

A REVIEW OF THE 1908 NEBRASKA FOOTBALL SEASON

In some respects the season of 1908, now drawing to an end, has been the most remarkable a Nebraska football team ever experienced. While not fulfilling the fondest hopes of the many admirers of "King" Cole's Cornhuskers, it has been very successful from the standpoint of the average Nebraska student. The team, while it cannot possess a clear title, is probably entitled to the championship honors of the Missouri valley.

When the practice season started September 21 the prospects for a championship team were never better. Eleven "N" men of the previous fall—Captain Harvey, Chaloupka, Frum, Harte, Beltzer, Collins, Kroger, Cooke, Johnson, Ewing and Miner—had returned to school. Coach "King" Cole who in 1907 had developed a championship team was back in charge of the coaching. Besides the veterans of the season before, he had plenty of excellent material to work with, and during the early training weeks brought out of this material, Bentley, Temple, and Sturteznegger, three men who during the big games of the season proved their worth.

But the schedule which "King" Cole and his veterans faced loomed up as a pretty big proposition for an eleven to tackle without meeting some severe reverses. There were ten games booked for the fall. Five of these were regarded as "big" games. The Cornhuskers were hopeful of going through the season with a clean slate, but none of them was sanguine. Their aim was to defeat Minnesota first and then to win from Iowa, Ames and Kansas in succession, thereby keeping the premier honors at Nebraska for at least another year. The early season games, however, did not find the Cornhuskers in good shape and did not promise well for the accomplishment of their aim.

Slow in Developing.

In the first two games, with Peru and Doane, the Cornhuskers had not rounded into form and their play was listless. Instead of running away from the small colleges, they were forced to be content with low scores. Their play was slow and they did not show up well in any of the fine points of the game. The score was, Nebraska, 20; Peru, 0.

Peru was played on a muddy field and it was impossible to get any line on the play of the Nebraska team. The heavy line, however, did not do the work against the lighter normal players that it should have been able to do. In the Doane game which followed a week after the Peru contest, the Cornhuskers again failed to use their force and their supporters were more or less disappointed. The score was, Nebraska, 43; Doane, 0.

Grinnell, the team that the previous fall had surprised Nebraska and had put up a remarkable defense, was played the Saturday after the Doane game. In this contest the Cornhuskers showed the same weakness that had marked their play in the other two games. The big line still failed to work well and the backfield and quarterback were extremely slow. The men from Iowa worked hard and gave the Cornhuskers a real scare by scoring the first touchdown in the first five minutes of play.

They secured the ball on their own forty-five-yard line and by a triple forward pass from quarter to half and then to left end, they carried the oval to Nebraska's thirty-five-yard line. Here they were compelled to punt, but recovered the ball on Nebraska's twenty-yard line, from where on straight football they pushed it over for the first touchdown.

This score by Grinnell served to awaken the Cornhuskers and they soon gained a lead. They showed brilliant flashes of their old form of the previous fall, but did not play consistent ball. The final score of the game was 20 to 5 in favor of Nebraska.

Prospects Appear Dubious.

The prospects after this game looked rather dubious for success against the Gophers, who were the opponents on the next Saturday, October 17. In the three games that had already been played the Cornhuskers had failed to come up to expectations of their coach, and their supporters were extremely disappointed, yet hopeful. None of the players seemed to have struck his gait and the play was listless. It looked to everybody as though the regulars were not trying to do their best—as though they knew they had their places clinched and believed they did not have to work hard in order to stay on the team. But by this time "King" Cole had the services of two former Nebraska players—Ray Elliott and Charles Borg—as assistant coaches and the Cornhuskers began to make rapid strides toward getting into perfect condition.

The week of the Minnesota game the three coaches worked hard with the squad and sent them to Gopherland many percent stronger than they had been in the Grinnell game. The Cornhuskers found the Gophers less confident than in 1907 and without the services of the great kicker, Capron. The game resulted in a tie,

but proved that Nebraska had a strong line and a slow backfield.

In the first half Nebraska, with Beltzer in at left half, more than held its own, and really outplayed the Gophers. The failure of the early season to develop a drop kick cost Nebraska a field goal in this half which would have won the game. An easy try at goal from the twenty-five-yard line was missed and the Cornhuskers did not try to kick goal from the field again during the game. Beltzer in this half did the punting and kept the Gophers from threatening the Cornhusker goal.

At the end of the first half Beltzer retired, leaving Nebraska without a punter. Birkner, upon whom the task then fell was completely out of form and his punts did not average more than twenty yards. Soon after play was begun in the second half Minnesota secured the ball in Nebraska's territory and there it was kept until the last four minutes of play. Birkner, when he punted, sent the ball only a few yards and Nebraska could not get away from its goal on this account. The backs could not advance with the ball and the Cornhuskers were compelled to defend their goal for fifteen minutes with the Gophers playing on the Nebraska ten-yard line. Here the Nebraska line proved a stone-wall and held against the line plunges of the fierce playing Gophers. Temple, a new man, was sent in to play

own favor. But even with Beltzer out, the backfield was not what it should have been. Its work was slow and its players did not take advantage of the opportunities which were presented. Nebraska in this game had a golden opportunity for whipping Minnesota. It failed to take it though, and several years will probably dwindle along before it will repeat the trick of 1902, when the score was 6 to 0 in favor of the Cornhuskers.

