

# 'Big Red Confidential' lives up to name

## Publisher says sales going well

By Darran Fowler  
Senior Reporter

Sources at Contemporary Books Inc., which published the controversial book *Big Red Confidential: Inside Nebraska Football*, said the book's first week of sales were good.

Amy Kelly, assistant sales manager for Contemporary Books Inc., said Monday that 50,000 books were distributed to vendors across the country and that the "up-to-the-minute" sales indicate that 20,000 had been sold. She said the records show that none have been returned.

"As far as I know it's really done well," Kelly said. "It had plenty of pre-publicity on it, especially because of the nature of the book."

The book, which was written by former Sports Illustrated investigative reporter Armen Keteyian, scrutinizes the Cornhuskers' football program, including accusations of drug and steroid use by players, illegal cash payments and ticket sales to boosters.

Donna Adkins, publicity director for the publishing company, said the book was shipped out a week before its publishing date of Sept. 5. She said she expects all 50,000 books to be sold.

"The book is a balanced, fair book," Adkins said. "They'll either buy it or they

won't. We expect to sell those 50,000 copies. We're in the midst of promoting it right now. We expect to sell it all the way through Christmas time."

Kelly and Adkins said the book has done as well as predicted.

"I think that's what the market had anticipated and, of course, we anticipate to sell all of them," Kelly said.

Kelly said 1,000 books remain on hand at the Chicago-based company. She said that because of the book's demand, another 10,000-20,000 will be printed.

"We believe we'll do real well with this," she said. "There's a lot of college football fans that want to know the scoop on Tom Osborne."

Kelly said the 50,000 books printed is much higher than the company's normal figure of 20,000-25,000.

"That's a fairly large print for a company our size," she said.

Kelly said she is not sure where the book has been selling the best.

"I imagine in Nebraska and surrounding areas," she said. "That's just a guess."

Martha Hoppe, trade book manager at the University Bookstore, said 40 of the 100 books

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## 'Big Red' author loses credibility

By Brandon Loomis  
Senior Editor

"*Big Red Confidential: Inside Nebraska Football*," a book detailing the problems and pressures heaped on the championship-seeking Cornhuskers' program, submerges its credible and compelling elements by living up to its name -- with confidential sources.

Each time author Armen Keteyian begins making a convincing portrayal of cocaine and steroid use or player benefits from boosters, he lapses into quotes from minor and often unnecessary anonymous sources.

Keteyian presents perhaps his most credible evidence in a section theorizing that steroid use was widespread at Nebraska at least during the early 1980s. On the record, he reports statements from a former major U.S. steroids dealer, Tony Fitton, that he supplied several Nebraska players with enough steroids to go around.

Former lineman Dean Steinkuhler, also on the record, says he knew of at least five or six players, mostly linemen (including himself), who used steroids during their Nebraska careers. Keteyian reminds readers that former defensive linemen Neil Smith and Lawrence Pete were arrested in 1986 and found to have steroids in their possession. He also re-hashes

other scrapes between Huskers and the Lincoln Police Department.

But the credible and convincing argument ends there.

Keteyian talks to a dealer going only by the name of Nelson and divulges much the same information that Fitton gave. A whole slew of unnamed former players add tidbits here and there to the controversy, but little to the book.

Likewise, the apparent problem with players selling their family game passes until the NCAA cracked down in 1986 is for the most part from the record and identified sources.

Former I-back Mike Rozier said he never sold his tickets but often would trade for merchandise such as radios. Former fullback Andra Franklin said he sold tickets for about \$5,000 a season. But unidentified players then enter the picture, adding relatively little.

If Keteyian would let the record speak for itself, it would. As it is, Husker fans have every reason to doubt much of what is said, and every excuse to turn their backs on what credible evidence is presented.

The pattern of credible evidence mixed with mysterious sources continues in every other topic discussed, including cocaine use, possible gambling violations in the 1983 team,

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## Despite Allegations

# Manager optimistic about racing season

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Editor

A glimpse of light shines through the dark cloud that hovers over Nebraska horse racing.

State Fair Park Manager John Skold said Monday that he is optimistic about the upcoming racing season even though Nebraska racing is being rocked by numerous allegations. The allegations include charges of hidden ownership and stories of alcohol and drug abuse that stretch from coast to coast.

Skold said he isn't overly concerned about the impact of the allegations even though they will not reflect

favorably on Nebraska racing. He said horse-racing fans should remember that the allegations focus on the integrity of individuals, not the honesty of particular tracks.

The hidden ownership charge alleges that an Ak-Sar-Ben official raced horses that were registered under another individual's name. The charge is considered serious because of potential conflict of interest problems.

That allegation, along with other undisclosed allegations, reportedly is being investigated by the Nebraska State Patrol and the attorney general's office.

