

## Huskers Tops . . .

**Big Eight Football; Youth And Balance**

By Jim Pearse

The gap between the first and last slot in the Big Eight standings will shrink again this fall as the conference strengthens throughout.

Nebraska, pre-season pick as this year's top collegiate team, will be pressed hard for the conference title by stout Missouri, fast-rising Oklahoma State, ever-capable Oklahoma, and the remainder of an improved conference. With the Big Eight becoming an "any-team-can-beat-a-ny-team-on-any-given-Saturday" league, it is difficult to predict with accuracy how the teams will finish. But here is a brief glimpse of the conference in the order I believe they will stand come December 5.

**Husker Harvest is Top Crop:** The defending Champs of the Big Eight have the best field of returnees in the league, the top crop of rookies,

and the momentum of championship football to make them the odds on favorite for the title, their third straight. The weaknesses in Coach Bob Devaney's team almost disappear under the positive factors on the Husker squad.

What else can be said about a squad picked No. 1 in pre-season polls?

**Tigers Tense for Title Bid**  
In looking at Missouri football for 1965, there is a definite optimistic tone, even if somewhat restrained by the artful dodger Dan Devine.

The Tigers return a proven defensive unit, plus one outstanding sophomore. Tom Lynn, a 6-3, 215 pound senior, will man one end position, and mammoth rookie Russ Washington, 6-6, 260, will handle the duties at the opposite end. The middle of the Missouri defensive line finds stalwarts Bruce Van Dyke, Bill Powell, Ron Nelson, and Ron Snyder.

The secondary is anchored by All-American candidate Johnny Roland.

A bevy of backfield men return, including two men injured in spring drills: fleet Charlie Brown, and nimble Ken Boston. Also coming back is shifty Monroe Phelps, injured in 1963, who spent last year at Joplin Junior College.

The remainder of the backs are last year's big guns Gary Lane, Carl Reese, and Earl Denny. Lane led the conference in total offense, while Denny and Reese were the Tiger's third and fourth leading rushers.

Though the middle of the offensive line is untested, staffing elsewhere along the front wall is solid. Ranga tackles Butch Allison (6-3, 235) and Francis Peay (6-4, 240) and end Jim Waller (6-2, 205) should make the job easier for the interior sophomores.

A rugged schedule, beginning with highly touted Kentucky, should keep the Tigers claws sharp, and if they can meet the schedule week after week without serious injuries they should finish second in the Big Eight scramble.

**Good Stock in Cowboy's Corral**  
Phil Cutchin has the Oklahoma State Cowboys on the rise, and this, his third year at the helm, promises to be his best. Returning ten first team offensive men, and seven first line defenders, the Cowboys show experience and depth they'll need to meet the most demanding schedule in the league.

The interior line is one of Cutchin's assets, held down by senior middle guard Hugh McCrabb, tackle Dennis Randall, tackle Rusty Martin, and guard Charles Harper.

As for offensive punch, Oklahoma State returns All-America nominee fullback Walt Garrison, quarterback Glenn Baxter, and junior halfback David Dickerson. Cutchin's goal for the offensive unit—consistency. Last year the team faltered on third down and long yardage, fumbled too much, and had too many aeriels picked-off.

On the OSU roster there is a place reserved for specialists. This means an unimposing 5-11, 165 pounder from Hurst, Texas, Charlie Durkee. The articulate Texan used his talented toe to snare scoring honors for the Cowboys last season (37 points), and was the highest scorer in the Big Eight among those using kicking exclusively to score.

With a stout line, capable backfield, and Durkee to pull out three points even though a drive may be halted, the

Cowboys will finish in the first division despite lack of experienced reserves.

**Young Sooners To Slip:**

Oklahoma, a team that always shows up with good ball players, will have to turn up quite a few this fall. Graduation, dropouts, major league baseball, and mononucleosis have left the Boomer Sooners with eight returning starters, lowest in the league.

Graduation claimed 20 seniors. Three juniors recently dropped off the squad, while All-Big Eight guard Carl Schreiner signed a professional baseball contract. And finally, the depleted tackle corps was further flattened when Jerry Goldsby failed to recover from a knee operation and now his sophomore replacement, Phil Wetherbee, is decked with mononucleosis.

Therefore, Coach Gomer Jones will have to man several key positions with new men, and hope to build a hard fighting team that will improve enough to finish respectably in the conference.

To accomplish this Jones has some top grade talent. On offense Ron Shotts, 6-0, 200 pound sophomore, senior Larry Brown, and junior fullback Jon Kennedy. Their efforts may lack the snap of previous Sooner squads, due to an inexperienced front line.

Senior Mike Ringer and Sophomore Gene Cagle will battle for the quarterback spot. Whoever comes out as the top signal caller will have the advantage of throwing to some of the finest receivers Oklahoma has had in recent campaigns. Among them Ben Hart, Ray Haynes, and Gordon Brown.

The Sooner defense has three returnees, and although this years unit is quicker and more mobile than last season's, it does not measure up in experience and strength. The biggest problem for the Sooner defenders will be to keep the opposition from overpowering them with a sustained drive.

One tight spot, however, where the opposition will not get three and four yards at a crack is at middle linebacker Carl McAdams, 6-3, 215 pound senior from White Deer, Texas. This All-America candidate has an endless list of credits. He is big, fast, mobile, wide-ranging, hard-hitting, and quick thinking.

The young squad will learn this season by taking their lumps, but by mid-season will be giving enough back to finish in the middle of the conference standings.

