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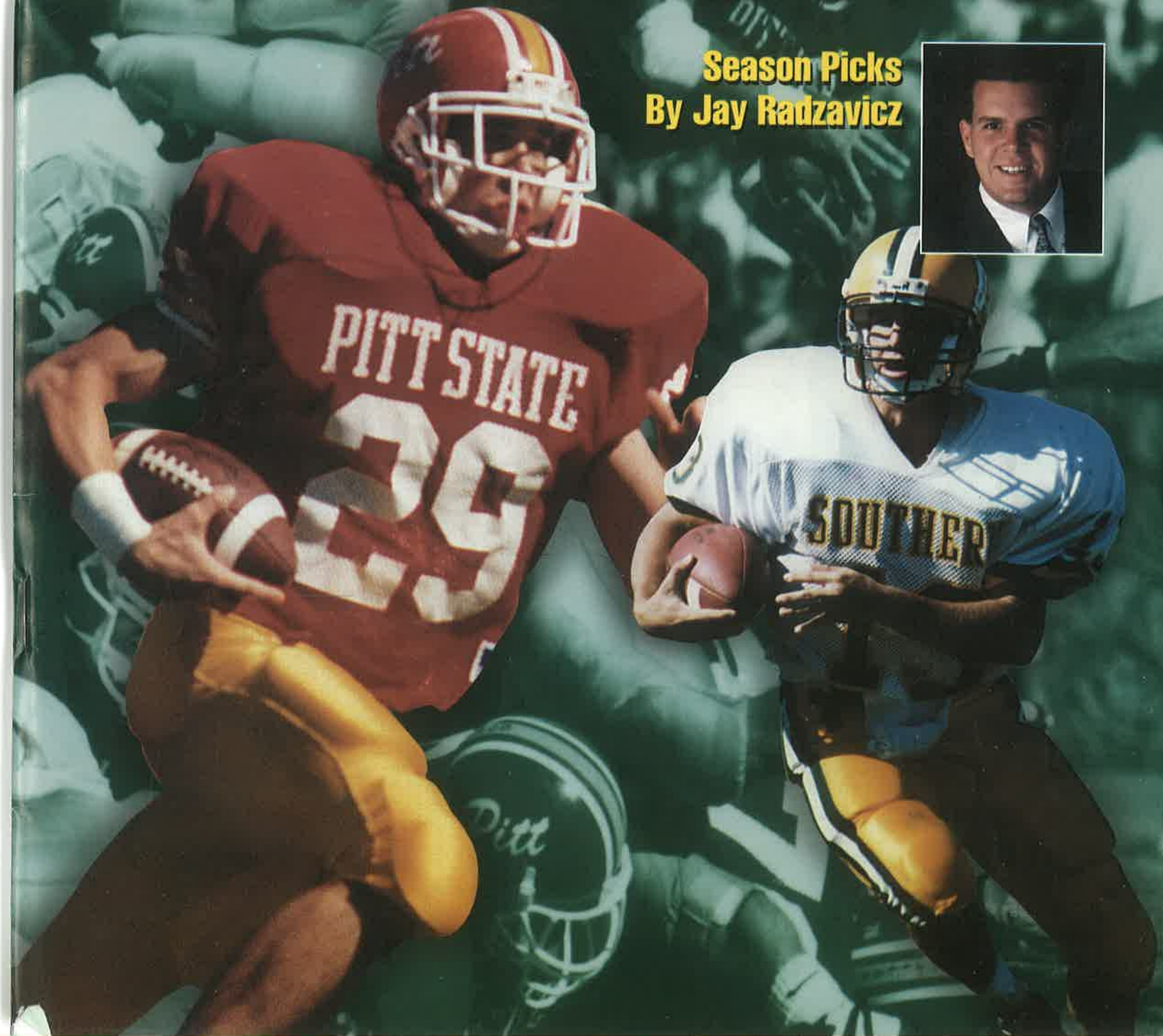


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NEWS CHANNEL 7

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Dear Football Fan,

Welcome to the debut of KOAM News Channel 7 Sports' "Pigskin Preview."

