1969, August 15 - A key event occurred which eventually led to the creation of the National Strength and Conditioning Association. Bob Devaney, Head Football Coach and Athletic Director at the University of Nebraska crossed a new threshold in the world of collegiate sports as the first Athletic Director to hire a full-time strength and conditioning coach. It turned out to be one of the most beneficial moves he would ever make and it eventually led to the first NSCA National Convention being held on the University of Nebraska campus.

Boyd Epley became the first full-time paid Strength and Conditioning Coach for the University of Nebraska athletic program. Epley was a scholarship pole-vaulter in his senior season at the University of Nebraska. A back injury left Epley sidelined and red-shirted for the entire season which forced Epley to spend most of his time in the weight room where he started helping other injured athletes. With the inception of Epley as the strength and conditioning coach, the Huskers football program thrived, and did so almost immediately winning the National Championship in 1970 and 1971.

Seeing the success Epley had at Nebraska, many other schools across the nation began hiring strength and conditioning coaches. Nebraska had sent a ripple through the sports world and created waves of new hires at many universities throughout the nation.

1977, September 17 – When Nebraska played Alabama, Strength Coach Boyd Epley was introduced to Southeast Conference Commissioner Boyd McWhirter. Commissioner McWhirter asked Epley what his position was at Nebraska, and then asked if Alabama also had a strength coach. It was then and there that Epley realized if the Commissioner was not aware that strength coaches existed and were a valuable part of the athletic program then there was a serious need for strength coaches to unite.

Nebraska Athletic Director, Bob Devaney allowed Epley to create a Directory of Strength Coaches which led to hosting the first ever National Strength Coaches Convention, which led to the first NSCA office on the campus which led to printing the NSCA Bulletin and Journal at the University Print Shop and as they say, the rest is history....
The First Directory of Strength Coaches was written prior to the first NSCA conference.

1977, December 15 - A letter was sent to strength coaches by Epley announcing a National Directory that would list Strength Coaches.

1978, February 22 - The National Directory of Strength Coaches was printed by UNL Printing. The directory was compiled by Epley in an attempt to identify Strength Coaches throughout America. Mike Arthur, Gary Wade, and Bill Allerheiligen of the Nebraska strength staff were a great help putting the directory together.

The NSCA logo was designed by Martha Florence, a student at the University of Nebraska. The original directory is now on display at the NSCA World Headquarters in Colorado Springs.

1978, April - Jim Williams of Arkansas and Pete Martinelli of New Mexico called Epley and told him that they thought the National Directory of Strength Coaches was a good first step, but what was really needed was an association of strength coaches. Of course, they wanted Epley to do the work. Williams had been Epley's first assistant at Nebraska before being hired at Arkansas to start up their strength program. Martinelli was the strength coach at New Mexico.

Knowing how much work the directory had been, having sent out thousands of requests for information and processing the information received, Epley wasn't convinced he had time to start an association. He turned to his friend George Sullivan, the Athletic Trainer and Therapist at Nebraska, for advice.

Jim Williams - Arkansas Strength Coach

Pete Martinelli - New Mexico Strength Coach

The original NSCA logo designed by Nebraska student, Martha Florence.
George Sullivan introduced Boyd to the President of the National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA), who invited the strength coaches to join their association. Epley sent letters to the strength coaches explaining the invitation to have a strength coaches group within the NATA and attend their conference. The NATA conference was held in Las Vegas in June. Dan Riley of Penn State called Epley and pleaded with him to avoid the association with the NATA. He felt the strength coaches needed to be independent. Riley said he would be in Kansas City giving a speech and asked Epley to meet him there to discuss the future for strength coaches. Jim Williams, Pete Martinelli, Dan Riley, Mike Arthur and Epley met in Kansas City. Through this meeting, Epley was persuaded to host the first NSCA National convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the date was confirmed for July 29-30, 1978.

1978, July 12 - At the 1978 National Athletic Trainers Convention in Las Vegas, Boyd Epley and Jim Williams stood in the lobby with a sign promoting the first NSCA conference to be in Lincoln. They redirected several strength coaches to Lincoln who had come to Las Vegas thinking the first meeting would be there.

1978, July 17 - Arthur Jones, the owner of Nautilus, called Epley and wanted him to cancel the first NSCA convention. He asked Epley to come to Florida so they could talk. Epley said he could come after the convention. Jones did not want strength coaches to get organized. Jones was a very dominant individual and a powerful force in the strength training industry. Jones was afraid the strength coaches would unite and no longer listen to his machine training philosophy, and he was right. The controversy between barbell training and machine training had led to many arguments both verbally and in print. Epley did go visit Arthur Jones and stayed at his house after the first NSCA conference. Epley was not only successful in convincing Jones the NSCA was necessary, he convinced Nautilus to be a major advertiser in the new NSCA Journal that was soon to be developed.

