

Frazier Sticking With Ponder As Vikings Quarterback

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — The only passes from Christian Ponder that didn't sail over a receiver's head or bounce harmlessly out of bounds seemed to land in the arms of a Green Bay defender just as the Minnesota Vikings were approaching the end zone.

At one point, the beleaguered quarterback went nearly 39 minutes of game action without completing a pass, rendering moot another breath-taking performance from Adrian Peterson.

Yet through all the struggles, all the poor footwork and all the back-breaking mistakes that allowed a winnable road game against a division opponent to swirl down the drain, coach Leslie Frazier stuck with Ponder. And he sticks by him still.

Frazier said Monday he never considered pulling Ponder against the Packers and believes he is the QB that gives the team the best chance to win against Chicago this week.

"It hasn't come up any time this season where I thought we needed to pull him out of a game," Frazier said. "That hasn't occurred."

Frazier acknowledged such unwavering support, whether solely his decision or a result of a directive from the front office that drafted Ponder in the first round last season, has the potential to rattle other players in the locker room — players who seem to be held to a different standard of accountability.

"I've thought about that a lot because when you're struggling at a position, the

guys know how we talked about everybody doing their jobs and why it's important for us to have our success," Frazier said. "You don't want to send mixed messages at any position."

The Vikings led the Packers 14-10 at halftime, jumping on Peterson's broad shoulders to move into position for a commanding lead early in the third quarter when Peterson ripped off a 48-yard run to the Green Bay 12-yard line. Ponder was intercepted in the end zone on the next play.

With Percy Harvin missing his third straight game, Ponder didn't complete a pass to a wide receiver until late in the fourth quarter. The putrid air game allowed the Packers to weather a 210-yard day from Peterson and a shaky perform-

ance from their own offense to drop the Vikings to 6-6.

Ponder's struggles were so glaring that Frazier was asked repeatedly Monday about his reluctance to play backup Joe Webb in the second half. Webb has provided a spark periodically over the past two seasons, including games at Philadelphia in 2010 and at Washington last year.

Frazier has shown a willingness to rotate players during games at other positions, including safety with Jamarca Sanford and Mistral Raymond, and right guard with Brandon Fusco and Geoff Schwartz. But the coach said Monday he approaches quarterback with a different view, one that values continuity above all else.

"I think there's something there where in my mind you don't want to get into a situation where you're not sure who your No. 1 is," Frazier said. "We believe that Christian is our No. 1. ... That being said, if things get to a point where your No. 1 is really costing you some situations that could preclude winning, you do have to do what's best for the football team."

It's getting harder for Frazier to argue that Ponder remains the right choice for the Vikings. They started the season 5-2 thanks in part to Ponder's steady play, but have dropped four of the last five while he has crumbled.

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Huskers Roll Past USC, Face Creighton Next

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Ray Gallegos scored 20 points and made a career-high six 3-pointers to lead Nebraska to a 63-51 victory over Southern California on Monday night.

The Cornhuskers (6-1), off to their best start since 2008-09, led by as many as 20 points in the most lopsided game in the four-game series with the Trojans.

The Huskers, who came into the game shooting just 29.8 percent on 3s, made a season-high 11 of 17.

Dylan Talley, who made three 3s, finished with 14 points.

J.T. Terrell scored 14 points, Byron Wesley had 12 and Jio Fontan scored 11 for the Trojans (3-4).

Nebraska had beaten USC each of the past three years by a total of eight points, and it looked like it would be another close game early. Then Gallegos went on a tear, scoring all 11 of his first-half points in a row to give the Huskers a 33-25 lead.

He hit a 3-pointer to tie it at 25, put Nebraska ahead with a jumper inside the arc and then hit two more 3s to make it an eight-point game.

The Huskers were just getting started.

Andre Almeida's bank-in, tip-in, inside bucket and Talley's 3-pointer helped extend the run to 19-3 early in the second half.

USC had a 10 1/2-minute field-goal drought end when Fontan swiped the ball from Gallegos and drove the length of the floor for a layup, ending a stretch in which the Trojans missed nine shots and committed five turnovers.