I want to thank the many coaches and sponsors who have worked with us to help make this comprehensive magazine on area football a reality.

The project has truly been a team effort from News Channel 7, with major contributions from Darren Prather in the sales department and strong backing from General Manager Danny Thomas. Publisher John Halley and graphic designer Kelly Lawson have given this magazine a championship look.

The four states is a football hotbed, and I sense a great amount of enthusiasm for the 1996 season. Personally, I have enjoyed corresponding with everyone involved. The coaches, players, fans, and supporters seem to be as excited as ever.

As I embark on my eighth football season as a sportscaster at News Channel 7, I encourage you all to give us your feedback on this magazine, and on our television coverage throughout the fall. It is our mission to be your best source for area college, junior college and high school football.

I wish all of the players a safe and prosperous season. May you all exceed my predictions.

Sincerely,

Jay Radzavicz

Sports Director

News Channel 7 at 6 & 10



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CNC League

Baxter Springs
Caney Valley
Colgan
Erie
Frontenac
Galena
Girard
Northeast
Southeast
Riverton

Mineral Belt League

Chetopa
Elk Valley*
Oswego
St. Paul
Thayer

Tri-Valley League

Burlington*
Cherryvale*
Eureka*
Fredonia
Humboldt
Neodesha
Yates Center*

3 Rivers League

Central Heights*
Jayhawk-Linn
Marmaton Valley*
Pomona*
Pleasanton*
Uniontown

SEK Lower Division

Chanute
Columbus
Iola
Labette County
Parsons

SEK Upper Division

Coffeyville
Fort Scott
Independence
Pittsburg

Class 5A - District 4

Arkansas City
Coffeyville
Independence
Pittsburg

Class 4A - District 7

Chanute
Fort Scott
Girard
Iola

Class 4A - District 8

Columbus
Labette County
Neodesha
Parsons

Class 4A - District 11

Augusta*
Douglass*
Fredonia
Towanda-Circle*

Class 3A - District 6

Humboldt
Jayhawk-Linn
Central Heights*
Yates Center*

Class 3A - District 7

Baxter Springs
Galena
Riverton
Northeast

Class 3A - District 8

Caney Valley*
Cherryvale*
Erie
Southeast

Class 2-1A - District 6

Colgan
Frontenac
Marmaton Valley*
Pleasanton*
Uniontown

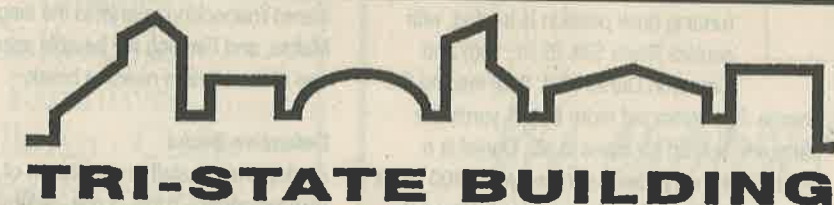
8-Man I - District 2

Chetopa
Oswego
St. Paul

8-Man II - District 3

Cedar Vale*
Dexter*
Thayer

* not previewed



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Baxter Springs *lions*

Conference: C.N.C.
Classification: 3A
District: 7
Head Coach: Tom Audley
Years at School: 10th
Record at School: 38-45

The bottom of the Lions schedule this year reads, "The pain of discipline is less than the pain of regret." There are certainly few regrets after Baxter Springs' impressive 9-2 record a year ago. Tom Audley returns for his 10th year as head coach of the program. The Lions made some major strides last season in establishing themselves as a top team in the always tough C.N.C. conference. With 21 lettermen returning with confidence from the '95 team, Baxter Springs will contend again this fall.

"It will be important to get off to a good start and to stay healthy," Audley said.