1978, July 28 - Epley invited the 76 conference attendees to his house in Lincoln for burgers on Friday, July 28 – the night before the first convention. The 76 guests included the strength coaches from across the country as well as the exhibitors that took a chance on this new organization.

At that point in time Jimmy Carter was President of the United States, a gallon of gas was 63 cents, a new house was $54,000, a new car $5,000, the average income was $16,975 per year and the Dallas Cowboys won the Super Bowl.
1978, July 29 - The first National Strength Coaches Association Convention hosted in Lincoln, Nebraska on Saturday and Sunday, July 29 and 30, was held at the Nebraska Continuing Education Center at 33rd and Holdrege. Boyd Epley was named Executive Director, and Chairman of the Board of Directors. The title President was not used the first year.

The keynote speaker was Bob Devaney, Nebraska Athletic Director. The entertainment was provided by Nebraska All-American offensive tackle Kelvin Clark who sang *I've Been Everywhere Boys*.

1978, July 29 - The original mission of the National Strength Coaches Association was to: **Unify its members and facilitate a professional exchange of ideas in the area of strength development as it relates to the improvement of athletic performance and fitness.**

1978, July 30 - Six Regional Directors were elected: Bill Thomas – Western Region; Steve Bliss – Eastern Region; who later became President, Paul Hoolahan – Southeast Region; who later became Executive Director then Vice President, Dr. Tom Baechle – Midwest Region; who later became Executive Director then President, Pete Martinelli – Southwest Region; Mike Flynt – Northwest Region; and Luanne Sundberg – Secretary/Treasurer.

Boyd Epley named Executive Director July, 1978 then President thru May, 1983

Bob Devaney Nebraska Athletic Director was the first NSCA Keynote Speaker

Nebraska strength coaches helping start the NSCA: (L to R) Jim Williams, Gary Wade, Mike Flynt, Dave Redding, Mike Arthur, Boyd Epley, Steve Bliss and Bill Allerheiligen
The 76 Charter Members who attended the first National Conference in Lincoln, Nebraska are displayed at the NSCA World Headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Bill Allerheiligen
John H. Arce
Mike Arthur
Tom Baechle
Kevin Beck
Garry Benford
Steve Bliss
Keith “Jake” Boyer
Jake Burkhardt
Kathy Calder
Roger J. Capan
Charles Craven
Jerry Cullen
Jeremiah Davis
Boyd Epley
Robert J. Fix
Jim Flanagan
Michael Flynt
Doug Garfield
Mike Gittleson
Ralph Grieser
Joe Handlos
John Harper
Michael Hawkins
Jack R. Hecker
Bill Henderson
Richard Holland
Dave Holton
Paul Hoolahan
Ron Hubbard
John V. Hughes
Larry Jackson
Amo L. Jensen
Arthur Jones
Jerry Kaminski
Ken Kontor
Jim Kozak
Jim LaBonte
J. Stanley Land
Dana LeDuc
Dan McCárney
Bill McCullough
Larry McDaniel
Rick McDermott
Scott McFarlane
Tim McGuire
Jerry McMahon
Shi Mcnutt
Peter Martinelli
Mike Merritt
Al Miller
Wilbur Miller
Doug Nelson
Augie Nieto
Dick Parks
Tony Paroli
Bill Patterson
Pat Patterson
Ronald Pecoravo
Gregory Pittman
Randy Pospishil
Gene Primm
Jerome C. Provence
Dave Redding
John Sisk
Harry Smith
Butch Stackpole
Allen Stanford
Bill Story
John R. Stucky
Gene Suhr
Harry VanArsdale
Merv Van Engen
Dan Viola
Gary A. Wade
Jim Williams
1978, August - Ken Kontor was hired as Assistant Executive Director to run the NSCA office, and immediately began plans for the first NSCA Newsletter. Ken was named Executive Director in 1983. Ken didn’t get a lot of credit but was responsible for much of the success during the early years of the NSCA.

1978, November - an introductory issue of the NSCA newsletter was sent to members that recapped the proceedings of the first national convention. The six Regional Directors were charged with hosting a Regional NSCA clinic annually.

