

Nebraska vs. Oregon (Sept. 17, 2016)

Nebraska Player Quotes

Senior Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr.

On satisfaction of winning close game

"It feels great. It was a team effort. Defense got us stops when they needed to. Offensive line did a great job. We made plays when we had to, definitely late in the game. Three and a half minutes left, fourth and nine, being able to put a ball in there and move the chains, I kind of thought they that got the momentum with offense, definitely with the offensive line, moving definitely. When we converted on that fourth down and (were) able to move the chains, get down there and score."

On injury and process to get back into game

"I was just cramping a lot. I thought I could tough it out the first time. I started cramping, but I was trying to hydrate as much as I could. When you find yourself in that situation, you've just got to make sure you roll out, get close to a trainer, and make sure they're helping you out. The second time, both of my legs started locking up. Then I figured out you can't really do anything about it. Do what the doctors tell you to do, so I had to take those steps and make sure that, I could hydrate as much as I could before that last couple drives."

On the final touchdown

"It was kind of a two step thing. We either pass the ball or run the ball. Saw a certain defense, they were overloading the right side. Got a chance to get a push up front with [Dylan] Utter and those guys working up to the next level with Devine [Ozigbo] getting the cut on that linebacker. I found my self one-on-one with the safety, made him miss, and tried my best to get in the end zone. With my legs hurting a lot, but those guys helped me out when it came to pushing me to try to finish the game. That's what a family and a brotherhood is about, putting your hands on each other's shoulders when you need help to push throughout the game. Those guys did a great job of helping me out."

On how legs felt during final touchdown

"It felt like Jell-o honestly. I was just trying to get in the end zone. When I got in the end zone, that's when it started cramping up a lot more. I just sat there. They had to pick me up. Once you get the adrenaline pumping, you don't really realize until you get to the sideline then you're like 'Oh man, here we go.' And Mark [Phillip] was like 'Are you all right?' And I was like 'Yeah, I'm good.' Just make sure you hydrate. That's the key in the middle of the day. My legs hurt, but they feel better when they're in the end zone. It helps a lot."

On personal satisfaction with win and satisfaction with Coach Riley's history with Oregon

"Like I said before, we treat every week like a big week. It's great for us. It's a statement game for our season this year. That's our goal, to be 3-0 going into conference play. Like I said before, we treat every week like a big week. We've got Northwestern, our first away game, this upcoming week. We have to focus up for that. As far as this game, it's one of the biggest games I've played in. In front of these fans, they did a great job of supporting us throughout the whole game. Like I said before, we treat every week like a big week. We've got Northwestern this upcoming week, and we're looking forward to that."

On the enormity of this game at home and the fans

"They brought the intensity whenever we needed it. The offense of Oregon found themselves calling timeouts in certain situations. Later in the game when they would have needed those timeouts, they didn't have them. The communication wasn't as (good) as we thought it would be with how loud it was when our defense was out there. They did a great job of rallying up. Just getting those miscues with the offense on Oregon's side. Just the play-calling and having our defense get stops. It helped a lot on defense. Offensive-wise, once we made big plays they supported us and things like that, so they fueled the fire when it came ot both sides of the ball."

On the backwards pass that was a fumble

"I've just got to get depth on my throws. Definitely when it comes to swing passes like that. Quarterbacks always have to take their drop beforehand, so if I would have taken my drop like I would have, or (was) supposed to, it would have been a forward pass instead of a backward pass, instead of just punching and trying to get the ball out to him because no one was covering him. But I just have to trust in my feet and stay with what I'm coached to do. It cost us early in the game, having that happen, marching down the field, getting first downs. We've just got to make sure, definitely myself staying with how we're suppose to run plays, just taking care of the football."

On team running the ball in the second half

"We just saw opportunities. We've got coach [Danny] Langsdorf up there seeing certain things, and he told us after the first half, 'You guys are only one block away from making a 3-, 4-yard run into a 12-, 15-yard run.' And all-of-a-sudden those offensive linemen started understanding, started buying ino the system, started having that fight to them that we knew that they had all along. And they just started putting their foot in the ground, putting their foot in the turf and just pushing people back. Our running backs were running hard: Devine [Ozigbo], Mikale [Wilbon], and Terrell Newby. Those guys were runnink hard, defintely after contact running guys over and just getting first downs for us."

On Oregon's final fourth down

"Honestly I was sitting on the bench, hydrating as much as I could because I was in a little bit of pain. But I was with the receivers and the linemen and I just told them, 'Hey, no matter what don't get comfortable, because we may have to go out there.' That's the attitude you have to have. Throughout any game, those guys make plays when you don't expect it. Late in the game, you never know what may happen. We just had to make sure we were ready. I was making sure I was hydrated, and we were going over plays that we were going to run just in case something happened. We were just making sure from the get-go that we were prepared in case the offense had to go out there."

