

Three of nation's top running backs fight for yards, not honors Saturday

By Ward Triplett and Cindy Gardner

Three of the nation's outstanding running backs will be on the Memorial Stadium Astroturf Saturday. One is a senior, one is a junior and one is a sophomore. They rank, respectively to age, first, second and fourth in Big Eight rushing statistics. Each has had at least two 100-yard games this year.

Having three backs the caliber of Dwayne Crutchfield of Iowa State and Roger Craig and Mike Rozier of Nebraska in one stadium would make an entertaining package in itself, even if the two teams involved were not fighting to keep bowl berths alive. But there will be at least three men Saturday who won't be observing the I-back battle as an added attraction to the game. "I really don't know anything about Dwayne Crutchfield," Rozier said. "I won't be too concerned with what he does. That's for the defense to worry about."

"That can kind of screw up your concentration if you worry too much about outdoing their running back," Craig said.

"Then you never know about things like that. Their defense may not allow us to do anything, and our defense may not allow Dwayne to do anything. I just plan to go out and give my 100 percent, and let that (I-back battle) take care of itself," Craig said.

"There's a lot of similarity between the two offenses. But when you start breaking it down personnel-wise, there's a lot of differences," Crutchfield said.

Ankle injury

Crutchfield suffered an ankle injury in the Cyclones' game against San Diego State which has caused him to carry the ball less and may be the cause of Iowa State's back-to-back losses against Kansas and Kansas State, ISU Coach Donnie Duncan said.

"I'd say Dwayne was about 70 percent for the Kansas game," Duncan said. The low yardage and few carries were due mostly to this, because Crutchfield has done well against tough defenses before, Duncan said.

"I'm healthy . . . I'm ready to go this week," Crutchfield said. The ankle will be at about 90 percent this Saturday, he added. "It was a big disappointment to me," Crutchfield said of the injury. "It would be in any season. Any time we're in a loss situation, it's also a disappointment."

After Iowa State's 5-1-1 start and subsequent downfall the last two weeks, Crutchfield is thankful the Cyclones can still redeem themselves. "It's nice to have a little life

left at this point of the season. But I think it's going to come down to Nebraska and Oklahoma again. I think Oklahoma will win the Big Eight," Crutchfield said.

Any other team

"We haven't been preparing extra for Nebraska at all," Crutchfield said. "I don't mean to cut them down, but they're just like any other football team."

While Crutchfield will give the Nebraska defense something to think about, Craig said the tandem he and Rozier have should create twice as much trouble for Iowa State.

"He (Rozier) can run outside hard, and inside hard too. Same here. When there are two of us like that, it's harder for the other team to key on either one of us," Craig said.

"Nebraska hasn't had the one running back system for a long time. You look at teams like Southern Cal, and Iowa State, and you see one guy doing all the running. Crutch is all banged up right now (because of it)," he said.

Duncan said Crutchfield may be bigger than either of Nebraska's backs, but both Huskers are as strong, and extremely fast.

"I don't know yet what we'll have to do to stop them, but it will obviously have to be something very good," Duncan said.

ISU lineman . . .

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"Anytime you beat or tie three of the top-ranked schools in Nebraska, Oklahoma and Missouri, that team should go to a bowl game," he said. "I would obviously like to go to the Orange Bowl, but if that's impossible I would pick the Tangerine Bowl because I love the city of Orlando, Fla., so much."

Because Boskey said he takes one game at a time, and doesn't look to the future, he said he hasn't thought much about playing in the NFL.

"It would be a great honor if I was drafted and I would jump on the occasion," he said.

What kind of an outcome does Boskey expect in Saturday's game?

"I think the game will probably end 62-0 Iowa State, no make that 72-0." Seriously, I think the game will be a lot like the Nebraska-Missouri game, only that we have a better offense than Missouri," he said. "I bet the score will be about 10-6, Iowa State, of course."

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