The Lions open the season with three relatively unknown opponents. Baxter hasn't played Erie, Neodesha, or Caney in a number of years. This season, the Lions drop down one class in district competition. But don't be deceived: Riverton, Galena, and Northeast make district 7 one of the most competitive in the eastern part of the state.

Baxter Springs is coming off its best season in a decade. With some luck and with discipline, there will again be little to regret come November.

Offensive Backs

Junior Drew Hartley (6-1, 175) is back as the incumbent quarterback. The talented signal caller had a very productive sophomore season, throwing for 1100 yards and 14 touchdowns. The running back position is loaded, with seniors Travis Sills (5-11, 180) and Cameron Daniel (6-2, 240) leading the

charge. Sills averaged more than 5 yards per carry and scored six times in '95. Daniel is a bruiser who has racked up more than 1400 yards in two seasons of duty. Junior Jake Johnson (5-11, 165) will push the upperclassmen.

Receivers

Wide receiver Alex Ikenberry (6-0, 170) is one of the most dangerous young men in the C.N.C. The athletic senior caught four touchdown passes, rushed for more than 7 yards per carry and was a threat as a kick returner. There is plenty of depth in the position group with seniors Doug Holden

(5-10, 175) and Bud Dalton (5-9, 165), and juniors Kyle Crotts (6-0, 155), Daryn King (5-9, 150), Grant Ashe (5-11, 155) and Derek Coulson (5-11, 150) all capable of making contributions. At tight end, junior Alex Kissel (6-2, 175) should be the mainstay.

Offensive Line

Senior J.R. Hartley (6-1, 175) is a returning all-conference performer on the offensive line. He'll be flanked by experienced junior Andy Dinger (5-11, 230). There will be good competition for the remaining spots in the trenches with seniors Dustin Parker (5-10, 230) Steven Gandy (6-3, 210), Chris Stebbins (5-11, 180), Jeff Lonie (5-10, 170), Josh Fanning (5-9, 175), and Charles Woznick (5-11, 205) all in the mix. Junior offensive line candidates include bulky Nick Edwards (5-10, 250) and Jeremy Mathis (6-0, 185).

Defensive Line

The Lions defensive line will be formidable with J.R. Hartley and Dinger returning as starters. Hartley received all conference accolades last fall. The defensive front will be complemented by Parker, Gandy, Stebbins, and Kissel. Sophomore Dustin Schroyer (5-11, 285) is a project for the future who could get some valuable experience.

Linebackers

This position group will be a fortress. All four starting linebackers suit up again this season. Sills, Daniel, Ikenberry and Johnson will use their experience and enthusiasm to make this the most feared linebacking quartet in the league. Gandy, Mathis, and Fanning will be able apprentices if one of the starters needs a break.

Defensive Backs

Audley and his staff are in search of a completely new secondary. Three quality defensive backs were lost to graduation. Drew Hartley could make an impact, but that means having the talented quarterback play both ways. Crotts, King, Ashe, and Coulson will have to mature to make this defensive unit a complete package.

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1996 Baxter Springs Lions Schedule

September

6	Erie	Away
13	Neodesha	Home
20	Caney	Away
27	Southeast	Home

October

4	Columbus	Away
11	Glard	Home
18	Riverton	Away
25	Galena	Away
31	Northeast	Home

1995 Overall Record: 9-2
1995 Playoff Record: 1-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 6
Defensive Starters Returning: 5
Total Returning Lettermen: 21

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 7, LOSE 2

Chanute *blue comets*

Conference: SEK

Classification: 4 A

District: 7

Head Coach: Kent Frazell

Years at School: 2nd

Record at School: 5-4

1996 Chanute Blue Comets Schedule

September

6 Coffeyville Home

13 Labette County Home

20 Independence Away

27 Parsons Away

October

4 Larned Away

11 Columbus Home

18 Iola Home

25 Girard Home

31 Fort Scott Away

1995 Overall Record: 5-4

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 7

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 13

JAY'S PREDICTION – WIN 5, LOSE 4

After a successful first year, Chanute head coach Kent Frazell expects his team to build on its' accomplishments and take another step forward and towards the top of the SEK.

