Former Husker still lives by Devaney’s words

More than four decades have passed since the late Bob Devaney brought a group of young football players to the center of the field midway through a practice and questioned their desire.

“Are you getting better each day? Or are you getting worse?” the legendary Nebraska football coach asked.

Naturally, Devaney wanted the members of his team to improve with each repetition.

“Get better each day. I can still hear him saying it and to this day, I use those very words to remind myself how to live,” said former Husker football player Randy Borg. “If you’re not getting better, what are you doing?”

Borg has been among the best of the best more than once.

As a senior in high school, the Alliance native was the first Nebraska boy to ever qualify for the state golf meet all four years.

He was also an all-state basketball player at Alliance.

The draw after high school, however, was not golf or basketball.

“When you grow up in Nebraska and you have an opportunity, there’s really no question,” Borg said. “I wanted to play football for the Huskers.”

Borg said his dad thought he was nuts for giving up scholarships to be a walk-on in 1970.

“I guess it all worked out, didn’t it?”

The Cornhuskers won the national championship in 1971 and Borg went on to finish his college career with second team All-Big Eight honors in 1973.

After a stint in professional football with the Redskins, Borg returned to Nebraska.

He recently retired after spending 12 years as a Mizuno golf equipment sales representative.

Football was life for Borg for many years and he continues to be an avid fan.

He has had season tickets in Memorial Stadium about as long as he can remember. He and his family still enjoy the tailgate parties in the lettermen’s lot before Husker home games and he continues to travel for one road game each season.

But the passion isn’t quite the same.

“I love Husker football, don’t get me wrong,” Borg said. “But I don’t live and die by it anymore.”

Now it’s golf that drives the 60-year-old.

“I try to limit myself to one round a day,” he said, explaining how difficult that can be while living at the sixth tee on Firethorn Golf Club in Lincoln.

“I’m a very competitive person,” Borg said. “Very competitive. Right now, golf is my outlet for that.”

When former Husker linebacker and longtime color commentator Adrian Fiala decided to put together a golf tournament to benefit the TeamMates program back in 2001, Randy Borg was one of the first Husker legends on the list of participants.

Borg made the trip to Wild Horse Golf Club that first year and has come back every year since.

“I’m from Alliance,” he said. “Anything that has to do with the true western Nebraska, I’m all for it.”

He is also a strong supporter of the TeamMates program that benefits from the event.

TeamMates was founded by longtime Husker coach Tom Osborne and his wife Nancy to pair volunteer adult mentors with school-age children to help improve their lives.

Borg served as a TeamMates mentor in Lincoln about six years ago.

He said the young man he was paired with came from a rough background with a poor family structure.

JOHN SCHEER STEVE TURNER JOE ADAMS DAVID COPPER

“I firmly believe children are a product of their environment,” Borg said. “What I did for him was try and help him establish a life plan.”

Although the young man has since graduated from high school, he still keeps in contact with Borg now and then.

“TeamMates is a valuable program,” he said.

The Fiala tournament usually pairs Husker players with a four-some of teammates for the scramble event at Wild Horse.

Most of the time, it’s the first meeting between the players and the Huskers.

But for several years now, Borg has been assembling his own team from Lincoln, winning the tournament title four times, he said, and coming in second twice.

This year’s teammates proved to be just as competitive as Borg.

“We play together a lot at Firethorn,” Borg said.

David Copper, Joe Adams, Steve Turner and Wild Horse member John Scheer combined with Borg for a scramble score of 54 to finish second among the 20 teams.

“We might be old and decrepit but we can still play golf,” Borg said.

Guy Ingles (1968-70) teamed up with local golfers Mike Nichols, Mike Henry, Eric Seaman and Rob Ostergard to win the tourament with a scramble score of 52.

And Borg will continue to play—in Fiala’s event and as many others as he can squeeze in—as long as he’s able, he said.

“I’ll do what I can to support these kinds of programs and give back to the people of Nebraska.”