On connection with Jordan Westerkamp on fourth down

"It's not even about a roommate thing. It's just trusting my receivers. We had certain looks based on defense, who we were going to. They gave us a look to where we had a one-on-one with Westy. That guy is definitely going to catch a ball when you need him to. He caught some great balls today, some tough ones. The look they gave us on defense, I had to stay in the pocket and trust my offensive line to give me some time, and they did. And just make that play. And that just fueled that fire, going down and scoring."

Nebraska vs. Oregon (Sept. 17, 2016)

Nebraska Player Quotes

On coming back from being down 20-7 in the final minute of the first half

"I think it all started off with DP [junior wide receiver De'Mornay Pierson-EI], I told him, hey man, if you ever wanted to make a statement, here's your time, and he said, I got you man. And he went out there and he returned it 50-something yards and got us in a position to score. And I applaud him for it, he told me he had us, and he went out there and made a guy miss and he did what he always does. I think it's just a confidence thing for him. He's building confidence each time he goes out there and makes a play like that, and him having surgery and things like that, being able to go out there and make a play like that, it boosts his confidence a lot more this season, of just being able to go out there and trust in himself. So he started that all off by getting us those yards, definitely, late into the second quarter going into half-time."

On what he saw available in the fade-route to the back corner that the Huskers had three plays with

"Just one-on-one. We took our one-on-ones, our chances, definitely with so many guys in the box. We trust in our guys to make plays and we feel like we've got the best receiving corps in the country. We've just got to make sure that we give them the chance to go up and get a ball, and they did."

On senior wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp's catches

"Like I said before, those guys, they're willing to work their tails off whenever their number's called. They've just got to execute and I think that Jordan did a great job of executing whenever his number was called. Like I told him before, I said, hey, based on their defense, you may get the ball, we've just got to make sure that we're on the same page right before that snap. And he said, all right, we've just got to get a little bit of time, if they man-break it or if they play it man, just give me a little time, just put the ball on me. And I said, all right, well I know exactly what defense they're going to play based on film study, so we did a great job of executing, and like I said before, offensive line did a great job of making sure we got in the end zone."

On excitement in the locker room after the game

"We were excited, but like we said, we're not done yet. This is only week three. We've got another week to look forward to. We're looking forward to each week. This is just the statement game for us. Everybody said that we had a couple easy games, but it's going to test our will this week, and that just shows how well we work, how hard our team works to prove to everybody that we're better than what we were last year. We just had to make sure we put it all on film and put it out there for the world to see, so we're looking forward to next week."

On whether Coach Mike Riley's history with Oregon makes the win more satisfying

"You know, we really weren't there for everything with Oregon State and Oregon. But he's here, he's at Nebraska. It's one of those things that we always look forward to, is playing a great team like Oregon and just being able to prove to everybody that we're willing to work our tails off to win games. And like I said before, this week is this week now, we're going aside looking at the things we need to fix and looking forward to having our first away game."

Senior Safety Nathan Gerry

On the final play and where it ranks

"I would for sure say top two. You know, ever since I've been here we have played a lot of tough games. We've had a lot of tough losses in those big-time games. This is one of those bigger games where we played someone out of conference. We saw something we won't see everyday in the Big Ten. I was just proud of the guys for fighting until the end, and that was one thing we worked on all week and that was one thing we prepared for was to be mentally strong and physically strong."

On what there is to prove

"We have something to prove all year, we have the same guys as we had last year. It was tough on a lot of people last year with the transition but everyone is bought in right now. We have a chip on our shoulder we are capable of something and the sky is the limit for us. We just have to keep putting our heads down and going to work. That is one thing we did from last week to try and get better."

On what the defense did best

"Never gave up. We knew we were going to see some funky things and they did a lot of side-to-side running. Just being able to track the ball down and make those tackles in space. I thought just the effort out of the whole defense was great. I thought Coach Banker had a good game too, he called a lot of good plays in certain situations. I just thought the defense stepped up today and I was real proud of them."

On the discussion on the sidelines after Oregon took the lead

"I think we were just frustrated with ourselves, beat ourselves. You know, we put ourselves in some situations that we were put in practice. We knew things were coming and it was game time environment where you know, you give up 3rd-and-30 and just plays like that where you have to still fine tune."

On Oregon's final drive

"In the back of my mind and a lot of the other guys mind was not again. It kind of crossed our mind and I think we overcame a lot of things. I thought these guys did a great job in the big time situations and we had a lot of people step in and make plays that's what we ask of the Blackshirts everyday."

