

Young Hoosiers similar to 1967 team

By Larry Stunkel

For the optimists in Bloomington, Ind., there are a few parallels between this year's Indiana football team and the 1967 Hoosier team that shared the Big 10 Conference title and played in the 1968 Rose Bowl.

For example, present coach Lee Corso, like coach John Pont in 1967, is in his third season at Indiana after two previous losing seasons.

This year's team, as the one in 1967, is youth-oriented with 14 starters who are either sophomores or juniors.

There was also a great weight loss on the 1967 team, which shed 600 pounds over that summer to gain speed and agility.

This year's team dropped 500 pounds over the summer.

Defensive tackle

Just as in 1967, the player that dropped the most weight over the summer is a defensive tackle who was moved from offense to defense for his senior year.

Greg McGuire, a 270 lbs. senior from Middletown, Ohio, weighed 298 pounds last spring. But at a lighter weight, Corso says McGuire will stand out this fall.

However, Corso's big guns this year could be on offense, as his quarterback, junior Terry Jones, returns after leading the Big 10 last year in passing. Jones's target, senior split end Trent Smock, also

returns after averaging 17.7 yards per catch last season and leading the Big 10 with seven touchdown receptions.

Junior Courtney Snyder and sophomore fullback Rick Enis give the Hoosiers a pair of hard-running backs, according to Corso. Snyder, from Steubenville, Ohio, broke an Indiana rushing record with 1,254 yards on 291 carries in 1974.

Line extremes

In the line, Indiana has both extremes in size, with two lightweight guards and two heavyweight tackles.

Senior Don Schanz, at 219 lbs., 6 ft. 1 in., and sophomore Russ Compton, 220 lbs., 6 ft. 2 in., are both transplanted defensive linemen, making the change last spring when Corso abandoned the 5-2 defense.

At tackle, junior Dave Knowles, 6 ft. 7 in and 268 lbs., is a returning starter from last year, along with another junior, Joe Doggett, 255 lbs. and 6 ft 3 in., who started last year at guard.*

Knowles missed the last half of the 1974 season with a knee injury, but came back last spring after surgery.

Defense is key

"We have some good people coming back on offense," Corso said, "but defense is the key to winning more games. Any improvement we make as a team will be primarily through defensive

On this season's defense, 31 players return who started on at least one occasion last season.

Among the top defenders are linebackers Donnie Thomas, Craig Brinkman and Tom Buck.

Generally, the defensive backfield is inexperienced with three sophomores, safeties Tim McVay and Kevin Grump and corner-back Willie Wilson.

More experience can be found in the defensive line with McGuire and senior Jack Hoffman at the tackles. Hoffman started the whole of last season at the position and had 44 unassisted tackles.

At the ends, senior Mark Deming returns after being injured last season and sophomore Carl Smith is labeled by Corso as being quick and aggressive.

Offensive formation

After a 1-10 season last season, Corso changed his offensive formation from the Pro-I to the Pro-set, which has split backs. The defensive formation also underwent change from the 5-2 alignment similar to Nebraska's, to the 4-3-4 set to take advantage of Indiana's depth at linebacker.

According to Corso, Indiana was a better team than its 1974 1-10 record indicates as four of the losses were within ten points.

The Hoosiers opened the season by beating Minnesota 20-14 last Saturday.

"This is a good football team," Corso said, "with more of everything it takes to win. There is more depth, more talent and more of everything."

"Barring injuries, the team we put on the field this fall will be a good football team, a lot better than people think we are."

