Nevada outlasts BSU in 3 OTs

By Tim Leonard

An unseasonably warm day in Reno, Nevada, on December 8, 1990, provided almost perfect weather for football. At a packed Mackay Stadium, two teams that knew each other well prepared to do battle on the football field. Boise State and the University of Nevada had played each other during regular seasons for 19 years. In their last meeting in Boise on November 10, the Broncos dominated the Wolf Pack 30-14.

But in this game the stakes were higher than a conference victory. A trip to Statesboro, Georgia, and a chance to play for the national championship awaited the winner. Confident about the outcome, both teams squared off at midfield with a boastful talk session moments before the kickoff. No one in the stadium that afternoon could imagine the dramatic outcome that would occur four hours later.

The 14th ranked Broncos received the opening kickoff. The first play succeeded with a handoff to Sean Sanders, who ran through the weak-side tackle. However, the drive ended unsuccessfully and the Broncos had to punt. Unsuccessful throughout the first quarter, the Broncos trailed 6-0.

The second quarter looked even worse for the Broncos. Late in the quarter, trailing 20-7, Coach Skip Hall replaced quarterback Mike Virden, who had led the team all season but seemed unable to do the job this day. He sent in backup and 1988 starter Duane Halliday. The senior quarterback from Coeur d'Alene turned in a dazzling performance. He quickly led the BSU offense to a touchdown drive late in the second quarter to get the Broncos back into the game. At the end of the first half, Nevada led BSU, 20-14.

Trailing by only six points despite numerous mistakes, Bronco optimism mounted for the second half. The BSU offense had scored 14 points in the first half for Nevada! Virden had a pass interception returned for a touchdown, and he also fumbled the ball into the end zone to give Nevada a 27-20 lead.

Halftime, but the game was far from over. Nevada had to punt to open the third quarter, and BSU's Halliday led his unit to a touchdown drive to cut the deficit to 27-26.

The fourth quarter was all Navy. With the lead down to 1 point, the Boise State defense relied on the successful planning of Charlie Weiss, Coach Skip Hall's defensive coordinator. The Navy offense was held to a field goal as time ran out. Nevada had to kick to win.

The Wolf Pack's first play was intercepted by Darnell Scott, who took it back to the end zone for a 43-yard touchdown. The score gave the game its final score of 39-27, and Boise State had an improbable win over the Wolf Pack in triple overtime.

The emotional drain on Boise State was staggering. A trip to the national championship was at hand. The Broncos had overcome their rival in the biggest game in their history.

218
zone, where a Wolf Pack player recovered for a score. The Bronco defense had held the Wolf Pack to only two field goals in the first half.

The Broncos took the lead in the middle of the third quarter by scoring two touchdowns and holding the fourth-ranked Wolf Pack to three points. BSU led at the end of the third period 34-23. The Bronco offense had effectively moved the ball under Halliday's direction, and the defense, led by Scott Russell and Erick Helgeson, had yet to yield a touchdown against the Wolf Pack in seven quarters of football played between the two teams in 1990.

In the fourth quarter, the Broncos scored 17 points, but Nevada responded equally well. With 10:25 left in the game and the Broncos leading 35-31, Nevada faced a third and two on its own 28-yard line. The Broncos knew that if they stopped them here, they could get the ball back with good field position. Once in control of the ball, the Broncos could take time off the clock and inch their way closer to Statesboro. On the snap the Bronco defense read the play perfectly. Nevada fullback Ray Whalen, who was having an outstanding game, took the handoff and ran off the strong side tackle. The BSU defense met him, as Bronco linebacker Tim O'Connor filled the hole and a swarm of blue and orange defenders closed in for the tackle. But, surprising everyone in the stadium, Whalen somehow bounced off the defensive swarm, escaped the tacklers and ran 72 yards for a Nevada touchdown. The contest continued to see-saw, with Virden returning long enough to tie the game on a yard strike to Ryan Tee! with 59 seconds left. At the end of regulation play, the scoreboard read 45-45.

Overtime! Like the week before, when the Wolf Pack managed to beat Furman 42-35 in triple overtime, Nevada headed into yet another extra period.

