

Nebraska Head Football Coach Matt Rhule + Selected Players
Iowa 13 - Nebraska 10 Post-Game Comments
November 24, 2023

Matt Rhule - Nebraska Head Coach

Opening Statement

“I can’t tell you how much I wanted that game for them and to walk off the field winners. For them to lose in that fashion I wouldn’t wish that on anybody. They are winners. Very grateful for that senior class. They stood in the gap. Everyone might not be able to see it yet, but I truly believe they’ve built something really really special. I hate the way it ended. Credit to Iowa. They are a really good football team. They play a certain way. Obviously had our chances down the stretch. We just weren’t able to make it happen. The things that affected us all year, affected us. And we lost the football game obviously.”

On what happened on the pick

“I wouldn’t be able to say. There were obviously no timeouts left. They were trying to take a shot over the top of Jaylen (Lloyd) again. There was a 3 level flood there. They blitzed all three of those downs there. We looked like we picked it up. I would assume they were trying to throw to Thomas (Fidone II) there that’s the lowest part. Must not of seen the defender there. But I’d have to see the tape to see what happened. With 23 seconds, we are trying to push the ball down the field. Had an open over route and then cut in behind it. Chasing it this way hoping to see the ball past the sticks. Clock it. Then take one more chance on a long field goal.”

On the common threads throughout the season

“Oh it’ll all be fixed. It’ll all be improved. Maybe this is about where we are right now. Sometimes people see it from the outside and they think, ‘wow they really messed that up’ or ‘another short loss.’ I see it as, ‘Man these guys, how many guys go down and continue to put guys in, and we just battle right?’ (Quinton) Newsome goes down in the scheme, (Marques) Buford (Jr.) didn’t really play in the scheme, Blaise (Gunnerson) couldn’t go into the game and pregame. Sua Lefotu is out there just out there in his redshirt year playing nose. What might to the outside world look like, ‘Man, it looks like an unbelievable job by a lot of people to get everything this close and to battle like this.’ So, it doesn’t excuse the question about the timeout there or the last timeout. That’s ridiculous, right? There will be a day where we have seven wide receivers traveling with us and active. Those things will happen. We’re just not quite there yet and that’s why I’m so proud of these guys. They battle, they fight and we don’t make excuses. We just come back. I think that’s the key. Moving forward I think they ran the ball on us a couple times. I think we had to continue to develop our run defense and our ability to run the football.

We couldn't run the ball in the game to the level that we wanted and that's what they did really well. He (Coach Ferentz) has been there a long time. They have a formula, we came down there, we battled and we couldn't quite get it done."

On Chubba (Purdy's) game overall

"I thought Chubba was a little bit sporadic early. There wasn't a ton of pressure so we told him just to settle down and make plays. I thought he started to do that. You know that was a cold, windy day and I think he handled those things well. Obviously, it's protecting the football. The one play, I know he was trying to throw the ball forward, that was a fumble that led to them getting the ball. We have the ball down at the 20 going in, you talk about the margin of error. We can't turn the ball over even if we get it back. We put the ball away and run for the first down and that's how we put away games. People always think you fix things by saying 'go get that player', but we have a lot of good players here. Part of fixing these close losses is asking each player to get a half-point better and learn from these things and understand situation football. Situation football will be way different next year when you're talking about our games. Tommi (Hill) picks that pass off and we have a chance to go win the game. Chubba did a really nice job, made some really big third down conversions. Looking at this we were at 8-for-17 on third downs, one of our best days. That's a credit to him and he's only going to get better."

Ty Robinson - Nebraska Defensive Lineman

On what was going right in the second half with the drives

"I think our mentality and going out there. Knowing that we just played to our standard of our defense. We couldn't be stopped. We knew it was going to be 'whose defense is better' today. Ya know I just think that was kind of at half time stated again and restated going into the second half."

On what Nash (Hutmacher) and he saw on the field goal blocks

"On the first one when they got the penalty I noticed that it was low. I just told them to take three steps and jump as high as you can really. I got one and Nash got the second one. There wasn't much going into that. We just knew and I kind of saw they were being kicked low."