**Young Buffaloes Threaten to Stampede:**

Following a dismal '64 season (2-8), Colorado football is in a rebuilding program. Coach Eddie Crowder's squad is 60% sophomore, and of the 70 men reporting for fall practice 17 sported letters and only six of them saw regular duty last year.

In step with the new substitution rules, Colorado will switch to the platoon system this fall. Coach Crowder is seemingly putting all his young Buffs in one herd as he makes the change to two unit football. At the time of the Skywriters invasion of the Colorado camp returnee ends Sam Harris and Ray LeMasters, center Steve Sidwell, tackle Bill Sabatino, and backfield men George Lewark and Hale Irwin were all on the defensive unit; while offensively rugged two-year letterman tackle Frank Van Valkenburg was alone with an untried interior line and a backfield where quarterback Bernie McCaj is the lone proven veteran.

The defense, obviously and traditionally, will be tough. Harris at 6-4, 225, is probably the best all around player on the CU squad; LeMasters and Sabatino are solid collegians. The front line is big enough and mobil enough to stand up physically with most teams on the schedule. Sidwell anchors the line backing corps and qualifies that position as adequate. The back line looks good as Lewark and Irwin combine their excellent understanding of the game.

The offensive picture is not quite so sound, and here the young Buffs might break. Coach Crowder labels his offense the "Switching T." Basically, it features a slotback that switches from side to side with the same lineman always playing that particular side. The running back is always opposite the slot to form a T with the fullback resting behind the quarterback. This nomenclature is based on the fact that the alignment offers a slot offense to the slot side and a split-T threat to the opposite side. The Buffs are unproved at both guards and one tackle as well as slot end, and this could cause much confusion in the "switching T." The running back position and the quarterback spot are probably the best equipped positions. The feeling at CU is that the offense should get better as the season progresses.

**Kansas Minus Big Feathers:**  
Kansas finished third in the

Big Eight last season, but this fall Coach Jack Mitchell doesn't have Gayle Sayers. True, one man does not make a team, but Sayers could disarm the opposition by coming out of the huddle. No matter where he lined up, at halfback or flanker, the defense shifted and stirred always keying on him. But, he is gone.

Mitchell has 25 lettermen returning, and only 13 seniors making Kansas one of the youngest teams in a conference of young teams. Only another 18 are second-year men, so sophomores will be looked to.

Kansas' strongest point is the offensive backfield, strange as it may seem. Left-handed quarterback Bob Sahan, recently injured, should be ready for conference competition. He promises to spice up an attack vastly different from the hard-nosed ground teams of recent Jayhawk history.

The defensive unit at Kansas is fairly strong, lacking experience only at tackle and in the secondary.

This is the first year in a rebuilding program Mitchell had to institute, and lack of experience and mistakes in the more versatile offensive plan, plus the strength of the rest of the league will probably cost Kansas a first division finish.

**Wildcats Caught In Trap:**

Doug Weaver, the personable coach of KSU, enters his sixth season with perhaps the best outlook he's had since joining the Wildcats. But Coach Weaver, like many Big Eight hopefuls must count on sophomores to fill big holes if the team is to climb toward the conference summit. Overall improvement in the league will hinder the Wildcat's rise.

A bigger squad in both numbers and heft gives K-State depth it isn't used to. With more than half the squad sophomores (46 of 73) there are 20 letter winners to give stability.

Improved line size and prospects for a better defense head K-State's list of improvements. Graduation took All-Big Eight guard Bob Mitts, but Weaver has moved 207-pound vet Mike Beffa in to fill Mitts' shoes. Flanking Beffa will be 6-4, 225, senior Willie Jones and senior Dan Woodward. To round out this stalwart defensive line is all-conference and selection Bill Matan.

The offense is not quite so well off. Senior quarterback Ed Danieley has been moved to fullback and the signal calling duties handed over to

sophomores Mike White and Vic Gastille, both with reputations of strong arms and the will to use them. The half-back positions are weak and will probably be manned by sophomore Lodi Rhodes and senior Charlie Cottle.

If the offense can come alive the defense may be able to hold well enough for K-State to rise in the conference. But win or lose, Coach Weaver has built a team that craves competition, and all opponents will feel the upward thrust in KSU football.

**Cyclones Astir:**

Again the ISU squad is among the smallest in the conference averaging 206. But fans around the conference remember the Dirty Thirty of 1959 who scrapped their way to third place. The leather is popping with more spirit this fall than last and this team, aptly dubbed the "Somewhere" Cyclones, since their performance is a bit unpredictable, could surprise along the way.

The offensive unit, led by a group of fiery seniors, should be the best part of the ISU team. Tim Van Galder, a junior from Madison, Wisconsin, will direct the attack and could provide ISU with a passing game to complement what should be a fine running game. Behind Van Galder will be Tony Baker (214), fresh from a six month stint with the US Army; and two sophomores, Leslie Webster and Tom Busch, who moved up when senior Ernie Kennedy went to defensive end to fill a void.

An overview of the offense shows 14 of 22 players returning from last season and inexperienced, but hard-hitting sophomores to fill the gaps. The defensive unit will go with nine first year men and a JC transfer.

Anchoring the defense will be transplanted end Kennedy, senior Wayne Lueders and Sam Ramenofsky. Sophomores appear throughout the squad, Dennis Esselman at end, Dave Mayberry at line-backer, and Doug Robinson in the backfield.

Iowa State carries a heavy load of sophomores into the '65 season and, as the saying goes, sophomores don't win in the Big Eight. Half the Cyclone contingent are first year men, and most of these will see action with the defensive unit. Because of this, the departure of Tom Vaughn and Jim Van Sticklen, and the two platoon system thinning ISU's ranks, few signs point up from last seasons 1-8-1 showing.

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