

HuskerVision Enhances Fan Experience

Fifteen years ago, the idea of Memorial Stadium becoming the nation's first college football stadium to have big-screen replay boards was being considered. Some people doubted that a college venue could make a project that big a reality, and they wondered if the screens would detract from the game itself.

However, when HuskerVision became a reality in 1994, all of the proposal's critics were silenced. The big-screen replay boards were an instant hit with the fans, enhancing their Husker gameday experience.

With its replay boards, the University of Nebraska became the first college football team in the country to have instant replay boards at a venue used exclusively for college athletics. The only other college stadiums that previously had boards available were those serving as homes to professional football teams.

NU took another step forward during the summer of 2006 with the replacement of the 12-year old video boards with three new screens, including a 33-foot 7 3/16-inch high by 117-foot 7 1/8-inch wide video board atop the new Tom and Nancy Osborne Athletic Complex that is one of the largest in any college stadium in the United States. The two smaller screens on the South end of Memorial Stadium each measure approximately 21-feet high by 24-feet wide and are larger than the old screens.

All three of the new Mitsubishi screens utilize high brightness LED technology, and the north video screen contains 3,670,016 LEDs. The system accepts all graphic and broadcast signals, including HDTV. HuskerVision is capable of running video on the entire active viewing area of the North Stadium screen, and also has the ability to segment the screen in a variety of ways to show live action, statistics, graphics and advertising.

In addition to the obvious advantage of being able to view replays, game action and statistics on three huge screens, HuskerVision has made several other changes to game day at Memorial Stadium.

The most important change was in atmosphere. The screens are a key ingredient to one of the most dramatic team entrances in all of sports. Along with a 30,000-watt sound system, the replay boards help make the "Tunnel Walk" part of the atmosphere of Nebraska football.

HuskerVision's contributions to Memorial Stadium have not gone unnoticed by Nebraska fans. In a survey of season ticket holders, fans mentioned HuskerVision as one of the most worthwhile additions to Memorial Stadium in years.

Like the NU football team, the HuskerVision crew spends the week before a home game developing its own game plan. Starting on Sunday before a home game, the crew produces features for Saturday's game and spends much of the week preparing graphics, player headshots and other clips and features that appear on the boards throughout the game.

Game day is showtime for the HuskerVision crew. On a home Saturday, a dozen staff members work in the control room while five other members of the staff operate



cameras on the field. The staff includes Creative Director Kirk Hartman, Chief Engineer Scott Guthrie and Production Specialists Mike Hodges, Brad Colee and Amanda Pohlmann. HuskerVision also utilizes the talents of 35 University of Nebraska broadcast journalism students throughout the year. Director of Technology Shot Kleen oversees the HuskerVision department.

HuskerVision is housed in the Michael Grace Production Studio located on the concourse level of West Stadium, which was made possible by a generous donation from Lloyd and Katherine Wilson in honor of former football player and NU Foundation fund-raiser Michael Grace. In addition, a broadcast quality control room, three non-linear editing rooms and a television production studio allow the HuskerVision staff to produce a multitude of video productions.

Last year, HuskerVision produced television shows, including coaches shows for football, men's and women's basketball, volleyball and baseball.

This season, the Bank of the West Coach Pelini Show will be produced Sunday mornings after each game for a statewide broadcast on Sundays. In addition, The Husker Volleyball Show will also be aired during the fall. During the basketball season, The Doc Sadler and Connie Yori basketball shows will be broadcast on a state-wide basis, while The Mike Anderson baseball show will air in the spring. Both the Pelini and Sadler shows will air nationally (Fox Sports Midwest) throughout the week. Features on all of Nebraska's 23 varsity programs are part of many of these coaches shows.

HuskerVision's duties also include the production of highlight tapes for all 23 varsity sports. Over the past decade, more than 100,000 highlight tapes have been purchased by NU football fans. In 2002, HuskerVision received two major awards at the IDEA conference, one for "Best Overall Video Display" in the University division and one for "Best Music Video", beating out entries from all levels, including the NBA, NFL and Major League Baseball. The HuskerVision staff earned best display for a second time in three years in 2004, and earned "Best Special Occasion Video" for its season-ending music video for the baseball team.

In 2000, HuskerVision expanded to the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Giant replay boards were installed on the East and West upper ends of the Sports Center and are nearly the same size in terms of square footage as the original smaller screens in Memorial Stadium. The Devaney screens are among the largest indoor boards in the country at 15-feet high and 26-feet wide. The screens are also compatible with HDTV wide-screen format and are part of a 162-foot wide display system on each end of the Devaney Center.

The HuskerVision control room in Memorial Stadium is also used to produce the programming seen on the big screens at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. This is made possible by incorporating a fiber optic network used to send and receive audio and video signals between the two locations.



HuskerVision Staff: From left: Scott Guthrie, Mike Hodges, Kelly Mosier, Kirk Hartman, Brad Colee, Shot Kleen, Amanda Pohlmann.