

## A Story From The Stands

Stories about former Nebraska Football players and what they learned from the game.

By Kenny Miller

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### THE ALL-AMERICAN LIFE

**LINCOLN NE-**Let's say you decided to trade sunny California for the plains of Nebraska and have big plans to play for the Huskers. On the first night game ever in Memorial Stadium, against one of the top foes in the country, Florida State, the coach calls your number and in you go. You have already set a record. You're the first true sophomore to start at quarterback for Nebraska. That would be a pretty tall order for most players.

But not for Steve Taylor.

"There was a lot of media pressure on us," Taylor recalled. "Dion Sanders was part of that Florida State team. "Taylor did pretty well himself, running for two touchdowns and passing for two.

He knew the game was a season-maker and so did Tom Osborne. "He told me to go out there and settle down." Settle down he did with one of the most complex offenses in the country.

"I came from primarily a passing style offense," Taylor said referring to his days as a star quarterback for San Diego Lincoln High School. Several big name universities recruited him, but the final decision came down to the Huskers and Pac 10 power Washington.

"The Nebraska recruiting trip was awesome," Taylor said. "I knew I would be playing with the best at a top school."

But the offense wasn't an easy thing to master. "There are so many versions of the option. Fans see it go left and pitch or go right and pitch but it is much more complex and sophisticated than that."

Taylor learned quickly. "I had help from great guys like Travis Turner and Clete Blakeman who helped me understand the offense," he said.

Things went pretty well for the high profile QB until a trip to Boulder where the Colorado Buffaloes pulled a major upset. "I didn't play very well that game," Taylor said. "And I heard about it."

That's when he remembered some good advice from Coach Osborne. "When things go well, you get all the credit, Coach told me, but when things don't you get all the blame."

Fortunately, blame wasn't a frequent visitor to the Taylor-led Huskers. He rewrote the record books and gained All-American status. "Eric broke most of my records," Taylor said as he acknowledged the talents of former Husker QB Eric Crouch. "But there may be a few left. Plus, we ended the Sooner Magic stuff in Norman."

Taylor went on to play in the Canadian Football League at Edmonton and Winnipeg. He bristles at any mention that the CFL doesn't have the same talent level as the NFL. "I went from the option back to throwing the ball more. The talent level is another notch up. Don't forget, some players who were cut in the CFL went on to become stars in the NFL," he said as he quickly named several prominent NFL stars who were CFL players.

During his pro years summers, Taylor returned to Nebraska and worked in the Nebraska recruiting office. "I did that for a few years until the NCAA passed a rule that prohibited pro athletes from recruiting for colleges."

With the recruiting job gone, Taylor started thinking about other things to do. His football days were over at the ripe old age of thirty. "Enjoy it. Appreciate it. And when it's time, move on," Taylor said. "I had played football for twenty years and it was time to

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move on." He and his wife Stephanie, a Seward native, decided to move back to Nebraska.

"I was reading the Lincoln newspaper and saw an ad about real estate school so I went for the interview," Taylor said. "I took the classes and passed the test I loved it."

Finding something you love is a key ingredient in the Taylor success formula. "My Lincoln dad told me to do something you love and the rest will follow. And, I love real estate."

"Coach Osborne also stressed consistency," Taylor added. "If you are consistent, you will succeed. We knocked at the National Championship door so many times we knew it would only be a matter of time before Coach Osborne won one."

With sound advice and a great work ethic, it's no surprise that Taylor has been very successful in the real estate business. "Real estate is a lot like football," Taylor stressed. "You are only as good as your last game and in real estate, you are only as good as your last closing."

Taylor also does color pre-game analysis for Lincoln television station KLKN TV8 when ABC television broadcasts the Huskers.

He continues his winning ways as he routinely finishes in the top group of Lincoln's elite real estate agents. "I have had people cry on the final walk through of their new home. It's the American dream to own a home and I am grateful I can be part of that big dream."

That's a perfect role for him. After all, who knows more about the All-American dream than Nebraska's Quarterback legend Steve Taylor.