The Minnesota game was hard on the Cornhuskers and left Kroger, Cooke, and Beltzer crippled. These men were not ready for the Haskell Indian game, on October 24. This game was played in a downpour of rain and on a muddy field which prevented any fast play and kept either team from showing up to advantage. Nebraska secured two touchdowns, one being made on straight football, when the Indians were shoved through the mud across their goal line, and the other coming as a sort of fluke. The ball passed over the Haskell goal line from a punt and in the scramble for the oval Frum fell on the ball making five points which were allowed. The final score of the game was 10 to 0.

Nebraska now faced three hard games—Iowa, Ames, and Kansas. Iowa was rated quite high before the Cornhuskers met Coach Catlin's team at Iowa City on October 31. It had defeated Coe of Iowa 92 to 0, but had

did splendid work and proved a stone-wall to the attacks of the Aggies. On the offense it also played brilliantly. Chaloupka, at tackle, carried the ball for good gains and ploughed through the Aggie line frequently. Cooke won the game by a long run in the last four minutes of play.

Ames secured its first touchdown from a fake kick formation. "Si" Lambert, on Nebraska's thirty-yard line, drew back as if to try a place kick, but instead the ball was passed to Knox, who carried it to Nebraska's two-yard line, where "Si" Lambert was shoved over the goal line. The second came after Hubbard had caught a punt on Nebraska's thirty-yard line and carried it to the five-yard line. A play at center netted the touchdown. The third was made in the second half when "Si" Lambert, catching a punt on the Cornhusker forty-yard line, ran across the goal line through a broken field. This tied the score making it 17 to 17.

Nebraska's first touchdown came after a forward pass from Bentley on the Ames forty-yard line to Harvey, had placed the ball on the fifteen-yard line. It was carried over on straight football from here, Beltzer making the touchdown. The second touchdown came before the close of the first half. Bentley returned a punt thirty-five yards to the Aggie ten-yard line. Line plunges took the ball over the line from this point, Birkner making

be easy victims for the mighty Cornhuskers. The Kansas game, however, proved to be Nebraska's Waterloo. The Jayhawkers won by a score of 20 to 5.

The grueling work of the Minnesota, Iowa, and Ames games had worn out the pupils of "King" Cole, and they played the poorest game of the fall. Their powerful line was worn out and could not get into the game. It was broken through repeatedly for good gains by the Jayhawkers. Chaloupka was the only line man who played up to the standard. He worked like a Trojan, hitting the Kansas line hard. Often his plunges were effective.

The Nebraska backfield was not in condition, at all. Cooke, Beltzer, Miner, Birkner and Kroger did not play half as well as they did against Ames. Captain Harvey was a star and his fierce playing did much to prevent big gains by the Jayhawkers. On several occasions he pushed through back of the Kansas line and broke up plays.

Once during the contest the Cornhuskers showed brilliant form and during that time they made a touchdown on a forward pass and straight football. Eight of the Kansas scores were made on goals from the field. The others came on two touchdowns. The first one was due to a fumble by Nebraska of an onside kick on its own twenty-yard line. A Kansas player recovered the ball and ran over the goal line. The second one came after a long run of eighty yards by Johnson of Kansas through a broken field. He placed the ball on the Nebraska two-yard line, from where it was shoved over on the first play.

This game was the greatest surprise of the day in the west. Nebraska had been an easy winner by all football experts and the defeat was never considered. Kansas had a powerful line and two fast backfield men that worked havoc with the Cornhuskers.

The defeat was a severe blow to Nebraska, for it practically took away all chances of getting the Missouri valley championship. It really was not a fair test for the Cornhuskers, who had just come through three hard games, to put them against the fresh Jayhawkers.

Kansas in Fine Form.

The meeting with the Cornhuskers was the first hard game that Kansas had played. Coach Kennedy had pointed his Jayhawkers for this game; he had seen the Cornhuskers in action three times and knew their plays well. His team was in tip top form, while the Cornhuskers were in poor condition. They needed more than a week in which to rest after the Ames game before meeting the Jayhawkers.

There is little doubt in the minds of the Nebraska supporters that if the game had come a week later the Cornhuskers would have won. The Kansas game was played November 14, and by November 21 the Cornhuskers were in the best form they had shown during the season. If they had gone against the Jayhawkers on that day they probably would have kept their slate clean.

The game with the Hastings college which was scheduled to follow the Kansas contest was cancelled at the request of the Hastings players, and Nebraska enjoyed a rest on the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving.

Two games remain to be played, Wabash today, and the Carlisle Indians Wednesday, December 2. Since the middle of last week the Cornhuskers have been getting ready for the battle with the Little Giants, and today are in fit shape for a hard game. They ought to win, but only after a fierce struggle.

The Cornhuskers will not break training with the end of the game today, but Saturday will commence work for the Carlises. Since Minnesota defeated the Indians last Saturday the pupils of "King" Cole have some hope of winning from the Redmen.

