

Right: The pilgrim prays at the Double Hundred shrine after traversing hundreds of miles on his knees. "It's all worth it," Sartore said. "I'd do it again."

Below: The pilgrim pleads for rides from passerby on the Holy Highway as he follows the grey concrete road to a land lovelier than Oz. "My knees were a little sore," he said. "But I'd do it again."



Mourning, maniacal Big Red fan starts new life at coaches' shrine

Humor by Joel Sartore
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Well, the Big Red Shootout is over, and I have once again cried myself to sleep. Sure, I know, I'm not the first and probably won't be the last to bitterly mourn a Cornhusker defeat, but gosh dang it, it hurts.

When you're hurting like I am it's of little consolation to know thousands of fellow Husker fans also sleep on soggy pillows. The last few hours I've spent wandering from trash can to trash can in search of chicken bones, totally without reason. I was in a daze for awhile, like most of America to be sure, but I eventually overcame it. Then I was moved, so to speak, and I want to sing it to the world.

My Big Red story began Saturday night in the inner-reaches of smoggy Grand Island. I managed to get in only a couple hours of sleep before I woke up in a bloody

sweat. It was an awful feeling, kind of like digging around through a dark refrigerator only to find a small, dead animal in the luncheon meats compartment.

From there on things are a blur in my memory. In piecing the events of the evening together, though, I figure I sleepwalked until I reached the Tom Osborne Expressway. And, like Canadian Geese on their way to Mexico for their annual Stroh's beer fiesta, I began a great pilgrimage of my own to the very heart of blackshirt land, UNL's Memorial Stadium.

By following that big red "N" with the premanently burnt out blub on the left side, I soon arrived at my destination. There, shrouded by a veritable pine forest, lies all the peace and serenity this Big Red fan could ever hope for: the Devaney-OSborne Shrine.

When I first stepped in among the four marble columns, I could

have sworn I heard the wailing of angels. Instead, it turned out to be only the sobs of channel three sportscaster Terry Yeager praying for another shot at the Orange Bowl. You bet that scared me, but I was also excited. Yeah, as excited as the first time I heard Larry "Bud" Melman sing the theme song for "Shangri-La."

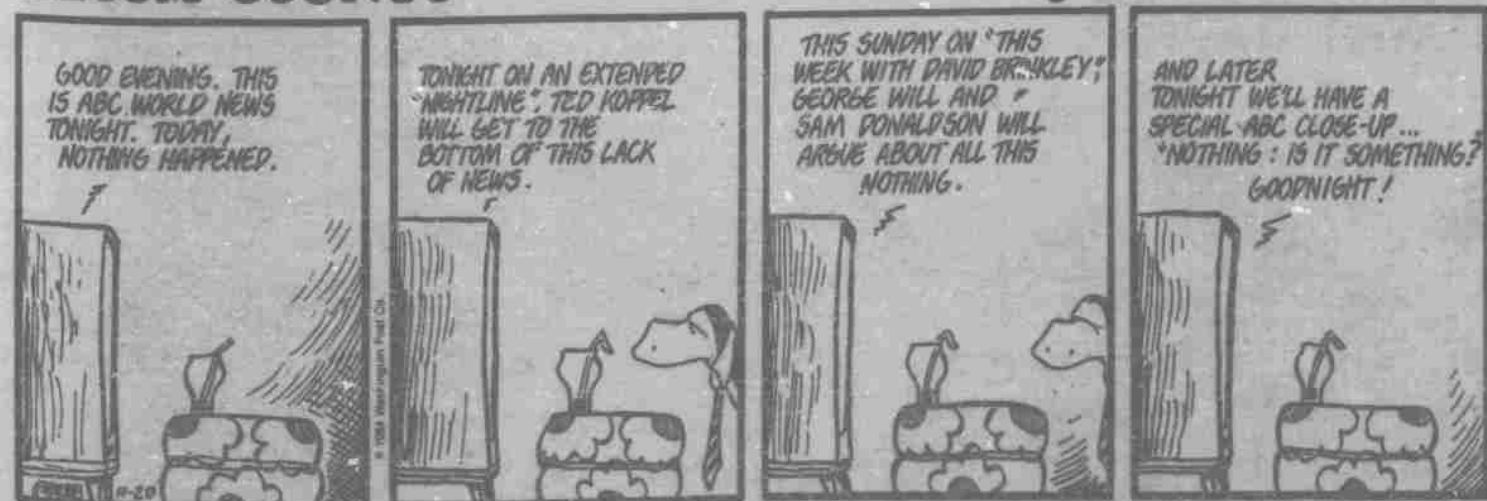
Call it luck, call it fate, call it an electro-magnetic ice-core boring mechanism, but I believe I have found all the strength and courage I'll ever need in this shrine. Just think, it was built to honor two coaches for winning 100 games each over the course of their careers at an estimated cost (to private donors) of \$100,000.

"What better place to start my life over," I said to myself, caressing the two bronze busts of the coaches honored there.

"Maybe one day I'll be able to bring my grandchildren here, the Good Lord and Bob Devaney willing, or course."

by Berke Breathed

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