

Remembering N8M: 1973

85 Teams played 8-Man football in 1973

11-Man football would set a record in 1973, with 280 schools in Nebraska playing that version of high school football. The record still stands to this day.

Approx. 130 Nebraska schools play 11-Man today, the number is a far cry from the 280 playing 11-man in 1973. Consider the fact that only 277 total schools will even field a high school football team this year in our state. These falling numbers are an unfortunate by-product of Nebraska's small school consolidation over the last half-century- as we will see many schools disappear from the ratings over time.

There were no State playoffs in Nebraska in 1973, but the NSAA was just TWO years away from implementing a playoff system where State Championships were settled on the football field, as it should be.

Conference playoffs were the only post-season games allowed at the time and some carried great significance. Here is a list of the 22 Conference Championship matchups in 1973. These include 11-Man and 8-Man. Many of these conferences dissolved years ago as you can see.

Capital Conference

Hickman-Norris (8-1) at Springfield-Platteview (9-0)

Rangeland Conference

Valentine (6-2-1) at Chadron (8-1)

Niobrara Valley Conference

Atkinson West Holt (3-5-1) at Orchard (6-2)

Lewis and Clark Conference

Newcastle (7-2-1) vs Coleridge (7-2) {@ Wayne State}

Mid-Nebraska Conference

Sandy Creek (9-0) at Grand Island Northwest (7-2)

Big Sky Conference

Stapleton (6-3) vs Hyannis (6-2) @ Thedford

Galaxy Conference

Falls City Sacred Heart (6-1) at Louisville (7-2)

Pioneer Conference

Lawrence (7-1-1) vs Meridian (7-1-1) (@ Alexandria)

Southern Nebraska Conference

Sutton (8-1) at Wymore Southern (4-4-1)

Twin Rivers Conference

Fairbury (9-0) at Blair (9-0)

Central Ten Conference

Schuyler (8-1) at Ord (7-2)

Metro Conference

Creighton Prep (8-1) at Omaha Westside (6-3)

Big Ten Conference

Grand Island (7-3) at North Platte (7-1-1)

Husker Conference

West Point (7-1) vs Columbus Lakeview (7-1-1) {@ Pawnee Park./2:00}

Loup Valley Conference

Callaway (8-1) at Ansley (8-2)

Great Plains Conference

Farnam (7-1) at Big Springs (6-1)

Republican Valley Conference

Franklin (7-2) at Arapahoe (8-0-1)

Goldenrod Conference

St. Edward (9-0) at Stromsburg (5-5)

Sandhills-Gateway Conference

Clearwater (5-3) at Bartlett (8-0)

Southern Frontier Conference

Bartley (9-0) at Madrid Wheatland (8-1)

Mid-State Conference

Dodge (10-0) at Newman Grove (4-4-1)

Centennial Conference

Fremont Bergan (5-4) vs Columbus Scotus (8-1) {@ Pawnee Park/7:30}

1973 Final 8-Man Top 10

- 1. Paxton (9-0) {431-64}**
 - 2. Hampton (9-0) {446-80}**
 - 3. Cedar Bluffs (9-0) {446-100}**
 - 4. Bruning (8-0) {338-108}**
 - 5. Madrid Wheatland (9-1) {391-127}**
 - 6. Bartlett (9-0) {428-68}**
 - 7. Bartley (9-1) {402-112}**
 - 8. Farnam (8-1) {423-71}**
 - 9. Mullen (6-3) {265-127}**
 - 10. Adams (7-1-1) {458-61}**
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1973 8-Man All-State Football Team

End---Doug Max-Brady, 6-1, 180, Senior

End---Don Peck-Paxton, 6-5, 205 Senior

Guard-Gary Drahota-Bartlett, 5-11, 180, Senior

Guard-Bernie Perlinger-Paxton, 6-3, 190, Senior

Center-Bob Pfister-Lewiston, 6-5, 215, Senior

Back--Mark Olson-Hampton, 6-1, 197, Senior

Back--Gary Walkenhorst-Cedar Bluffs, 6-0, 198, Senior

Back--Wes Hoppe-Farnam, 6-0, 175, Senior

Kicker-John Poltack-Madrid Wheatland, 5-10, 170, Senior

Hampton quarterback **Mark Olson** was a very special football player, and the Hawks have turned out some special players over the years.

The 6-1, 197-pound Hampton ace had a hand in 95 touchdowns during his illustrious 4 year career, scoring 37 himself and passing for another 58 TDs. Those stats were as good as it gets for career numbers in the 1970's.

Olson compiled 4,232 career yards of total offense and in his senior season alone, he ran for 16 touchdowns and passed for 25 more. There were many coaches who urged World-Herald to place the Hampton star on World-Herald 1st Team Super-State.