Nevada began the overtime on offense. After gaining a first down, the Bronco defense stopped the Wolf Pack and Nevada failed on a field goal attempt. The Broncos took over, and called upon kicker Mike Black to kick the field goal that would project the Broncos into the national title game. But the kick went wide right. A second overtime!!

In the second overtime, the Broncos scored a touchdown on a 1-yard run by tailback Bart Hull. Nevada responded with an 8-yard pass from Chris Vargas to Scott Benning for a score. Tied at 52, the two teams headed into a third overtime. Nevada quickly scored on a 8-yard run by Whalen. The score stood at 59-52. Emotionally drained and physically tired, the Bronco offense took to the field. Their position became precarious after the Nevada defense sacked Halliday and the Broncos were penalized for illegal motion on the next play. On fourth down and long, the final pass sailed over the outstretched hands of Terry Heffner. The game had lasted almost four hours! There were six lead changes and three ties. The field, icy beneath the surface, began to thaw and turn slippery.

The defense that held the Nevada rushing game to minus 14 yards in November gave up 291 yards on the ground. Ray Whalen had 245 yards, a Nevada school record. Halliday came...
off the bench and threw for 382 yards without an interception in a little over two quarters of play. His performance netted BSU’s fourth-highest passing total ever in a single game.

The performances of both teams remain as spectacular as the game itself. The game had emotionally sapped the players, the coaching staffs and the spectators. It has become one of the most memorable games in Bronco history.

The Nevada classic brought to a close the careers of several outstanding Broncos. Virden finished his two-year career with the Broncos with 324 pass completions and 11 games in which he passed for over 200 yards. Virden holds third place in career passing yardage with 4,294 yards. Halliday, Heffner, Helgeson, Kuehl, Russell, White, Tim Langhans, Anthony Hernandez and O’Connor also closed out remarkable playing careers.

The Bronco football team opened the 1991 season with four big home victories over Liberty University, Long Beach State, Eastern Washington and Stephen F. Austin. The Long Beach win (48-14) was the Broncos’ biggest-ever over a Division I-A opponent. They later went 5-1 with a 57-14 homecoming thrashing of Northern Arizona, amassing 596 total yards — the most by the Broncos in 12 years.

Then it was on to Reno, where another awesome Nevada team awaited, as did the largest crowd ever to watch a Big Sky game (27,668). BSU fought the Wolf Pack to the wire — this one low-scoring in stark contrast to the previous year’s playoff game. But a potentially game-tying field goal attempt by Black was blocked on the final play of the afternoon to give Nevada a 17-14 win.

A 31-24 victory over Montana State two weeks later produced two milestones, as Black became BSU’S all-time leading scorer and Robinson broke the Big Sky record for career interceptions. The Broncos completed the season at 7-4.

Jeff Mladenich, who quarterbacked the Broncos through most of the season, threw only two interceptions in 239 attempts to set an NCAA record for lowest interception percentage. He also tied the Bronco record for completions in a single game with 30 against Idaho. Bronco scoring power came from the sure hands of Forehand, Stayner and Mike Wilson, combined with the running of Thomas and David Tingstad. A stalwart offensive line consisting of Jeff Pittman, Dave Giacomazzo, Lee Duncan and Greg Alexander guided the attack.

The defense contributed through the efforts of Robinson, Matt McLaughlin, Anthony Brown, Marcell King, Darrin Lyle, Eric Escandon, Scott Monk and Chris Shepherd. McLaughlin, Black, Thomas and Robinson made the All-Big Sky first team. Thomas finished his four-year career in second place in career rushing (3,437 yards) and third in career touchdowns (35).

Hopes ran high for the 1992 Broncos with the return of Jeff Mladenich and Travis Stuart at quarterback along with wide receivers Forehand, Wilson and Kerry Lawyer, and fullbacks Tingstad and Rod Cornist. After dropping their first two games, the Broncos rolled to five straight victories. Wilson became the focal point of the offense, and he would go to a school record 76 receptions — second in all of Division I-AA.

