



Scott Downing

Tight Ends/Special Teams/Recruiting Coordinator | Third Season | Sterling College, 1979



- ▶ Coached All-American and Ray Guy Award finalist Kyle Larson in 2003
- ▶ Coached 2001 Ray Guy Award winner Travis Dorsch

Scott Downing begins his third year on the Nebraska staff as recruiting coordinator while also coaching the tight ends and kicking specialists. A former Husker graduate assistant and head freshman coach, Downing serves as the team's summer jobs coordinator and as the liaison to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Under Downing's tutelage, Nebraska's punters have gained national recognition. Kyle Larson, who was the starting punter for the Cincinnati Bengals in 2004, earned first-team All-America honors and was a Ray Guy Award finalist as a senior at Nebraska in 2003. Last year, Sam Koch took over the punting duties and averaged a solid 41.3 yards per punt in his first season, helping the Huskers rank No. 16 nationally in net punting (38.39 ypp).

Downing has also played an integral role in the development of the Husker tight ends in the West Coast Offense. Downing's most heralded protege is Matt Herian, who set the Nebraska tight end single-game record with eight receptions in the second contest of the 2004 campaign. Herian finished second on the squad with 24 catches for 308 yards and three scores despite missing the final four games of the year with an injury. Herian earned All-Big 12 honors at tight end in 2003 as a sophomore, while tying for the team lead with 22 receptions, including three TDs.

As Nebraska's recruiting coordinator, Downing has a wealth of contacts after having coached at three Division I schools. Downing helped coordinate the Huskers' efforts while helping NU land one of the top-ranked recruiting classes in the nation by some analysts in 2005.

Downing came to the Huskers from Purdue in 2002. He served as Joe Tiller's assistant head coach and worked directly with the Boilermakers' running backs and special teams during a six-year stint. Each of the Purdue teams Downing was associated with participated in a bowl game. The Boilermakers had a .500 or better record every season Downing was in West Lafayette, highlighted by a tie for the Big Ten championship and a Rose Bowl appearance in 2000.

In 2002, Downing coached Purdue running back Joey Harris to a 1,000-yard rushing season, as Harris totaled 1,115 yards and scored eight touchdowns. Downing mentored two other running backs at Purdue who just missed 1,000-yard seasons.

The Downing File

Date and Place of Birth: Born on Nov. 7, 1956, in Kansas City, Mo.

Family: Wife, Karen; Sons, Matthew (18), Andrew (15) and Zachary (12)

Education: Sterling College, bachelors in history, 1979

Playing Experience: 1975-78, Sterling College

Coaching Experience: 1980-81, Sterling College (assistant coach/offensive line); 1982-83, Sterling College (head coach); 1984-85, Nebraska (graduate assistant coach); 1986, Nebraska (head freshman coach); 1987-90, Wyoming (assistant coach/linebackers); 1991-94, Wyoming (defensive coordinator/linebackers); 1995-96, Wyoming (assistant head coach/running backs/special teams); 1997-2002, Purdue (assistant head coach/running backs/special teams); 2003-present, Nebraska (assistant coach/recruiting coordinator/tight ends/kickers)

Recruiting Emphasis: Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Wyoming, Canada

Downing's success at Purdue was not limited to running backs. In 2001, Downing helped Travis Dorsch become an All-American as both a kicker and a punter. Dorsch finished his career as the Big Ten Conference leader with 68 field goals and 355 kicking points. He also was the school record-holder for career field goal percentage (.701) and punting average (48.5). Dorsch received the Ray Guy Award as the nation's outstanding punter in 2001. Downing also tutored Vinny Sutherland, the top punt returner in Purdue school history. Sutherland averaged 11.6 yards per return and scored two touchdowns on punt returns in his career.

Before his six-year stint at Purdue, Downing spent 10 seasons at Wyoming, including the final six under Tiller. Downing left Wyoming to join Tiller's Purdue staff after the 1996 season. Downing served as linebackers coach at Wyoming from 1987 to 1994, defensive coordinator from 1991 to 1994 and assistant head coach while coaching the running backs and special teams in 1995 and 1996. The Cowboys went to two Copper bowls and two Holiday bowls during his tenure in Laramie. He also was a part of Western Athletic Conference championship teams in 1987, 1988 and 1993, as well as the WAC Pacific Division-winning squad in 1996.

Downing posted a 4-1 record as the Nebraska freshman coach in 1986 after serving as a graduate assistant in 1984 and 1985 on Coach Tom Osborne's staff. The Cornhuskers had a three-year record of 29-7, won the 1984 Big Eight championship and played in the 1985 and 1987 Sugar bowls and the 1986 Fiesta Bowl.

Downing was an assistant coach at Sterling College in Kansas in 1980 and 1981 and head coach in 1982 and 1983. Sterling was 13-4-1 and ranked in the NAIA top 20 final poll for the first time in school history in 1983. Downing graduated from Sterling in 1979 with a B.A. in history. He was a four-year letterman at offensive guard for Sterling from 1975 to 1978. Downing was a co-captain each of his final two seasons and earned honorable-mention NAIA All-America honors in both 1977 and 1978. He was inducted into the Sterling College Hall of Fame in 1990.

A native of Kansas City, Mo., Downing and his wife, Karen (Allan of Vevay, Ind.), have three sons, Matthew, Andrew and Zachary.



The Downing family (from left): Andrew, Scott, Matthew, Karen and Zachary.