

longest field goal in ncaa

longest field goal in ncaa history is a remarkable achievement that highlights the extraordinary talent and skill of college football kickers. This record-setting feat not only showcases individual prowess but also reflects the strategic decisions made during high-stakes games. Understanding the context, conditions, and players behind these impressive kicks provides valuable insight into collegiate football dynamics. This article delves into the history of the longest field goal in NCAA football, notable record holders, the evolution of kicking techniques, and the impact of these monumental kicks on the game. Additionally, it explores the factors influencing the success of long-range field goals and lists some of the most memorable kicks in NCAA history. The following sections will guide readers through these aspects in detail.

- History of the Longest Field Goal in NCAA
- Notable Record Holders and Their Achievements
- Evolution of Kicking Techniques and Equipment
- Factors Affecting Long-Range Field Goals
- Memorable Longest Field Goals in NCAA History

History of the Longest Field Goal in NCAA

The longest field goal in NCAA football has evolved over the decades, with kickers pushing the boundaries of distance and accuracy. The record has been contested and reset multiple times since the early days of college football, reflecting advancements in training, technique, and technology. Historically, field goals exceeding 50 yards were considered exceptional, but modern kickers now routinely attempt much longer kicks. The NCAA officially recognizes field goals based on distance from the line of scrimmage to the goalposts, excluding the end zone and snap distance. This measurement standardizes comparisons and maintains the integrity of the record.

Early Milestones in NCAA Field Goal Records

In the mid-20th century, field goals rarely surpassed 50 yards due to less specialized training and equipment limitations. The kicking game was often secondary to other offensive strategies. However, as the importance of special teams grew, kickers began focusing on increasing their range. One of the earliest recorded long field goals in NCAA history was a 60-yard kick,

setting a new benchmark at the time. These early milestones laid the groundwork for future record-breaking attempts.

Official Record Recognition

The NCAA maintains official statistics on field goals, verifying distances and conditions under which they were made. This includes verifying game footage, official measurements, and referee reports. The longest field goal in NCAA history recognized by the NCAA is a critical statistic for both players and teams, often becoming a defining moment in a kicker's collegiate career.

Notable Record Holders and Their Achievements

Several kickers have etched their names into NCAA history by achieving some of the longest field goals ever recorded. These athletes demonstrated not only power but also precision under pressure. Their accomplishments often propelled their teams to victory and enhanced their prospects for professional careers. This section highlights some of the most notable record holders and the circumstances surrounding their landmark kicks.

Ove Johansson – The Longest Field Goal Ever

The current NCAA record for the longest field goal is held by Ove Johansson, who successfully kicked a 69-yard field goal in 1976 while playing for Abilene Christian University. This extraordinary kick remains the longest in NCAA history, surpassing previous records by a significant margin. Johansson's feat is particularly impressive given the era's less advanced kicking technology and training methods. The kick occurred during a game against East Texas State, cementing Johansson's legacy in college football history.

Other Remarkable Long Field Goals

Beyond Johansson, several other kickers have accomplished field goals of 60 yards or longer. These include:

- Russell Erxleben – 67-yard field goal for Texas in 1977
- Steve Little – 65-yard field goal for Arkansas in 1977
- Chris Sailer – Multiple long field goals exceeding 60 yards in the 1990s
- Justin Tucker – Known for accuracy and long-distance attempts during his college career

These athletes illustrated the increasing capability of kickers and the strategic use of long-range field goals in NCAA games.

Evolution of Kicking Techniques and Equipment

The progression of techniques and equipment in NCAA football has significantly influenced the ability of kickers to attempt and succeed at long field goals. Early kickers often used straight-on kicking styles and less advanced footwear, limiting their range and accuracy. Modern kickers employ soccer-style techniques, specialized cleats, and training regimens designed to enhance leg strength and precision.

Kicking Styles: From Straight-On to Soccer Style

The transition from the traditional straight-on approach to the soccer-style kick revolutionized NCAA field goals. Soccer-style kicking involves striking the ball with the instep, enabling greater control and power. This technique became widespread in the latter part of the 20th century and remains the dominant style today. The enhanced biomechanics allow kickers to generate higher ball velocity, critical for achieving maximum distance.

Advancements in Equipment

Modern kicking shoes provide better traction and impact absorption, contributing to improved performance. Additionally, footballs have been designed to optimize aerodynamics, allowing for longer and more accurate kicks. Training equipment and video analysis tools enable kickers to refine their form and consistency, directly impacting the success rate of long field goals.

Factors Affecting Long-Range Field Goals

Several variables influence the success of long field goal attempts in NCAA football. These factors include environmental conditions, field surface, game situation, and kicker skill level. Understanding these elements is essential to grasp the complexity behind achieving the longest field goal in NCAA history.

Environmental and Field Conditions

Weather plays a critical role in field goal success. Wind speed and direction can either aid or hinder the ball's trajectory. Temperature and humidity affect air density, which in turn influences how far the ball travels. Moreover, the type of playing surface—natural grass versus artificial

turf—can impact the kicker's footing and plant foot stability.

Game Context and Pressure

Kickers attempting the longest field goals often do so under intense game pressure, such as late-game situations or critical scoring opportunities. Psychological resilience and focus are vital for executing these kicks accurately. Coaches also weigh risk versus reward when deciding to attempt exceptionally long field goals, considering the potential for a favorable or unfavorable field position after a miss.

Physical and Technical Skill

The kicker's physical attributes, including leg strength, flexibility, and technique, directly affect the potential distance of a field goal. Rigorous training, mental preparation, and experience contribute to the ability to perform under pressure and achieve record-setting kicks.

