

Big 10 pass leader sidelined by injury

By Bob Cullinan

John Pont was given a "baptism by fire" in the Big 10 Conference last year, as he tried to reverse the losing ways of Northwestern University.

Northwestern ended up with a 4-7 overall record, a 4-4 conference record and a tie for fourth in the Big 10. In 1972, their record was 2-9.

This year, Pont hopes he can further turn the tide of Wildcat football fortunes. Northwestern returns 28 lettermen, including 11 starters.

Injuries last week to starting quarterback Mitch Anderson and backup Kim Girkins probably have thrust third-stringer Steve Moor into the starting role. Anderson has led the Big 10 in passing the past two seasons.

Primary targets for Moor's passes will be returning lettermen Bill Stevens and Wayne Frederickson, who caught 15 and 11 passes respectively last year.

Other offensive assets include Jim Trimble and Greg Boykin, who shared the starting fullback berth a year ago. Trimble continues at fullback, while Boykin has been moved to tailback this season.

"In the spring, we produced a more consistent inside game," Pont said. "This should make our pass more effective."

Pont sees the defense as the key to an improved season. Northwestern last year placed ninth in the league in total defense, seventh in rushing defense and tenth in passing defense.

The Wildcats employ a 5-2 defense, similar to that of Nebraska. They return four starters from that front five. Doug Belko and Rob Mason are back at their defensive end positions, along with tackle John "Doc" Holliday and middle guard Paul Maly.

Northwestern's season record stands at 0-2, with early season losses coming to Michigan State and Notre Dame.

At East Lansing, Mich., the Wildcats bowed 41-7 to a Michigan State team that scored only nine touchdowns all of last season.

Northwestern held Notre Dame to a 14-3 halftime lead last week at Evanston, Ill. before the Irish exploded for a 21-point third quarter. Notre Dame went on to win 49-3.

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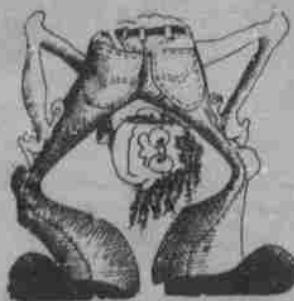
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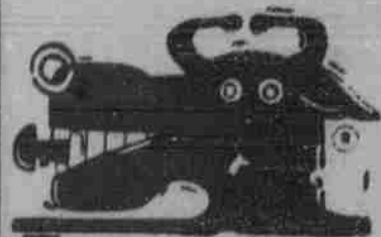


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