



## The National Strength and Conditioning Association Timeline

**1969, August 15** - A key event occurred which eventually led to the creation of the National Strength and Conditioning Association. Bob Devaney, Head Football Coach and Athletic Director at the University of Nebraska crossed a new threshold in the world of collegiate sports as the first Athletic Director to hire a full-time strength and conditioning coach. It turned out to be one of the most beneficial moves he would ever make and it eventually led to the first NSCA National Convention being held on the University of Nebraska campus.

It comes once in a great while that one decision has the ability to alter an entire generation of athletics and change the landscape of an entire country. It was actually Tom Osborne, the assistant football coach at the time that noticed injured Husker football players returning to practice much stronger than before their injuries and asked who was helping these injured players. Osborne had the vision that strength training could help all the Nebraska athletes and suggested to Devaney to have the athletes begin lifting weights. This concept was foreign to athletes in most programs in 1969. Lifting weights was not recommended by many coaches across the country. There were no recognized lifting programs during the season, no winter or summer conditioning and no testing of strength, agility or power.



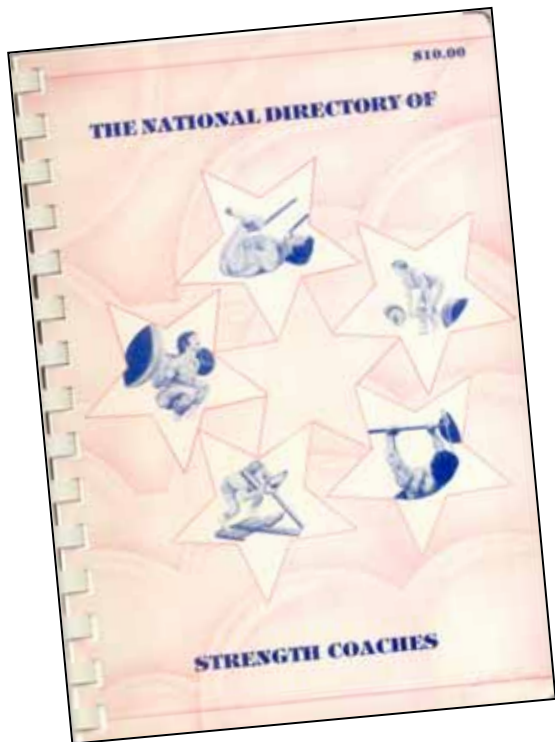
Tom Osborne (L) had the vision and Bob Devaney (R) gave the approval

Boyd Epley became the first full-time paid Strength and Conditioning Coach for the University of Nebraska athletic program. Epley was a scholarship pole-vaulter in his senior season at the University of Nebraska. A back injury left Epley sidelined and red-shirted for the entire season which forced Epley to spend most of his time in the weight room where he started helping other injured athletes. With the inception of Epley as the strength and conditioning coach, the Huskers football program thrived, and did so almost immediately winning the National Championship in 1970 and 1971.

Seeing the success Epley had at Nebraska, many other schools across the nation began hiring strength and conditioning coaches. Nebraska had sent a ripple through the sports world and created waves of new hires at many universities throughout the nation.

**1977, September 17** – When Nebraska played Alabama, Strength Coach Boyd Epley was introduced to Southeast Conference Commissioner Boyd McWhirter. Commissioner McWhirter asked Epley what his position was at Nebraska, and then asked if Alabama also had a strength coach. It was then and there that Epley realized if the Commissioner was not aware that strength coaches existed and were a valuable part of the athletic program then there was a serious need for strength coaches to unite.

Nebraska Athletic Director, Bob Devaney allowed Epley to create a Directory of Strength Coaches which led to hosting the first ever National Strength Coaches Convention, which led to the first NSCA office on the campus which led to printing the NSCA Bulletin and Journal at the University Print Shop and as they say, *the rest is history....*

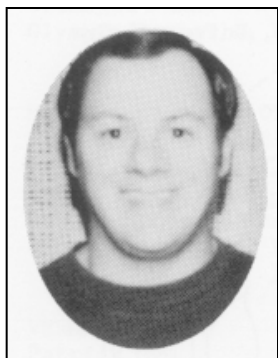


The First Directory of Strength Coaches was written prior to the first NSCA conference.

**1977, December 15** - A letter was sent to strength coaches by Epley announcing a National Directory that would list Strength Coaches.

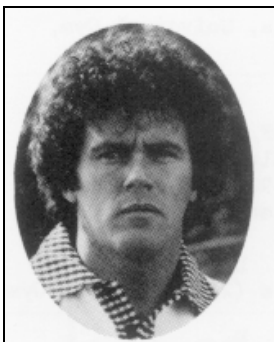
**1978, February 22** - The *National Directory of Strength Coaches* was printed by UNL Printing. The directory was compiled by Epley in an attempt to identify Strength Coaches throughout America. Mike Arthur, Gary Wade, and Bill Allerheiligen of the Nebraska strength staff were a great help putting the directory together.

The NSCA logo was designed by Martha Florence, a student at the University of Nebraska. The original directory is now on display at the NSCA World Headquarters in Colorado Springs.