"We have a highly motivated team with intelligent kids," Frazell said.

The football smarts will come into play when Frazell employs a complex offense with many different sets. With seven returning starters back on the point scoring unit, the Blue Comets have a chance to be potent.

Frazell calls Chanute's district, "Without doubt, the toughest in the state."

Iola and Girard play at the Blue Comet's home. Chanute must travel to Fort Scott.

If the offense meets its' high expectations, and the defense can gel by the time the district season begins, the Blue Comets will be a force to be contended with.

Offensive Backs

The backfield is led by returning second team all-league quarterback Aaron Gutierrez (5-9, 160).

Gutierrez threw for 610 yards in this junior season. Also returning in the backfield will be senior running back

Jim Severt (5-8, 160). Severt rushed for 220 yards in '95. Newcomer Eric Rausch (5-10, 195) is a senior ball carrier who should add depth to the Blue Comets offense.

Receivers

The air attack features three returning lettermen. Seniors Jesse Williams (6-0, 170), Matt Reid (6-1, 180) and Chris Martin (5-8, 150) team up again as pass catching threats. Williams and Reid had more than 100 receiving yards last fall.

Offensive Line

Frazell feels extremely confident with his personnel up front. Four of five starters return for the Blue Comets on the offensive line. Seniors Matt Cox (6-4, 250) and Paul Arthur (6-0, 210), along with juniors Chris Bancroft (6-0, 210) and Dave Guinotte (6-1, 220) are proven athletes. The coaching staff will search the crop of underclassmen to try to find at least one more player to complement this impressive group.

Defensive Line

Bancroft, Arthur and seniors Steve Cunningham (6-0, 200) and Brian Waggoner (5-9, 150) will compete for the starting defensive line spots. This group has plenty of potential, but will have to make constant improvement in the early part of the season.

Linebackers

Guinotte is back after an outstanding performance in '95. The junior was a first team all-SEK linebacker and led the team with 89 tackles. Guinotte will be joined by veteran junior Doug Taylor (5-10, 170) and Martin. Taylor is fundamentally sound and has good quickness. Backups are still an unknown. Finding some emerging young linebackers will be a priority in August.

Defensive Backs

Reid and Severt return to lead the secondary after both earned second team All-SEK honors last season. Reid shined as a starter, compiling 47 tackles and making five interceptions. The coaching staff will also count on Williams and Gutierrez to make contributions to complete the defensive backfield package.

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Chetopa *green hornets*

Conference: Mineral Belt League
 Classification: 8-Man Division I
 District: 2
 Head Coach: Mitch Riggs
 Years at School: 4th
 Record at School: 17-14

1996 Chetopa Green Hornets Schedule

August		
30	Cedarvale	Away
September		
5	Bluejacket	Away
13	Crest	Away
20	open	
27	Copan	Away
October		
4	Elk Valley	Home
11	Oswego	Away
17	Thayer	Home
24	St. Paul	Home

1995 Overall Record: 3-7
 1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
 Offensive Starters Returning: 5
 Defensive Starters Returning: 5
 Total Returning Lettermen: 10

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 2

Gas up the team bus and check the oil. The Green Hornets are hitting the road.

Mitch Riggs returns for his fourth season at Chetopa. If Green Hornet fans don't stop by to watch practice, or if they aren't willing to travel, they won't see Riggs and his squad until October. A quirk in the schedule sends the team on the road for the four games. The regular season begins on August 30th, the home opener comes on October 4th.

That seems to be alright with Riggs. He has his sight set on the two late season opponents.

"St. Paul and Oswego would have to be the key games," Riggs said. "If we win those two games we are in the playoffs."

