

# Blake tries to restore pride, hope to Oklahoma football

**SOONERS WANT TO erase all memories of Schnellenberger.**

**BY TREVOR PARKS**  
Senior Reporter

Three coaches in three years and zero points in its final two games. With those numbers, there is no direction to go but up for Oklahoma football.

So now, new Coach John Blake will try to restore pride to a football team that finished 5-5-1 a year ago.

Blake, who at 34 is youngest head coach in Division-I college football, replaces Howard Schnellenberger, a coach who promised "the Sooner nation" his team would be a national force last season.

But in Schnellenberger's final two games, the Sooners were outscored 49-0 by Oklahoma State and Nebraska.

Blake was an assistant coach with OU from 1989 through 1992 after playing for OU from 1979 through 1982. He is no stranger to the word success.

He played on the Sooners 1979 and 1980 national championship squads and was a coach under Barry Switzer on the Dallas Cowboys 1993 and 1995 Super Bowl champion teams.

Saturday, Blake takes the sidelines for the first time in Oklahoma's season opener at home against Texas Christian.

"Deep down inside, I feel this football team has a chance to win any game that it plays," he said. "One or two plays can make a difference in a game. I don't instill in my kids that they are that low."

After nonconference games with TCU, San Diego State and Tulsa, the Sooners play possibly the toughest schedule of any Big 12 team.

Kansas, Texas, Baylor, Kansas State, Nebraska, Texas A&M and Texas Tech fill out OU's Big 12 slate.

"I'm being very interesting and very honest with people about what this football team can do," Blake said. "I know what it takes to get it done."

And according to running back James Allen, Blake has his players' respect. Last year, Allen said, there was a division between the players and the coaching staff.

"Things are so much better this year," Allen said. "A year ago, everyone was uptight and we didn't know what to expect. I'm trying to forget about everything that happened last season."

Despite everything that happened, Blake said, now is the time to change things.

**BIG 12 CONFERENCE**

This is the eighth story in an 11-day series on football in the Big 12 Conference.

**Oklahoma**



"It's important that things turn around now," he said. "When I mean turn around now, I don't mean winning the Big 12. I just mean that things head upward. We cannot go down any farther at Oklahoma."

**Note:**

The Sooners also have a new athletic director. Steve Owens, who played for OU from 1967 through 1969, replaced Donnie Duncan — the Big 12's new associate director of football operations — on Tuesday.

## New tie-breaker rule pleases league coaches

**BY VINCE D'ADAMO**  
Staff Reporter

College football's new tie-breaker rule has drawn positive reviews from Big 12 coaches in the opening days of the 1996 season.

If a game is tied at the end of regulation, the team that wins a coin toss is given the option of taking the ball at the opponent's 25-yard line. If that team scores, the opposition must match the score.

The teams trade possessions — much like extra innings of a baseball game.

The tie-breaker rule went into effect during bowl games last season.

Oklahoma State has already received a taste of overtime play. The Cowboys beat Southwest Missouri State 23-20 in overtime last week.

OSU Coach Bob Simmons opted to kick an extra point, which tied the game, after the Cowboys scored a fourth quarter touchdown.

"I didn't know what to think of it," Simmons said. "We tried to prepare for it. Based on how the team was playing, we had taken the momentum of the

game. I knew we were going to overtime."

Nebraska spent the first portion of its scrimmage last week preparing for a tie-breaker situation.

"I suppose the only change in strategy probably will be to kick the PAT and tie," Osborne said. "The PAT is more automatic than the field goal."

Texas Tech Coach Spike Dykes endorsed the new rule.

"Nobody likes ties," Dykes said. "The few times I've been involved in a tie, neither party has been happy."

Most Big 12 coaches said they think the rule change will have an impact on decision making.

"I think it very definitely could change your strategy depending on how things are going," Texas A&M Coach R.C. Slocum said. "You might see guys going for a tie, but it depends on the flow of the game."

Kansas State Coach Bill Snyder said the decision will depend on the team's preparation and physical condition near the end of regulation.

"A lot will depend on the condition of your players at that point and time," Snyder said, "also how productive you've been during the course of the game."

### Football Picks

The Daily Nebraskan sports staff members pick the winners in bold in 10 college football games this weekend. The staff is 9-1 this season.

Wyoming	at	Iowa St.
Colorado	at	Colorado St.
Oklahoma St.	at	Nebraska
Washington	at	Arizona St.
North Carolina	at	Syracuse
UCLA	at	Tennessee
USC	at	Utah
Michigan St.	at	Nebraska

## K-State tickets on sale Tuesday

From Staff Reports

Full-time University of Nebraska-Lincoln students can pick up ticket applications for the Nebraska football team's student migration game — Oct. 5 at Kansas State — Tuesday at the NU ticket office, H17 South Stadium.

Tickets are \$35, and 800 will be distributed on a lottery basis, said John Anderson, NU's ticket manager. Students are limited to one ticket. Applications are due Thursday.

## Lecture Notes

Grade A NoteTakers are Seniors and Grad Students. They attend class and take accurate and complete lecture notes. These notes can make great supplemental study guides.

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Bio Sci 101	Econ 212	Nutr 101
Bio Sci 312	Econ 321	Philosophy 106
Bio Sci 431	Finance 365	Physics 212
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