

No. 8 Nebraska Goes Down To Wire With Quarterback Call

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska fans haven't forgotten that one-point loss to Texas in the Big 12 championship game, and they're still celebrating next year's move to the Big Ten.

But the biggest topic of conversation in Big Red country lately has been about who'll be the starting quarterback when the No. 8 Cornhuskers open against Western Kentucky on Saturday night.

Coach Bo Pelini hasn't said whether he'll go with Zac Lee, the senior incumbent, Cody Green, or redshirt freshman Taylor Martinez.

"I think it will come down to the last-minute call," offensive lineman Ricky Henry said.

Pelini probably can't go wrong regardless of who he chooses for this game. After all, the Sun Belt Conference's Hilltoppers have lost 20 games in a row and are five-touchdown underdogs.

The Huskers have their highest preseason ranking since 2001 and will be in position to make a run at the national championship if their

offense improves.

The Ndamukong Suh-led defense carried the Huskers a year ago while the offense chugged along to a No. 99 national ranking.

"We know that we didn't live up to everything that was expected last year," receiver Brandon Kinnie said.

Lee started 12 of 14 games and was serviceable, though the Huskers went through a brutal patch where they scored four touchdowns over four games. He had surgery on his right (throwing) elbow after the season, forcing him to miss spring practice.

Green and Martinez did enough in the spring to make it a three-man race that, Pelini predicted, could last until October.

"They've played at a high level," offensive coordinator Shawn Watson said. "They've had to, to stay in the hunt. It's been a great competition and it's really, really close."

Roy Helu Jr. and Rex Burkhead give the Huskers a 1-2 punch at running back, the offensive line is deep

and the Niles Paul-led receiving corps is experienced.

Jared Crick, Suh's partner on the defensive line, and cornerback Prince Amukamara lead a unit that's strong in front and back. The Huskers were left vulnerable at linebacker when Sean Fisher broke his leg last month, and there will be two new starters at safety.

The Hilltoppers not only are outmanned, they'll be going against an opponent that has won 24 straight openers. Nebraska has scored at least 40 points 17 times during the streak and given up 14 points or less 16 times.

"For us to have a chance, we have to be on our 'A' game," first-year WKU coach Willie Taggart said.

"They have an opportunity to win a national championship this year. But anything is possible," Taggart said. "If we're not sharp, we're not going to have a chance."

This is another in a line of "money" games for the Hilltoppers, who'll earn \$800,000 for their visit to Memorial Stadium. Since 2008

they've also visited Tennessee, Alabama and Virginia Tech.

"That most definitely is going to help us," WKU defensive end Jared Clendenin said. "We're not going to be in there with those big wide eyes. You know how it is when you walk in a big stadium like that. All you want to do is look around at the fans."

The Huskers are coming off a 10-4 year in which they won six of their last seven games, including a 33-0 Holiday Bowl win over Arizona.

All that stood between Nebraska and a BCS game was the 13-12 loss to Texas. The Longhorns kicked the winning field goal after one second was put back on the game clock.

Players are wearing reminders on their wrists — red rubber bracelets with the messages "0.01" and "FINISH" stamped in.

It still comes up on ESPN Classic, and I can't watch it," Kinnie said, "it still eats at me. We have a lot of motivation, a lot to prove this year."

Western Kentucky (0-0) at No. 8 Nebraska (0-0)

By The Associated Press

Line: Nebraska by 37 1/2.
Series Record: First meeting.

What's at Stake

The race for Nebraska's starting QB job probably will go at least until the Cornhuskers make their trip to Washington in three weeks. Coach Bo Pelini hasn't said whether Zac Lee, Cody Green or Taylor Martinez would take the first snaps. Look for all three to play, with the best performer getting a leg up in the competition. **Key Matchup**

Western Kentucky OL vs. Nebraska front four. The Hilltoppers have a veteran line that averages 303 pounds, and they'll try to dent the middle in an attempt to keep the ball out of the Huskers' hands. Nebraska was tough against the run last year, but now it's without AP national player of the year and Detroit Lions rookie Ndamukong Sun.

Players to Watch
Western Kentucky: RB Bobby Rainey is the Hilltoppers' best weapon. He set a school record for kick return yards, along

with rushing for 939 yards. He averaged a Sun Belt Conference-best 175 all-purpose yards in 2009.

Nebraska: QB Taylor Martinez. Even if he doesn't start, he'll surely play. Fans have been anticipating the redshirt freshman's debut since his sharp outing in the spring game. Pelini raves about his athleticism, and offensive coordinator Shawn Watson gives glowing reports about his improved passing. He would seem the perfect fit in the Huskers' hybrid offense.

