

New record recalls a great teammate

Last Friday night our Sidney Yellow Jackets enjoyed an impressive



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52-28 football victory over Troy at Sidney Memorial Stadium. Senior kicker Danny Dean had a big night with five extra points, a field goal,

and several kickoff touchbacks. He now has a new school regular season record of 33 extra points with two games to play.

The record he broke was mine and it was held for 45 seasons. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Danny and also to pay tribute to the unselfish guy who held the record before me, First Sergeant Robert Osborne-U.S. Army, Sidney High School 1971. He was an integral contributor throughout the "30 & 0" winning streak from 1968-70 for which our current playing field is named at Sidney Memorial Stadium.

In 1968 Bob was a starting defensive back and our first soccer-style placekicker, booting 19 extra points. He later became an outstanding

blocking fullback and ground gaining tailback, depending on the team's need at the time. "Ozzie" also returned a punt for a touchdown in a critical game at Lima Shawnee in 1970.

He was a fine basketball player and musician, an amazingly talented individual. He was a great leader within what I still feel is the finest class in the history of Sidney High School, the 1971 graduating class. This group excelled in the classroom, on stage, in athletics, in the community, and elsewhere during three memorable years on Campbell Road.

In the 1969 football preseason, I was a sophomore hoping to become the team's kicker, which would mean unseating Bob Osborne. That became reality two days before the opener at St. Marys.

Shortly thereafter we were having trouble with the center snap on extra points and punts, prompting head coach Dave Haines to seek volunteers. Up stepped former kicker Bob Osborne to do a quality job for almost two seasons. I was



Osborne

always appreciative of Bob and enjoyed seeing him periodically after graduation.

Bob was 14 years removed from SHS when he decided to enlist in the United

States Army and make it a career. I got his Army address from the Sidney Daily News when it listed contact information for local military personnel serving in Desert Storm in 1991. He replied quickly and we stayed in touch.

He took leave to return to Sidney in 2000 to attend a reunion of the "30 & 0" teams. Two years later I was involved in the planning and fundraising for Sidney Memorial Stadium. An e-mail showed up on my computer from Iraq where Bob was again serving. He told me of his pride in both his country and his hometown, and enlisted my assistance in working with his wife to facilitate their financial contribution to our new stadium.

I don't get emotional very often but this really got to me. Here's a guy approaching 50 years old serving his country over 6,000 miles from home and taking time to sup-

port the stadium project back in Sidney. "It's the least I can do," he said in the note.

As I thought further, was this really any different from when he stepped forward to become our long-snapper over three decades earlier? No, it was simply a great teammate continuing to be a great teammate.

Bob retired from the Army in 2005 and periodically gets back to Sidney from his home in Alabama. Appropriately, a commemorative brick salutes his service in the "Freedom Rock" display adjacent to Sidney Memorial Stadium.

I just saw him on Labor Day weekend. At each reunion, we always embrace and I thank him one more time. At this time I thank Danny Dean, his holder, snapper, blockers, and teammates for providing the platform for me to tell the story of a very special Yellow Jacket, First Sergeant Robert Osborne—US Army, SHS 1971. I hope the example of Bob Osborne resonates with them and others who now know his story.

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