

Sports



All-time greatest

... Grid watchers pick top offense

By Tim McNeil

"Bill Englehardt could do it all. Pass, run, tackle, and kick," Wayne Wagner said.

"Marlin Briscoe was a great field general," Paul Borge said. "He was smart and he called his own plays." "Nobody could compare to Roger Sayers when it came to running," Lloyd Cardwell said.

"Frank Hahn and Simon A. Simon were the two best guards to play for UNO," Maurice Shadle said.

When asked to name the all-time great offensive football players at UNO (formerly Omaha University), Wagner, Shadle, Cardwell, and other long-time football observers expressed different opinions.

Englehardt

Wagner, entering his 14th year as athletic trainer at UNO, selected Englehardt as the best quarterback.

"He wasn't the fastest or quickest player on the team," Wagner said. "His greatest asset was his ability to do everything well and do them by surprise."

Shadle, a retired Omaha World-Herald sports-writer who covered OU-UNO football from 1938 to 1976, agreed.

"He would be a great back in any formation today except the wishbone," Shadle said. "He wasn't extremely fast and he didn't have the great quickness that so many good backs have today."

Smart

Lloyd Cardwell, who coached Omaha University from 1947-1959, picked Englehardt because of his play calling.

"He was a smart quarterback," Cardwell said. "He was good at reading defenses and finding the open receiver."

Paul Borge, associate professor of communication and member of the UNO athletic committee, has followed UNO football for 30 years. He said he has not seen another player as good as Englehardt.

"Englehardt could do everything and anything," Borge said. "He was tremendously talented."

Englehardt's career spanned the years 1952 to 1956 at OU. A 5-9, 185-pound tailback in Cardwell's single-wing formation, he remains UNO's leading scorer. He set or tied 21 records, including most points in a career with 237, and most career touchdowns with 35. He rushed for 2,152 yards, passed for 3,568 yards, threw 36 touchdown passes, and had a punting average of 34 yards. He led the nation in total offense in 1954 while leading his team to the Tangerine Bowl. UNO's only two-time All-American, he is a member of the UNO Hall of Fame.

Magician

Wagner, Shadle, Cardwell, and others said Marlin Briscoe rates with Englehardt as a great quarterback.

"Briscoe was a magician," Wagner said. "He was a better passer than Englehardt and a good ball

UNO All-Time Offense

TE — Rudy Rotella (6-1, 195 — 1954 All-American — UNO Hall of Fame)

WR — K. R. Anderson (6-2, 190 — 1979-80 All-NCC)

OL — Simon A. Simon (5-10, 200 — Tangerine Bowl)

OL — Frank Hahn (5-10, 210 — Tangerine Bowl)

OL — Dan Klepper (6-3, 245 — 1968 All-American)

OL — Harlan Aden (6-1, 220 — 1965 All-American)

C — Larry Johnson (6-3, 210 — 1952 All-American)

QB — Marlin Briscoe (5-10, 170 — 1967 All-American — UNO Hall of Fame)

B — Bill Englehardt (5-9, 185 — 1955-56 All-American — UNO Hall of Fame)

B — Roger Sayers (5-8, 154 — UNO Hall of Fame)

B — Joe Arenas (5-11, 180 — 1949 All-American)

The players selected as UNO's all-time offensive players stood out in the minds of Wayne Wagner, Paul Borge, Maurice Shadle, Lloyd Cardwell, and Carl Meyers. Additionally, they said there have been many outstanding players throughout the years besides the players mentioned.

handler. I wouldn't consider him a better all-around player than Englehardt, but he was just as valuable to his team."

"He could have played quarterback on an also-ran team in the NFL," Shadle said. "I don't think he could have quarterbacked a championship team because he didn't have the size of most quarterbacks."

Carl Meyers, former UNO quarterback and assistant coach, said Briscoe was one of the best players he has seen or coached.

"He was one of the best players in the 1960s," Meyers said. "He could have played anywhere in the nation."