Facts & Figures

Nebraska has won 24 straight openers... Huskers are in preseason top 10 for the first time since 2002... Huskers' defensive average of 10.4 points last season was lowest since 1984... Roy Helu Jr. begins his bid for a second straight 1,000-yard season, which would put him No. 4 at Nebraska... The Hilltoppers have lost 20 games in a row, with their last victory a 50-9 rout of Murray State in 2008... Western Kentucky's past three losses were by 13 total points.

Creighton Rolls In Eight-Man Debut

ELGIN, Neb. — Creighton took a six-point lead going into half-time and scored 14 points in the third quarter to seal a win against Elgin Public-Pope John, 32-14 in Nebraska prep football action Friday in Elgin, Neb.

Ryan Mitteis threw for 112 yards on seven completions and one touchdown in a win for the Bulldogs (2-0), he also had a seven yard touchdown run in the final quarter. Derek Tyler put together 82 yards on 15 carries.

For Elgin Public-Pope John (0-1), Evan Parks led the team in passing and rushing. Parks had 63 yards on the ground and had 76 yards through the air. Caleb Pelster stepped on the defensive side with five tackles.

Both teams will play next Friday with Creighton hosting Bloomfield, while Elgin Public/Pope John will travel to Fullerton.

CREIGHTON (2-0).....6 6 14 6 — 32
ELGIN PUBLIC/POPE JOHN (0-1).....0 0 0 0 — 14

Bloomfield 60, Niobrara-Verdigre 0

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — Wayne Bruegman played a hand in six touchdowns as the Bloomfield Bees blanked Niobrara-Verdigre 60-0 in both team's season opener on Friday night in Bloomfield, Neb.

Bruegman completed touchdown passes to Brett Hopkins of 25 and 18 yards, and also ran for scores of 42, 24 and 20 yards. He also returned a fumble 45 yards for a score. In all, Bruegman rushed for 181 yards.

Bloomfield scored 24 points in the first quarter and led 60-0 at halftime.

Chet Boeckman completed 5-of-8 passes for 48 yards and scored on a 62-yard punt return.

No stats were reported for Niobrara-Verdigre (0-1). Bloomfield is at Creighton

next week.
NIORBARA-VERDIGRE (0-1).....0 0 0 0 — 0
BLOOMFIELD (1-0).....24 36 0 0 — 60



JUSTIN RUST/P&D

Yankton's Evan Schroeder makes a catch in traffic during the Bucks' game with Brandon Valley Friday at Crane-Youngworth Field.

Bucks Top Vermillion In Dual

The Yankton Bucks posted the top four scores to easily claim a boys' golf dual against Vermillion on Friday afternoon at Hillcrest Golf & Country Club in Yankton.

Yankton shot a 336, while Vermillion carded a 386.

Jace Guthmiller earned top individual honors with a round of 77, while teammates Ryan Shindler (86), Mitch Schlingman (86) and Cannen Barry (87) rounded out the top four.

Also for the Bucks, Ben Jensen shot a 93 and Tristan Barry carded a 100.

Vermillion's Mitch Nelson finished fifth at 87. Also for the Tanagers, Carter Andre carded a 97, while Zach McDonald shot a 99, Peter Haught finished at 103, Mitch Ellison shot a 110 and Jay Munger finished at 119.

In JV action, which was a nine-hole dual, Yankton shot a

136 and Vermillion finished at 206.

With the top three scores counted, Yankton saw T.J. Dumke shot a 44, one stroke ahead of Chase Brummer. Mason Sundleaf and Brady Weidmeier tied at 47.

Yankton will host the annual Yankton Invitational next Friday at Hillcrest.

VARSITY DIVISION

TEAM SCORES: Yankton 336, Vermillion 386

INDIVIDUAL: Jace Guthmiller Y 77; Ryan Shindler Y 86; Mitch Schlingman Y 86; Cannen Barry Y 87; Mitch Nelson V 87; Ben Jensen Y 93; Carter Andre V 97; Zach McDonald V 99; Tristan Barry Y 100; Peter Haught V 103; Mitch Ellison V 110; Jay Munger V 119

JUNIOR VARSITY DIVISION

TEAM SCORES: Yankton 136 (9 holes), Vermillion 206

INDIVIDUAL: T.J. Dumke Y 44; Chase Brummer Y 45; Mason Sundleaf Y 47; Brady Weidmeier Y 47; Zach Nolz Y 48; Logan Megard Y 48; Derek Dvorak Y 50; Brandon Frick Y 50; Evan Hoffman Y 51; Eric Stratman Y 53; A.J. Larson Y 54; Paul Schwasinger V 65; Tristan Meadows V 86; Sam Craig Y 75

BUCKS

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After another Bucks' drive stalled on the 6-yard line, the Bucks were able to capitalize.

