

8. On two occasions Devaney coached UNL to four straight Big Eight Conference titles. During what years did those strings occur?

'Consistency' the word in comparing NU-KS matchup

By Kevin Schnepf

For the past five autumns, Tom Osborne has consistently told Nebraska fans that a Big Eight Conference victory over Kansas State University is just as important as a longed-for victory over Oklahoma.

Today is no different. A win over the Wildcats is another step toward a possible Big Eight title, but if Osborne relied only on the series history of the two schools, this week's practices could have been cancelled, due to lack of interest.

When one team scores 1,324 points and the other team only scores 403 points in their 62 years of playing each other, one gets the impression that domination is evident. UNL has been so dominant that the average annual score against KSU is about 22-6.

Osborne has not lost to KSU yet and if history remains consistent, he will coach his sixth straight victory over the Wildcats. UNL teams coached by Osborne have outscored KSU, 174-37, making the average annual score during his tenure even more dominant, 35-7.

During his coaching career at UNL, Bob Devaney lost to Kansas State only once, and his teams outscored the Wildcats 369-116 over an eleven year period. The average annual score—33-10.

So, if Osborne relies on the consistency of the history series, the scoreboard should read, Huskers-34, Kansas State-8. But, the role of a head football coach is to avoid any inconsistencies, including those concerned with history.

Devaney shut out

KSU beat a Bob Devaney coached team in Memorial Stadium in 1968 and did not allow UNL to score (12-0). That was Kansas State's last victory over UNL and it was one of the four shutouts that Bob Devaney ever suffered.

So, the series history is sprinkled with a few inconsistencies here and there. Mostly the inconsistency of KSU, occurred in Memorial Stadium, where they won seven of their ten victories over the Huskers.

Hipp's rampage

It was just last year when winless KSU was ahead, 3-0 before I.M. Hipp went on a rampage. He scored from 66 yards and 82 yards to put the game out of reach. Hipp's 82 yard run—the longest touchdown run by a Husker—is one of the many UNL records set against KSU.

KSU is not only humiliated on the field but in the record books as well.

In 1911, UNL beat the Wildcats 59-0 and in doing so, two school records were set—the longest kick-off return

for a touchdown, Owen Frank ran 105 yards through the KSU coverage and in the same game, UNL compiled 35 first down to hold the record for the most first downs in one game.

More records

In the 1970 KSU-UNL game, the Huskers won 51-13, thanks to three records set in relation to interceptions. Joe Blahak had three interceptions for the most interceptions in one game; Blahak also had the longest interception return for no score—53 yards; and the entire UNL secondary set the record for most pass interceptions in one game with seven.

In 1976 when UNL won 51-0, the defense held the KSU rushing game to a minus 45 yards which may be a record hard to beat.

Kansas State also made the Husker's "10 Highest Scores versus Big Eight Schools" list. The Wildcats rank fifth as UNL scored 59 points against them in 1911 and in 1972.

UNL has obviously dominated this series but that doesn't make any difference to Tom Osborne. Osborne would only call it an easy game if the 1951 game were repeated—that's when Kansas State forfeited and UNL won 1-0.



Photo by Ted Kirk

I.M. Hipp, who rushed for 207 yards in last year's Kansas State-UNL game, is seemingly on a field of his own on this run against the Wildcats last year. The play went for 82 yards and a touchdown.