

2008 Cornhusker Football Gameday

A Welcome from Athletic Director Tom Osborne

Welcome to Memorial Stadium. I hope you enjoy the game and continue show respect for our team, our opponent and the opposing fans. Nebraskans are known for their hospitality and as we approach our 300th consecutive sellout, I hope you will continue to welcome our opponent into Memorial Stadium as you would a neighbor into your home. The welcoming nature of our fans is one of our greatest traditions.

Having coached football at Nebraska for 36 years before serving in Congress and then becoming your athletic director, I reached some fundamental conclusions about life and the game. Nebraska coaches and players helped me reach those conclusions because they exemplified what competition, discipline and caring are all about.

Writing books entitled *More Than Winning*, *On Solid Ground* and *Faith in the Game* reinforced what really drove me as a football coach and continues to drive me as an athletic director. It's a simple thing that we all know but sometimes forget – the journey is more important than the destination.

John Wooden, the former UCLA basketball coach – a role model of mine – was a great advocate of this approach. He emphasized proper technique, effort, conditioning and teamwork. He believed if a team prepared properly, winning would take care of itself.

At Nebraska, we've done similar things – embracing the special "Nebraska way" to build skills and a winning attitude on the practice field in a way that optimizes our performance on game day. These principles and practices have been effective in developing a highly respected football program with exceptionally loyal fans, and I believe they also can apply beyond the athletic field.

Of course, the heart of our process-oriented approach is a singular focus on character. Much of what has been accomplished at Nebraska springs from a unique team atmosphere that revolved around attitudes and relationships associated with the character we strive to cultivate in our student-athletes.

Head football coach Bo Pelini incorporates that approach into the core values he and his staff are instilling into this team. They are values that Nebraskans hold in high regard, such as honesty, trust and loyalty. In a way that typifies our coaches in every sport, he believes in substance more than style and in setting goals and then paying a price to reach those goals. Bo, his staff and his players embrace the tradition of this program, and they're doing everything they can to help unify the team, the state and Nebraska fans everywhere. If we continue to focus on the process more than the end result, we will be successful.

Best Wishes,

Tom Osborne



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