Skold said he hopes the Nebraska State Patrol and the attorney general's office act quickly.

"They need to get their conclusions out," he said, "so we can put those things behind us."

Skold said he wants horse-racing fans to realize that State Fair Park runs an honest business. He said the track prides itself on providing good, fun entertainment, and not on running a crooked business.

Skold said he hopes two changes will bolster State Fair Park this year. He said the track has dropped its Wednesday program and altered its starting time in hopes of cutting ex-

penses and increasing attendance.

Skold said racing on Thursday through Saturday will begin at 6 p.m. He said 6 p.m. is an ideal starting time because officials found that the 5 and 7 p.m. starting times employed last year were too early and too late.

Sunday's card will begin at 2 p.m. Skold said the lost day of racing will not mean that fewer races will be run. He said the track will run 10 races on Thursday and Friday and 11 on Saturday and Sunday, which means State Fair Park is scheduled to run five more races than it did last season.

Skold said he had a good reason to

drop Wednesday racing.

"Wednesdays have never been one of our greater days," he said. "We approximated the amount of business we would have, and we wanted to cut our expenses. That's the bottom line."

Skold said a lot of State Fair Park's success this season will depend on the weather.

Two years ago, the Park's biggest race in history -- the \$50,000 Big Red Mile -- was delayed a week after freezing temperatures plagued the track. The entire last week of the meet then was cancelled after several

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# Retired football coach remains involved in UNL athletics through Husker clubs

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

For Cletus Fischer, his responsibility to University of Nebraska-Lincoln athletics is still there, but the seven-day work weeks aren't.

Fischer, director of the Cornhusker Beef and Wheel clubs, left the long hours and stress-filled football months behind when he retired as Nebraska's offensive line coach in 1986.

Now, he said, his football Saturdays are spent in the stands or at home, watching the games on television.

"But I still see the coaches all the time, and the players are always running around here," Fischer said. "It's not like me and the football team are a million miles apart."

Fischer's responsibilities with the Wheel Club include setting up transportation for coaches and athletic department officials, and providing transportation for recruiting purposes.

The Beef Club, on the other hand, is primarily a fund-raising organization. It originated in 1962 when a group of ranchers from Grand Island bought steers to be slaughtered, and used the meat to feed athletes at the dining table.

Since Fischer took control of the group, membership has increased from 400 to almost 1,300.

But he wants more. "We're hoping to get the membership to 2,500 within the next two

or three years," Fischer said. "We're really just getting started."

Members of the Beef Club pay yearly dues of \$250. With 2,500 members paying that each year, "we'd have a pretty solid fund-raising foundation," Fischer said.

Fischer played halfback at Nebraska from 1945 to 1948, then spent one season with the New York Giants before beginning his coaching career at St. Edward High School.

Prior to assuming his current position, Fischer served on former Nebraska coach Bill Jennings' staff as the Husker running backs' coach in 1960 and 1961. He then was the junior varsity's offensive line coach from 1962 through 1966.

From 1967 to 1968, he was the junior varsity coach, then became the varsity's offensive line coach, where he remained until his retirement in 1986.

Fischer says the most enjoyable aspect of his current position is the people he works with.

"They've been really super people," he said. "They're supportive and very cooperative. It makes the job a lot of fun."

Fischer said he doesn't miss coaching as much as some people might expect.

"I haven't really had time to miss it," he said. "The two organizations I'm involved with keep me busy."

"There's no job like coaching. When you're a coach, half the time you don't even know what day it is. You just know that every seven days,

you have another game."

Fischer said the greatest change from coaching to working with fund-raising activities is the amount of time spent at work each day.

"With (fund-raising), you can have a five-day work week, if you want it," he said. "I can be home at 6 o'clock and eat supper like a normal person. It's not quite as demanding as coaching is."

Many of the major athletic department fund raisers this year are centered around the 100th anniversary of football at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

One of the most ambitious projects, Fischer said, is the promotion of a drawing with the Gillette Dairy Co. Throughout the summer, he said, people have bought tickets in hopes of winning one of 200 footballs that have been autographed by former Husker players.

Fischer said the players date from the 1922 season to present. More footballs -- "hopefully 10,000 or 20,000," Fischer said -- will be sold to the public.

Also, sets of 100 Nebraska football trading cards are now circulating, and a Kansas artist has completed a set of seven drawings depicting different eras of Husker football. Fischer said the largest drawings will be sold for \$2,000 each, while the smaller 10 x 11 prints will be sold for \$200.

Money raised will go to the ath-

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David Fahleson/Daily Nebraskan

Former Nebraska offensive line coach Cletus Fischer displays some of the items being sold in conjunction with the Cornhuskers' 100th anniversary.