

Remembering the 1st “Official” season of Nebraska 8-Man Football

8-Man football made its’ official mark on the state of Nebraska beginning in 1954.

There were 16 teams competing in this initial campaign, a southern division known as the ***Trailways Conference*** (made up of Milford, Exeter, Beaver Crossing, Dorchester, Utica, Fairmont and Western) and a northern group that deemed themselves the ***Corntassel Conference*** (made up of Crofton, Randolph, Wayne Hahn, Wausa, Winside, Osmond, Coleridge, Newcastle and possibly Rosalie).

Some of these teams still dropped down to play a six-man for a game or two, but most tried to stay with the 8-Man game.

In the final ratings, the Trailways certainly appeared the stronger of the two groups, with Milford, Exeter and Beaver Crossing occupying the top three spots.

Here is a glance at the first ever end of season 8-Man ratings- with team records:

- 1 Milford (7-1)** Coach- Lyle Aberle
 - 2 Exeter (7-1)** Coach- Kenneth C. Kasperek
 - 3 Beaver Crossing (8-1)** Coach- Don Mietzner
 - 4 Crofton (8-0)** Coach- Dale W. Oleson
 - 5 Randolph (7-1)** Coach- Ted Morgan
 - 6 Western (6-3)** Coach- Junior Ferrebee
 - 7 Coleridge (5-3)** Coach- Bill Edwards
 - 8 Wayne Hahn (4-4)** Coach- John Hodapp
 - 9 Wausa (4-3)** Coach- Gerald Gunderson
 - 10 Dorchester (4-4)** Coach- Ted McCartney
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1954 Eight-Man All-State Football Team

- End---Gary Kuhl-Exeter, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- End---Lowell Hunter-Coleridge, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Guard-Dan Kremer-Crofton, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Guard-Leonard Homolka-Western, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Center-Ray Erdkamp-Exeter, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Back---Dave Barker-Milford, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Back---Robert Ebersbacher-Beaver Crossing, 6-0, 178, Sr.
- Back---Ron Shirmer-Milford, 5-10, 155, Sr.

Below is a table illustrating how 11-Man, 8-Man and 6-Man football numbers have fluctuated over the years. This statistical information was taken from the NSAA.

The 8-Man game exploded after being introduced in the 1950's, going from 14 schools in 1954 to 163 schools fielding teams by 1959.

These numbers show that Nebraska still has more schools playing 8-Man football than any other state. Listed below is the year, followed by the number of teams playing 11-Man, 8-Man and then 6-Man in that order:

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
1950	....176.....	0.....	167
1951	....176.....	7.....	172
1952	....175.....	12.....	177
1953	....180.....	13.....	183
1954	....194.....	15.....	169
1955	....182.....	25.....	147
1956	....189.....	88.....	105
1957	....181.....	124.....	78
1958	....185.....	145.....	56
1959	....185.....	163.....	41

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
1960.....	191.....	167.....	33
1961.....	207.....	154.....	25
1962.....	217.....	164.....	11
1963.....	230.....	158.....	8
1964.....	239.....	152.....	5
1965.....	257.....	136.....	4
1966.....	252.....	140.....	4
1967.....	265.....	102.....	0
1968.....	265.....	99.....	0
1969.....	270.....	93.....	0

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
1970.....	276.....	85.....	0
1971.....	278.....	85.....	0
1972.....	280.....	87.....	0
1973.....	278.....	84.....	0
1974.....	275.....	84.....	0
1975.....	270.....	90.....	0
1976.....	274.....	89.....	0
1977.....	274.....	89.....	0
1978.....	260.....	101.....	0
1979.....	250.....	111.....	0

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
1980.....	237.....	119.....	0
1981.....	234.....	125.....	1
1982.....	211.....	143.....	2
1983.....	203.....	145.....	11
1984.....	201.....	132.....	19
1985.....	197.....	132.....	23
1986.....	193.....	132.....	24
1987.....	186.....	129.....	31
1988.....	186.....	133.....	27
1989.....	180.....	131.....	31

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
1990.....	179.....	125.....	29
1991.....	180.....	125.....	29
1992.....	180.....	120.....	32
1993.....	181.....	124.....	25
1994.....	185.....	121.....	23
1995.....	189.....	116.....	23
1996.....	188.....	118.....	23
1997.....	194.....	116.....	22
1998.....	189.....	117.....	14
1999.....	191.....	119.....	7

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
2000.....	191.....	119.....	7
2001.....	175.....	130.....	7
2002.....	176.....	129.....	7
2003.....	176.....	129.....	7
2004.....	179.....	117.....	8
2005.....	179.....	117.....	8
2006.....	176.....	121.....	11
2007.....	176.....	121.....	11
2008.....	170.....	118.....	15
2009.....	170.....	118.....	15

	<u>11M</u>	<u>8M</u>	<u>6M</u>
2010.....	161.....	115.....	18
2011.....	161.....	115.....	18
2012.....	156.....	114.....	14
2013.....	156.....	114.....	14
2014.....	155.....	108.....	18
2015.....	155.....	108.....	18
2016.....	147.....	107.....	25
2017.....	147.....	107.....	25
2018.....	136.....	109.....	31
2019.....	136.....	109.....	31

11M 8M 6M

2020.....131.....114.....33

2021.....131.....114.....33

2022.....131.....114.....33

2023.....131.....114.....33

2024.....132.....111.....34

2025.....132.....111.....34