

# Nebraska vs. Minnesota (Nov. 12, 2016)

## Nebraska Player Quotes

### Senior Wide Receiver Jordan Westerkamp

#### On if anything Tommy Armstrong Jr. does surprises him

"No. He has had a pretty incredible career and he is such a competitor. I say it every single time I get asked about him, he is the most competitive person I know and he just battles and battles and battles. I think it is great to see that out of your quarterback, out of one of your leaders."

#### On if he had talked to him yet after the game

"Yeah, he is just disappointed that he is dealing with the injury bug but he will be okay and he is excited we won, obviously. He had some huge plays tonight, so it was great to have him making those plays and we are going to need him going forward."

#### On the team's thoughts as it was trailing at halftime

"We were disappointed with our performance in the first half, we left a lot out there. We tweaked some things and came out in the second half on fire and just got after it. Things were clicking, we hit a lot of passes and were hitting some great runs. Everything was just working real well for us in the second half."

#### On how important it was to win after the past two weeks

"Coming off of two tough losses against Wisconsin and Ohio State, it was tough for our guys but our team had been through so much adversity, so we were not going to let two losses bring us down. We knew a great opponent with Minnesota was coming in here tonight and they were going to give us their all, but it was great to come out with a win."

#### On how much seeing Tommy Armstrong Jr. return from injury energizes the team

"A ton. He is one of our leaders, one of our guys with a lot of experience. He has been a quarterback forever now it seems like. He is just a great guy to have out there. He brings so much to the table, not just his quarterback play but his mentality, like you said, his toughness being able to come back after injury, after injury. It is incredible. Guys see that and that energizes us, definitely."

#### On how important it ended up being for Ryker Fyfe to get snaps in practice since he had to come into the game

"It was huge. In case injury did happen, with Tommy coming off of his concussion protocol so we were not certain who was going to be the guy. But Tommy came out and played as hard as he could. Unfortunately, he had another injury and he had to come out, but Ryker was able to go. He had a great week at practice, he was prepared. From the receivers' point of view, we were ready for both guys and there was really no setback with that."

#### On how important it was for all of the wide receivers to be healthy

"It is huge. You see it out there with guys making play after play. De'Mornay [Pierson-El] had some huge plays where it did not look like he was getting anywhere and all of a sudden he sprung a huge run. Stan the Man [Stanley Morgan Jr.] obviously making grabs, those guys all around. Everybody is making plays. It was great to have all the guys out there healthy."

#### On if he knew Tommy Armstrong Jr. would be ready to go

"Pretty much. I knew he was not going to let a concussion hold him back, but he was cleared and everything was good to go. He came in and had to get ready at practice on Thursday and Friday and was ready to go. Just living with the guy I knew he was going to be back. I know his personality, he is a competitor, I have already said that multiple times. But we were excited to have him and he made some huge plays tonight."

#### On how important it was to have Tre Bryant's touchdown

"It was huge at the beginning of the game there to get one in there and put some points on the board, especially coming off of two games where we kind of stalled a little bit, so to speak. But it was huge to have that. That was a big moment for us. We have to keep going."

### Senior Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr.

#### On the process and uncertainty of this week leading up to the game, on whether or not he'd play

"I was kind of nervous, but I just wanted to go through the protocol. A couple days where I was kind of ticked off about the results here and there, but it got better, I just had to trust in the doctors, trust in [Head Football Athletic Trainer] Mark [Mayer] to do the right stuff and make sure I'm on the right path to coming back. Now that I look at it, I'm glad that they held me back on some days. I may have felt good on Sunday but didn't feel too good on Monday, so they did a great job."

#### On how the first hit to his head in the game affected him

"I was good. That was probably one thing that I was kind of nervous about, what if I'm actually going to run down and hit my head one time, just see how it feels. But after that happened the first time I was good to go."

#### On his last touchdown run and what was going on in his head during the drive

"Just move the chains, trust in my guys. You know, those guys work their tails off all week and me, having a couple days of practice in, I just wanted to go out there and do what I had to do to get us in the right position to win. Coach Riley and Coach Cav[anaugh] told us if we wanted to win, we were going to have to put a drive together, because they were trying to keep the ball away from us earlier in the game, managing the clock well, and we had to make sure that we put our defense in the right situation. We came out, first drive, scored, tied the game up, and being able to just go down there, have a long drive like we did, and punch it in for a touchdown and get us the lead and just put the ball game in the hands of our defense, they did a great job of working their tails off to get two stops."