Taking over on the Brandon Valley 39, Yankton quarterback Jackson Pasco hit sophomore Evan Schroeder for a 13-yard pass and junior fullback Brady Knodel powered the Bucks down to the 13. After a penalty, Pasco threaded the ball through two Lynx defenders to a diving Connor Fitzsimmons for a touchdown.

On the play, though, the Bucks lost kicker and tight end Terry Huber for the rest of the game due to injury. The PAT kick was missed.

The Lynx stopped another Yankton drive inside the red zone early in the second half, this time on the 13-yard line. After the Bucks' stopped the Lynx offense, Yankton used four straight runs by Knodel to pull within striking distance.

But there the Brandon Valley defense made its biggest play of the night. Matt Vandenberg stepped in front of a Pasco pass and returned it all the way to the 22 yard line. Rall hit Brock Wickett for the score on the next play, giving Brandon Valley a 10-6 advantage. Yankton fumbled the ensuing kickoff, and the Lynx pushed down to the 8-yard line before stalling, but another McClanahan field goal made the advantage seven points.

Yankton did not cross midfield in its final three offensive possessions.

For Brandon Valley, Rall was 10-26 passing for 135 yards, and rushed for 32 yards. Casey Lee had five catches for 59 yards, with Niklason making two catches for 57 yards. Trevor Crow rushed for 32 yards on five carries, all in the fourth quarter as the Lynx attempted to run out the clock.

Garrow said his line stepped up down the stretch after rushing for just 34 yards in the first three quarters.

"We probably could have run more during the game, but we couldn't get into a flow and Yankton took away the edge," he said. "At the end, I challenged our offensive line, told them they needed to get a couple first downs and they got the job done."

Defensively, Jeffrey Maassen had 14 tackles and Kyle Peterson had 12 tackles for Brandon Valley. Vandenberg and Lee had

eight stops each.

Pasco finished 8-17 passing for 75 yards, one score and two interceptions. Knodel had 21 carries for 82 yards. Schroeder had four catches for 20 yards.

"Offensively, we had at least four opportunities in great field position, to take the ball in and score, and we didn't execute," said Yankton head coach Arlin Likness. "We have to have confidence to execute and put points on the board."

Powers Schurrer led the Yankton defense with seven stops. Austin Anderson made six tackles and Tyler Sternhagen made five stops for the Bucks.

Both teams are now 1-1. Brandon Valley, 1-0 in ESD play, now hosts Aberdeen in the Lynx's home opener.

While Brandon Valley will be joining a Sioux Falls metro conference in a few years, a shot at an ESD title is still a point of pride for the Lynx, Garrow noted.

"There's a lot of tradition, a lot of pride there," he said. "And, any time you can beat Yankton on their home field, it's nice.

We've done it the last two times we've been down here."

Yankton, 0-1 in league play, has to bounce back as it travels to Watertown. The Arrows come in 2-0 after a 13-12 victory over Pierre Friday.

"That's going to be a tough ball game," Likness said. "We have to come out ready to play."

BRANDON VALLEY (1-1).....3 0 3 — 13
YANKTON (1-1).....0 0 0 0 — 6

First Quarter
BV — Ian McClanahan, 22-yard field goal, 10:36

Second Quarter
Y — Connor Fitzsimmons, 19-yard pass from Jackson Pasco (kick failed), 1:28

Third Quarter
BV — Brock Wickett, 22-yard pass from Sam Rall (McClanahan kick), 1:25

Fourth Quarter
BV — McClanahan, 25-yard field goal, 11:41

First Downs.....12.....6
Rushing.....43-138.....21-60
Passing.....75.....135

Passing Yards.....75.....135
Passes.....8-18-2.....10-26-0
Total Offense.....61-213.....47-195

Fumbles/Interceptions.....4-4-2.....7-50
Fumbles/Interceptions.....0-2-3
Fumbles/Interceptions.....2-2-2

Sacks By.....2-16.....1-6
RUSHING: Y — Brady Knodel 21-82, Connor Fitzsimmons 8-31, Jackson Pasco 6-15, Evan Schroeder 6-10; BV — Sam Rall 13-52, Trevor Crow 5-32, Team 1-0, Brock Wickett 1-(-2), Tony Tripp 1-(-2)

PASSING: Y — Jackson Pasco 8-17, 75 yards; Connor Fitzsimmons 0-1; BV — Sam Rall 10-26, 135 yards

RECEIVING: Y — Cole Ditzmann 1-24, Evan Schroeder 4-20, Connor Fitzsimmons 1-19, Terry Huber 1-10, Bryan Youngberg 1-2; BV — Casey Lee 5-59, Dylan Niklason 2-57, Brock Wickett 2-20, Trevor Crow 1-(-1)

Last Original Texan Gone

By The Associated Press

There are no more original Houston Texans.