A 51-26 loss to Portland State October 24 started a four-game losing streak, and the Broncos' fortunes ended in disappointment as they posted a 5-6 season. Coach Skip Hall resigned on November 21, 1992, just after the Broncos ended the season by losing to the Idaho Vandals for the 11th consecutive year. Two
Broncos received postseason recognition. Place-kicker Dodd made All-American on the Kodak, Walter Camp and Sports Network teams, after booting a BSU record 22 field goals in 1992. Dodd and Wilson made the All-Big Sky first team.

On December 9, 1992, Boise State University hired Pokey Allen to head the football program. Allen came to the Broncos from Portland State, where he had accumulated a 63-26-2 record over seven years with the Vikings. During his tenure, Portland State made five NCAA Division II appearances including two trips to the national championship game (1987 and 1988), two semifinal appearances in 1991 and 1992, and a quarterfinal trip in 1989. He was named the Western Football Conference Coach of the Year for the fifth time in 1992. He was twice named Division II Regional Coach of the Year in 1987 and 1988. Allen brought with him a wealth of experience, including a coaching staff that — with one exception — had been together intact for all of his seven seasons in Portland.

But Allen's past coaching magic wasn't enough to produce a winning season in his first year at the Bronco helm. The combination of youth and inexperience cost the Broncos dearly as they went on to a 3-8 season, the worst since the Lyle Smith era began in 1947. By the end of the season, three freshmen were in starting positions, including quarterback Tony Hilde, who the year before was playing at Pendleton (Oregon) High School. Only seven starters were lost to the Broncos from the '93 team.

As for individual honors, tight end Del Graven was named to the Big Sky all-conference team and defensive lineman Kimo von Oelhoffen was drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals.
1 The Idaho Statesman, November 11, 1934, pp. 1 and 6.
2 The Statesman Campus Chronicle, February 12, 1933.
3 The Idaho Statesman, January 20, 1934.
4 Information on these teams can be found in the Les Bois yearbooks, The Roundup, and in William Jones, A Review of Athletics at Boise State College, M.A. Thesis, Utah State University, 1974.
5 The Taft queen was Cathy Simmons. Just coincidence.
6 The Idaho Statesman, December 1, 2, 3, 4, 1949.
8 Ibid., Sunday, December 10, 1950.
10 Ibid., December 1, 1951.
13 Found in Jim Nall’s scrapbook.
14 Ibid., May 20, 1951.
15 Anschab, Track and Field, BSU Archives, 1991.
17 Interview with Patrick House, and The Idaho Statesman, May 19, 21, and 22, 1960.
20 Interview with Big Sky Commissioner Ron Stevenson, October 5, 1992.
21 John Barnes to Dr. Ernest Hartung, Nov. 26, 1969, Barnes Correspondence, BSU Archives.
22 Robert Scott Peterson notes, Ourada Papers, BSU Archives.
26 Ray, Giffin, Ibid.
27 Ibid., December 11, 1971.
29 Warren S. Brown, NCAA Executive Secretary, to President John Barnes, August 28, 1972. Ibid.
30 Report from the Big Sky Violations Committee, September 25, 1972, Ibid.
34 President John Keiser to The Honorable Joseph A. Califano, Jr., February 9, 1979. John Keiser Correspondence, BSU Library, Archives.
35 Lori Orr Hays, Sports Release, March 8 and 14, 1988, BSU Archives.
38 BSC Arbiter, October 9, 1972.
42 The volleyball information can be found in the Lori Orr Hays Press Releases, and in the Coach’s questionnaire answered by Darlene Bailey.
The ‘Dream Team’
Fans select the best football players, 1968-93

The 1968 football season marked the end of an era for Boise State’s athletic program. That year the school shed its junior college schedule and began to play larger, four-year colleges. Gone were the Carbon and Snow colleges. On were the Montanas and Idaho States.

To mark the 25th anniversary of Boise State’s entrance into the new era, in the fall of 1993 KTVB television and Commercial Tire sponsored a ballot for fans to select their “Dream Team” in football. Almost 1,000 people voted. Here are the stars of yesteryear whom the fans selected as the best at their positions:

**QUARTERBACK**

**RUNNING BACKS**
- Cedric Minter (1977-80): Three-time All-Big Sky, All-American honorable mention three times. BSU’s all-time leading rusher and holds every major rushing record. Played in CFL and with NFL’s NY Jets. Top vote-getter in the balloting.