The words of wisdom come from experience. The Green Hornets limped to an 0-6 start in 1995, only to atone for the dismal beginning by finishing strong with an unbeaten record in district play.

With five starters coming back on both sides of the football, this eight man team isn't likely to struggle this fall in the early weeks of the season. The Herculean stretch run by Chetopa last year should translate into momentum this year.

If it does, refuel those buses, the Green Hornets are on the road to the Kansas eight-man playoffs.

Offensive Backs

Junior running back Kenny Brown (6-1, 212) has the speed and size to dominate at this level. Brown rushed for over 1100 yards last season and was first team all-league on both sides of the football. Sophomore Joey Midgett (5-9, 165) played a big role in the Chetopa backfield last season. Two quality quarterbacks in senior Eric Bump (5-9, 150) and junior Matt Nading (5-10, 165) will make for some healthy competition in pre-season camp.

Receivers

The Green Hornets have a set of contrasting

tight ends. On one side will be huge sophomore Ryan Hellwig (6-3, 220) on the other side will be petite Nathan Blackledge (5-8, 140). As one would expect, Hellwig is the better blocker and a possession type receiver. Blackledge has the speed and is a deep threat. Freshman Bobby Carter (5-10, 150) could push for playing time.

Offensive Line

Seniors Bill Columbia (5-11, 225) and Josh Smith (5-11, 240) return as starters to anchor the offensive line. Columbia will assume leadership duties in the trenches. Junior Broc Bryant (5-10, 175) is back after a shoulder injury cut short his sophomore season. Sophomores Tyrone Armstrong (5-11, 250) and Dusty Jarrett (5-10, 225) are two top candidates to complete the offensive front.

Defensive Line

Columbia, Smith, Bryant, Armstrong, Hellwig, and Jarrett make the defensive line the most competitive position group on the field. Carter is a project who will tutor under the experienced defensive linemen this fall.

Linebackers

Brown will be one of the league's top-notch linebackers. Fortunately for the junior, the eight man field is smaller, because Brown will be all over it. Offenses may choose to run towards junior Jeff Chartier (5-8, 160). The returning letterman will have to be up to the challenge. Senior Buck MacGowan (5-9, 185) is a top newcomer with decent size who could make an immediate impact at linebacker.

Defensive Backs

The two quarterback candidates will team up to lead the defensive secondary. Bump and Nading both have good speed and experience at defensive back. Midgett will press for a starting role. Riggs and assistant coach Rob Page will give Blackledge and freshmen Adam Mayfield (5-9, 165) and David Nading a chance to earn a spot in the secondary.

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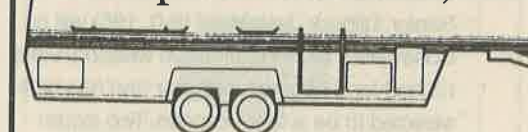


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Coffeyville *golden tornado*

Conference: S.E.K.
Classification: 5A
District: 4
Head Coach: Brad Hessler
Years at School: 2nd
Record at School: 3-6

1996 Coffeyville Golden Tornado Schedule

September		
6	Chanute	Away
13	Parsons	Away
20	Sapulpa, OK	Home
27	Fort Scott	Away
October		
4	Joplin	Home
11	Lafayette County	Home
18	Arkansas City	Home
25	Pittsburg	Away
November		
1	Independence	Home

1995 Overall Record: 3-6
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 9
Defensive Starters Returning: 8
Total Returning Lettermen: 18

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 4, LOSE 5

Like a storm chaser in the film "Twister", second year head coach Brad Hessler thinks he has this Golden Tornado figured out. And they are potentially dangerous. Coffeyville High School returns 17 starters from a competitive team in '95.

"We have more experience, and being a second year head coach, the players now know me and I now know them," Hessler said. "We have more time to teach fundamentals and technique."

Hessler believes the strong contingent of senior leaders has been a tremendous benefit during the off-season conditioning program.