Kicker Kris Brown, the only player left from the inaugural 2002 season, was cut by coach Gary Kubiak on Friday as NFL teams began paring to the 53-man roster limit for the regular season. Brown was beaten out by Neil Rackers, a free agent signed by Houston in the offseason.

"It was miserable. I don't know how to put it any differently," said Kubiak, entering his fifth season as Houston's coach. "Kris and I had a lot of conversations throughout my time here. We've had some great conversations, we've had some tough conversations on Sunday nights. But I respect him as a man. He's a great person. I respect his career, and I know he's going to have a good one."

Brown followed up his best season as a pro in 2008 with his worst last year, when he made just 21 of 32 field goals. Rackers spent the previous seven seasons in Arizona and made the Pro Bowl in 2005 after setting an NFL record for field goals in a season (40).

Neither kicker missed in the preseason until Brown came up short on a 56-yarder in Thursday's 24-17 loss to Tampa Bay. Rackers hit a 21-yard later in the game.

"It was a tough, tough call," Kubiak said.

Over in North Texas, the Cowboys made a move by sending receiver Patrick Crayton to San Diego for a late-round draft choice next April. Crayton was expendable after Dallas drafted Dez Bryant in the first round this year and had asked to be traded.

Crayton skipped offseason workouts, but once he showed up, there were never any problems. He just couldn't move ahead of Miles Austin, Roy Williams and Bryant on the depth chart.

"You have to let things play out," Cowboys vice president Stephen Jones said. "We really wanted to evaluate the full situation. Now we're at a point where we need to make decisions."

Dallas also sent offensive lineman Pat McQuistan to the Miami Dolphins for undisclosed considerations.

Another blocker was on the move with Arizona trading guard Reggie Wells to Philadelphia for a late-round draft pick. Wells, entering his eighth NFL season, has started 90 games, including 64 in a row

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Volleyball: USD Drops Two At Northern Colorado Classic

GREELEY, Colo. — The University of South Dakota volleyball team dropped two matches at the Northern Colorado Classic Friday in Greeley, Colo.

Fairfield won two hard-fought opening sets on its way to a 25-23, 27-25, 14-25, 25-18 win over USD, while Northern Colorado beat the Coyotes, 25-18, 25-13, 23-25, 25-20.

Against Fairfield, USD (2-5) lost the match despite recording a higher hitting percentage (.129-.102) and more blocks (12-4) than the Stags.

The Coyotes lost a hard-fought first set that featured eight ties and four lead changes. USD held a 21-20 lead after a kill by freshman Amber Aschoff. Fairfield scored the next four points to take a 24-21 lead before USD closed within 24-23 after senior Kristin Krittenbrink put down a kill. However, a serving error ended the hopes for USD as Fairfield recorded a 25-23 win.

In the second set, USD faced a 15-9 deficit but fought back, going on a 9-3 run to tie the set at 18-18. Aschoff had three kills during that stretch, while Krittenbrink and sophomore Kim Bulaga added one each.

The Coyotes took a 25-24 lead — their first of the set — when Krittenbrink put down a kill. However, Fairfield scored the final three points to record a 27-25 win.

USD regrouped with a dominating performance in the third set, storming out to a 10-4 lead and rolling to a 25-14 win. Sophomore

Taylor Russell and Krittenbrink had three kills each for USD in the set while freshman Natalie Walseth had two.

In the fourth set, USD led 4-2 early but Fairfield got the momentum and went on to take a 25-18 win.

Krittenbrink led USD with 11 kills, while Aschoff had 10. Russell and Bulaga had six each. Freshman Tori Kroll had 33 set assists, while junior Carol Logato had 23 digs.

Walseth had two solo blocks and six block assists, while Krittenbrink had a solo block and five block assists.

Against Northern Colorado, Bulaga and Krittenbrink led USD with 12 kills each, while Kroll had 31 set assists. Logato had 16 digs while Bulaga added 12.

USD's offense struggled in the first two sets, as the Coyotes hit .034 and -.026, respectively. In the third set, USD got rolling with 14 kills compared to just three errors.

The result was a 25-23 Coyote win, bringing USD within 2-1 in the match.

USD was in the hunt in the fourth set before Northern Colorado prevailed, 25-20.

Walseth added three block assists for USD, while Kroll had two.

The Coyotes play two matches today (Saturday) to conclude the event. USD will play UM-Kansas City at 9 a.m. Central and conclude with a match against Georgia at 4:30 p.m. Central.

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