**WIDE RECEIVERS**

**TIGHT END**

**OFFENSIVE LINE**

**DEFENSIVE LINE**

**LINEBACKERS**

**SECONDARY**

**COACH**
**What led you to Boise in the first place?**

I'd always liked Boise and the situation seemed good. When I played, I admired the coach at Whitman College. It looked like he was in a small situation in a nice community. It was something I was looking for, and they seemed to have it in Boise.

**What was your first salary?**

Three thousand dollars. The first year, I taught PE classes, was assistant football coach and managed veteran's housing. We reported directly to the president. PE was one of our assignments — we were the PE department. Athletic director wasn't part of the title, though it was just part of the job.

**What kind of raise did you get when you became head coach?**

I just threw away all those old contracts not too long ago. I think to be head coach you got a raise of $300 a year or something like that.

**What kind of support staff did you have?**

There was two of us. We did our own training, handed out the equipment and swept out the locker room if it needed it. Bill Gottenberg (BSU vice president) did an outstanding job of game management for us. The faculty helped us sell tickets. There was no clock and I can still see Joe Spulnik and Don Obee behind the offensive team with a stop watch.

**Was President (Eugene) Chaffee supportive?**

Very much so. He let us run things, but nobody would do anything under the sun to cause any embarrassment after the trust that he put in us. He was a tremendous individual. I'll never forget the first Potato Bowl game. As the game started getting kind of tight, I looked over and Gene Chaffee was kneeling down. He was on the sideline — the first and only time that I remember him there. One of our guys got sent over to the sidelines for a little fisticuffs and I guess I was burning his ear a little bit. There sat Gene. My language may have been a little stronger than it would normally have been in the presence of the President.

**As a first year coach, what kind of advice did you get from the community?**

In those first years I'm not so sure a lot of folks in the community knew we had a football team. There were not too many people in the stands. Some folks from south Boise would stop by and watch practice, but that wasn't to a great extent.

**Can you remember what the gate was at the games?**

When we first started, I was kind of lonesome out there. Then it built up. In the '50s we were drawing 5,000-7,000 people sometimes. Then in the early '60s it tapered off and then came back.

---

Center on the University of Idaho team, 1938.
again in the mid-'60s.

AND WHAT WERE THE FACILITIES LIKE WHEN YOU ARRIVED IN 1946?

There was room for about 250, maybe 300 people in the stadium. The bleachers had about five rows. The press box was a little tiny room about the size of this table. The locker room was in an old hanger that was used for basketball. It had the best floor you'd ever see in a gym at the time.

WHEN DID PEOPLE REALIZE THAT FOOTBALL WAS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF BOISE JUNIOR COLLEGE?

I think momentum built up toward our first postseason game (in 1949). We had gone two seasons without a loss and were mentioned as a possible team for the Junior Rose Bowl. But that didn't happen until later. The postseason games really generated interest and publicity throughout the community.

THE ORIGINAL BRONCO STADIUM — THE WOODEN STANDS — WAS BUILT ABOUT THAT TIME, WASN'T IT?

I think it was that first postseason game that fired interest in a new stadium. Dr. Chaffee felt that the community would use it, so they should help pay for it. Oscar Worthwine [BJC board of trustees] and Jim Brown [Statesman publisher] were two of the community leaders who backed it. The stadium was quite a jump for us. If you had 1,000 people at the old field you had quite a crowd because the bleachers would only hold 300 or so. Then we jumped to the stadium, which held 10,000 people.

YOU RECRUITED SOME TERRIBLE PLAYERS. WHAT WERE YOUR SECRETS?

You got on your boots and got out in the barn yard. I felt that my territory was from here to Burley, and I hit every one of those high schools. I felt I could make six schools a day if I got there when school opened and worked after supper.

DID THE PLAYERS GET SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS?