On watching Tommy Armstrong Jr.

"Ever since I have been here I have respected the hell out of Tommy (Armstrong Jr.). Tommy is one of the toughest dudes I know. I have never seen him get knocked down and not get back up. This whole team respects Tommy for him as a ball player, we love him for it."

On rallying around the ball

"If we want to be an elite defense that's the type of attitude we have to have. You know that is just the Blackshirts mentality, getting to the ball and chasing the ball so that is just one thing we focus on everyday."

On being 3-0

"We got a lot to improve. The Big Ten, you never know what you are going to get in the Big Ten. So everyday we have to come to practice. We have to win the week. Northwestern, they are a good ball team, I have never played them since I have been here. We just have to put our nose down."

Nebraska vs. Oregon (Sept. 17, 2016)

Nebraska Player Quotes

Sophomore Defensive End Freedom Akinmoladun

On the sack and fumble he caused to set up 4th-and-18 with under a minute left

"I just went out there and did what my coaches told me to do, and we had good coverage on the back end, and I said we'll get a sack for the last play."

On Oregon's final drive

"They always go fast-tempo so we always have to plan on that, but we knew that this was the drive, and we knew that as the defense we had to execute, because the offense did their thing, so we have to do our thing."

On the mindset of the defense after the Huskers scored a touchdown in the last minutes of the game

"With defense, it's always about short-term memory. If we mess up on one play, we've got to go to the next play. Because if you think about the last play, we're going to have continuously bad plays going on. So just as a whole defense, we said, 'All right, next play, next series. We'll get out there.'"

On heading into Big Ten Conference play with a 3-0 record

"We all have a mindset, especially the defensive line, and we just want to do our best, every single time, every single play, and that goes for the whole defense. We want to go out there, play our best every single play and give it our all."

On the importance of winning a close game early, based on last year's early season results

"There was a lot of close games that we didn't come up on top, but we always kept our composure and we were able to finish the game."

On how the Husker defense has been able to stay focused

"That's just based on the leadership that our defense has and the communication that we all have with one another. And also the part that we all try to have one mind, one mindset, and that's to get after the offense."

On anyone on the sideline saying anything before the last Oregon drives

"I don't think I could hear anybody because the crowd was going crazy. But you definitely know when your teammates want you to make a big play. And it's not just me, but it's everybody wants the defense to make a big play, because they know that we went out there and competed."

Senior Wide Receiver Jordan Westerkamp

On his catch on 4th-and-9 to keep Nebraska's game-winning drive alive

"I had a quick in kind of called for me, and man-to-man coverage, they played a lot of man-to-man. I was super-comfortable with the play call and just ready to go. The line held up awesome there, and we needed a big play. You know Tommy (Armstrong), he is the biggest competitor out on the field, made a great throw right in there, first down. Tommy runs it in for the touchdown, end of story we win."

On his say in the call to push down the field

"You know I was already out there on the field, but I was happy we were going for it. It was huge for us and it was just great to get that big win over them."

On Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s performance

"Tommy played out of his mind. He is such a competitor. He was dealing with so much. He was taking big hit after big hit, cramping up a little bit. Like I said just now, he is the biggest competitor out there, and it is awesome to have him as our quarterback. The guy never quits, and that motivates our offense and our whole team so much."

On whether they would be worried for the outcome

"No, every time we huddled up we kept telling each other on the sideline that we were going to win. It never phased my mind we weren't going to win that game."

On how important the win was

"It is huge. We have had so many close games, especially last year. It was awesome to come out on top of this one, beating a great program in Oregon, and it will give us so much momentum here going into the Big Ten play."

On the certainty of his catch

"We know Oregon plays man-to-man defense, and my route was specifically set up to kind of beat that man. We were able to run a good route there, and Tommy got in there and the line blocked perfectly so it was a great play for us."

On linebacker Michael Rose-Ivey

"Just on the sidelines, the guys, we were just watching him play and the guy, he is just all over the place and all over the field. He had an unbelievable game and like you said, a lot of injuries, so it is awesome to see him out there and making plays because we know how good he is."

On the key going into Big Ten play

"This isn't the exclamation mark, this is just the start. It is great to get that huge win against them, like I said it is a huge momentum going into that Big Ten play."

On how much the program has grown

"As you all know we had a lot of close games and it came down to little details. We have grown so much more coming into this season and said we weren't going to be beat like that anymore. Just the second year with this new staff we have grown so much closer with them and have been able to take this playbook in so much more now, and everyone has a much better understanding and everyone is playing better. It has been great."