"Our players have worked very hard to make themselves stronger and faster. Our seniors have done an excellent job in being leaders and bringing everyone together."

Hessler thinks the first three games on a rigorous schedule will be critical. The Golden Tornado will debut their new University of Michigan-style helmets on the road against Chanute. A week-two test sends Coffeyville to Parsons before a home game against powerful Sapulpa from Oklahoma.

"We have to get off to a fast start for confidence," the coach said.

A home game against Joplin comes in the middle part of the schedule two weeks before the Golden Tornado embark on a district stretch against Arkansas City, Pittsburg, and Independence.

Offensive Backs

Senior fullback Josh Viets (6-0, 195) will be Coffeyville's primary offensive weapon. Viets rushed for 536 yards last year and has been selected to be a team captain. Two experienced senior quarterbacks return to compete for the starting nod. Billy Foster (6-1, 180) and Brad Manley (6-2, 180) have a lot of the same qualities. The starter will likely be the candidate who shows the most consistency and the least propensity to turn the

ball over.

Receivers

Josh Mecom (6-1, 185) is a converted quarterback who lined up at wide receiver on a regular basis during his junior year. Tight end Danny Fisher (6-1, 195) returns as a good blocker and able pass catcher. The Golden Tornado coaching staff will look to big sophomore Eric Weils (6-0, 210) for support.

Offensive Line

Offensive tackle Heath Cochran (6-3, 280) is a division one college prospect with good feet and exceptional strength. The senior bench presses 345. Seniors Will Mann (6-1, 205) and Gabe Abaloz (6-0, 205) have made significant gains in the weight room after gaining experience last fall. Senior Brad Flanders (6-1, 195) is the incumbent at center. Underclassmen Thomas Dougan (6-1, 220) and Eddie Petch (6-1, 220) will add depth. Jacob Viets (6-2, 240) is an enormous freshman who could develop.

Defensive Line

Cochran will be a two-way player and in the trenches. Brad Cain (6-0, 212) is a veteran senior defensive tackle. Dougan, Petch and Jacob Viets will also get an opportunity to prove themselves on the defensive line.

Linebackers

The linebacker corps is deep and athletic. Josh Viets was an All-State selection last season when he registered 122 tackles. Seniors Matt Schmidt (6-0, 190) and Mann along with juniors Michael Rogers (6-0, 185) and David Felts (6-0, 180) will make for great competition in pre-season camp. Sophomore Justin Campbell (5-10, 180) could materialize into a top 'backer.

Defensive Backs

Foster and Manley will join forces at the safety positions. Sophomore John McGehee (6-2, 185) is a highly regarded newcomer. Hessler and his staff will search for another underclassman to emerge as a dependable contributor in the secondary.

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Colgan *panthers*

Conference: CNC
Classification: 2A
District: 6
Head Coach: Chuck Smith
Years at School: 17th
Record at School: n/a

1996 St. Mary's-Colgan Panthers Schedule

September		
5	Girard	Home
13	Northeast	Away
20	Riverton	Home
28	Galena	Thursday
October		
4	Southeast	Away
11	Frontonac	Home
18	Pleasanton	Away
24	Unkrentown	Home
31	Marmaton Valley	Away

1995 Overall Record: 6-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 5
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Total Returning Lettermen: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

If the CNC Conference held interscholastic events in equestrian, or bobsledding, or cricket, or even tick-tack-toe the Panthers would come to play. This group of seniors loves to compete, and they are proven winners. Many of the same talented young men who helped Colgan to a 6-3 record in football, who won the State Championship in basketball, and who played in the state baseball tournament are back again.

"This team has an excellent senior class with a good backup from their underclassmen," head coach Chuck Smith said. "The season is being looked at with high expectations with a good number of starters coming back."

Smith enters his 17th year on the Colgan sideline with long-time assistant Wayne Cichon and newcomer Nate Clevenger assisting. Last fall, the coaching staff molded an inexperienced offense into one of the most productive attacks in the area. Colgan racked up more than 300 yards per game and laid the foundation for great things to come in 1996.

