

Play pushes Cowboys to top

OSU stands undefeated for first time since 1987

BY SAM MCKEWIN
Staff Reporter



Mamas, you can now let babies grow up to be Cowboys.

The Oklahoma State Cowboys returned to the national football scene with a 42-16 upset of Texas Saturday in Stillwater, Okla.

The victory improved OSU's record to 5-0 for the first time since 1987, and has propelled the Cowboys to the top of the Big 12 South Division with a 2-0 record.

Oklahoma State coach Bob Simmons said he is happy with his team's start to the season.

"The Texas game was a big one for us," Simmons said. "We played the way we needed to. Texas is a good team."

Oklahoma State jumped out to a 29-0 lead at halftime led by the play of OSU freshman quarterback Tony Lindsay and its defense. Lindsay ran for 129 yards and passed for 85, most of which came in the first half.

Texas coach John Mackovic said OSU's spread offense hurts its opponent's defense.

"They really spread out the field against the defense," he said. "They get Lindsay on the corner where he can really hurt you with his speed."

Although the OSU offense played well against the Longhorns (2-2, 0-1), the Cowboys have been paced all season by its attacking 4-6

defense. OSU held UT to 240 total yards for the game, including 86 yards on the ground.

Going into the game, OSU was ninth in the nation in total defense and third in rushing defense. Simmons said that the defense has improved as the season has continued.

"We've always been an attacking defense, and we haven't made a lot of changes," he said. "It was just a matter of getting guys with a little more experience than we've had in the past."

Texas Tech coach Spike Dykes said the OSU defense is one of the most dangerous in the conference.

"They are a team and a defense to be reckoned with," he said. "Their defense gets better every week, and they've improved their defense a lot from last year."

The special teams also have been strong with the play of defensive back R.W. McQuarters. McQuarters has returned two punts for touchdowns, including a nation-long 82-yard run against NE Louisiana. His 78-yard return against Texas put OSU up 21-0 in the first quarter.

McQuarters, who also is an all-Big 12 candidate and occasionally plays receiver, is a candidate for the best player in the conference,

Simmons said.

"He's done a lot for us this year," he said. "He's certainly a valuable player for us."

Possibly the most amazing part of OSU's success this season is that they lost five starters, including star tailback Andre Richardson, to academic ineligibility before the first game against Iowa State. While that might have hurt many teams, Simmons said OSU has stepped up well.

Cyclone coach Dan McCarney said even without those five players, he could tell OSU would be good.

"They had a tough adjustment to make after just losing those guys," he said. "I could tell that they were a real quality team at the beginning of the season, much better than the team we had seen last year."

Oklahoma State plays Colorado Saturday in Stillwater. The Buffaloes are coming off a 16-10 loss to Texas A&M and have fallen to 2-2 overall and 0-1 in the conference.

Simmons, who was Colorado's defensive coordinator before taking the OSU job, said he's not breaking out the party hats yet to celebrate a great start to the season.

"We have a long ways to go," Simmons said. "We have a big stretch of games where we play Colorado, Oklahoma and Texas A&M. We can't let down now."

Sidelined players open window for Colorado

BY ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

Nobody can put together a puzzle without all of the pieces

Nebraska (13-3 overall, 4-1 in the conference) played without some of its biggest pieces last night and it showed, as No. 22 Colorado (9-4, 5-0) put an end to one of the longest winning streaks in the country.

Without the service of juniors Jaime Krondak and Renee Saunders who sat out the match because of injuries the fifth-ranked Huskers dropped their first-ever home conference match in the 23-year history of the NU program to CU 11-15, 15-9, 15-7, 6-15, 15-8.

Krondak sat out the match with back spasms while Saunders, who broke her foot last week, will be out of action for the next six weeks. Both of them are outside hitters and strong passers for the Huskers.

Without the two, NU was left unorganized and disheveled.

"Jaime is consistent and she's been that way all year," NU middle blocker Tonia Tauke said. "She was full of motivation on the bench tonight, but

we missed her.

"It really hurts because I don't want to be known as the team that lost the streak."

Because of the injuries, freshmen Kim Crandall and Kim Behrends saw extensive playing time as Nebraska coach Terry Pettit played nine Huskers in all five games.

The game, which was played in front of 5,432 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center for the first time since Oct. 21, 1995, also put an end to the Huskers 41-home match winning streak.

Junior middle blocker Megan Korver said having the streak broken hurts, but it wasn't going to ruin the Huskers' season.

"It's tough to lose like this," Korver said, "but we have to go on and beat Oklahoma on Friday."

