

# Nebraska vs. Fresno State (September 3, 2016)

## Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley Quotes

### **On the running backs:**

"I think that for us right now it's a rotation. They are both going to play. Terrell [Newby] is the starter, and Devine [Ozigbo] comes in. As you can see, the other two guys are good players too, so we feel pretty good about our backs."

### **On plays:**

"I didn't really think it was going to be right like that necessarily. We of course want to run the ball, and we think that has got to be a good part of the recipe for what we do all the time. I think that we have to be two things; a little more versatile for the long spell of the season, and when we are versatile, we have to be effective."

### **On second half adjustments:**

"I have many mixed emotions about this game. Obviously there was some good football. When you rush for that many yards, you've done some pretty good things. I thought defensively, it seemed like we made a lot of good plays. Games get pretty cloudy for me when you get a punt blocked and when you have a procedure penalty that takes away a first down. When you get a big penalty when you're going to get a team off the field, you get a targeting foul that gives them new life. So I have really mixed emotions about this game. There's lots of stuff that has to change. Sometimes you feel like you can't make a good play without a celebration penalty, which is silly to me."

### **On the Sam Foltz tribute punt formation:**

"I think that it might have been early on in the start of camp, and then there were a lot of good thoughtful ideas by a lot of people. I think Shawn [Eichorst] might have been the one to bring this idea to me, and then shortly after, Drew Brown brought it to me, too. So I thought, maybe there's something there with that. I thought that the crowd responded just as I thought they would. A lot of what our team did was not orchestrated, so I'm not necessarily sure how it all got done when they came to greet Caleb [Lightbourn] when they knelt on the sidelines. I'm not sure."

### **On mistakes:**

"I think it's all frustrating. I think that we have to be better than that. I thought we'd take a step forward with penalties and it didn't feel like it. I thought we'd take a step forward without lining up illegally. Getting the punt blocked is just horrible. Fielding punts, guys running into each other is just sloppy. It just doesn't feel real good."

### **On helping players control emotions:**

"That's a good one. That's life. It's all about discipline and self-control, all those old-fashioned kind of things. The problem is the heat of the action; that's how guys can react and it can be very hurtful. Like I said, we had that penalty and then their touchdown drive gave them life. We had them stopped, and if we make them punt, we're going to get the ball midfield or better. Then we're going to score again and it's going to be just about game over, but we prevented that ourselves and that's what is really too bad."

### **On if he was given an explanation on the targeting ejection**

"I did not hear why they did not call Aaron's [Williams]. They said that Luke's [Gifford] went to the head, and that was their explanation."

### **On if he thinks coaches understand the emphasis of the targeting rule**

"I think that we all understand the emphasis. I think it is up to us to figure out what they are going to call and help our kids, and it is up to the kids to avoid that. If indeed Luke went to the head, then that is our fault. We know there is an issue there. We know there is a real pull-off standard for the quarterback there right now. Sliding, anything close to hitting the guy is going to be a penalty. In the emphasis, don't get me wrong, I think it is all real good. But I think that the point is what is the interpretation, how do we coach it, how do we change that."

### **On if he addressed the team about all of the upsets that have been taking place this week**

"I did not. I've been talking all along about the fact of the matter is that it does not matter. The game is all about us. We know that this Fresno [State] team historically has beaten a lot of what would be called bigger schools. So we all know the reality of what has happened too in the past, so our main emphasis going into the game was how we were going to play."

### **On his thoughts about all of the positive stats the team put up**

"Those were good stats. We got it going. Don't get me wrong, we are happy to win. We did some good things, we rushed for close to 300 yards, that is good to do. And we didn't turn the ball over, so that is a big leap from a year ago. I don't think it was their longest game on their offense. They had their one pass near the end that was probably their biggest gain. So we limited big plays a little better than we did for sure a year ago against most teams and we didn't turn the ball over. Those were two things that we wanted to get done."

### **On how he thought freshman punter Caleb Lightbourn performed and if senior wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp will continue to return punts**

"I don't think so forever. That was just for tonight. It was one of those games as you saw where it was going to be trying to field the ball. The ball mostly hung up into the wind and we did not adjust very well to that as a matter of fact, so it wasn't going to be a big return night."

### **On how he thought senior quarterback Tommy Armstrong played in a decision-making standpoint**

"I thought he did a nice job with all that. He didn't have lots of throws, so it would be hard to categorize his decision-making over what we did that way, but when you couple it on how he makes decisions on the run-option stuff and I thought he did a nice job with it tonight. I thought he had some good runs himself."