the new faces are unfamiliar to Sanders, many of them are familiar to new assistant coach Mike Ashman.

Ashman coached Sergio Betancourt, James Castro, Justin Gomes and Mel Motley at Riverside last season. Ashman is also well-acquainted with Husker seniors Scott Wulffing and David Crain, who both played at Riverside two years ago.

Sanders said Ashman's presence would create a smooth transition for the new players.

"Mike knows what his players can do, and he has confidence in them," Sanders said. "That

See **BASEBALL** on 8



Gerik Parmele/DN

The new HuskerVision screens were used for the first time during Nebraska's practice on Tuesday. The screens will be unveiled Friday night during the HuskerVision Kickoff Celebration.

Cornhusker fans shouldn't take ESPN boys seriously

Warning to all football fans in the Lincoln area this weekend: Be on the lookout for three grown men posing as football experts in the vicinity of Memorial Stadium.

These men are recognizable because of weekly TV appearances on ESPN from late August to early January.

Do not apprehend these three men. Their ideas, comments and beliefs may permanently damage your brain.

The "College Football GameDay" crew, consisting of Chris Fowler, Lee Corso and Craig James, has a knack for brainwashing the average individual.

For instance, the terrific trio boldly promised a Notre Dame victory over Michigan while broadcasting live from South Bend, Ind., last weekend. Many innocent, unsuspecting fans believed them.

Oops.

Apparently, Corso and James (who make most of the bold forecasts) again forgot that you actually have to wait for the games to be played before declaring a victor.

One noticeable trait of the "College Football GameDay" crew members is their inept ability to be wrong.

So when you see Corso and James declaring this year as the year Tom Osborne will get his national championship, don't get too excited right away.

Listen to what they have to say about it. Maybe the old Indiana coach with a career record of 41-68-2 and the former running back from probation-torn Southern Methodist are starting to see the light.

More likely they are just leading the charge toward the Cornhusker bandwagon — a wagon that will be full if the Huskers can cover the 14-point spread against defending Pacific 10 champ UCLA on Saturday.

Go ahead, watch "College Football GameDay" on your television Saturday morning before going to the stadium. Even better, witness the odd couple perform their act live from Memorial Stadium.

However, beware of the predictions, and if you hear James say the word "respect," disregard everything



Mitch Sherman

else that comes out of his mouth for at least two minutes.

One year ago at this time, James was the nation's biggest Florida State fan. The "College Football GameDay" crew was on a mission to award the 'Noles a national championship at the halfway mark of the season.

While they were brainwashing the nation, the ESPN boys were themselves being led to believe that Florida State was far and away the best team in America. Don't get me wrong, Florida State was very good, but the team of the century?

No.

When bowl time rolled around, the Seminoles drew a game against some slow, out-of-shape school from the Midwest.

The "GameDay" trio gave Nebraska about as much of a chance to win as they gave Kentucky to defeat Florida last weekend. The only difference was the Seminoles didn't win by 66 points. They didn't even win by six.

And as quick as Craig and Lee could say Tommie, the Huskers were suddenly worthy of great respect.

There's that word again. So, Craig, why the respect all of a sudden?

Because Nebraska lost. Oh, of course.

The Huskers lost a game, albeit by only 2 points with a little help from the refs, but they lost.

The Huskers completed a perfect 11-0 season, along the way beating four bowl winners. They got no respect from James and Corso during the season. But when they lose to a great team like Florida State, all of a sudden Nebraska's a completely different team.

If you turned on "GameDay" on New Year's night, you might have noticed a pathetic plea from Mr. James.

He said he judged the Huskers wrong. Way to make yourself look credible, Craig. They are a good team, he said. A respectable team.

Some people never learn.

In the first two weeks of the season, the "GameDay" guys have been touting Nebraska as the team to beat this year. After witnessing the fall of the mighty Irish firsthand last week, Craig, Lee and Chris are going to be pumping out the Husker fight song louder than the Cornhusker marching band come Saturday.

If you get lucky enough to see one of them mingling with the fans at the HuskerVision gala Friday night, take the warning to stay away very seriously. Don't listen to everything they say, and whatever you do, do not — under any circumstances — stoop to their level and start throwing around the word "respect."

If you do, it will come back to haunt you. Just ask Craig James.

Sherman is a sophomore news-editorial major, a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter and a columnist.