#### On what plays the offense was going to try to do with Tommy's hobbling

"Everything. They asked me before, was I able to run, was I able to, you know, scramble out and throw the ball if I needed to, and I told them, 'yeah.' It was just something that I just have to suck up and say, 'hey, I'll be okay.' At the end of the day, I only have one quarter left to get out there and work my tail off to get the ball in their hands. So I just told them to just open up the playbook. If we needed to run quarterback runs, I was there to run. If we needed to throw the ball and have some scrambles with myself outside the pocket, I could do that too."

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## Nebraska Player Quotes

### Junior Safety Kieron Williams

#### On winning the game

"It felt good just to be able to get over the hump of the last two weeks and be able to close the game out and get away (with a win)."

#### On how the defense bounced back from last week's performance

"When you get 3-and-outs, when you're able to make a team punt the ball, it definitely boosts the morale of the defense. So since we were able to do that tonight it felt great. Minnesota is a great team so if you can make a team like that punt, you're definitely doing something right."

#### On the defense making a play to close out the win

"We try to say it as a group. We try to talk about it and say 'hey, we need to make a play right now and do it right now'. Tonight, I was blessed for it to be me. So we just try to do our best. If it's the fourth quarter and it's a tight game, we put it on ourselves as the defense to be the tide that turns the game."

#### On what he saw on his interception that sealed the win

"We were in our base defense. Aaron (Williams) got his hand on the ball. If it weren't for Aaron, I wouldn't have gotten it. So Aaron put his hand on the ball, it pops in the air, and I was able to get it and do my best not to fumble."

#### On quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr.

"Tommy is the toughest dude I've ever been around. He's going to have any type of injury and he's gonna come back. Like a lot of quarterbacks, what happened to him last week, (they) would not have been playing this week. That dude is definitely a warrior. People can say what they want to say about him, but I wouldn't rather go to war with any (other) dude in college football."

#### On his battle with safety Nathan Gerry for the team lead in interceptions

"It's always a healthy competition. There are no bets or anything involved because that would be illegal."

#### On the halftime adjustments made by the defense

"I mean our coaches did a great job. It was all our coaches. They came in with a second-half game plan and just told us to trust it and we did trust it, and we were just able to make some plays in the second half. They definitely came out with some new wrinkles, some things that we had not seen and some different formations. Once we figured out what they were trying to do and how they were trying to attack us, we just did our best to lock down on it."

### Senior Linebacker Josh Banderas

#### On winning the game

"Just a good feeling. I mean anytime you get a win is awesome. And I only have one game left at home. I saw the team bounce back to show who we really were. Had two rough weeks and there are some things we wish we could take back but it's all in the past. Tonight we put it on the grass and we grew a lot."

#### On the seniors taking charge

"It's huge, it was huge. I don't know what was going on in the first half, we were out of whack and not playing our kind of ball. The older guys out there took charge and knew what we had to do and you see from the result we got it done in the second half."

#### On Minnesota's offense

"I like this. I call it real football. I like the real old school football. Kind of ground-and-pound, kind of man-on-man action. So this was definitely more of a team that I am suited for and that I like playing."

#### On his injury

"I just need to start wearing thigh pads. I just got whacked in my thigh and couldn't move my legs but it'll get there, I just got to start wearing thigh pads."

#### On wanting to say undefeated at home

"Everyone comes out and supports us, and so many fans coming to road games. So to be able to leave this place knowing we left a good taste in the fans' mouth and in our mouth, just kind of show that this place is one of the greatest places to playing college football. And our record here would show that, it's a great feeling."

#### On the secondary

"So reassuring to know that if you take care of what you have to do underneath and you see that ball go over your head and you turn around knowing and feel good about the result. A big part of their success is number one there just playing with so much confidence and so much swagger it's unbelievable and you can really see who the guys are out there. They're having fun and their playing like the players that they are and our underneath coverage is gotten better and we are taking away the routes they don't have to worry about because they're trusting us and playing over the top so we're just working so much better as one unit as a defense that's I think where the credits to our successes are going."

#### On being on the field at the end of the game

"Love it. It's what you want and what you dream about. You come here and you don't want to be on the sideline watching the game be in somebody else's hands, you want to have it in your hands and you want to be able to make those plays that you can be on ESPN and you can be the guy that's getting high fives and everything. So it's a great feeling going out there knowing that we have the game in our hands."