

Nebraska vs. Wisconsin (Oct. 7, 2017)

Nebraska Player Quotes

Junior Quarterback Tanner Lee

On J.D. Spielman

"I think I definitely feel comfortable with him, especially third down. The important downs. I think we are doing a good job of moving him around, keeping in motion. Just using him a lot, I feel comfortable with him. I think he's getting used to getting open and doing better in his option routes. He's definitely grown."

On moving the ball without scoring

"I think it's just about finishing. We have to finish drives with points. They kept us from doing that today. They were a solid defense, just like we knew they were going to be and I think we played them well. We just didn't come out with a win. It's tough. That's what they want to do. They want to kill clock, gets first downs and eat away at the clock. That's tough for us for sitting around a little bit. We did a good job at keeping our focus knowing we were going to get back out there and try to make more plays."

On Devine Ozigbo

"He's doing a great job. Very proud of him. He wasn't getting a majority of the touches earlier in the year and for him to just stay the course and continue to work out, now he's getting the ball, and we needed him today because of the injuries. He showed up, he practiced hard and gave it everything he had today."

Junior I-Back Devine Ozigbo

On unsuccessful drives

"We had more total yards. We were moving the ball pretty well but it just wasn't the amount of points we wanted, which is really frustrating. We have to figure out a way to have these long extensive drives but with a finish with points and preferably touchdowns."

On running the ball

"We knew we could run the ball because we had the offensive linemen and the back to be able to run the ball. We didn't feel like running the ball was something that wasn't an option. We knew we needed to run the ball if we wanted to open up the rest of our offense. We knew they were good and this was a challenge that we had to meet. Overall, when it comes to a specific run game, we did a pretty good job of that."

On the ball bouncing off his helmet

"I was running a shoot route. As I looked, the ball was on me pretty hot. I should have turned around quicker. It was behind my helmet and I didn't have the time to turn my hips to catch it. When it bounced off my helmet, I thought it went out of bounds, but it went straight up. It was just one of those crazy plays. It happens in football and that's something we need to overcome."

On fixing

"It's definitely a mindset. There's some things that are kind of clear to some people and we are trying to get finished to be the thing that everyone clicks on the team. We definitely work with the running backs. There's definitely points where you get the ball and no matter what happens, you have to finish to a point. We did a bunch of things in the offseason to focus on finishing. That's something I think we got better on but like you see today, we need to improve and just continue to want to be better finishers and stronger finishers."

Sophomore Lineman Jerald Foster

On pass protection

"I feel like we had a good plan coming into it. We had our ups and downs, but definitely a good plan. It worked out well for us in the sense of keeping Tanner up. Hopefully we will be able to take the pieces we learned from this game and move forward."

On what was going through the mind of the offense after the pick-six

"We have to respond. It being our fourth one that we've had, I feel like we definitely learn how to respond better. Coming out and being just able to, we score, they score kind of deal, cancelling out points like that. I really do love how we come out though. I feel like every single game we've come out with a good fire to our game and unfortunately a couple times there have been the interceptions, but we definitely come out strong, and I'm happy to see the offense keeping that part of the game. I feel like we've learned and we're still learning from our faults. Hopefully we'll learn from this game and we'll be able to take everything we've learned, all of our success, because I feel like we've had a lot of success in our passing game and our running game as well. Taking our success from that is something we're going to look forward to."

On being off the field for most of the third quarter

"It's simple to say, just watching another unit playing instead of you. Just waiting for your turn. It's never easy being on the sideline hoping that somebody else does something spectacular, when you want to do something spectacular. Being on the sideline is never easy. It's always hard staying on the sideline, but that's any football player's mindset. You always want to be out there, always wanting to be the one making plays, doing the big impact plays of the game. Standing on the sideline, I believe in our defense, I believe that they're going to take care of what they need to, so again you have to be able to trust your whole team. I trust my defense they do what they need to do all the time. Whatever is needed for us to get a win, I'm cool with, but yeah it was hard."

On if Nebraska's offensive identity wants to be similar to Wisconsin's

"I don't want to be Wisconsin. I'm Nebraska if that's simple enough to say. I don't want to be them. I believe in what we have with our quarterback. He's a gunslinger, in the sense of him being able to do what he does I don't want us to be running the ball the whole time. We have great backs, definitely, but being able to have two parts of the game, being able to run it, being able to pass it at the same time is why you become an A list team. I'm not saying Wisconsin's not, that's their identity, that's something they stick to, but what we're going to stick to is what we've had good success with, which is being able to run the ball on the downs we need to run it and trust ourselves in Tanner so he'll be able to do the big things in the pocket."

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On the message to team after good drives and fluke plays

"We're all a team, so I can't count myself out of that. Us not being able to finish is a team effort that's something that we all need to look at as a squad, and understand that if we don't get these points, the points that we leave out there, that's really what's going to give the team that handicap. Just moving forward we're going to need to figure out just how to get all the points that are looking to be ours."

On Devine Ozigbo

"We have a back in Devine that runs hard every single drive, and every single play. I really don't think we changed up our game. We played our game, trying to be the most physical team out there. Coach Cav was preaching this whole week that after contact we need to secure our blocks and things like that. With Wisconsin, they're the 3-4 team that they are what you have to understand is that it's key and read, that's the kind of defensive line that you would be, just being able to keep your blocks is how you are going to be able to make the holes and get it so your running back can show case himself in the next level."

Junior Linebacker Luke Gifford

On Wisconsin's offensive looks

"They threw a lot of looks at us, but it's like in the years past, when they found something that worked they kept going to it. We've just got to be able to stop it, and we didn't. We had a couple of scheme things, jumping out of gaps, stuff like that. We didn't get it done."

On performance in fourth quarter

"I think you've got to give them a lot of credit. The plays that we didn't make were because we weren't in the gap or something like that. Not that they were there and they just beat us we did have a few missed tackles that we can't have. Most of the big plays were gap assignments."

On Jonathan Taylor

"He's a really good back, he runs hard, he's a thick kid, rocked up, and we knew he would be. We talked about tackling all week just like all the other backs, they have a lot of good backs. We worked on all week and we had a few spurts there we missed a lot of tackles that mattered. It's tough."

On taking momentum from big plays

"We had the momentum and that's when we've got to step up and take that next step as a defense, and it's frustrating because we had it right there and we felt like we could take it, and really put our foots down and we didn't get it done. As a defense, I think we played three pretty good quarters of football and then for whatever reason stuff went south a little bit. We'll get in the film room and fix that up, and keep playing hard."

On Chris Jones and Joshua Kalu

"I talked a little bit about it earlier this week just about their presence. When you have players like that, that are that high profile player and they carry that swag with them. It's nice having them out there. Not that the other guys don't, but those are veteran guys that have played a lot of football."

On Antonio Reed

"Obviously it helps having him. I thought the guys stepped up pretty well too. So you've got to give them credit, but it hurts when we have someone go down."

On physicality

"For most of the game I thought we did really well. Even towards the end, like I said it was a lot of gap stuff. Physically, I thought we were just as physical as they were, but we've just got to be a more assignments on."

On the pick-six

"For us we can't do anything about it. We just go out there and play the next play, that's what Coach Diaco talks about is playing the next play, it's always the next play, I know everyone says it, but that's how you have to think about it. I thought we did a pretty good job of that, and we weathered that storm there at the beginning of the game."