

# Nebraska and football synonymous; program continues to create history

By Chris Hopfensperger  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska is football. And it has been since 1890, when the first group of gridders finished the inaugural season undefeated and unscored upon. Of course they only played two games, and the best opponents they could dig up were Doane and the Omaha YMCA. And to think people are screaming about the quality of this year's schedule...

That, however, was not the only time Nebraska dominated a schedule like Genghis and his Huns rolling through the Asian highlands.

In 1902 the Cornhuskers, after permanently adopting the nickname in 1900, cruised to a 9-0 record without allowing a point — and that doesn't count their 27-0 win over Lincoln High in an exhibition game.

Before the turn of the century Nebraska teams were referred to as the Antelopes, Old Gold Knights, and the infamous Bugeaters. That was, until Lincoln sportswriter Charles S. (Cy) Sherman adopted the moniker from the now Iowa Hawkeyes.

The team mascot, however, did not make a debut until the Huskers' appearance in the 1974 Cotton Bowl.

Artist Dirk West created the cartoon character that has come to symbolize Nebraska — Herbie Husker — "a burly, rugged, and confident fellow who is proud of both the athletic and the agricultural traditions of the University," according to the press guide.

The program has come a long way since its early years — they no longer play Omaha Balloon, the Kansas City Medics, or the Kirksville Osteopaths — and so have the facilities.

Athletes, who once ate at the Selleck Training Table, now eat in the multimillion dollar Hewitt Center and pump themselves up in the largest weight room in the world.

Attendance, which 46 years ago hovered around 4,000, now numbers better than 75,000 every football Saturday, making it the third-largest population area in the state behind Omaha and Lincoln.

In fact, when the Huskers play at home, 6 percent of the state's population attends.

It would be more. Nebraska owns the ever-increasing NCAA record for consecutive sellouts, now standing at 173 and dating back to Nov. 3, 1962.



Al Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

A Nebraska marching band member whistles a tune before performing a Saturday halftime show.

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