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University of Wyoming Football Postgame Notes *Following a 30-27 Home Win over UNLV on Sept. 26, 2009*

Postgame Notes

- With today's win, the Cowboys are now 2-2 overall and 1-0 in the Mountain West Conference.
- The Cowboys have now forced 11 turnovers this season and have committed only three turnovers of their own. That marks a +8 interception ratio or +2 per game. UW entered today ranked 12th in nation with a +1.33 turnover ratio. The Pokes have also not thrown an interception this season.
- The all-time series between UNLV and Wyoming is now tied with nine wins apiece. Both teams are now 5-4 at home in the series.
- Wyoming has now won five of the last six games in the series with UNLV.
- Five of the last six games between UNLV and Wyoming have been decided by eight or fewer points.
- After not scoring a point in six consecutive quarters leading into today, the Cowboys kicked a field goal on their opening drive today.
- UW's touchdown with 2:48 remaining in the second quarter broke a streak of 10 consecutive quarters without scoring an offensive touchdown. UW's last touchdown came in the third quarter in the season opener against Weber State.

Offensive Notes

- In his first career start, true freshman Austyn Carta-Samuels led the Cowboys to a win. He became the first true freshman to start for Wyoming since Rick Costello did so in 1974. Carta-Samuels completed 24 of 37 passes for 234 and threw three touchdown passes. Those three TDs were the first of his career.
- Carta-Samuels is the first UW quarterback to throw three touchdown passes in a game since Sept. 2, 2006. In that game, Jacob Doss threw three TD passes in a 38-7 home win over Utah State.
- Junior wide receiver David Leonard caught his first touchdown pass of the season in the third quarter. He led the Cowboys in receiving with six receptions for 89 yards, which is a career high in terms of yards. His previous career high was 87 yards against Weber State earlier this season. Today's TD reception was the first for Leonard since Oct. 27, 2007 against UNLV. Leonard now has three career TD catches.
- Junior wide receiver Travis Burkhalter caught his first career touchdown in the fourth quarter of today's game.
- Senior tight end Orlando Arnold had a career high five catches. His previous career high was four receptions against Weber State.

Defensive Notes

- Sophomore Gabe Knapton had a game high 17 tackles today, 11 of which came in the first half. In his young career, Knapton has now recorded 15 or more tackles in a single-game three times. He has recorded double-figure tackles five times, including UW's last three games.
- Sophomore linebacker Brian Hendricks also recorded double-figure tackles for the third consecutive game. He finished with 11 tackles today.
- Sophomore cornerback Tashaun Gipson had two interceptions today, which is the first time he has had multiple interceptions in a single-game. Gipson now has three career interceptions, all of which have come this season.
- The Cowboy defense has now intercepted eight passes this season. In all of last season, the Cowboys intercepted nine passes.
- The Cowboy defense broke up 10 passes today. Junior cornerback Marcell Gipson led the way with three PBUs of his own. The Cowboy defensive line broke up three passes, two of which were by senior defensive tackle John Fletcher.

Special Teams Notes

- In his first game as UW's starting place kicker, true freshman walk-on Ian Watts was a perfect three of three on field goal attempts--connecting from 28, 29 and 22 yards. He was also a perfect three of three on extra points. On the day, Watts scored 12 of UW's 30 points.
- Junior Marcell Gipson had a great game returning kicks. He returned three kicks for 93 yards, which was an average of 31.0 yards a return.
- Sophomore punter Austin McCoy punted averaged 53.2 yards per punt on five attempts today. He had a long of 60, which is his longest of the 2009 season.

Wyoming Postgame Quotes

Head Coach Dave Christensen

“It was a great day for Cowboy Football. Austyn (Carta-Samuels) had his coming out party. He did a phenomenal job. He was 24 of 37 for 234 yards, three touchdowns--not bad for a true freshman. We were put in a situation two or three times that the offense had to answer and they came out and did it. Defensively when we had to stop them we did, including intercepting the ball and four takeaways. On both sides of the ball, they each played their role to help us win this football game.

“No question that Tashaun Gipson’s interception at the four-yardline was as big a play as any. UNLV was having success moving the football. We talk about when teams get down in that area we have to make something happen and he did. We also got the first turnover of the game, and the result ended in three points.

“Ian Watts had ice water in his veins. He came out and made every field goal and extra point. It was a great effort by him, and those were crucial points for us. I’m so proud of all of the players. They’ve bought in, worked hard and we learned today how to compete and win a game. We emphasized all week that we needed to win a fourth quarter and it worked out.”

Quarterback Austyn Carta-Samuels

“We stepped in a bit of a hole in the first quarter and our offense wasn’t in a groove, which I think was partially my fault. I made a few mistakes in the first two drives--call it nerves or whatever. The coaches were awesome, they talked with me and calmed me down until I got settled. Usually, I’m pretty calm from the start, but this one took me a while to get into a groove and good things happened.

“It really took a load of us after our first touchdown. When I threw the ball and Brandon (Stewart) caught it, it was surreal to me. I looked around and saw that everyone was going nuts and I got really excited. It was an exciting day and once that happened, it really got the offense rolling.

“Our coaches did a good job of implementing some plays to beat man coverage and we saw a combination of zone and man. UNLV has a good defense. I just had to keep the play alive a little longer sometimes and our line also did a good job of protecting me.”

Linebacker Gabe Knapton

“Both our offense and UNLV’s offense are very similar. I just tried to do my job every play and it worked out. It is trouble for an offense when we have two linebackers like Brian Hendricks and myself making tackles. I think it was a team effort by the entire defense.

“It was a total team victory. Our offense is working hard and we went into the game knowing that they would be successful. At times, they struggled and we did as a defense as well, but in the end it all came together.”

UNLV Postgame Quotes

Head Coach Mike Sanford

“All I can say is, we had opportunities to win the game and we didn’t play well enough to win the game. That’s what it comes down to.

“On this day they (Wyoming) played better than us.

“Do I think we are a good team? Yes. Did we play as well as we could play? No.

“We just didn’t play well enough to win the game. It comes down to that.

“I give them (Wyoming) credit. They played well and their quarterback (Austyn Carta-Samuels) played well. He was a play-maker when he scrambled.”

“It was a very difficult way to end the game. I take full responsibility for the delay of game penalty. That was a mistake on my part.”

“I considered going for it instead of kicking, but I think the percentages were with kicking and playing defense and going to overtime.

“Today we didn’t do what we do. We score in the red-zone and today we didn’t score in the red-zone. “