1978, December/January - The National Strength Coaches Association Newsletter – the official voice of the NSCA began publication with the Dec/Jan Volume 1, Number 1. The newsletter was sent to 8,000 high school and college coaches. One of the first areas of concentration was women’s strength training. Female athletes had only recently been accepted on an equal financial basis as men. To meet this need a women’s section was planned in the NSCA newsletter. It would be announced in the 1979 June/July newsletter that Jane Lilyhorn was named the first National Director for Women’s strength coaches.

1978, December/January - Three initial levels of membership were established: $25 for Professional, $25 for Affiliate and $10 for Student.

1978, December/January - The NSCA College Football All-American Strength Team was presented in the very first NSCA newsletter. The selection committee consisted of six NSCA Regional Directors who determined winners from statistics submitted by Division I college strength coaches. Even though the NSCA was only a few months old the Associated Press nationally recognized the NSCA All-American Strength Team for Football on December 18th. This team helped put the NSCA on the map with football coaches around the country. Six members of this team were drafted in the first round of the National Football League (NFL).

1978, December/January - The NSCA Job Finder listed employment openings in the strength coaching field with the University of South Carolina and Louisiana State University being featured.

1978, December/January - The first Newsletter also featured a “Book Review Section,” a “New Apparatus Report,” a “Letter to the Editor Section,” and coverage of strength and conditioning programs for a variety of sports.
1979, May - The NSCA received support in the May issue of Strength and Health magazine by Bob Hoffman the world famous weightlifting coach and editor of the magazine.

1979, May 4-5 - Nearly 300 attended the second NSCA National Conference held in Chicago in conjunction with the Physicians and Sportsmedicine group.

1979, May 4-5 - Bill Thomas dropped out as a Regional Director. The remaining five Regional Directors would now have a dual role. In order to comply with the federal non-profit regulations the Regional Directors would now serve as the NSCA Board of Directors. Boyd Epley was elected as the President, Executive Director and Chairman of the new Board of Directors. The newly elected Board was a unanimous decision by the membership present at the convention. Epley was provided a $4000 salary as Executive Director but never took any salary. Ken Kontor continued to serve as Assistant Executive Director.

Seven committees were established and certification was discussed for the first time receiving support from the members.

It determined that Regional Clinics would not be enough for the demand and a State Director format was selected. A “Guidelines to a Strength Clinic” booklet was prepared for the State Directors to ensure a standard of excellence and a section in the newsletter was established to list upcoming clinics.

The featured speaker was Bob Ward of the Dallas Cowboys and his program was featured in the NSCA Newsletter.
1979, May 4-5 - The NSCA announced a Journal will be published on a bi-monthly basis. On the months the Journal is not distributed a bulletin would be distributed.

1979, June 13 - The NSCA was incorporated in the state of Nebraska. Robert Eberly, Legal Counsel, was responsible for getting the NSCA off the ground legally with bylaws and contracts. Most of his time was donated.

1979, December 1 - Jane Lilyhorn who was serving as the National Women’s Director, resigned to marry Boyd Epley.

1979, December 15 - Seventeen states had NSCA State Directors.

1980, April - A questionnaire was mailed to NSCA members regarding the criterion necessary for certification. Respondents overwhelmingly favored certification.

1980, May 22 - The third National NSCA convention was held at the North Park Inn in Dallas, Texas. Many important traditions for the NSCA were set in place. The National Strength Coach of the Year Award was presented for the first time. The award was later changed to the College Strength Professional of the Year Award. The actual award has been changed and the original award shown here is on display at the NSCA World Headquarters.
1980, - 17,000 Free Look promotional brochures were sent out giving coaches a chance to see what the NSCA Journal was like which led to 2025 new members for the NSCA. The brochure featured wingback Kenny Brown from Nebraska.

1980, May 22 - Membership stood at 2600 on the second anniversary of the NSCA.

1980, May 22 - NSCA State Clinics were established which have proven to be the backbone of the NSCA grassroots network.

1980, May 22 - NSCA student membership is increased from $10 to $12.

1980, May 22 - Certification committee chairman Dr. Tom Baechle pointed out to the members in attendance at the third national conference that the path to certification would be difficult and one that will take time and careful planning.

1980, May 22 - The evaluation committee appointed Mike Arthur of Nebraska as Special Investigator to collect data for the purpose of establishing norms in the testing of athletic components.
1980, May 22 - Paul Hoolahan, the Head Strength Coach for North Carolina, was named Executive Director with Epley continuing to serve as President and Ken Kontor continuing as Assistant Executive Director. Hoolahan later became Athletic Director at Vanderbilt before becoming Executive Director of the Sugar Bowl.

