

NEBRASKA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2012



Jim Irwin (Kearney State College) - Jim Irwin was a four-year letterman from 1960 to 1963 at Kearney State College (now the University of Nebraska-Kearney). A native of Genoa, Neb., Irwin earned honorable-mention NAIA All-America honors as a wideout his senior year while leading the Antelopes to their first NAIA playoff appearance. They lost 20-7 in the 1963 national semifinals against Prairie View A&M of Texas. The Kearney team, coached by Hall of Famer Al Zikmund, had a regular season record of 9-0 and was ranked third in the national NAIA standings. Irwin was a two-time all-conference selection and made the Omaha World-Herald Nebraska All-Conference teams in each of his final two seasons of play, despite missing three games as a senior with a broken hand. Irwin set game, season and career school records. His career included 79 receptions for 1,333 yards and 20 touchdowns, while averaging 16.87 yards per catch. Those 20 career TDs were a school record at the time and currently rank sixth in school history. Irwin shares the school record with three touchdown receptions in a game, a feat he accomplished in 1963 against Wayne State. His play gained him a contract with the Los Angeles Rams in 1964. Irwin also competed in the discus for the Antelope track and field team, earning three letters. In 1988, Nebraska-Kearney inducted Irwin into its Athletic Hall of Fame. After a 40-year career with CNH Global, Irwin retired as VP of the Case-IH Brand, and he and his wife moved to Scottsdale, Ariz.



Mitch Johnson (Kearney State College) - Mitch Johnson was a standout football and baseball player at Kearney State College (now the University of Nebraska-Kearney). His versatility earned him the honor of being selected as Nebraska's College Athlete of the Year in 1977. The Central City, Neb., product was a four-year starter from 1973 to 1976 as a defensive back and punt returner on the gridiron and as an outfielder on the baseball diamond. In football, he earned honorable-mention NAIA All-America honors as a junior and senior and was a three-time all-district selection. Johnson capped his gridiron career in 1976 by being the first of only four athletes in school history to earn All-America honors from the American Football Coaches Association. The Antelopes posted a 28-9 record during Johnson's career, winning two outright conference titles and sharing two more. As a punt returner, Johnson totaled 291 return yards as a junior and 215 as a senior. In his career, he returned 66 punts for 592 yards. As a junior, he intercepted eight passes, tying for second place in school history. He ranks third in school history with 18 career interceptions. On the baseball diamond, Johnson posted a .322 career batting average with 11 home runs and 75 RBIs. As a senior, he hit .417 with six homers and 37 RBIs and was named honorable-mention NAIA All-American. Johnson was inducted into the UNK Athletic Hall of Fame in 1988. Johnson is a Director of Sales for Staples Print Solutions and resides in Lincoln.



Josh Heske - Two unbeaten national championship seasons highlighted Josh Heske's Nebraska career. The Mustang, Okla., native was a four-year letterwinner piloting Big Red lines that went a combined 45-6 from 1995 to 1998. He helped NU to unbeaten national championship seasons in 1995 and 1997, and a pair of conference titles. He played in two Orange Bowls, a Fiesta Bowl and the Holiday Bowl. A two-time all-conference performer, Heske played in 47 games and made 27 starts. He was selected as a team captain in 1998. Behind Heske and the offensive line, Nebraska led the nation in rushing offense in 1995, 1996 and 1997. NU also led the country in total offense in 1997. As a freshman, Heske played in nine games behind All-American Aaron Graham. As a sophomore, after playing nine games behind All-American Aaron Taylor, Coach Tom Osborne moved Taylor to guard for the Orange Bowl and Heske started at center for the rest of his career. As a junior, Heske started all 13 games for the national champions. He participated in the Hula Bowl following his senior season. Heske lives in Newcastle, Okla., where he is an Area Account Manager for the state of Oklahoma working for CU Direct.



Dale Klein - Originally a walk-on from Seward, Neb., Dale Klein earned first-team All-Big Eight honors in 1985 and CoSIDA Academic All-America accolades in 1986 as one of the best place-kickers in Nebraska history. A three-year letterman (1984, 1985, 1986), Klein still ranks 16th on Nebraska's career scoring list with 196. He made 27 field goals and 115 PATs in his career. He tied the then-school record with a team-high 77 points as a junior. In a 28-10 win over LSU at the 1985 Orange Bowl, Klein tied the school bowl game record by hitting 4-of-4 field goals. In his most memorable performance, Klein powered NU's 28-20 win at Missouri in 1985 by scoring 22 points in the game - a Big Eight record for a kicker. He was 7-of-7 on field goals and made his lone extra-point attempt. He tied the NCAA record with seven field goals and set an NCAA record with five field goals in one half. Two weeks later, Klein booted a career-long 50-yarder in a 41-3 Husker win over Kansas State. Following his senior season, Klein competed in the East-West Shrine game. Klein is a Lead Structural Engineer for United Launch Alliance in Littleton, Colo.



