

Sports

Gibler expects a passing game

By Cindy Gardner

Missouri will be without the services of its No. 1 receiver in Saturday's regionally televised clash with Nebraska. But the Tigers' talented No. 2 man said that won't stop the Mizzou pass attack.

"We might try to pass a little more this week," tight end Andy Gibler said Tuesday. "To win a football game you have to run and pass, but we'll test their (the Huskers') defensive backs."

Gibler, Missouri's second leading receiver, will combine with split end Craig White as two of the Tigers' favorite targets Saturday. White will start in place of Curtland Thomas, who lead Mizzou receivers with 17 catches before breaking his leg last week in a 17-17 draw with Iowa State.

The absence of Thomas should not change the Tigers' offensive strategy, Gibler said.

"Craig White is a good receiver. He caught two passes last week, too. We'll still just look for the open man," he said.

Record approached

Gibler himself should be in on a fair number of catches against Nebraska. The senior nabbed 27 passes for 233 yards during his junior season and is on his way to becoming Missouri's all-time leading receiver. At the start of the season, he needed just 15 catches to surpass the school record of 90 career receptions set by Joe Stewart between 1974 and 1977. Thirteen catches so far this season have brought Gibler within two of the record, which he is likely to break Saturday.

Gibler, however, said his eye is not on the record but on improving his performance each week. The entire Mizzou offense is hoping for such an improved performance this week, he said.

"I'm optimistic," he said. "If we can get our offense

together, we should have a pretty good chance against Nebraska. We've been just a little bit away."

Missouri's offense, hampered by injuries, has spent the first half of the season searching for the right combination of healthy personnel. For example, the Tigers currently are employing their third starting center of the season, Phil Greenfield. Greenfield faces the task of filling the shoes left empty by the graduation of all-American Brad Edelman.

Offense shuffled

The offensive shuffling has made it more difficult to pull the offense together, but Gibler said he hopes the unity and timing will be there on Saturday.

"It's a big game. We haven't been playing all that well. We hope we can put it all together this week."

While the Tiger offense by no means has had an easy row to hoe in preparing for Nebraska, Gibler said the Tigers do have a mental advantage that was absent last year when the Huskers beat Missouri 6-0 at Columbia, Mo.

"Last year at his time, we'd just gotten blown away by Iowa State," he said. "We were kind of stunned."

Iowa State handed Missouri its first loss of the 1981 season with a 34-13 victory in Ames, Iowa. The loss dropped the Tigers out of the top 10. Even though the Cyclones came back to tie Missouri last week, he said, "we have a better attitude than we did last year."

Gibler has been a starter since the sixth game of his freshman season, so he's well aware of the intensity of Missouri-Nebraska match ups. Yet, the second-team all Big Eight selection said he is not sure he would label the Huskers as the Tigers' "rival."

"We want to beat all the teams every week, but Nebraska is always on top," he said. "I wouldn't say they're our rival, but they're somebody to prove yourself against. If you beat Nebraska, you know you've beaten the best."