Good Spirit Manifested.

The season so far has seen a good spirit among the men. They have worked hard to uphold the honor of the scarlet and cream, and have done remarkably well. Their schedule is probably the hardest any Nebraska team ever played, and one that few teams could have carried out so well. The only man on their record is the Kansas game, and that spot is not so black when the conditions which allowed it to get there are considered.

Captain Harvey, who finishes his college football career in the Carlisle game, has made a great leader and has been one all the players have willingly followed. Coach "King" Cole has held the respect of every man on the team and of all others who have come in contact with him. He is a great coach and has given Nebraska a great team.

When the season is reviewed at length it must be admitted that the Cornhuskers of 1908 are a powerful team; it must be said that they are equal to any team in the Missouri valley. Their record will stand as one of the best any Nebraska team ever made. It will take a great team to make its equal.



Nebraska on the Ames Ten Yard Line  
Nebraska-Ames Game, November 7th, 1908, at Omaha

at fullback in the closing ten minutes of the game and did a great deal toward saving the Nebraska goal line from being crossed. On every play directed at the Nebraska line he threw himself into the defense of the Cornhuskers and helped to hold back the powerful force that was exerted by the Gophers. In the last four minutes of play Miner punted out from behind the Nebraska goal line after the Cornhuskers had secured the ball on downs, and Johnson, Nebraska's left end, recovered the ball after it had been fumbled by Halfback Johnson of Minnesota. On the first play Quarterback Cooke carried the ball to the Gopher forty-five-yard line on an

gone down to defeat at the hands of Missouri by a score of 10 to 5. The defeat at Missouri was accredited to over-confidence, and the Hawkeyes' supporters were certain that "King" Cole's men would be easy for Iowa. Captain Kirk, who had been out of the Missouri game, was in fine condition again and the Hawkeyes presented the best they had.

Nebraska, however, was in the best of condition and played in the best form it had so far shown. Iowa started the scoring, Captain Kirk making a drop kick from the Nebraska thirty-yard line in the early minutes of the opening half. Following the Iowa score, the Cornhuskers began to play fiercely and completely swept the Hawkeyes off their feet with their line plunges, end runs, onside kicks and forward passes. The first half ended 6 to 4 in favor of the Cornhuskers. In the second half Iowa made another field goal and Nebraska scored again on a touchdown, the final score being 11 to 8 in Nebraska's favor.

Iowa Clearly Outplayed.

But the final score does not show the relative strength of the two teams. Nebraska outclassed its rival in both the open and old style play. It gained many times as much ground in every way and deserved a much higher score. Chaloupka, with his terrific plunges, showed up to good advantage. Miner was a star in making long runs. He carried the ball two different times for over forty yards on each run. Bentley, who played at quarter in place of Cooke, ran the team remarkably well.

Some of the men came out of the Hawkeye contest badly bruised up, and were forced to take light work during the week in preparing for Ames, the most feared of all Nebraska's rivals. Ames was known to be strong, having defeated Missouri by a 16 to 0 score.

The Cornhuskers and Iowa Aggies clashed at Omaha November 7 in what was probably the hardest fought game played on a western gridiron this season. The Aggies were in perfect condition and the Cornhuskers, with the exception of Cooke, were in fairly good shape for a hard game. Nebraska's line was the big factor in winning this game which went to the Cornhuskers by the score of 23 to 17. The Aggies were not able to gain through the Cornhusker line and had to depend on their tact backfield, which was far superior to Nebraska's. Hubbard, and "Si" Lambert, left halfback and fullback of Ames respectively, played a remarkable game. Frequently they circled Nebraska's ends for long gains and often returned punts long distances.

Nebraska used the forward pass and onside kick for great gains. The line

the last plunge which scored the touchdown. A forward pass and some fierce line plunging resulted in Nebraska's third touchdown. The pass took the ball twenty yards to the Ames' fifteen-yard line. Birkner made three yards and the ball was on the ten-yard line. Chaloupka on a play through tackle ploughed through the Aggies from this point for the third touchdown.

Cooke made a forty-yard run which resulted in the winning touchdown. He was called into the game in the last ten minutes of play. When Nebraska had the ball on the Ames' fifty-yard line, Cooke, on a fake quar-



BEN BOWERS  
Position, sub-center or guard; weight 178 1/2, age 23 years, on squad 1, home Lincoln.

end run. At this point the game came to an end with the score standing 0 to 0, and honors about even.

The Minnesota game in some ways was a disappointment to the supporters of Nebraska who watched the play. It ought to have been won by the Cornhuskers who were veterans and who played against a comparatively new team. And with Beltzer playing the second half Nebraska probably would have broken the tie in its



A. C. STURTEZNEGGER  
Position, sub-fullback; weight 155, age 20, years on squad 2, home South Bend.

terback run, dodged through a broken field of the Aggies for forty yards, placing the ball on the Ames five-yard line, from where Sturteznegger scored on the next play.

With this game Nebraska had met what was considered the two strongest teams in the Missouri valley and it looked as though the championship title was clinched. Kansas had yet to be played, but all during the season little attention had been paid the Jayhawkers for it was thought that they were weak and that they would