Steve Manstedt - Steve Manstedt was an All-Big Eight and UPI honorable-mention All-American defensive end for the Huskers in 1973. Originally a walk-on, Manstedt was a three-year letterman (1971, 1972, 1973) who was part of Nebraska's 13-0 national championship team in 1971. He earned starting spots for Coach Bob Devaney at defensive end in 1972, and again in 1973 under first-year head coach Tom Osborne. Nebraska went 31-4-2 in Manstedt's career, won three Big Eight titles and played in two Orange Bowls and a Cotton Bowl, beating Alabama, Notre Dame and Texas. Manstedt totaled 145 career tackles, including 17 for losses. The Blackshirts led the Big Eight in total defense in 1971 and 1972, and in rushing defense in 1971. The Huskers also led the Big Eight in pass defense each of his three seasons. NU led the nation in that category in 1972. In his final game, the 1974 Cotton Bowl against Texas, Manstedt picked off a Longhorn fumble in mid-air and ran it back 65 yards to the Texas 8 to set up a first-half field goal in a 19-3 win. After a postseason trip to the Hula Bowl, he was a fourth-round draft pick by Houston in 1974. He went on to play for Birmingham in the WFL in 1974-75 and with the Washington Redskins in 1976. Manstedt is a general contractor and lives in Wahoo, Neb.



Bill Weber - A four-year letterman (1981-84) at Nebraska, Bill Weber was an All-Big Eight defensive end for the Huskers in 1984, after capturing second-team CoSIDA Academic All-America honors in 1982. Nebraska went 43-7, won three Big Eight titles and shared a fourth, while playing in three Orange Bowls and one Sugar Bowl in Weber's career. He logged 129 career tackles, helping the Blackshirts lead the nation in passing defense in 1981 and total defense and scoring defense in 1984. Weber made 14 total tackles as a freshman after coming to NU as a high school All-American at Lincoln Southeast. He notched 40 tackles as a sophomore when he took over at left end after three games. Weber delivered a clutch performance in Nebraska's 28-21 win at Oklahoma in 1983. With 43 seconds left and the ball on the NU 2, Weber recorded a four-yard sack to help seal the victory, his third tackle-for-loss in the game. As a senior, Weber was part of a Nebraska defense that held Iowa State's offense to just 53 total yards, as he intercepted a pass to set up a touchdown in Nebraska's 44-0 win. Weber is a Commercial Banker/Relationship Manager for Wells Fargo's Regional Commercial Banking Group in Lincoln.



NEBRASKA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

2012 INDUCTION DINNER
PRESENTED BY NEBRASKA FURNITURE MART

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
WEST STADIUM CLUB, MEMORIAL STADIUM
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA



NEBRASKA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

PROGRAM

Reception - 6-6:30 p.m.

Dinner - 6:30 p.m.

Program - 7 p.m.

Greg Sharpe - The Voice of the Huskers - Emcee

Tom Osborne - University of Nebraska Athletic Director - Welcome & Opening Remarks

Irv Veitzer - President of Nebraska Chapter

THE CLASS OF 2012

LYELL BREMSER SPECIAL MERIT AWARD

Ron and Jeanie Carson

Nebraska

CLARENCE E. SWANSON MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Dan and Cara Whitney

Nebraska

HALL OF FAME COACH

Frank Solich

University of Nebraska

Head Coach (1998-2003)

Assistant Coach (1979-97)

HALL OF FAME PLAYERS

Ahman Green

University of Nebraska

I-Back (1995-97)

DeJuan Groce

University of Nebraska

Cornerback>Returns (1999-2002)

Jim Irwin

Kearney State College

Wide Receiver (1960-63)

Mitch Johnson

Kearney State College

Defensive Back/Returner (1973-76)

Josh Heske

University of Nebraska

Center (1995-98)

Dale Klein

University of Nebraska

Place-Kicker (1984-86)

Steve Manstedt

University of Nebraska

Defensive Tackle (1971-73)

Bill Weber

University of Nebraska

Defensive End (1981-84)

We would like to extend our thanks to Brad Colee and the HuskerVision crew and Photographer Richard Voges.