Exciting

UNO Sports Information Director Gary Anderson called Briscoe the most exciting player he has seen.

"He was undoubtedly the most exciting and best player I have seen in my 20 years of watching UNO football. He probably meant more to his team than any other player," Anderson said.

Briscoe, a 5-10, 170-pound all-pro wide receiver during the Miami Dolphins' Super Bowl years and member of the UNO Hall of Fame, was an All-American in 1967. He set 22 records, 14 of which still stand. He remains UNO's total offense leader with 6,253 career yards.

Briscoe was drafted in the 14th round by the Denver Broncos in 1968. He started at three different positions in the NFL — quarterback (Denver), defensive back and wide receiver (Buffalo), and wide receiver (Miami).

Shadle and Borge named Carl Meyers as another good quarterback because of his ball-handling and intelligence.

"Meyers was probably the smartest player I ever saw," Shadle said. "He was a good passer and excellent ball handler. He was handicapped by mediocre material. If he had the players Englehardt did, he would have been a great quarterback."

Great faker

"Meyers was a great faker and good at play-action passing," Borge said.

As a junior, Meyers (5-11, 170-pounds) led his team to an 8-1-1 record and to the All-Sports Bowl. He completed 12 of 24 passes for 238 yards and two touchdowns as OU beat East Central Oklahoma 34-21. He was also voted the game's outstanding back. He recorded his best year as a senior, passing for 1,125 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Wagner, Cardwell, and Borge agreed with each other when selecting their all-time running back.

"Roger Sayers was another player that was essential to his team," Wagner said. "If you gave him a hole, he was gone."

Bears

"He made defenses look like they were standing still," Borge said. "He was one of the fastest players I have seen in a uniform."

Sayers is the brother of former Chicago Bears all-pro running back Gayle Sayers.

The 5-8, 154-pound back shares the NAIA record for longest pass reception from scrimmage, 99 yards. He holds the UNO record for rushing average with 8.6 yards a carry.

Sayers rushed for 2,033 yards in his career and scored 30 touchdowns. In the last three games of his career, he carried 13 times and scored seven touchdowns.

Sayers was also a standout in track. He was clocked at 9.4 when he twice beat the "world's fastest human," former Dallas Cowboy star Bob Hayes. He is a member of the NAIA track Hall of Fame and UNO's Hall of Fame.

Cutting back

Wagner, Shadle, and Cardwell chose Joe Arenas as Sayers' greatest running mate.

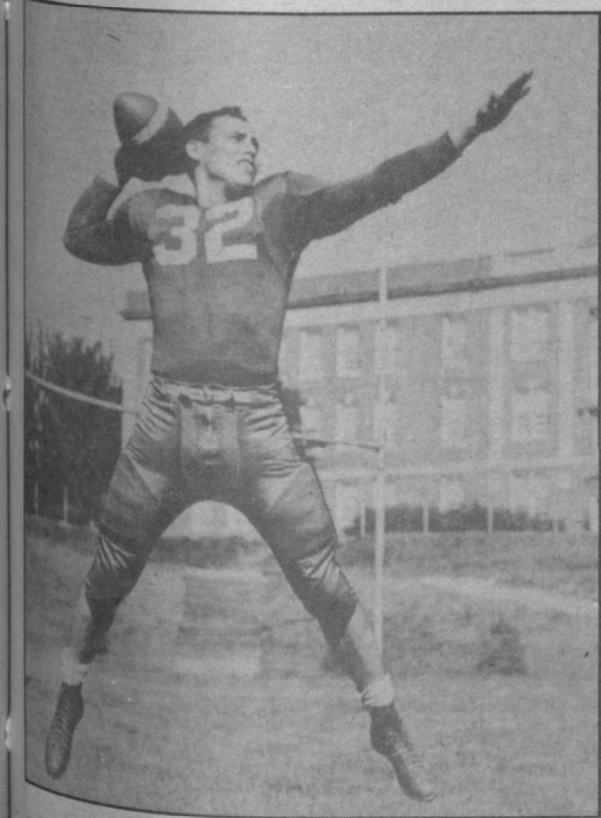
"Football fans marveled over the success Arenas had in the NFL," Shadle said. "People always asked me if he improved that much. I answered no, because I felt he was always a great player."