1980, Fall - The NSCA College Football All-American Strength Team is recognized.

1981, May 14th - Boyd Epley made a motion and it was approved by the Board to change the name from The National Strength Coaches Association to the National Strength and Conditioning Association. This was done to make the association available to a broader group of persons interested in strength and conditioning.

1981, May 14th - The NSCA’s first scholarship was presented to Larry Crouch an NSCA student member studying pre-med from Ansley, Nebraska who later became Dr. Larry Crouch. The award originally was created to go to a student at the school of the Strength Coach of the Year winner.

1981, May 14th - College Strength and Conditioning Professional of the Year Award was presented to Keith Kephart from the University of Kansas.

1981, May 14th - Association membership increased to 3500 representing all 50 states and 16 foreign countries.

1981, May 14th - In a motion by Region II Director Mike Marks and seconded by Dr. Tom Baechle, the American Strength Team would be comprised only from Division I football teams and only NSCA members may submit candidates for the team.
1981, May 14 - the NSCA national office was moved off campus to 251 Capital Beach Blvd. Suite 12 in Lincoln, NE.

1982, May 5 - Jay Robert Epley was born while Boyd was attending to his Presidential duties at the Atlanta NSCA Conference. At age 25 J.R. became an NSCA Certified Personal Trainer.

1982, May 5 - Association membership rose to 4900 including 22 countries.

1982, May 5 - Dr. Tom Baechle replaced Paul Hoolahan as Executive Director and Paul Hoolahan became Vice President.

1982, May 5 - Vern Allers is named Chairman of the NSCA Ethics Committee.

1982, May 5 - Steve Bliss is Chairman of the first NSCA Scholarship Committee.

1982, May - College Strength and Conditioning Professional of the Year Award is presented to George Dostal from Clemson University.

1982, May - Dr. Tom Baechle presented a Certification feasibility study as his plans for certification were taking shape.

1982, June 3 - The NSCA Articles of Incorporation are approved as a 501 (C) 3 non-profit organization.

1982, December - Dr. Chris Eskridge a Nebraska professor allowed the NSCA to use his athletic Index to select the 1982 All-American Strength Team. Performance data was sent in by the Division I College Strength Coaches. The NSCA Board restricted entries to senior football players from Division I then used the Index points to make the selections. When four members of one team were included on the All-American Football team Keith Kephart of Kansas filed a formal complaint. The controversy was solved in the 1983 Board of Directors meeting.

1983, May 12 - Evelyn G. Hall became the first women named to the Board of Associate Editors for the NSCA Journal.

1983, May 12 - Denise Wood, from the University of Tennessee, was selected as the head of the Women’s Advisory Committee.

1983, May 12 - College Strength and Conditioning Professional of the Year Award was presented to Bill Dunn from University of Virginia.

1983, May 12 - At the Los Angeles Convention Boyd Epley resigned as President after heading the Association for five years as the main structure of the NSCA was in place and membership had grown to 6200.
1983, May 12 - Dr. Tom Baechle, a former professor at Nebraska, who served as the first Midwest Regional Director. He also served as Executive Director before becoming NSCA President. Tom made many changes during his presidency but is best known for his work in NSCA Certification.

Baechle had three distinct goals. First, create an awareness and appreciation for strength and conditioning knowledge grounded in scientific research. Second, establish credibility for the NSCA among sporting federations and academic institutions. This was to be achieved, in part, by recognizing those within the organization who could demonstrate (using certification) strength and conditioning expertise. Third, change from an autocratic to a democratic process for the selection of Board members.

1985, President Kephart worked with those pushing forward with our desire to put in place "certification" - wanting to bridge the gap between science and those in the trenches or the field.

President Kephart said, “My primary focus is to in someway work with Athletic Administrators to have their strength coaches working for the athletic department and not under the power of football. Too many coaches were held in place based upon the success of the football program and they should be considered as a part of the athletic program, not JUST football.
1987 – 1989 Steve Bliss, MEd, CSCS served as NSCA President. He has been involved with the NSCA from the very beginning and continues to serve the NSCA as the NSCA South Dakota State Director.

Steve is an Omaha Burke Bulldog that was also a Nebraska Assistant Strength Coach before serving as Head Strength Coach at Miami, Ohio State, and North Dakota State. Steve made many significant contributions during his Presidency. Please visit the official NSCA History Timeline at www.nsca-lift.org.