MENU

Chef's Carved USDA Choice Roast Beef with Merlot Sauce / Chardonnay Chicken

Oven Roasted Rosemary Potatoes / Green Beans with Parmesan Butter

Premier's Fresh Garden Greens with French and Raspberry Vinaigrette

Pasta Carbonara Salad / Broccoli and Bacon Pasta Salad

Wheatberry, Dill-Rye, and Sour Dough Rolls / Assorted Mini-Desserts

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Coach Frank Solich (Nebraska) - The first person in history to be inducted to the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame as both a Husker player and NU coach, Frank Solich had a 25-year coaching career with Nebraska football. During his time as coach, Nebraska won three national titles, 13 outright conference titles and two more shared crowns. After 19 years as an assistant, Solich was named Tom Osborne's successor on Dec. 10, 1997. As head coach from 1998 to 2003, Solich guided the Huskers to a 58-19 record (.753 winning percentage). He was a two-time Big 12 Coach of the Year and three of his Nebraska teams finished in the top 10, while his 2001 squad played for the BCS National Championship in the Rose Bowl against Miami. Solich coached Nebraska to its last conference title in 1999, and the Huskers' last BCS bowl game, a 31-21 win over Tennessee in the 2000 Fiesta Bowl. In 1998, Solich's first group of young Huskers went 9-4, before his 1999 team went 12-1 and beat Texas for the Big 12 title. After the Fiesta Bowl win over Tennessee, the Huskers finished No. 2/3 in the final polls. Solich's 2000 Huskers went 10-2 and finished No. 8 in the AP Poll, while featuring Vincent dePaul Draddy Award winner Kyle Vanden Bosch. The 2001 Huskers opened 11-0 to earn a share of the Big 12 North

Division title and a bid to the BCS National Championship Game. NU finished 11-2, while Eric Crouch won the Heisman Trophy. After a 7-7 season in 2002, Solich led Nebraska to a 10-3 campaign in 2003. A Husker assistant from 1979 to 1997, Solich began as NU's freshman coach and went 19-1 in four seasons. He took over as running backs coach in 1983, when I-back Mike Rozier won the Heisman Trophy. NU led the nation in rushing in nine of Solich's 15 seasons as running backs coach, while finishing in the top four every year. NU averaged more than 350 yards per game with Solich guiding the running backs. Solich came to Nebraska as a part of Coach Bob Devaney's first recruiting class in 1962. A fullback, Solich earned All-Big Eight honors in 1965 and was the first Husker to rush for 200 yards in a game. A three-year letterwinner, Solich rushed for 444 yards as a junior in 1964 and 580 yards as a senior in 1965. He was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame as a player in 1992.



LYELL BREMSER SPECIAL MERIT AWARD



Ron and Jeanie Carson – Ron and Jeanie Carson have been named the recipients of the Lyell Bremser Special Merit Award. Ron and Jeanie reside in Omaha and have three children. They enjoy spending time with their family, golfing, flying, and are avid Nebraska Cornhusker fans.

Inaugurated by the Nebraska Chapter in 1974, the Lyell Bremser Special Merit Award honors a person or persons “with a background of interest in and support of intercollegiate football, who has made a sizeable contribution to society through public service and/or self-sacrifice.”

Long-time season ticket holders for football and men's basketball, the Carsons have been generous contributors to Husker Athletics for many years, not only with monetary support but also with personal service. Ron initiated the Husker Football Air Force Fund and annually contributes use of his plane to assist the Husker football coaches in recruiting. He has encouraged others to contribute in this way, helping the group to grow and enabling the NU football staff to more efficiently visit top recruits across the nation.

Ron is founder and CEO of Carson Wealth Management Group, a comprehensive wealth management firm, and founder of Peak Advisor Alliance, a consulting program for financial advisors, both based in Omaha. Ron began in business in 1983 while attending UNL. He enjoys serving other financial advisors through his consulting business, and the investing public through his wealth management firm. Ron recently co-authored the New York Times best-selling book *Avalanche*. Jeanie is proud of her Nebraska roots, having grown up on a farm near Decatur, Neb. She enjoys giving back to the community by being involved throughout the years in the Elkhorn school district. Jeanie spent several years as a member of the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation Board and has chaired events for the Child Saving Institute and the Salvation Army. She is also the Managing Director of the Carson Family Giving Foundation.

CLARENCE E. SWANSON MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD



Dan and Cara Whitney – Dan (“Larry the Cable Guy”) and Cara Whitney have been named the winners of the Clarence E. Swanson Meritorious Service Award given by the Nebraska Chapter of the College Football Hall of Fame.

Inaugurated by the Nebraska chapter in 1972, the Clarence E. Swanson Meritorious Service Award honors a person “for outstanding contributions to the University of Nebraska and the Husker Athletic Department through personal service, personal support of athletic department programs and dedication to the Husker football program and intercollegiate athletics.”