"He was great at cutting back," Cardwell said. "He didn't have great speed, but he was shifty."

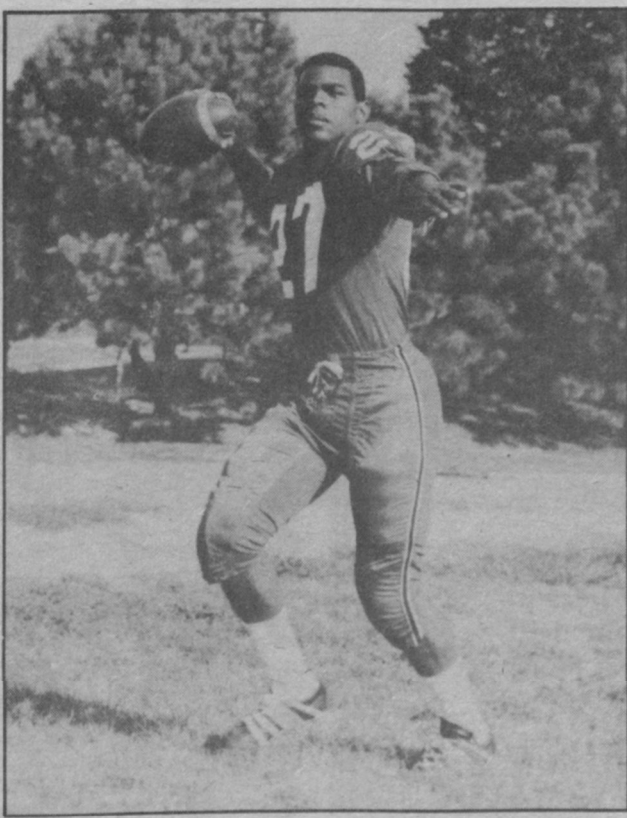
Arenas played from 1947 to 1951. The 5-11, 180-pound tailback averaged more than 200 yards rushing in one season. He is a member of the UNO Hall of Fame and a 1949 All-American.

Arenas led the NFL several times in kickoff returns while playing for the San Francisco 49ers. He was an assistant coach for the University of Houston when

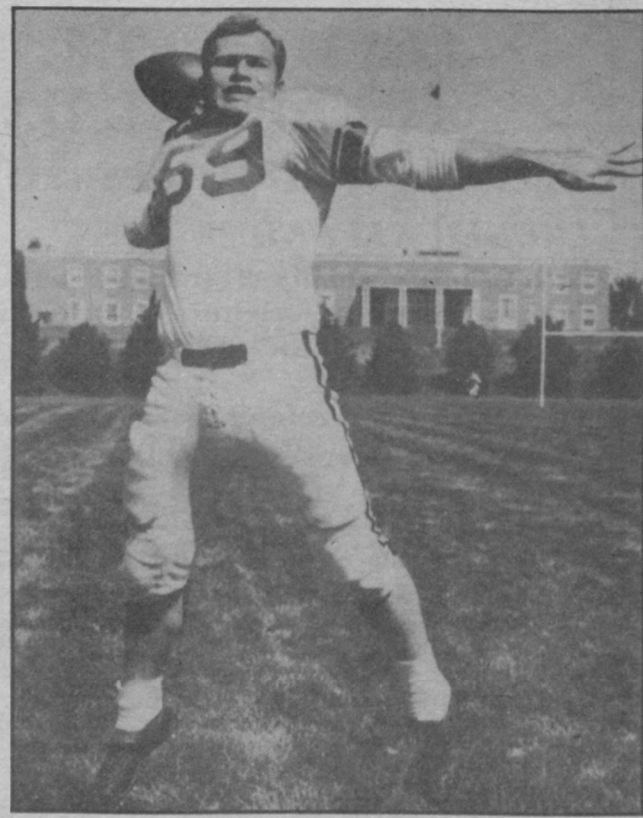
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Arenas



Briscoe



Englehardt

Best OU-UNO offense includes Sayers, Briscoe

(continued from page 13)
they played Nebraska in the 1976 Cotton Bowl.