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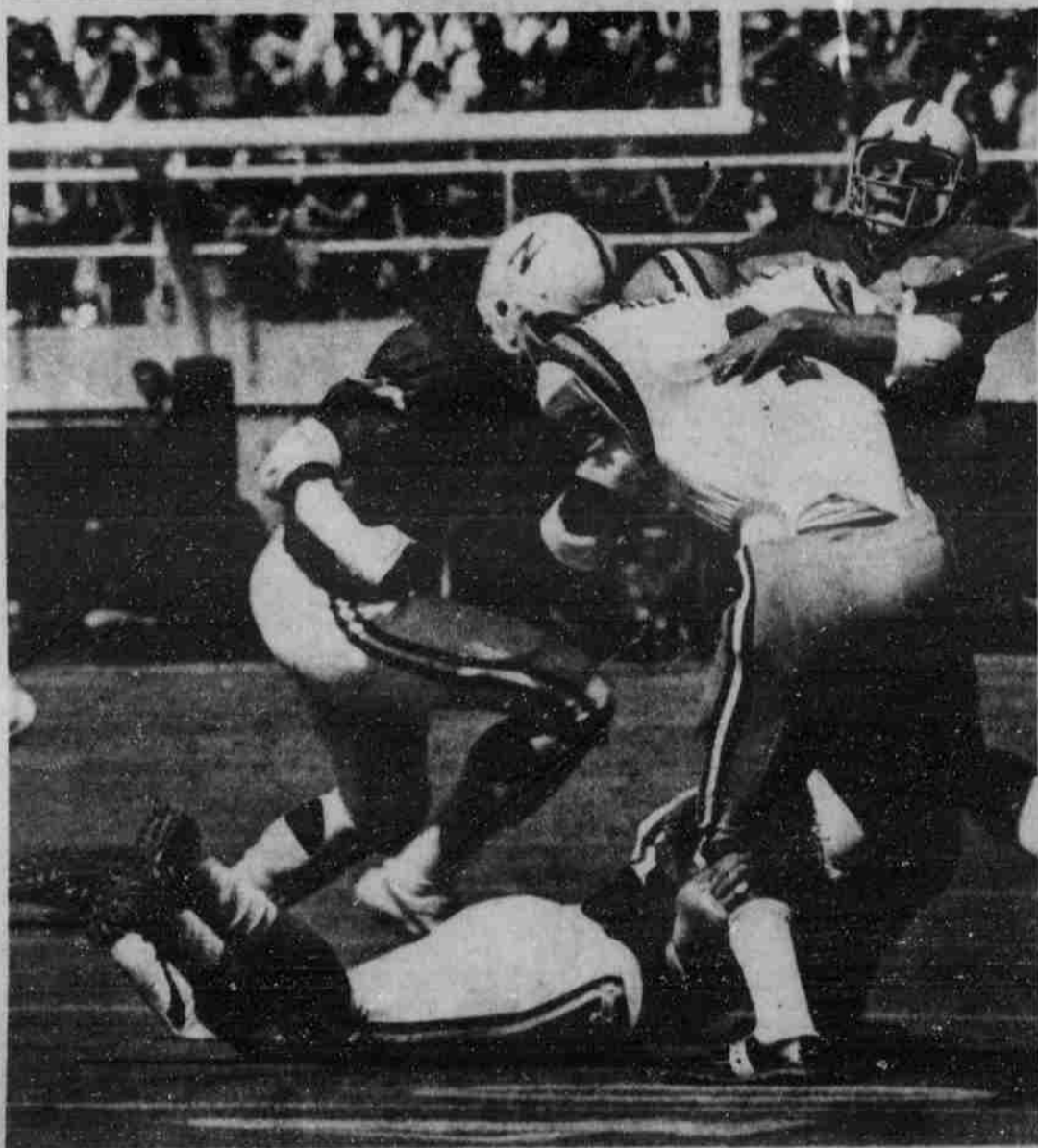


photo by Kevin Higley

Dave Butterfield (34) and Jim Wightman (59) team up on LSU's Charles Alexander (4). Wightman had 10 tackles in his linebacking debut.