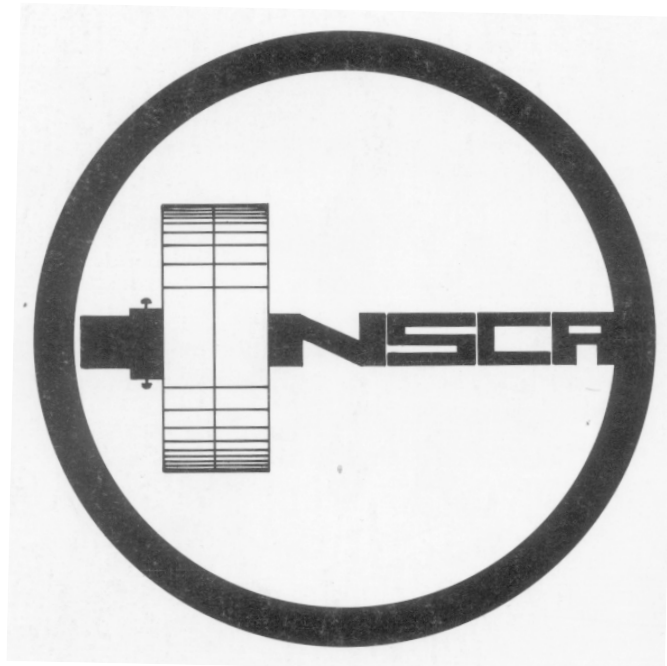
Pete Martinelli - New Mexico Strength Coach

**1978, April** - Jim Williams of Arkansas and Pete Martinelli of New Mexico called Epley and told him that they thought the *National Directory of Strength Coaches* was a good first step, but what was really needed was an association of strength coaches. Of course, they wanted Epley to do the work. Williams had been Epley's first assistant at Nebraska before being hired at Arkansas to start up their strength program. Martinelli was the strength coach at New Mexico.



Jim Williams - Arkansas Strength Coach

Knowing how much work the directory had been, having sent out thousands of requests for information and processing the information received, Epley wasn't convinced he had time to start an association. He turned to his friend George Sullivan, the Athletic Trainer and Therapist at Nebraska, for advice.



The original NSCA logo designed by Nebraska student, Martha Florence.

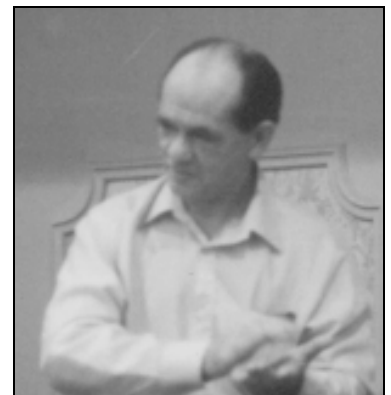
George Sullivan introduced Boyd to the President of the National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA), who invited the strength coaches to join their association. Epley sent letters to the strength coaches explaining the invitation to have a strength coaches group within the NATA and attend their conference. The NATA conference was held in Las Vegas in June. Dan Riley of Penn State called Epley and pleaded with him to avoid the association with the NATA. He felt the strength coaches needed to be independent. Riley said he would be in Kansas City giving a speech and asked Epley to meet him there to discuss the future for strength coaches. Jim Williams, Pete Martinelli, Dan Riley, Mike Arthur and Epley met in Kansas City. Through this meeting, Epley was persuaded to host the first NSCA National convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the date was confirmed for July 29-30, 1978.



George Sullivan –  
Nebraska Athletic Trainer  
and Therapist

**1978, July 12** - At the 1978 National Athletic Trainers Convention in Las Vegas, Boyd Epley and Jim Williams stood in the lobby with a sign promoting the first NSCA conference to be in Lincoln. They re-directed several strength coaches to Lincoln who had come to Las Vegas thinking the first meeting would be there.

**1978, July 17** - Arthur Jones, the owner of Nautilus, called Epley and wanted him to cancel the first NSCA convention. He asked Epley to come to Florida so they could talk. Epley said he could come after the convention. Jones did not want strength coaches to get organized. Jones was a very dominant individual and a powerful force in the strength training industry. Jones was afraid the strength coaches would unite and no longer listen to his machine training philosophy, and he was right. The controversy between barbell training and machine training had led to many arguments both verbally and in print. Epley did go visit Arthur Jones and stayed at his house after the first NSCA conference. Epley was not only successful in convincing Jones the NSCA was necessary, he convinced Nautilus to be a major advertiser in the new NSCA Journal that was soon to be developed.



Arthur Jones - Inventor of  
Nautilus Equipment

**1978, July 28** - Epley invited the 76 conference attendees to his house in Lincoln for burgers on Friday, July 28 – the night before the first convention. The 76 guests included the strength coaches from across the country as well as the exhibitors that took a chance on this new organization.

At that point in time Jimmy Carter was President of the United States, a gallon of gas was 63 cents, a new house was \$54,000, a new car \$5,000, the average income was \$16,975 per year and the Dallas Cowboys won the Super Bowl.



Luanne Sundberg - NSCA's  
First Secretary