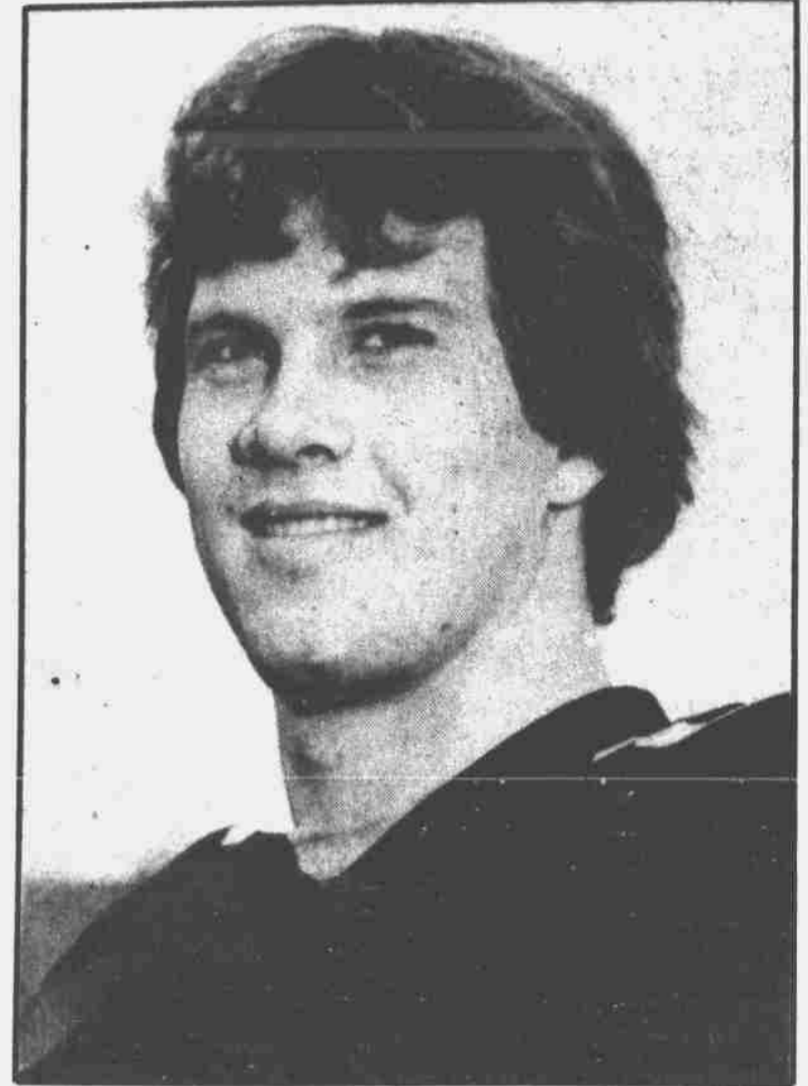


Photo courtesy Missouri Sports Information

Missouri tight end Andy Gibler

Big 8 increases travel limit

The Big Eight Conference has increased the 55-man travel limit for conference games to 60 this year, and Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said he welcomes the change.

"It is a more workable number and certainly better than what we had," Osborne said. Last year, the non-conference travel limit was 60, but 55 for conference games.

Osborne said it was difficult to cut back to 55 players when conference play began after using 60 for non-conference away games. Added travel costs for the five added players amounts to about \$150 a trip, he said.

Prentice Gault, assistant commissioner of the Big Eight Conference, echoed Osborne's reasoning for the change.

"Coaches were saying 'Hey, we have to make two different kinds of plans,'" Gault said.

Mike Gilleran of the National Collegiate Athletic Association said his organization has not set travel limits.

"We leave that up to the conference to decide," he said.

Osborne said the five extra spots add depth to the team for conference away games.

"We can almost be three deep at all positions," Osborne said.

The 60-player limit is "fairly comparable" to other conferences, Osborne said. Other conferences have a 60- to 65-player limit, except independents. Osborne noted that Penn State, which is not under the restraint of a player limit, has come to Nebraska with up to almost 75 players.

Tigers hope to leave rut behind

Missouri football Coach Warren Powers said his 3-1-2 Tigers hope to break out of the rut they're in with a good performance at Nebraska Saturday.

Missouri has tied its last two games, against Kansas State and Iowa State, and Powers said the team's confidence has been lagging.

"I think we'll bounce back from that, though," he said. "This will be the toughest game of the year, and we'll be up for it."

Powers said the Tigers will have to throw more than they have so far this year to stay in the game Saturday. The Missouri passing attack, however, will be hurt by the loss of split end Curtland Thomas, who broke a leg in the fourth quarter of last week's game against ISU and is out for the season.

"We lost a great receiver in Curtland Thomas," Powers said. "That's our biggest problem right now." Thomas

had caught 17 passes, four for touchdowns.

Missouri's quarterback situation is somewhat shaky. Both Brad Perry, a junior, and sophomore Marlon Adler have started. Perry quarterbacked the Tigers to their 19-14 win against Oklahoma last year. He is expected to start against the Huskers Saturday.

