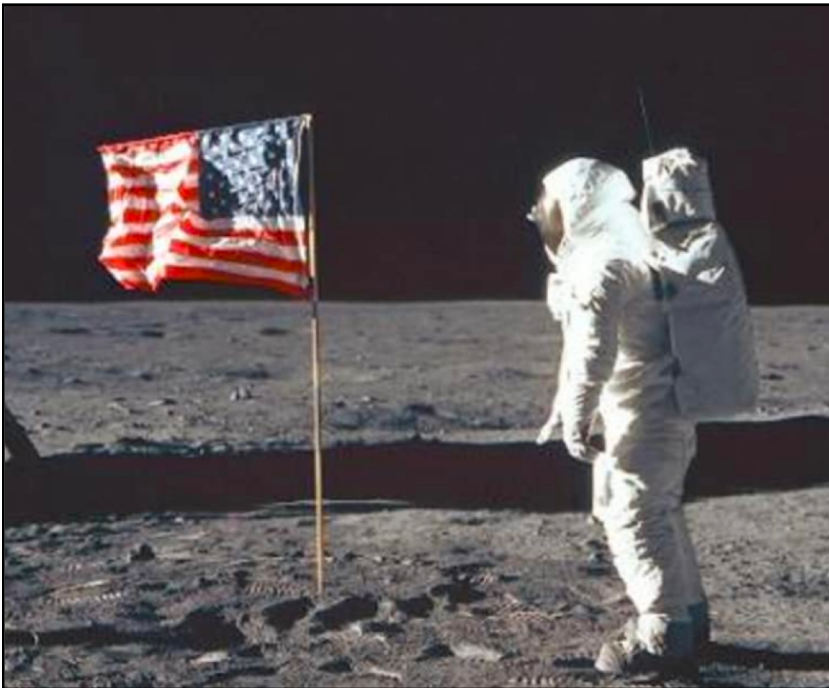


# #7. The Final Chapter

2019

Husker Power takes a look back to 1969 to see how far we have come in 50 years. Richard Nixon was President, Postage stamps were 6 cents, gas was 35 cents, Apollo 11 made a trip to the moon and Woodstock was held in New York Aug 15-18. Also on August 15<sup>th</sup> Nebraska's Athletic Director and Head Football Coach hired me as their first strength coach. Minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour and they paid me \$2 an hour.



First man on the moon

Popular cars were Dodge Charger and Plymouth Road Runner. Best Picture was Midnight Cowboy, Best Actor John Wayne in True Grit, Best Actress was Maggie Smith in The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. The top song that year was Sugar Sugar by the Archies. The New York Mets were World Series Champs, the Kansas Chiefs were Pro Football Champions and the Boston Celtics the NBA champions. Top TV shows were Gunsmoke and I Love Lucy. Popular toys were G.I. Joe and Barbie.

2019

Mike Arthur and I were asked to each write a chapter in a book with 30 other strength coaches which gave the opportunity to tell a little about Nebraska's 50 year history of strength and conditioning.



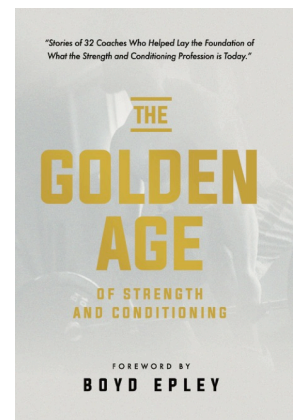
Woodstock



Best Picture in 1969



World Champs 1969



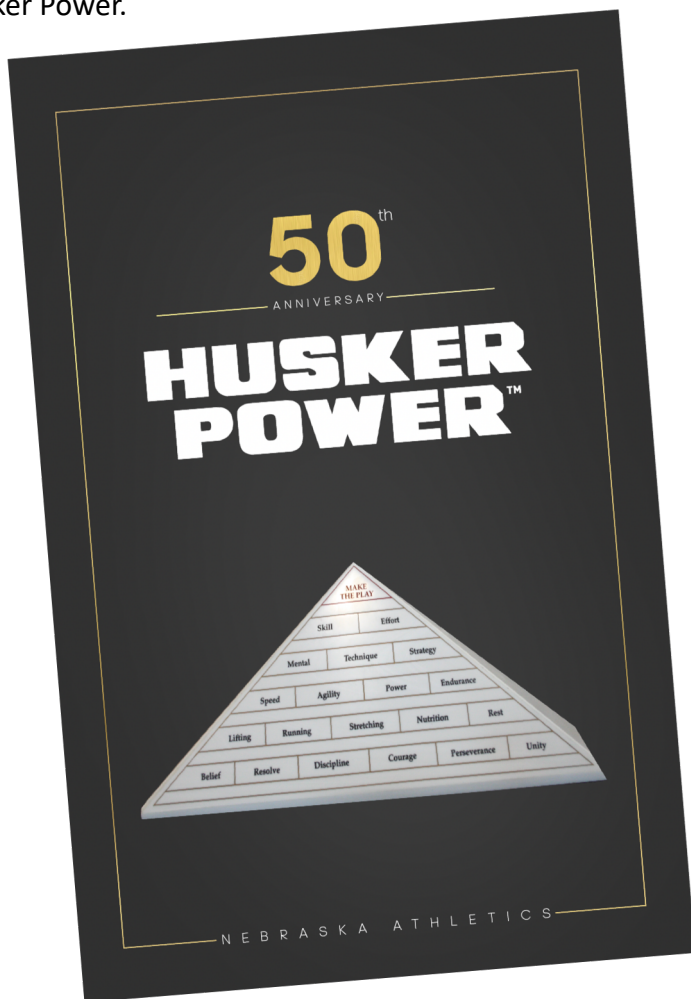
**2019** – While Nebraska was preparing to celebrate 50 years of Husker Power strength and conditioning ESPN was preparing to celebrate 150 years of College Football and the NFL was celebrating 100 years of NFL football.