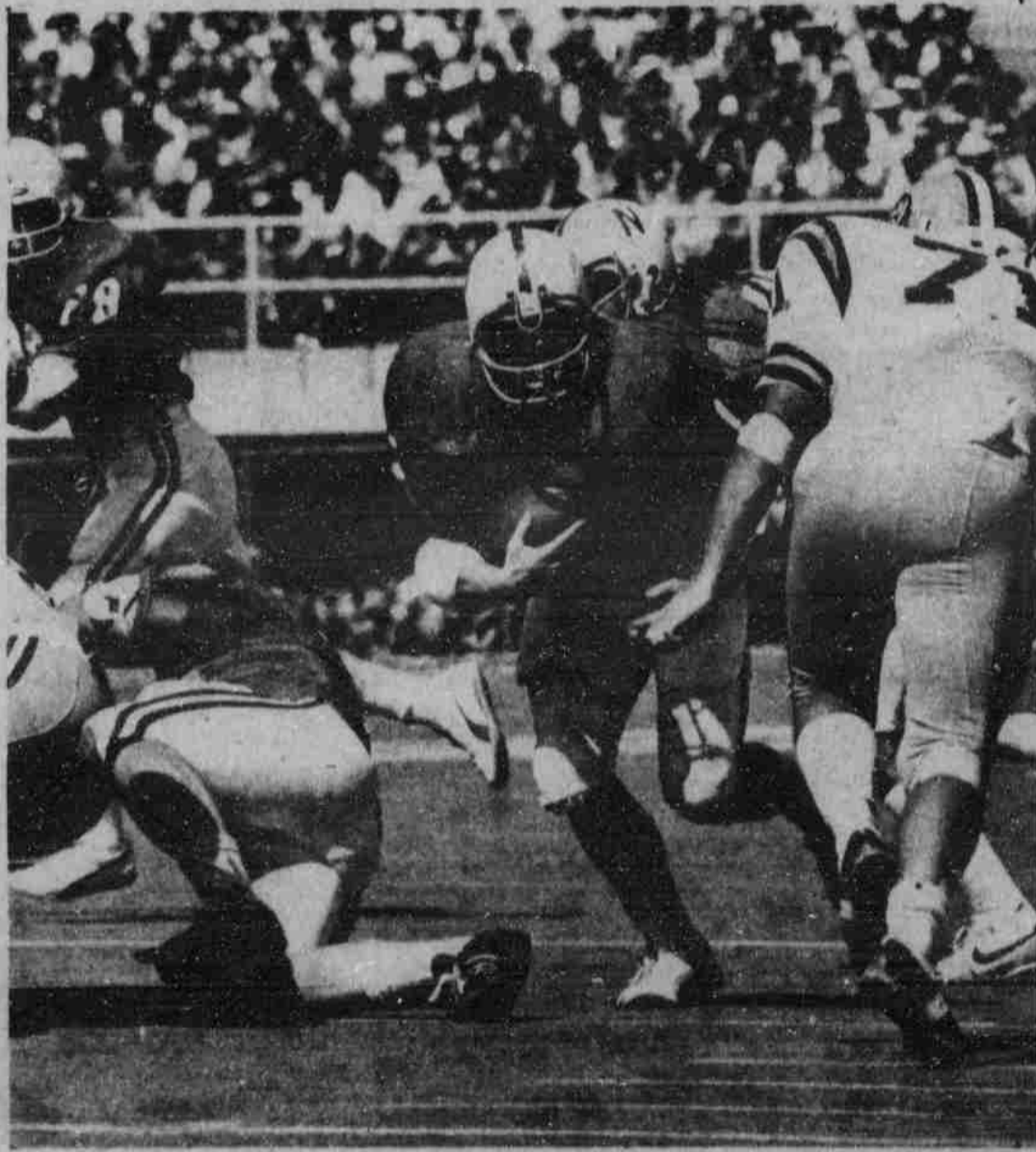


photo by Kevin Higley

Tony Davis (25) eyes LSU's Ronald Ramsey (71) while running through a hole opened by the offensive line. All five interior linemen started their first game for the Huskers last Saturday.