

Changing the spelling of PeLLLinI

By Larry Pritchett

Past PCHS activities director

The professional, college and high school football seasons are just getting started and already there are people in the sports news business talking about coaches who might be on the “Hot Seat” if they don’t improve the program, win more games, graduate more players, win more games, get bigger crowds, win more games and probably some other reason like “Win more games.”

Surprisingly on some of these lists you will find coach Bo Pelini. He is the guy that has that really nice stadium facility to play games in and you can see as you head off I-180 onto 9th street in Lincoln. Yes, that Bo Pelini.

Most of the time in college football you get that, “They are not winning enough games” or “The program isn’t moving in the direction we would like,” which is usually just another way to say they aren’t winning enough.

Bo Pelini’s record at Nebraska is 49-20. That is a 71 percent winning percentage. His teams have won nine or more games in the five seasons he has been at Nebraska as head coach. He even has a 1-0 record when he took over for the Alamo Bowl game after Frank Solich was fired by Steve Pederson, who must have decided Pelini wasn’t ready, so he hired that guy who is calling plays for the Cowboys in Dallas this year, offensive line coach Billy Callahan, but I digress.

Pelini is catching flack because he loses too many games in a season. He has lost four games each year he has been a head coach.

Some people, it is said, have said that Bo should spell his last name Pelllini in order to get those four l’s all the time.

He is three and three in bowl games, winning the first three times out as coach and losing the last three years.

I think I can remember when Coach Tom lost maybe six or seven times in bowl games but he did finish strong toward the end of his career.

But getting back to Coach Pelini, some of the losses have been spectacular. Giving up 70 points in the Big 10 Championship last season, giving up 60-some to Ohio State has not set well with some of the “Deep Pockets” people on the booster side of the table.

Another thing that enters into this picture is that there is a new athletic director in town. I don’t think there was any doubt that T.O. likes Bo. Sometimes when that position changes other positions don’t have as much slack as they did with previous administrations.

I don’t personally think Pelini is really even close to the hot part of the stove. He graduates his players and he has discipline in the program. He still has kids get into trouble, but how would you like to keep track of 180 kids and keep them out of trouble 24/7 for five years?

There are plenty of parents who can’t keep one or two out of trouble and usually those kids live

with them.

I am looking forward to the Huskers football season and if you look at the schedule, it isn't maybe as difficult as it has been in the past.

In these new conferences, unlike the old Big 12, you don't play every team so you might miss a powerhouse here or there and that may have happened some for the Huskers this year.

It still will be difficult and 10 wins are still possible, but this would be a great year to knock one or two of those "L's" out of Pelini.