On knowing the seniors and today's ending

"I came in with them. We're all in the same class and to go through that grind. The ups and downs for the past five years it's tough. Trying to close out that last game and become bowl eligible in that game. You could tell everybody wanted it. You could tell throughout the week with the tenacity, and the discipline, the engagement. This was going to be our game and unfortunately that's not how football works sometimes."

On the emotions from today's game

"I was excited, that's football. That's Big Ten football right there. The back and forth, nobody was freaking out that we had to go back out there and put a stop. Everyone knew that it was going to come down to us or it was going to come down to them. So we just had to go out there and someone has to make a play. Either they do or we do and unfortunately it ended up being their way."

Nouredin Nouili - Nebraska Offensive Lineman

On the moment his stepfather saw the back of the jersey

"He was bawling his eyes out. I didn't really say anything. I was trying to breathe. He had a really thick jacket on and he was pressing my head into the jacket, so I couldn't breathe. We're both very emotional."

On his message to younger offensive lineman

"Just stick to it. Believe it. One of the things we pride ourselves on is or what Coach Rhule says is believe, believe in it. We even have a sign that says believe in it. We have a little believe picture in our o-line room. Throughout the game you see those little specks of when you're really thinking about it and really doing it and it works. It works. You get those big runs, pass plays. You get the big opportunities. Just stick to it. Believe in it. I know they do. In our room, you have to. You're a part of something that's bigger than you."

On what is he the most proud of

"All in all I am proud of how we stuck together. It's been a hard year. It always is with the first year of a new coach. It's always a hard year. A lot of time people can leave. They transfer. They have the opportunity to leave and go wherever else. Everyone has stuck here and stuck together. We've been through a lot. And they're still here. They are in really good hands. And they don't know any better. The adversity that comes now they will profit from that next year."

Omar Brown - Nebraska Defensive Back

On the back and forth playing with an emotional ending

"In those games it's just like you don't know what's going to come. You just try to be in the moment of things. To be honest when you see certain things happen on the field you see your defense run out there. No matter what happens it's a lot of emotions out there. Just being in the moment of things. In the game I wasn't thinking about the beginning of the game or the end of the game. I'm just thinking about that moment. We had blocked a lot of their field goals and I thought we we're going to do it again."

On the second half mentality and what the difference was

“Obviously when you see a team doing things you have to adjust to them during the game. When we were at half time we saw what was going on, we adjusted, we saw what they’re doing with their tight ends and we’re adjusting during half time. We talked to each other and communicated. The whole defense did, but specifically with the secondary.”

On how he’s leaving the program and what foundation he thinks he is leaving behind

“Yeah, I want to say this, it really is Coach Rhule. It is us but man just the type of person, man and coach he is. I’m excited to see what Nebraska is going to be like. I can’t wait to see him, even the younger guys and how everything is going. When we had gotten the new coaching staff a lot of the seniors had to make certain decisions just for themselves and some guys left, some guys went. We bought in, we bought in to what he said and we bought in to what he was saying to us. I think it helped a lot of people and not just on the field. Also off the field. The type of person he is on staff, the type of person he is. He just cares for you. So, I can’t wait to see what Nebraska will look like because this was the start.”

On how the season went for him personally

“Obviously it sucks to lose. I’m a senior and it’s my last game. I want to see the positives. I had fun all season. Despite all of the losses, obviously losing is not fun. I had fun all year, everyday at practice, I had fun. I had fun in meetings, I had fun being around the guys. The guys are just great people to be around. I’m happy to have them going on in life and just knowing them. I think I just love them.”

Jaylen Lloyd - Nebraska Linebacker**On his freshman year**

“I think I grew a lot from my senior year of high school until now. Learning the offense. Learning the college playbook. That’s the hardest part. Just getting comfortable in offense and being able to make plays like that.

On plans for off season and what he wants to grow in

“I would say becoming more comfortable in offense. Being able to play in more than one spot. Moving into the slot a little bit more. Just becoming a playmaker on the field.

On being from Omaha and how it feels playing for Nebraska

“It’s very huge for me. I watched Nebraska growing up all the time. Dad and mom went to Nebraska. Family is a big Husker family. It’s just a crazy experience. It’s a wonderful experience.