

OCT. 8, 1955

UCR plays in its first-ever football game, a 40-0 loss to the University of LaVerne. The Highlanders finished with a 1-5 record in that inaugural season, their lone win a 36-7 victory over Cal Baptist. The team played its home games at Wheelock Field in Riverside.

NOV. 7, 1959

First-year head coach Jim Whitley guides the Highlanders to their first winning season in team history, finishing with a 5-2 record.

SEPT. 25, 1964

Former All-American UCR quarterback Pete Kettela secured his first win as the Highlanders' head coach, a position he held until 1969. He later became the offensive coordinator at Stanford and was an assistant coach with the NFL's Green Bay Packers. In 1983, he became head coach of the Canadian Football League's Edmonton Eskimos, later serving as both an assistant coach and director of player personnel with the Arena Football League's Arizona Rattlers.

SEPT. 16, 1972

Wayne Howard takes the helm in his first game as UCR head coach, amassing a 17-3 record during his two-year tenure. He later served as head coach at Long Beach State from 1974 to 1976 and at the University of Utah from 1977 to 1981.

JAN. 29, 1974

Tight end Frank Johnson becomes the first UCR player to be drafted in the NFL, a fourth-round pick by the Los Angeles Rams, where he played linebacker. Johnson was inducted into the UCR Athletics Hall of Fame in 1993. The Rams also selected UCR defensive back Derrick Williams in the ninth round of the 1974 draft. Though he was undrafted, defensive end Michael Basinger played for the Packers in 1974.

DEC. 4, 1975

UCR announces the discontinuation of the football program.



OCT. 6, 1956

UCR plays its first home game at the UCR Athletic Field.

NOV. 5, 1960

The Highlanders preserve their undefeated season with a dramatic 8-8 tie on the road against Azusa College in which John Elstead ran back a kickoff for a touchdown in the closing minutes.

NOV. 11, 1972

UCR closes out the league season with a last-minute field goal to seal a 27-26 win over Cal State Northridge. The Highlanders, who finished with a 9-1 overall record, shared the California Collegiate Athletic Association championship with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

SEPT. 14, 1974

Head coach Bob Toledo takes charge of his first game for the Highlanders. In his two years, UCR finished with a combined 15-6 record, winning the conference championship both seasons. Toledo later served as head coach at University of the Pacific, UCLA, and Tulane.