

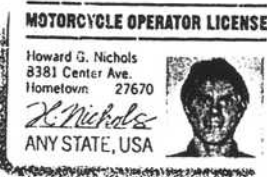

Big 12 Football

Contenders line up to knock Huskers, Horns out of line

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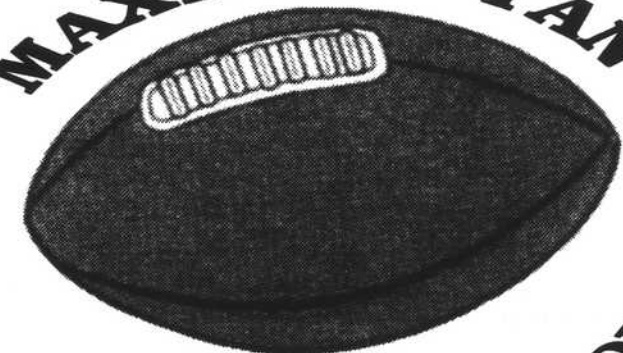

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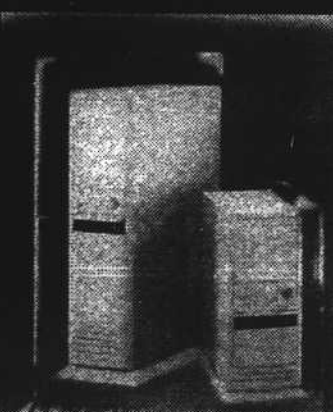
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WILDCATS from page 4

Three players will fight for the starting quarterback position this fall, including sophomores Adam Helm and Jonathan Beasley along with junior college transfer Michael Bishop.

"We'll name a starter when we're comfortable with the right one," Snyder said. "All three of these youngsters are going to have an opportunity."

TIGERS from page 4

244 yards in the final two games while throwing for 182.

"In our last five games last year," Smith said, "every week we thought (Jones) took another step. The sky is the limit for him as a quarterback. He's worked hard at his mechanics. He sees a lot more of the field now. It's just a matter of settling in."

The 1997 Tiger squad will be put to the

JAYHAWKS from page 4

Vann said he is ready to follow Henley, who averaged nearly 135 yards rushing a game in 1996. Vann was the second-leading Jayhawk rusher, averaging 16 yards a game.

"I've been trying to wait patiently," Vann said. "It's finally my goal, I'm back to where I want to be."

Allen said he thinks KU's early schedule will decide the Jayhawks' entire season. Outside the confer-

CYCLONES from page 4

Brcka, a sophomore from west Des Moines, Iowa, wants to improve after winning a total of five games in his tenure at Iowa State.

"We gained a lot of valuable experience," Brcka said. "We've worked real hard over the spring and summer."

McCarney hopes that his Cyclones are

Kansas State opens the season Sept. 6 at Northern Illinois, and plays Ohio and Bowling Green at home before traveling to Nebraska to face the Cornhuskers Oct. 4. But Weiner said the Wildcats are not looking ahead that far.

"We're going to take each game and look at it as if it's the only one," Weiner said. "We're not the only teams falling short of Nebraska and Colorado."

test with a schedule that lacks an off-date. Missouri opens the season Sept. 6 at home against Eastern Michigan, then travels to Kansas and Tulsa, Okla., before returning home to play Ohio State.

"I think our schedule is challenging," Smith said. "I think it's really important for us to get some momentum going in our first four games. The sky is the limit as far as we're concerned."

ence, the Jayhawks will face University of Alabama at Birmingham, TCU and Cincinnati.

"Our schedule could lead us either way," Allen said.

Both players see Allen as a key motivator.

"(Allen's) more positive, a player-type coach," Blevins said. "A positive-reinforcement coach."

Vann added, "I enjoy the change now, I think it's a good change."

ready to take the next step and pull off some major upsets this season.

"We've been so close, yet we haven't pulled off a major upset," he said.

The Cyclones' non-conference schedule includes Wyoming, Minnesota and in-state rival Iowa. By adding conference opponents Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas State, the Cyclones need a couple of upsets to climb the conference ranks.

HUSKERS from page 4

more D'Angelo Evans, along with spring game surprise Dan Alexander. Alexander and Evans will miss the start of the fall season, but both should be healthy by mid-season. Evans suffered a groin injury last fall, and Alexander underwent knee surgery to repair his ACL, which he tore in the spring game.

NU will utilize two returning starters in their front four to anchor their defense. Seniors Jason Peter and Grant Wistrom look to lead the Nebraska defense, after losing eight starters. Wistrom will line up in the right rush-end position, and could be the focus of many Husker opponents this fall.

"Most people have trouble handling Grant," Solich said. "When we scrimmage, we do, too."

Wistrom loses tag-team partner Jared Tomich on the left side, but said junior Chad Kelsay will step right into the role.

"Jared was a good buddy, but Chad's going to turn some heads this year," Wistrom said. "You're not

BUFFALOES from page 4

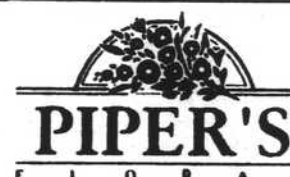
Joining Hessler in the Colorado backfield will be senior tailback Herchell Troutman, who led the team in rushing for the past two years. He rushed 193 times for 804 yards last season, and is 15th on CU's all-time rushing list.

The defensive leader of the Buffaloes will be strong side linebacker Ron Merkerson. He will lead a defense that last year was one of the strongest in the conference.

"Our goal, on defense, is to get better game by game," he said. "If you're not getting better, you're getting worse."

Colorado definitely doesn't want to get worse in a conference that sees the possible champion coming from a Buffs-Huskers showdown in Boulder, Colo., Nov. 28.

"We're every bit as talented as Nebraska," Hessler said. "We look at it like every other game. We get there with national title hopes, and they're crushed after that game."



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