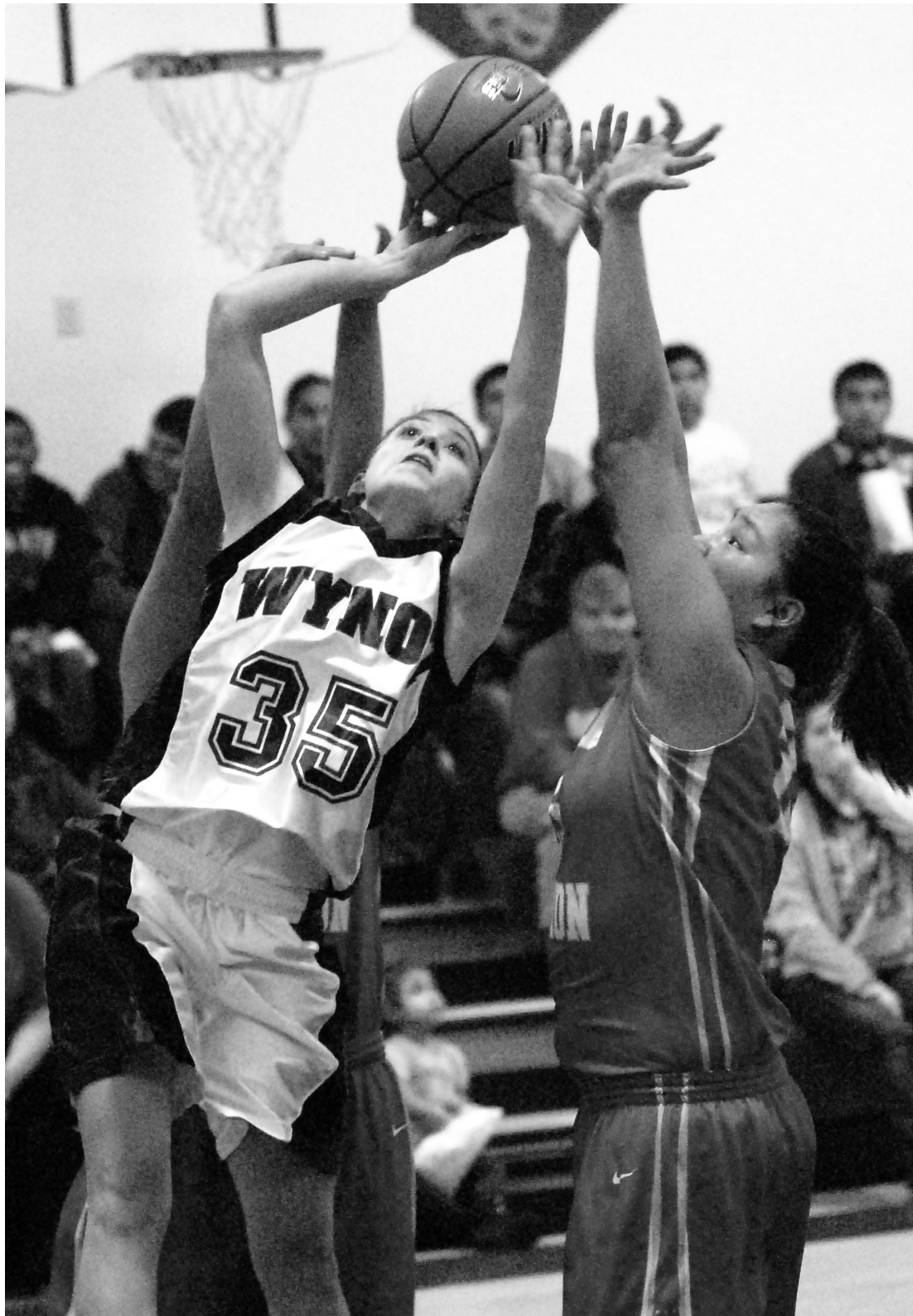
Gallegos' fourth and fifth 3-pointers, along with Shavon Shields' short jumper, stretched Nebraska's lead to 52-32 with 10 minutes to play.

The Huskers committed 15 turnovers but were still more than good enough against a USC team that has been woeful on the road. The Trojans, who were playing their first true road game of the season, have lost 11 straight on the road and 29 of 37.

Nebraska, picked to finish last in the Big Ten, posted a second straight convincing victory. The Huskers won 79-63 at Wake Forest last Tuesday for their largest margin of victory on the road since 2003.

They'll face their toughest test to date when 16th-ranked Creighton visits on Thursday.

THREE-PEAT BID OFF TO 3-0 START



Wynot's Zoey Heimes, 35, goes up for a layup around the defense of Omaha Nation's Brenna Parker, right, during their game Monday night in Wynot, Neb. Wynot, which has won the past two Class D2 girls' basketball titles, improved to 3-0 with a 92-37 victory.

Wynot Girls Cruise Past Omaha Nation

WYNOT, Neb. — Defending Class D2 champion Wynot forced 40 turnovers in a 92-37 girls' high school basketball victory over Omaha Nation on Monday night in Wynot, Neb.

Maggie Schulte scored 19 points to lead the Lady Blue Dev-

ils (3-0), who led 43-20 at halftime. Sam Wieseler added 12 points, while Kelsie Higgins and Shelby Hochstein both scored nine points. Twelve players scored in the game for Wynot.

