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(Neb.)-Not Much Goes Right For Huskers In 63-38 Loss

By: Dennis and Kathi Brown Posted at: 10/07/2012 06:46 AM

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COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) - Bo Pelini said his Nebraska Cornhuskers can't afford another slip-up.

"As I just told the football team, we need to win out," Pelini said after a night of mistakes, bad tackling and turnovers turned into a 63-38 loss at No. 12 Ohio State on Saturday night.

The Huskers (4-2, 1-1) now need to make up ground in the Big Ten's Legends Division. Michigan and Iowa are 1-0, while Northwestern and Michigan State are also 1-1.

"(Winning the rest is) the only way we can guarantee getting ourselves to Indianapolis" for the Big Ten championship game, Pelini said.

Taylor Martinez ran for two scores and completed 15 of 23 passes for 214 yards and a score but was intercepted three times for defenseless Nebraska.

"It's a team loss and we have to move on from here," Martinez said. "We still have everything in front of us."

The defense bore much of the blame. Ohio State's Braxton Miller set a school record for a quarterback by rushing for 186 yards, including a 72-yard touchdown run, and also throwing a TD pass.

The Buckeyes rushed for 371 yards and threw for 127.

"I told our football team we killed ourselves," Pelini said. "I'm frustrated and disappointed."

To make matters worse, leading rusher Rex Burkhead injured his left knee early in the third quarter after rushing for 119 yards on 14 carries, but did not return.

The Huskers also gave up points on offense - Bradley Roby had two interceptions for Ohio State

(6-0, 2-0), including one he brought back 41 yards for a touchdown - and on special teams. Corey Brown returned a punt 76 yards for a score.

Pelini was bewildered by all the breakdowns.

"I don't know, I wish I knew," he said when asked for a reason for all the missed assignments and missed tackles. "It doesn't happen at home. We practice with crowd noise every day, every single day. It hurts us."

It was the most points given up by the Cornhuskers since a 65-51 loss at Colorado in the final game of the 2007 season - also the last game of the Bill Callahan era.

The weird part is that the Huskers had things going their way early. They led 17-7 early in the second quarter and, at that point, had held the Buckeyes without a first down.

But then everything that could go wrong, did.

Down by 11 points at the half, they cut the lead to 35-31 on Martinez's 3-yard pass to tight end Ben Cotton.

But just as quickly, the Buckeyes countered on Hyde's third TD run and Brown's lightning-fast burst through traffic on the punt return. All of a sudden, it was 49-31 and the end was in sight.

"It's the whole thing. You just can't point at one play here or there," Cotton said. "It's the game as a whole. We made too many mistakes to win the game."

Burkhead, averaging 91 yards rushing a game, injured a knee on a 24-yard gain on the fourth play of the second half. He spent much of the third quarter pedaling away on a stationary bike on the Nebraska sideline.

Pelini said Burkhead's injury was not "a long-term thing."

He had rushed for 119 yards on 14 carries before being sidelined.

The game, played before 106,102, the largest crowd ever at Ohio Stadium, was a dramatic change from a year ago. In Nebraska's first Big Ten home game ever, the Huskers fell behind by 21 points before coming back to beat the Buckeyes 34-27 in the greatest comeback in school history.

But not this time.

"You've got to execute. You can talk about it all you want," Pelini said. "Like I said, what just happened, happened. What I'm worried about is we have six weeks. We need to win the next six football games to get us to Indianapolis."