We had funds for tuition and we had part-time jobs as school bus drivers. The school buses were our salvation, really. We had football players who drove in the morning and basketball players in the afternoon. Then in the season they would switch. Part of my summer job was to canvass the town looking for part-time jobs for the guys.

YOU RECRUITED SOME GOOD PLAYERS FROM HAWAII. HOW DID YOU GET YOUR CONNECTIONS THERE?

Peter Kim had come from the Hawaiian Islands as a student at the College of Idaho back in the late '20s or '30s. Pete was very fond of the Boise Valley. He was in the school system in the city of Honolulu and knew there were numerous young men who would like to come stateside to go to school. So he sent me a few names and I started corresponding. They started coming and it kind of built on itself.

DID YOU EVER GO OVER THERE TO RECRUIT OR DID THEY JUST COME THROUGH YOUR CORRESPONDENCE?

Correspondence. It took all the money I had to travel up and down the Boise Valley.

President Chaffee was a surprise visitor on the sidelines during the first Potato Bowl game.
Do you remember your first player from Hawaii?

George Tavaras may have been the first one. I think George is still in Caldwell. George was a big fellow; he's the one you sent out to flip the coin to put a little fear on the other side.

Of all the players you coached, is there one individual who stands out?

I think it would have to be Dave Wilcox from Vale. He never had a second gear; he was in high gear all the way. He just went real hard at practice and in the games. I was not surprised that he did so well as a professional. In that little community [Vale, Oregon], if a man didn't play football he was ostracized. They all played. We had several brothers from Vale — Schaffelds, Fulwylers, three Wilcoxes.

When you look back over all the individual performances, what would you judge as the best single game performance that you saw as a coach?

One that strikes me right off was Fred Miklancic. We were playing Ricks College and Fred was bothered with a hip injury. We were down two or maybe three touchdowns and not doing very much. I wanted to hold him out another week, but I put him in. I don't know if it was all through his efforts, but the team lifted up. We tied the game. I cite that as a time when an individual seemingly had influence on a game.

What was it like coaching your own son, Bill?

Our relationship was on the field; we never took it off. We never took football home; we tried to keep it right here.

What was it about Larry Jackson that was special as an athlete?

He was blessed with good ability, but he also was a good leader. Unfortunately I didn't get to spend as much time with Larry as I would have liked because I got called back to the military. I missed his second football season and his baseball season. Larry had ability and a good attitude.

I'll never forget the last game that I had with that team. Larry came up after that game and expressed gratitude and appreciation for playing and how much he enjoyed it. Not many players do that.

What about Ed Lodge?

He was a gamer — he could play. Lodge never went on a trip anywhere without coming up and saying 'Thanks coach for taking me.'

Good coaches are good motivators and teachers. How did you draw out the best in your players?

I think it comes from within the squad. I tried to build camaraderie within the team. The team leadership comes from that.

What were you looking for when you recruited a player?

We had a lot of guys who would end their careers at BJC — they were too small or had some other limitations that prevented them from playing at a larger school. So, they had to have desire — they had to compete. They had to want to win.

Everyone says you were a great football coach, but you were also a great baseball coach.

I was kind of an interim baseball coach — a 25 year interim. Nobody else wanted it. I enjoyed the guys who played baseball. A kid in baseball will wear the coach out. You can hit fungoes and they'll stay out there all night. I felt that I was kind of the supervisor of baseball, not the coach. But I enjoyed it.

You worked for three presidents — Eugene Chaffee, John Barnes and John Keiser. Can you give us your perspective on each of those presidents?

They were all very supportive. I kind of grew up with Dr. Chaffee. I think Dr. Barnes had a feeling for what athletics could do for the school. John Keiser had more of a background, had a better feel for athletics than any of the others. John Keiser always came down here when he wanted to talk. I never went to his office.
If the others had some communication to take care of, why it was 'come up'.

As I look back, I could've done a lot better job communicating with them. But I'm not a great memo writer. I feel very fortunate to have had a chance to work with all of them.

You had so many great teams and your record was unbelievable. What was the feeling when you decided to step aside from coaching and continue as athletic director?