President Kraemer says “I was a college football coach, wrestling coach, and the strength and conditioning coach at Carroll College in Wisconsin at the time of the founding of the NSCA in 1978. As an original member I had the opportunity to visit Coach Boyd Epley prior to the first meeting but was unable to attend in July due to typical summer football camps that in which I coached. Thus, as a former coach I had been in the trenches and gained first hand knowledge of the challenges of a strength coach from the junior high school through the collegiate ranks having worked with over 30 sports. As a former, athlete who had used strength training to gain the advantages in competition over the years, I knew firsthand how valuable strength training was in helping develop the physical capabilities of an athlete that would enhance performance.”
1991 - 1994 Bruno Pauletto, MS, CSCS, FNSCA is named NSCA President.

President Pauletto says “The NSCA is a diamond in the rough.” It typifies the relative youth of the NSCA as an organization, as well as the strength and conditioning profession. In both instances, there is tremendous weight and value yet, we are just beginning to appreciate each facet.”

The Pauletto era was one of change. The 1990-91 and 1991-92 expenses exceeded income. This prompted President Pauletto to make changes and implement cost cutting measures.

Dr. Michael Stone has been one of the top strength and conditioning researchers in world the field for many years. He literally changed how strength coaches train athletes in their off-season conditioning programs by showing that developing an aerobic base was not necessary for power sports like football.

President Stone has been the head of sport physiology for the United States Olympic committee (USOC) and the chair of sport at Edinburgh University in Edinburgh, Scotland. He is also an adjunct professor at Edinburgh University; Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia; and Louisiana State University in Shreveport. He is currently the director of the exercise and sports science laboratory in the department of kinesiology, leisure, and sport sciences at East Tennessee State University.

His research interests are primarily concerned with physiological and performance adaptations to strength and power training and he has also trained several international and national-level weightlifters and throwers in both the United States and Great Britain.
President Chu says, “Efforts during the 1st year of my Presidency led to a method of improved accountability and transparency for the Executive Director with the NSCA Board and NSCA staff involved in the evaluation process.”

President Wathen says, the NSCA purchased a building in Colorado Springs for its national headquarters and an open house and dedication for the new headquarters was held in July.

NSCA membership was near 20,000 with over 60% of that number holding one of the NSCA certifications (CSCS and/or NSCA-CPT).

A Strategic Planning and Leadership conference was held in March and a new Mission Statement was developed during the meeting.

As the worldwide authority on strength and conditioning, we support and disseminate research-based knowledge and its practical application to improve athletic performance and fitness.
President Borden says, “Reorganization of the format of the Board was a priority. Only main motions were on the agenda. Motions needed to have acceptable format, with support statements.”

President Borden formalized the Board meetings and developed a more structured annual meeting. He introduced Special Interest Groups.

He moved to eliminate artificial categories of membership on the Board such as Vice president for Education, and moved to eliminate the outdated category of President Elect and extend the Presidential term to three years as with all Board Members.

President Allerheiligen says, “I was privileged to serve our membership and work with our Board of Directors.”

About the same time the NSCA Certification Commission was getting a new building in Lincoln, NE, the NSCA was building a new World Headquarters in Colorado Springs, CO.

President Allerheiligen approved the Communications Committee. He reconstituted the Past-Presidents Committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the NSCA Board of Directors. He approved the creation of the NSCA Nutrition Metabolic and Body Composition Special Interest Group (SIG) and approved the creation of the Youth Special Interest Group.
In 2006 President Lee Brown resurrected the NSCA Foundation (NSCF) with a $300,000 endowment and created a separate NSCF 501(c)3 with its own Board of Directors (BOD) and bylaws. During his presidency the endowment grew to over $3 million dollars. He created a strategic alliance with Ireland and created a Women’s task force to look into creating more opportunities for female members. President Brown Invited the USAW to once again offer certification at NSCA events.

President Brown held a NSCA Strategic Planning meeting in Colorado Springs to develop new goals for the Association. During this meeting Unity was identified as the #1 goal of the NSCA.

Coach Hoffman says. “One of the first issues that I will tackle in my Presidency is to refocus our education and conference services in maintaining the evidence based approach that was the backbone of our organization. I promise the membership that we will not stray from our ‘bridging the gap between science and sport’ mission that is the crux of who we are. I want to see a return to the sport science aspect of the NSCA. We will accomplish this without reducing our mission to any other focus group.

For complete details please see the official NSCA History Timeline at www.nsca-lift.org and click on the name or photo of the President.