Adler is recovering from a bruised left knee, but could play Saturday. Adler also punts for the Tigers, and has had only one of 22 punts returned — for 4 yards.

Center Tom Hornof, who sprained an ankle last week, is probably out of the Husker game, Powers said.

Kevin Potter, Missouri's all-conference safety, will be back after missing the Iowa State game with an ankle injury.

The Tiger defense is ranked sixth nationally in total defense, giving up 232.5 yards per game. It is 19th in rushing defense (108.8 yards per game).

Sooners, cheerleaders blacken the eyes of Texas

The Big Fry

From Rice's winless start (and middle) to Texas' thrashing by underdog Oklahoma to the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders' subpar performance at a Fresno State game, it's been a bleak year for the Longhorn State.

So bleak that the theme of this week's Bottom 10 is "The Eyes of Texas Are Black and Blue!" — with an



Steve Harvey

all-state group of weaklings holding down Nos. 1-10. Eee-yah!

Meanwhile, Northwestern (2-5) followers found consolation in the fact that the Mildcats, despite two wins this season, still have a 45-game losing streak intact on the road.

And who says Ohio State Coach Earle Bruce gives boring pep talks at halftime? Why, the Buckeyes actually went out and scored a touchdown in the third quarter Saturday — their first points all season in that period.

The Rankings

TEAM RECORD

1. Rice (0-6)
2. UTEP (1-6)
3. TCU (2-4)
4. Baylor (2-3-1)

NEXT LOSS

- Texas ASM
Air Force
Baylor
TCU

5. Houston (2-3-1)
6. Texas ASM (3-3)
7. Texas Tech (3-3)
8. Iowa* (3-3)
9. Houston (NFL) (1-1)
10. Texas (3-1)

11. Virginia (0-6); 12. Memphis St. (0-6); 13. Cornell (0-5); 14. Oregon (0-6); 15. Oregon St. (0-5-1); 16. Kentucky (0-5-1); 17. Michigan St. (0-6); 18. Northwestern (2-5); 19. Washington St. (1-4-1); 20. (tie) NFC East All-Stars (1-0), and AFC East All-Stars (0-1).

*Coach Hayden Fry was born in Odessa, Texas.
Crummy Game of the Week: Texas of El Intercepted Paso (1-6) vs. Air Force (3-4).

Out of the Week: Washington (6-0) vs. Texas Tech (3-3).

Returning Letter-man: Reader Bob Perry wrote the Portland Oregonian: "This is the third year I have written to state my objection to The Bottom 10 column... That column should be put on waivers."

The Small Fry

Three weeks ago, a hypnotist named Dave Pappas began working with Eastern Michigan's hapless football team. Pappas has achieved remarkable results.

None of the players smoke anymore. However, they keep losing — they are now at 25 straight floggings. Next, the Hurons (0-6) attempt to roll under lowly touted Northern Illinois (1-5) in their

Arkansas

- Rice
Washington
Minnesota
?
SMU

determined quest for The Little Bottom 10 trophy (so little it can't be seen with the naked eye).

Meanwhile, Pacific (Calif.) (1-5) checked in at No. 9 after losing in the final seconds to Utah State on a trick play, the old long-pass-from-twin-brother-to-twin-brother (Doug to James Samuels).

The Rankings

- #### TEAM RECORD
1. Eastern Mich. (0-6)
 2. Cal Poly (Pomona) (0-6)
 3. Claremont-Mudd (0-5)
 4. Kent St. (0-6)
 5. Texas Southern (0-6-1)
 6. Richmond (0-6)
 7. Portland St. (0-6)
 8. Redlands (1-5)
 9. Pacific (1-6)
 10. New Mexico St. (1-6)

*Not a rock group.
Other Texas teams receiving votes: Lubbock Christian (0-5), Prairie View (0-5).

Crummy Game of the Week: Redlands (1-5) vs. Claremont-Mudd (0-5).

End of an Era: Lebanon Valley College (Pa.), apparently despondent after being overlooked by Bottom 10 selectors though it had been shut out 0-113 in its first four games, went out and beat Muhlenberg 10-7. A shame.