

WEEK TWELVE

MICHIGAN ST AT NEBRASKA

3 FGs in 4th quarter carry Nebraska to 9-6 win over Spartans

LINCOLN, Neb. -- Conditions weren't optimal for Barret Pickering.

The Nebraska freshman had never kicked in the snow before, and the intensity was picking up as he was getting set to try a season-long 47-yard field goal with a swirling north wind at his back and a feel-like temperature of 15 degrees.

The ball off his foot started left and faded right -- right between the goal posts for his third field goal of the fourth quarter and the go-ahead score in a 9-6 win over Michigan State on Saturday.

"We went out there like we do for any other kick," the native of Birmingham, Alabama said. "We cleared off the ground to make sure we get a good ball off. Played a little bit of wind and hoped it would go in. It was a little cold out there. I'm not going to lie. It was a pretty strong wind out there. Not the easiest thing. The ground's frozen."

It was the first time the Cornhuskers had won a game without scoring a touchdown since a 3-0 victory over Kansas State in 1937, according to Nebraska sports information officials.

"Every week I've been coaching them there's a little more fight. Today's the most I've seen," said first-year Huskers coach Scott Frost, whose team has won four of five after an 0-6 start. "That's a hard game to win. Even harder to lose. Our guys had to keep grinding, and the defense had to keep coming up with stops."

The Spartans (6-5, 4-4 Big Ten) got field goals of 34 and 26 yards from Matt Coghlin but were unable to sustain offense against a Nebraska defense that has struggled most of the season.

Nebraska (4-7, 3-5) tied it at 6-all on Pickering field goals of 36 and 20 yards before he hit the winner with 5:13 left.

The Spartans lost their chance for a touchdown early in the fourth quarter when Matt Dotson dropped a pass in the back of the end zone, and they ended up settling for Coghlin's second field goal.

Nebraska safety Antonio Reed came up big on two straight series to help set up the tying and winning field goals. He separated Rocky Lombardi from the ball with a jarring sack, and defensive lineman Damion Daniels recovered at the Michigan State 20. Next, Reed and Dedrick Young knocked the ball out of Dotson's hands for an incomplete pass to force a punt. Nebraska ran six plays before Pickering connected for the third time.

"We had too many drops," Spartans coach Mark Dantonio said. "If you've got to point to one thing in the football game, it would be the dropped passes. I thought Lombardi played pretty well. At the end of the day, you've got to put the ball in the end zone in the red zone."

THE TAKEAWAY

Michigan State: The injury-plagued Spartans are a mess offensively. They gained 289 total yards, but between dropped passes and big stops by the Nebraska defense, they couldn't sustain any drives.

"I'm frustrated about points. There's an execution factor here. You've got to score points. That's all inclusive," Dantonio said. "We're playing good enough defense to win."

Nebraska: The Huskers' defense has given up a lot of yards and points this year, but they played their best game of the season.

"That's what we've been searching for as a defense all year, a complete game," linebacker Luke Gifford said. "We got the stops when we needed them, got a couple takeaways. It was huge."

NUMBERS TO NOTE

Nebraska, which had gone over 450 total yards in seven straight games, generated just 248. Devine Ozigbo ran 18 times for 74 yards to become the first Nebraska player since 2014 to go over 1,000 for the season. ... Stanley Morgan caught four passes to become the school's career leader in receptions with 182. ... Lombardi, starting in place of the injured Brian Lewerke for the second time in four games, completed just 15 of 41 passes. ... MSU's Connor Heyward rushed 21 times for 80 yards and caught five passes for 78.

FOLTZ-SADLER CEREMONY

Frost and Dantonio met at midfield with the parents of former punters Sam Foltz of Nebraska and Mike Sadler of Michigan State. The two died in a car accident in Wisconsin in July 2016. The coaches made a presentation to the families.

"I'd like to mention the Sadlers and the Foltzes. Today was about them," Pickering said. "This is a game for them. And definitely I would like to thank my performance to Mike and Sam out there. It means a lot I go out there and represent them well."

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MSU	3	0	0	3	6
NEB	0	0	0	9	9

Scoring Summary -----

	MSU	NEB
FIRST QUARTER		
MSU FG 7:46 Matt Coghlin 34 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 50 yards, 4:45	3	0
Fourth Quarter		
MSU FG 12:13 Matt Coghlin 26 Yd Field Goal		
11 plays, 66 yards, 6:14	6	0
NEB FG 11:07 Barret Pickering 36 Yd Field Goal		
5 plays, 36 yards, 1:00	6	3
NEB FG 8:07 Barret Pickering 20 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 17 yards, 2:02	6	6
NEB FG 5:13 Barret Pickering 47 Yd Field Goal		
6 plays, 23 yards, 1:59	6	9

	MSU	NEB
Team Stats		
First Downs	18	14
Total Yards	289	248
Total Plays	79	67
Avg Gain Per Play	3.7	3.7
Net Yards Rushing	143	103
Rushes	38	30
Yards Per Rush	3.8	3.4
Net Yards Passing	146	145
Comp-Att	15-41	16-37
Yards Per Pass	3.6	3.9
Times Sacked	1	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-6	-10
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	7	5
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	7	5
Penalty Yards	87	45
Fumbles	2	5
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Possession	34:39	25:21

Individual Stats

RUSHING

MSU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
11 Connor Heyward	21	80	3.8	27	0
12 Rocky Lombardi	9	53	5.9	24	0
15 La'Darius Jefferson	7	16	2.3	6	0
34 Antjuan Simmons	1	-6	-6.0	0	0
NEB	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
22 Devine Ozigbo	18	74	4.1	15	0
28 Maurice Washington	3	19	6.3	10	0
2 Adrian Martinez	7	18	2.6	17	0

PASSING

MSU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
12 Rocky Lombardi	15	41	146	3.6	0	1	61.6
NEB	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
2 Adrian Martinez	16	37	145	3.9	0	0	76.2

RECEIVING

MSU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Connor Heyward	5	78	15.6	36	0
Darrell Stewart Jr.	4	23	5.8	11	0
Matt Sokol	1	14	14.0	14	0
Laress Nelson	2	12	6.0	7	0
Cody White	2	12	6.0	10	0
La'Darius Jefferson	1	7	7.0	7	0
NEB	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Stanley Morgan Jr.	4	67	16.8	35	0
Jack Stoll	2	26	13.0	13	0
Kade Warner	3	23	7.7	14	0
Devine Ozigbo	3	20	6.7	10	0
Maurice Washington	2	7	3.5	7	0
Mike Williams	2	2	1.0	1	0