With the loss the Huskers fall to No. 2 in the Conference behind the Buffaloes, who are now 5-0 in the conference, and Texas, which is 4-0 in the conference. The last time NU finished second in the conference was when the Huskers finished second to Colorado in 1993 in the Big Eight Conference.

Nebraska plays at Norman, Okla., against the Sooners at 7 p.m. Friday.

Verbal yes allows for reverse

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intent. So far this season, it is known that the Huskers have received at least five verbal commitments from high school seniors. At this time last year, NU had received nine - seven of which were received over the summer.

Many players are invited to attend the NU football camp, Logsdon said, but the sessions don't serve as a tryout for the team.

"It's illegal to have a tryout camp," Logsdon said. "But we definitely encourage kids to come."

But the camp, Kelsay said, was what secured his scholarship.

"The camp basically is a recruiting camp just to show the coaches what you could do," Kelsay said.

With five commitments this year, Nebraska falls in the middle of a big pack of schools. Michigan leads with nine commitments, Penn State and South Carolina have eight, and LSU has seven.

All the powerhouse schools aren't necessarily following the trend, said Bobby Burton of the National Recruiting Advisor.

Regional appeal

"It tends to be the teams that have a strong regional appeal," Burton said. "Those are teams that are not necessarily the only game in their state, but they don't have that much competition."

Paterno agreed.

"At a Penn State or a Nebraska, you're going to have kids that grow up wanting to play there," Paterno said. "And most kids are going to want to get

"We don't pressure kids and say, 'Hey you gotta commit.' It's their decision."

JAY PATERNO
Penn State recruiting coordinator

it done with before their senior season."

Such was the case with Kelsay and many other Nebraska recruits, who grew up liking the Huskers.

Football teams are allowed to reward 25 scholarships each year, but because of NCAA cutbacks in recent years, Nebraska most likely will not sign 25 players in February. Last year, the Huskers signed 20 freshmen and two juniors.

Logsdon said players sign early for different reasons.

"To some of them, it's a relief and they can concentrate on their senior year in high school," Logsdon said. "I guess for a kid that feels like he needs to make all five of his official visits, he may wait until signing day. Top athletes can probably get away with waiting."

Take Randy Stella for example.

A senior linebacker and running back at Omaha Benson High School, Stella was offered a scholarship from the Huskers shortly after attending the Nebraska football camp in June. The 6-foot-1, 195-pounder was an all-state football selection last season and also starred as a long-jumper last spring.

Stella, who runs a 4.5-second electronic 40-yard-dash, said he is almost sure he will commit to Nebraska, but wants to take his recruiting visits to

other schools first.

"I'm pretty much a verbal commitment," Stella said last month. "I tell (NU coach Tom Osborne) that I'll come up there."

Assuming Stella makes his decision sometime before February, Nebraska could have a scholarship waiting for him. But other undecided players may feel a little more pressure on their shoulders.

Paterno said he was all for early commitments, but does not approve of talk of making an early signing period for football. Logsdon said she had not heard about the possibilities for an early signing period.

"It would put more pressure on the kids," Paterno said. "I think we ought to keep it the way it is. The kids commit, but then they can sit back and think about it until February. We don't pressure kids and say, 'Hey you gotta commit.' It's their decision."

Paterno said he expected the trend to continue, but said it had reached its peak.

"I think you're going to see more and more of this," Paterno said. "but you're not going to see your entire recruiting class committed by December. I think we're to the point where it's going to steady out."

Buffaloes stomp Huskers' record

GAME from page 9

Colorado expanded its lead to 12-7 with three consecutive kills by junior outside hitter Sarah Lodge. NU's Lisa Reitsma and Tonia Tauke blocked an Alison Koepke attempt to cut the lead to four. Two more kills by Lodge gave CU a 14-8 lead, and Colorado ignited its celebration when Lodge and Koepke blocked Reitsma.

"We have a lot of respect for

Nebraska's program," CU coach Pi'i Aiu said. "I almost feel sorry for them. So many things happened tonight. Their 41-match home streak was broken. I think we just caught them when they weren't at their best and we were at ours. We got lucky."

The Huskers recorded more digs and blocks and posted a higher hitting percentage than Colorado. But Lodge, who pounded a match-high 27 kills - including eight in the rally-scoring fifth game - said a

solid team effort secured the win for the Buffaloes.

"We're not a team of one, or of two," Lodge said. "We're a team of six and we played that way. We played as a team, not as individuals."

The win was Colorado's first over a ranked team this season. CU carries a five-match winning streak into its match with Texas A&M Friday, Nebraska returns to action Friday against Oklahoma in Norman, Okla.

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