Dan and Cara, who reside in Nebraska with their two children, son Wyatt and daughter Reagan, are avid Husker fans of all sports and particularly football. Dan's signature camouflage hat has the Nebraska “N” emblazoned on it as he proudly promotes the Huskers nationally and internationally. Dan and Cara rarely miss a Husker football game and generously donated to build and equip Nebraska's players' lounge. They also made a significant contribution to the Championship Drive in 2006 to help build the Osborne Athletic Complex and the North Stadium addition. They

also support other Husker sports programs, including the Nebraska baseball and basketball programs.

A former radio personality, Cara is the driving force behind the International Hip Dysplasia Institute. When their son, Wyatt, was born with hip dysplasia, Cara recognized the need for more information. The International Hip Dysplasia Institute (IHDI) grew out of Cara's desire to help others avoid the problems she and her husband faced. Cara and Dan are the major benefactors for this program through the Git-R-Done Foundation. In 2010, the Git-R-Done Foundation donated \$5 million to the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children for further development of the IHDI. The Hospital opened a new wing called the “Wyatt Whitney Wing” of the hospital. The construction was completed in May 2012. The Git-R-Done Foundation has also made local donations of \$1.2 million to The Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln and \$1 million to the Nebraska Child Advocacy Center. The Git-R-Done Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created by Dan and Cara, as a focal point for the family's philanthropy in 2009. The foundation's mission is to provide assistance to charitable organizations that have experienced hardships beyond their control, with an emphasis on children and veterans.

Dan is a multi-platinum recording artist, Grammy nominee, Billboard award winner and one of the top comedians in the country. He has his own line of merchandise and continues to sell out theatres and arenas across the United States. Currently, Larry the Cable Guy is the host of *Only in America* for The History Channel, which has been ordered for a third season. The show premiered in 2011 and was a huge ratings success.

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Ahman Green – A two-time all-conference running back from Omaha, Ahman Green helped Nebraska to unbeaten national championship seasons in 1995 and 1997. A three-year letterwinner, Green helped the Huskers to a 36-2 record in his career. His 3,880 career rushing yards rank No. 2 in Husker history, and he scored 42 touchdowns. He closed his career No. 3 at NU with 4,280 all-purpose yards, including 300 receiving yards (35 rec., 3 TD). He ranked No. 2 nationally in rushing as a junior in 1997 with 1,877 yards, which also ranked No. 2 in NU history. He added 22 touchdowns. Green reeled off 12 straight 100-yard games, including three 200-yard efforts. He finished with 20 career 100-yard games and five 200-yard performances. Green capped his Husker career with a then-Nebraska bowl record 206 rushing yards to earn MVP honors in a 42-17 Orange Bowl victory over Tennessee for the national title. The second-team All-American rushed for 159 yards and

two scores in the third quarter. In 1995, Green captured Big Eight Freshman-of-the-Year honors with 1,086 rushing yards and 13 touchdowns as NU won its second straight national title. Green chose to enter the NFL Draft following his junior season, and he was a third-round pick of the Seattle Seahawks in 1998. He played for Seattle in 1998 and 1999, then spent his next seven seasons starring in Green Bay. In 2003, the two-time All-Pro set the Packer record with 1,883 rushing yards. A four-time Pro Bowler who spent 12 seasons in the NFL, Green finished as Green Bay's all-time leading rusher with 8,322 yards in eight seasons. His final NFL totals were 9,205 rushing yards and 60 touchdowns. After his stellar pro career, Green has continued his NFL involvement as part of the Packers pregame TV show. Due to his commitments with the show, he will miss Nebraska's game with Idaho State tomorrow.



DeJuan Groce – A first-team All-American as a return specialist in 2002, DeJuan Groce earned All-Big 12 honors at cornerback (second team) and kick returner (first team). The four-year letterman from Garfield Heights, Ohio was also a team captain and NU's Guy Chamberlain Award winner in 2002. Nebraska went 40-12 in his career, winning the Big 12 title in 1999 and reaching the BCS National Championship Game in 2001. Groce notched 142 career tackles and ranks No. 2 in NU history with 41 pass breakups, including a school-record 17 in 2000. He also holds single-season records in punt return touchdowns (4), yards (732) and returns (43). As a senior, he tied an NCAA record with two punt return touchdowns in a game, breaking off returns of 83 and 72 yards against Troy State. Groce owns two of the longest punt returns in school history, including a career-best 89-yard score against Missouri. Groce appeared in 13 games as a freshman, then set

NU's record for pass breakups as a sophomore. He started 11 games to help the Huskers to the national title game as a junior, including a 71-yard punt return for a score in the Rose Bowl against Miami. He had 61 tackles and a team-high four interceptions as a senior. Groce was selected by the St. Louis Rams in the fourth round of the 2003 NFL Draft. He played four seasons with the Rams (2003-05) and New Orleans Saints (2006) in the NFL. Groce now lives in Grapevine, Texas, where he is a mortgage loan officer for Bank of America. He is also a personal trainer in his spare time.