Inseparable

Meyers said he couldn't decide between Sayers, Louie Miloni, and Wayne Backes when selecting his favorite back.

Miloni, a 5-5, 154-pound halfback, rushed for 592 yards his senior year. Backes, a 5-8, 170-pound fullback, never lost a yard in his four-year career. He rushed for 607 yards his senior year.

The 1961 team featured Meyers, Sayers, Miloni, and Backes in the same backfield. Meyers passed for 705 yards, Sayers rushed for 707 yards, Miloni rushed for 592 yards, and Backes rushed for 304.

"Miloni would hit a truck if he had to. "He was tough as nails and built like a spark plug."

Tough yards

Gerald Allen, a 5-11, 195-pound running back and defensive back, made the Associated Press All-

American team in 1964. He holds the UNO record for longest interception return for a touchdown, 94 yards.

Shadle included Bill Steck as a member of his all-time backfield because of his ability to pick up tough yardage.

Cardwell also added Steck to his backfield. "He was old reliable. He produced the tough yards when his team needed it."

When selecting their best end, Wagner, Borge, Cardwell, and Shadle singled out Randy Rotella.

"The 1954 team was an excellent team," Wagner said. "Englehardt was the star, but Rotella was the leader."

K. R. Anderson

"Rotella had tremendous hands," Borge said. "He was good at catching in a crowd."

"Rotella was a tough tight end," Cardwell said. Shadle selected Rotella and Kurt R. Anderson as his all-time best ends.

"They are probably the best ends I can remember," Shadle said. "They didn't have the important physical tools, but they had a knack for getting open and catching the ball."

Rotella (6-1, 195-pounds), was a 1954 All-American and is a member of the UNO Hall of Fame. He caught the winning touchdown pass from Englehardt in the Tangerine Bowl. He was fourth in the nation his senior year in receiving with 32 receptions for 462 yards.

All-sports

Anderson (6-2, 190-pounds) was All-North Central Conference in 1979-80. He caught 129 passes for 1,810 yards and eight touchdowns in his career. His best season was 1979 when he finished sixth in the nation, catching 54 passes for 817 yards and five touchdowns.

Meyers chose Paul Blazeovich as the best end. T. 6-0, 195-pound tight end was All-American in 1962 and was voted outstanding lineman in the All-Sports Bowl.

Shadle and Cardwell named Frank Hahn and Simon A. Simon as the best linemen.

"They were not great individual players, but as a duo they were fabulous," Shadle said. "Simon was a smart kid and Hahn was a tough kid. A lot of Simon's intelligence rubbed off on Hahn, and Hahn's toughness rubbed off on Simon."

Loved football

"They played well together," Cardwell said. "I have never seen anyone who loved football as much as they did. The tougher the game got, the better they played."

Simon (5-10, 200-pounds) and Hahn (5-10) started as guards on the Tangerine Bowl team. They were part of the offense that holds the UNO record for most points in a season with 360, most points averaged a game with 36, and most first downs in one game with 37.

Meyers said Dan Klepper and Harlan Aden were the best linemen to play for UNO.

"Klepper (1968 All-American) was the best pass blocker I can remember," Meyers said. "He was big (6-3, 245-pounds), strong, and fast. Aden (1965 All-American) wasn't as big as Klepper, but he had more speed. His specialty was pulling and trapping."

Shadle said 1952 All-American center Larry Johnson (6-3, 210 pounds) and Hall of Fame center Harold Johnk (6-4, 260-pounds) were the best offensive linemen he had seen.

"They were awesome centers," Shadle said. "They fired off the ball and pushed people out. They had everything coaches look for in players — size, speed, and intelligence."