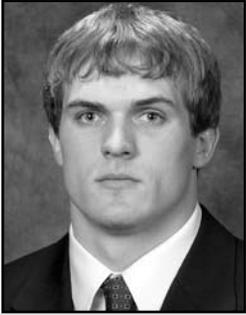


Shanle Carries on Family Dream



Andrew Shanle, SS

By Sarah Sherman, Nebraska Media Relations

In the summer of 2005, senior safety Andrew Shanle was in many ways a typical college athlete, playing as a reserve in Nebraska's secondary with the majority of his playing time allocated to special teams.

For an athlete whose career has focused on stopping the run, Shanle has been alarmingly on the move. In just one year, Shanle has developed into a strong starter for the Blackshirt defense, and is now a college graduate as well as a happily married man to the former Sarah Hertzler, a native of Lincoln.

Shanle's biggest break on the football field in his senior season came in the Blackshirt defense's shutout against Troy, the Huskers' first shutout in Memorial Stadium since 2003, when he grabbed his first career interception.

"I just read the quarterback's eyes on the play, and saw him chuck it up," Shanle said of the pick. "I just went for it and wound up with the ball. It's nice to get the first one out of the way.

"(A shutout) is always a goal in the back of our minds, and it's definitely nice to see the goose-egg at the end of the game. It's just icing on the cake to get the shutout after playing so well."

Shanle has long possessed the physical tools to be a presence in the secondary, as the 6-1, 210-pound speedster additionally ranks among the fastest players on the Husker roster.

Shanle earned first-team All-Class D honors for Coach Rich Lemburg as a senior for his high school in St. Edward, Neb., playing on both sides of the ball and snagging 90 tackles while also picking off seven passes from his safety position on defense. He also played quarterback, racking up more than 1,400 yards throwing as well as 835 on the ground.

The all-around athlete was also a standout on the track team, placing second in the state in both the 100- and 200-meter dashes as a junior and winning the 100 meters as a senior in a time of 10.87 seconds.

Growing up in small-town Nebraska, Shanle fit the mold of many young athletes who dream of coming to the University of Nebraska. He also had extra incentive added through his older brother Scott, who was a linebacker at Nebraska and is currently enjoying his fourth year in the NFL and first year with the New Orleans Saints.

"I always just followed the dreams of my brother," Shanle said. "I didn't know any better. Playing for Nebraska is something we talked about when I was younger, and I didn't think it was something that really could happen until I was about a junior in high school. I wasn't really recognized until I had a good year, and then it became a possibility."

While there were scholarship offers from other schools to consider, Shanle chose Nebraska after connecting with Scott about his time as a Husker.

"It was a dream come true," Andrew said. "I saw all of the attention that Scott received, and just talking to him about it was a great way to build the relationship between the two of us. It was a great time, and I'll always remember the experience of visiting and talking to the coaches on the phone."

With 39 games under his belt as a Husker, Shanle took to his starting position throughout summer workouts and fall training camp like second nature.

"I think during the summer I wasn't really focused so much on (receiving a) Blackshirt," Shanle said. "I had more of the attitude that this could be my last year of playing football.

"It's something that as long as you do what the coaches ask of you and try to go beyond what you have done before, all of the small things will fall into place to earn your spot."

After an intense summer of workouts and a fall training camp that saw the secondary lose starting cornerback Zack Bowman, Shanle is proud of the effort from the tested squad.

"Any time an injury occurs in the secondary where you're already being described as inexperienced, it's tough," Shanle said. "Especially with how fast

the injuries occurred, I think we've done a great job bouncing back and getting guys in there who have done a great job performing. It has been difficult, but something we saw as a challenge."

Through four games, Shanle has posted 12 tackles, including six solo, and has also added a pass breakup and a quarterback hurry to go along with his interception last weekend.

However, Shanle admits that there is still a lot of the season remaining for the secondary to be tested.

"I think we've done great so far," Shanle said. "We haven't really been tested with the deep balls yet. The USC game was a great test to see how we measure up, but only time will tell how we will develop this year."

Shanle redshirted in 2002, and followed up with a freshman campaign that included nine tackles, including six solo stops, on kick coverage. He had three tackles each against Texas A&M and Iowa State, including a 14-yard sack vs. the Cyclones.

In 2004, Shanle saw action in all 11 games as a reserve in the secondary and on most of the special teams units, finishing with 19 total tackles, including 16 solo stops. He also had two tackles for loss, and recorded a 10-yard sack against Kansas State.

Shanle also recovered a pair of fumbles (Missouri, Kansas State) and blocked a punt in NU's 24-3 victory over Missouri.

In 2005, Shanle played as a backup safety behind senior starters Blake Tiedtke and Daniel Bullocks and appeared in all 12 games. Shanle finished the year with 10 total tackles, including five solo stops, and added a pass breakup.

Shanle picked up his degree in consumer and family science education in May and entered the year as one of four seniors playing the 2006 season as a graduate student.

The two-time, first-team academic All-Big 12 Conference selection admits that just like every other football player with big dreams, he would like to continue playing after the completion of his senior year. However, if playing is not an option, Shanle has plans to stay in the world of football.

"If I'm not playing football, then (I'd love to be) coaching football," Shanle said. "Coaching is something I want to get into."

With the speed that Shanle moves at in all things in life, the probability for high-paced success on and off the field in his future is bright.