In the loss for the Lady Chiefs, Teonah Randol, Keiley Miller and

Keisha Grant all scored eight points.

Wynot hosts Osmond on Friday. Omaha Nation, 1-1, travels to Winnebago on Thursday.

OMAHA NATION (1-1)	8	20	25	37
WYNOT (3-0)	23	43	66	92



Wynot's Austin Lange, 32, goes up for a put-back between two Omaha Nation defenders during the first quarter of their game Monday night in Wynot, Neb.

Wynot Boys Survive Slow Start To Stay Unbeaten

WYNOT, Neb. — The Wynot Blue Devils overcame a five-point first quarter to claim a 52-34 victory over Omaha Nation in boys' basketball action on Monday.

Wynot led 5-4 after one quarter, then stretched the lead to 24-16 by halftime and 42-22 after three quarters.

Jackson Sudbeck scored a game-high 20 points to lead Wynot. Nathan Wieseler finished with 11 points and 11 rebounds. Austin Lange added nine rebounds in the victory.

For Omaha Nation, Marcus Walker scored 13 points.

Wynot, 3-0, hosts Osmond in a Lewis & Clark Conference matchup on Friday. Omaha Nation, 0-2, travels to Winnebago on Thursday.

OMAHA NATION (0-2)	4	16	22	34
WYNOT (3-0)	5	24	42	52

Utah To Hang Replica Majerus Sweater From Rafters

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — University of Utah officials will honor the legacy of Rick Majerus by hanging a replica of his trademark white sweater in honor of a man Utah athletic director Chris Hill remembered as a "basketball savant." Majerus died Saturday in Los Angeles while awaiting a heart transplant. He was 64.

"To retire his jersey and put a No. 1 up there, it just doesn't make any sense," Hill said Monday.

The replica sweater will be created to fit in with the select names already hanging from the rafters.

"We want people to know it's Rick," Hill said. "You'll know it's a sweater, but at the same time it won't diminish anybody else who is out there."

Majerus had been invited back previously to be inducted into Utah's Hall of Fame but the timing wasn't right last year as he was coaching at Saint Louis and his health had taken a turn for the worse. Hill said the induction is still planned for a man who led the Utes to the 1998 NCAA final and had only one losing season in 25 years with four schools.

"His career exploded during his time here and the University of Utah's recognition exploded following his wake," Hill said. "We are pleased to have the opportunity to have worked with somebody that was one of a kind."

Hill said he hopes to sit down with former players, coaches and supporters to discuss other ways to recognize Majerus, especially since there are plans to expand the Huntsman Center and upgrade facilities.

He also is working with the athletic director at Saint Louis, where Majerus most recently coached, to have him inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

"Essentially he was a genius and a savant in basketball," Hill said. "He died way too soon at 64 and many of us maybe knew that day was coming."

Hill said he definitely knew by the fourth game of Majerus' tenure at Utah that he was a great coach because of his passion and planning — even if he sometimes couldn't find his own shirt in his messy office.

"Somehow he was able to make it happen," he said.

Hill said he intends to attend Majerus' funeral Saturday in Milwaukee, where Majerus was born.

Current Utah coach Larry Krystkowiak, who played five years in Milwaukee and also coached at the NBA level there, remembers seeing Majerus at practices and training camps.

Krystkowiak called Majerus a "basketball junkie," living out of a Marriott near campus so he wouldn't be distracted by rent and coaching players he saw as an extension of his own family.

"Rick did it his way," Krystkowiak said. "He wasn't interested in making everybody happy, but if you were part of that basketball fraternity, then he had a special way to touch everybody."

Krystkowiak, 5-2 in his second season as Utah coach, recalled a vivid dream he had involving a healthy Majerus a year ago.

It wasn't long after that he spoke with Hill and the coach's longtime friend, Jon Huntsman, about bringing Majerus back to honor him.

"I fly all over the country, recruiting and doing various things and I'll run into people with my Utah gear on and it's unbelievable the people who want to know where Rick is," Krystkowiak recalled. "If you think about Utah basketball, he's the first name that comes to mind."

Though they weren't able to bring Majerus back for a special game, he said his passing will inspire and motivate everyone involved with the program.

"We're going to represent the program in grand fashion," Krystkowiak said, while adding that he doesn't believe anybody can live up to what Majerus did during his run at Utah.

"It's really beyond words what he did basketball-wise," Krystkowiak said of Majerus' 323-95 record with the Utes.

Sophomore center Dallin Bachynski said Monday that he regrets not ever having the chance to meet Majerus.

"Even though he's passed, he's still a big part of what (Utah) is now," he said. "He drives us forward, drives coach forward. It's one of the things as a team we want to do — play so we kind of respect what he did. Not play to get the amount of wins he got, but the way he did it, the kind of people that we are... (that) is the way we respect his memory."