Memorable Longest Field Goals in NCAA History

Throughout NCAA football history, several long field goals have stood out due to their distance, context, and impact on the outcomes of games. These memorable kicks often become legendary moments celebrated by fans and analysts alike.

Ove Johansson's 69-Yard Kick

As the longest field goal in NCAA history, Johansson's 69-yard kick is the most iconic. This kick not only set the official NCAA record but also demonstrated the potential of collegiate kickers to achieve extraordinary feats. The kick was made in game conditions, adding to its significance.

Russell Erxleben's 67-Yard Field Goal

Russell Erxleben's 67-yard kick for the University of Texas in 1977 remains one of the longest and most notable field goals. His performance showcased exceptional leg strength and set a high standard for future kickers at major NCAA programs.

Recent Long-Range Successes

In recent years, NCAA kickers have continued to push the envelope with long-range field goals. Though not surpassing Johansson's record, field goals of

60 yards or more have become more common, reflecting advancements in training and game strategy. These long kicks often occur in pivotal game moments, highlighting their importance.

List of Some Noteworthy Longest Field Goals in NCAA

- 69 yards – Ove Johansson (Abilene Christian, 1976)
- 67 yards – Russell Erxleben (Texas, 1977)
- 65 yards – Steve Little (Arkansas, 1977)
- 64 yards – Tony Franklin (Texas A&M, 1976)
- 63 yards – Joe Williams (Arizona State, 1978)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the longest field goal ever made in NCAA football history?

The longest field goal in NCAA football history is 69 yards, kicked by Ove Johansson in 1976.

Who holds the record for the longest field goal in NCAA?

Ove Johansson holds the record for the longest field goal in NCAA history with a 69-yard field goal.

When was the longest NCAA field goal kicked?

The longest NCAA field goal was kicked in 1976.

Which team did Ove Johansson represent when he kicked the longest NCAA field goal?

Ove Johansson was playing for Abilene Christian University when he kicked the 69-yard field goal.

Has the NCAA longest field goal record ever been broken since 1976?

No, the NCAA record for the longest field goal has stood since 1976 and has not been broken.

Are there any recent attempts close to the NCAA longest field goal record?

There have been several attempts in recent years, but no one has successfully kicked a field goal longer than 69 yards in NCAA play.

What factors contribute to making a very long field goal in NCAA football?

Factors include the kicker's leg strength, weather conditions, altitude, game situation, and the accuracy and technique of the kicker.

Is the NCAA longest field goal record recognized nationally across all divisions?

Yes, the 69-yard field goal record by Ove Johansson is recognized across all NCAA divisions.

How does the NCAA longest field goal compare to the NFL longest field goal?

The NCAA longest field goal is 69 yards, while the NFL longest field goal is 66 yards, kicked by Justin Tucker in 2021.

What is the typical range for field goals in NCAA football?

Most NCAA field goals range between 20 to 45 yards, with anything over 50 yards considered a long field goal.

Additional Resources

1. Kick to Glory: The History of NCAA's Longest Field Goals

This book delves into the most memorable and record-breaking field goals in NCAA history. It explores the athletes behind these incredible kicks, the games that defined their careers, and the evolution of kicking techniques over the decades. Readers get an in-depth look at how the longest field goals have shaped college football.

2. Beyond the Uprights: The Science of Long Field Goals in College Football

A comprehensive analysis of the physics and biomechanics involved in executing long field goals in NCAA games. The book combines expert interviews, player training regimens, and technological advancements to explain what it takes to achieve these remarkable feats. It also covers how environmental factors like altitude and wind influence kicking success.

3. *Clutch Kicks: NCAA's Greatest Last-Second Field Goals*

Focusing on the drama and pressure of game-winning long-distance field goals, this book recounts the stories of kickers who made history with their clutch performances. It highlights the psychological toughness and preparation required to succeed under intense scrutiny. The narratives include both legendary kickers and unexpected heroes.

4. *Record Breakers: The Longest Field Goals in NCAA Football History*

This title chronicles the progression of the NCAA record for the longest field goal, from the earliest days of college football to the present. It profiles the players who set new benchmarks and the circumstances surrounding their record-breaking kicks. The book also discusses rule changes and equipment improvements that have impacted kicking distances.

5. *The Art of the Kick: Training for NCAA Long Field Goals*

An instructional guide for aspiring college kickers aiming to reach or surpass the longest field goal distances. The book includes detailed training exercises, tips on technique, mental preparation strategies, and advice from top NCAA kickers and coaches. It serves as both a motivational and practical resource for players.

6. *Wind and Distance: Environmental Challenges in NCAA Field Goal Records*

Examining how weather conditions and stadium environments have affected attempts at the longest field goals, this book studies notable NCAA games where wind, altitude, and temperature played crucial roles. It features interviews with players who adapted to these challenges and provides insights into game-day strategies.

7. *Legends on the Gridiron: Profiles of NCAA's Top Kickers*

This compilation highlights the careers of the most successful and influential NCAA kickers known for their long-distance field goals. It includes personal stories, career statistics, and the impact these players had on their teams and the sport as a whole. The book celebrates their contributions to college football history.

8. *From Snap to Kick: The Mechanics Behind NCAA's Longest Field Goals*

Detailing the step-by-step process of executing a perfect long field goal, this book breaks down every element from the snap, hold, and approach to the follow-through. It combines technical diagrams with expert commentary to illustrate what makes these kicks possible. The focus is on precision and teamwork as much as individual skill.

9. *Chasing Distance: The Quest for NCAA's Longest Field Goal Record*

This narrative follows the ongoing competition among NCAA kickers striving to set new records for the longest field goal. It captures the excitement of the

chase, the setbacks, and the breakthroughs experienced by athletes pushing the limits of the game. Readers gain an understanding of the dedication and passion behind these historic attempts.

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