It was a normal, natural break. It couldn't be the same kind of program we had as a two year school. We got a new look and made the program transition from the two year to the four year. Fortunately, we had Tony Knap, who did such a great job.

Did you hand pick Tony? You guys grew up together and played football together.

No, Dr. Barnes asked me for the recommendation of three names. We put the names on a board in his conference room. We discussed what we thought we needed here and then listed the good and the bad points under each name and Tony came out on top.

Obviously there were numerous changes in league affiliations and levels of competition. How did those occur and was it similar to what we're facing today with the possible move to the Big West Conference?

I think it was somewhat easier than what you are facing today. It just seems to me that there's a normal or natural time. It's gonna come whether it's now or down the road a little bit. I thought when we joined the Big Sky it was a natural thing. We had to have someplace to go.

We were not established like the University of Montana, the University of Idaho and those older schools, but our geographical location and the things that this community had to offer made it attractive to the league. There was concern that the three Idaho schools would gang up on the rest of the conference, but you can see that the in-staters are probably further apart than some of the others. The grapevine rumor was that before they'd take Boise State, they had to have Northern Arizona — it had to be a package deal. I think it was a situation where the conference had a need to expand and we had to have some place to go.

What about dropping baseball in 1980? Was that one of your toughest decisions?

Well, there was no choice. No one around here was even playing. Even the College of Idaho and NNC had thrown it in. Idaho State had quit. Weber quit. Idaho canceled out. I think our budget was probably $40,000 when we gave up. Coach Ross Vaughn did a good job in scheduling. He brought BYU and Washington State in — they were as good as any in the country. I went out there one afternoon and there weren't 15 people in the stands. If something has got to go and there's no particular interest in it, that seemed like the place to cut.

In the close to half a century you've been a Bronco, what do you think were the most significant events that have shaped the athletic program?

I can remember going to a barber downtown. I'd said I'm out at the junior college and, hell, the barber didn't know where the junior college was ... didn't know they had one. I think the first postseason game [1949] would be one landmark and then maybe the next significant one would have been the national championship game [1958]. The next significant event would be the construction of the stadium — both of them — the wooden stands in 1950 and the concrete stands in 1970. The national championship in 1980 was important. The Pavilion. The expansion of the weight room. The improvement of women's sports. They have done a tremendous job in that area. And the creation of the BAA to increase financial support and involvement.

Over the years you've had some interesting experiences. Tell us a few of your favorite stories.

We had some good players, but I'd like to tell a story about one named Tater Smith, in 1957. Tater wasn't real fond of a classroom. He'd come to school on Tuesday or Wednesday and last through the ball game and then go home to chase the cows. He was kind of a cowboy. Tater was a ball carrier, but he also kicked the extra points. When we put in the new stuff for the next game, usually we would do that on a Monday. So this Monday we put in the fake extra point — you know, we're gonna kick the extra point but the holder keeps it and rolls out into the end zone. So we got that out of the way on Monday, but I never thought of Tater not being there. So, during the game we got
us a score and called for the fake kick. Tater took a whiff at that ball and he lit flat on his backside and the play went around him. Tater was mortified. He didn't come back till Wednesday that next week. He wouldn't talk to anybody all the way home. It was the greatest job of fakin' that I have ever seen.

There was a Sponsler kid, a guard from Oklahoma. He was an Okie, tough son of a buck, but one of those annoying kind of guys that's always saying, 'Coach, let me kick, let me carry the ball.' So at practice we let him carry and I'd get behind him and signal the line - no blocking - and let them knock the crap out of him. So we went up to Yakima and got the game in pretty good shape. Here he comes. 'Let me carry the ball.' 'Go sit down!' 'Let me carry the ball — let me carry the ball.' So on the last play I let him get back there. Son of a gun, would you believe — I don't know how many guys hit him, but he just kept bouncing off and he got over to the sidelines and ended up going on to score.

You can kind of sense when some of the guys are up to something. They make quite a to-do about saying 'Good night coach,' those kind of things. One evening on the road I just knew something was happening someplace, so I went out and was leaning against the post there in the alley. Sure enough, down the fire escape they came. I met 'em there and we had a nice little parade right back through the lobby and back to their rooms. You could always tell when they had something planned.