ESPN flew me to Hollywood to help create a feature on Innovation in College Football. This photo was taken at a bar in Kansas City from a friend that saw the show on the t.v. screens at the bar.

Bill Moss approved a huge promotion to celebrate the 50 year Husker Power anniversary including a patch to be put on the Adidas workout shirts for athletes in each sport in 2019. The logo was created by Dave Webster from Omaha.



**2019 - August** - - 50 Year Celebration for Husker Power.





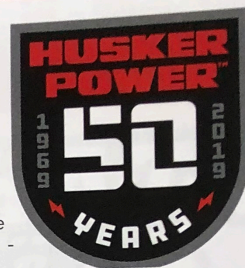
# NEBRASKA CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF HUSKER POWER



In 1969, Boyd Epley (pictured above) became the first hired strength and conditioning coach at an NCAA school.

Fifty years ago, Nebraska changed college football.

While some coaches across the country were kicking student-athletes off athletic teams for lifting weights, Nebraska took America's strength and conditioning program to another level. In 1969, NU became the first NCAA school to hire a strength and conditioning coach - Boyd Epley.



Nebraska's Head Coach at the time, Bob Devaney, took a big risk in installing a strength training program for his players during the 1969 season, but after his 1968 team lost to Oklahoma 49-0 on national T.V., he was looking for something to turn things around fast. Devaney needed results, but warned Epley that if anyone got slower, Epley would be fired.

Well, getting slower wouldn't be a problem.

Former Husker and 1972 Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers dropped his forty-yard dash from 4.8 seconds to a solid 4.4 - by doing squats.

"We lifted weights in high school but when I got to Nebraska, I was taught how to get stronger, quicker, and faster without getting bulkier," Rodgers said. "I was benching 300 pounds while still maintaining the flexibility of a gymnast."

Devaney's 1969 Huskers went on to beat Oklahoma 44-14 in Norman, Okla.

"We all owe a big part of our success to Boyd Epley, simply because we were all able to perform at the top of our game when the stakes were winner take all," Rodgers said. "We bypassed injuries because we were all strong and in world-class condition."

Devaney's success continued as his 1970 and 1971 teams won the National Championship.

"The results of Boyd Epley's work were swift and stunning: Nebraska won the national title one season after he started in 1969, and repeated as champion the following year. The Cornhuskers became the strongest team in the country," Sports Illustrated's Lars Anderson said in a March 2011 article.

The immediate impact strength training had on Nebraska's success sent tremors through the college football world. It was just the beginning though. Husker Power's legacy would live on.

"Nebraska fundamentally changed the way a football game is played because of its strength program," former Florida State head football coach Bobby Bowden said in the previously mentioned Sports Illustrated article.

Epley's concepts and ideas were revolutionary at the time, but no one could imagine the impact it would have on college football and athletic programs across the world.

Husker Power has produced certified strength and conditioning professionals across the world, including medical doctors, NFL, NBA, MLB and college head strength coaches.

This season, football players across the country are wearing a patch to celebrate 150 years of College Football, and Nebraska will also be celebrating 50 years of Husker Power.





### August 2019

Nebraska Athletic Director Bill Moos invited my family to the field during the first quarter of the first game of the season to announce the Lifter of the Year award would change to the Boyd Epley Lifter of the Year Award. He and I then presented one of the awards to Rik Bonness our first football winner from 1974 and to Jamie Hagedorn our first women's basketball winner from 1996. On my left is my son J.R., my wife Jane, my daughter Jenna, her husband Chase Beideck and their three sons, Cash, Colt and Crew.

All former Lifter of the Year winners were invited to extend the Nebraska Tunnel Walk as the football team came out to warm-up for the first game of the season. The night before the game some 250 special guests, former strength coaches, University Administrators and coaches gathered to recognize a 50 Year Husker Power Team. One athlete from each sport and 10 from football were recognized along with Tom Osborne as Coach of the 50 Year Husker Power Team.

Johnny Rodgers not only was named the Outstanding Receiver for the first 50 years of Husker Power he was recognized by ESPN and one of the top 100 players to ever play football in the first 150 years.

The following timeline features events and individuals that impacted the the Boyd Epley family between 1969-2019. For more athletic department information see Husker Power History at

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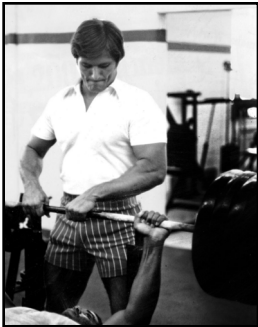
Steve Bliss presents Johnny Rodgers his Trophy.



2019 - August 1



Bill Moos changes the Lifter of the Year award to the Boyd Epley Lifter of the Year Award



My Nebraska strength coaching career started at age 22 and ends 50 years later.

I have great memories some and I have many to thank for my career success. My parents of course had a big influence on my life but I'd like to recognize Tom Osborne as someone who was always there for me and had a tremendous influence on my career path and me personally.



Unfortunately there is no way to thank everyone that has impacted my career and my life. I wish there was but there isn't so I'll leave you with two Mottos:

**The Great Ones Adjust!**

**Your Work Habits Determine Your Habits!**