The Hawaiians were kind of fun on road trips. They'd bring a ukulele along. Most of them could sing and they'd entertain for quite a while. We stopped on the Blue Mountains outside Pendleton one time. There was a big snow bank there and these kids had never seen snow. Two of them had the damndest snowball fight you ever saw. The next day we went to Yakima and one of them had no teeth. He had a bridge. Come to find out, he had lost the bridge in the snowball fight and hadn't said a word about it. So on the way back we stopped and took a look. You know, the snow bank had melted enough and there lay that bridge.

You might be interested in an early game. In fact, it was the first road game after I finally had taken over. The lighting wasn't so good in those days. Our enemy dressed in white helmets, white shirts and white pants. Here comes the referee and he's throwing out a white football. I said, well that's a little strange — it was camouflaged. He said he'd fix it up, so he ran into the stands and got his wife's lipstick and painted some red stripes around that football.

There was one game in California that has an interesting story. At half time we had them 7-6. In the third quarter our runner broke off tackle and was going all the way. All of a sudden, off of their bench came some guy. He hit our guy and his feet went this way, his helmet that way and the ball went there. I was doing all my yakin' from the sidelines, but to no avail. The first play they got the ball and they throw it and score. In a period of two minutes or less that game was gone. But I took the film clip and I sent it down to their commissioner of films. The only thing I got back was if that happened to him, he'd have protested. That's what you get when you get a long ways from home.

People often remark about how tight-fisted you were.

I was, too. I think it was important to pay the bills so that we weren't in the red. We were pretty frugal, but I don't think we'd ever deprived anybody of a sandwich after a game. We used to come home after we played a night ball game. We were better off Monday for doing that. If you stayed over night, you had a curfew problem. You had to get the guys to bed so you could get on the damn bus the next morning at 7 a.m. and start down the highway. You haven't lived until you get a group of guys 17, 18, 21 years old to ride a bus for about six or seven hours. By the last hour — you think little kids are bad — it just drove me nuts. So, we solved that. We just got each guy a quart of milk and a fruit juice, three or four sandwiches or whatever and some cookies and cakes and got on the bus. They'd eat that, and pretty soon, zzzzzz. You pulled into Boise about 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock or 5 o'clock in the morning and you'd get them out and go home. You saved the hotel bill and more than that,
you saved your own sanity.

YOU ARE LEGENDARY FOR THROWING YOUR CLIPBOARD IN THE AIR AT TIMES. DID THAT HAPPEN OFTEN?

I only remember one time. It was after a frustrating series of plays — we fumble, they recover. They fumble, we recover. We fumble, they recover. They fumble, we recover. This is consecutive plays. Now I'm serious. We fumble one more time and I let the clipboard go. Well, the damn clipboard ... when it got up at its height, somehow those papers came loose. They just blew away. I'm standing out there and I have to go out and pick 'em all up. I swear, that's the only time I ever let it really fly.

Lyle's Hat Trick

Ben Jayne tried to get Lyle Smith to buy a new hat on the trip to Ogden this year. Smith became quite shocked and proudly held up his old, blue fedora that looked much the worse for wear, and proclaimed "I'll never discard this fine specimen. It's got touchdowns in it!"

We found out that the old hat had been at every one of the last 14 victories and has played 60 minutes in every one of them. In one game in 1947 the hat worked through rain, sleet, hail, snow and even a little sunshine. If this old pile of rain-washed felt could talk, its main topic of conversation would be all the white hairs it has seen appear on its master's head since the unbeaten, untied string of victories started to mount for old BJC.

Up until last Friday, the touchdowns seemed to be coming out of the battered old hat as smoothly as ever. But Lyle lost patience when the U of I frosh tied the score. The hat hit the ground and Lyle gave it a couple of resounding kicks and placed it on his head after a short talking-to. No sooner was that hat on Lyle's head than BJC was moving down the field and did not stop until they had racked up two more touchdowns.

When, and if, BJC ever has a trophy case we recommend that the first article entered is Lyle Smith's faithful old, blue fedora.

By Dick Nelson
Roundup, October 29, 1948