"The players have worked hard and the attitude is great," Smith said.

The Panthers embark on a difficult season when they open on Thursday, September 5th at home against powerful Girard. The CNC league schedule follows, including a district clash against Frontenac in week six, much earlier than the traditional regular season meeting against the rival. This fall, the district is especially competitive with five schools vying for a playoff berth.

Offensive Backs

Pat McNally (6-5, 195) returns for his senior season at quarterback. McNally has great skills and is a poised leader. As a junior, the rangy quarterback was a high percentage thrower, completing 76 of 106 attempts for 12 touchdowns. Senior fullback Aaron Amershek (6-2, 200) and senior running back Kirk Duncan (5-10, 160) are both veteran ball carriers. Support will come from junior Ryan Moodie (6-0, 165) a hard running halfback, and from juniors Joe Shoemaker (5-10, 160) and Chris Peak (5-10, 160) who missed most of last year due to injury.

Receivers

Senior Adam Hamilton (6-1, 160) will be called upon to lead the wide receiver corps. Senior Joe Fleming (6-0, 150) and Shaun Ryan (5-9, 145) saw part time action last year. Backup quarterback Justin Hamilton (6-0, 160) could be a factor as a sophomore. A long list of underclassmen are also candidates to earn a starting spot. Smith and his staff will search the pool of talent in August to try to complete the position group.

Offensive Line

The offensive line looks solid with returning starters Corey Peak (6-0, 210) and Christian Dobrauc (6-0, 190) eager for their senior seasons. Senior Mark Schremmer (5-10, 165) is a quick guard with some experience. Junior John Barnes could step in to fill the center position. Fellow juniors Joe Boman (6-2, 180), Brian Hallacy (6-1, 165) and Dave Prewett (6-1, 220) will battle at the tackle position.

Defensive Line

Defensive tackle Corey Peak and nose guard Dobrauc were part of a group that surrendered a stingy 15 points per game in '95. Junior Luke Huerter (5-11, 195) could become an everyday player this fall. Schremmer is likely to play on both sides of the ball. Sophomore deep snapper C.J. Badart (6-1, 165) has found his niche as the Panthers deep snapper and could also compete on the defensive front.

Linebackers

Amershek will be a force at linebacker. The two-time all-CNC performer has led the Panthers in tackles the last two years. Duncan also returns as a starter on the solid unit. Ryan Comeau (5-10, 220) returns to Colgan after being gone for a couple years. The athletic junior is a welcomed addition.

Defensive Backs

McNally will lead the secondary as perhaps the best free safety in the conference. The offensive quarterback has good intelligence and is capable of making big plays. Adam Hamilton is a possibility at defensive back. Shoemaker and a host of other underclassmen will vie for a spot on the starting roster.

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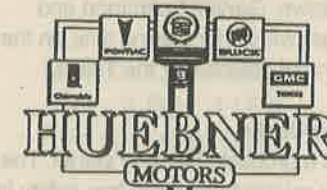
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Columbus *titans*

Conference: S.E.K.

Classification: 4A

District: 8

Head Coach: John Pierce

Years at School: 2nd

Record at School: 2-6

1996 Columbus Titans Schedule

September

8	Carl Junction	Away
13	Iola	Away
20	Aurora	Home
27	Edon	Away

October

4	Baxter Springs	Home
11	Chanute	Away
18	Labette County	Home
25	Parsons	Home
31	Neodesha	Away

1995 Overall Record: 2-6

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 3

Defensive Starters Returning: 3

Total Returning Lettermen: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 5

When John Pierce took over the Columbus program two years ago, the Titans looked more like The Titanic. Columbus was coming off a 0-8 season, but Pierce quickly righted the ship and managed two wins in his debut season.

In 1996, the stage is set for Columbus to take another step towards rebuilding this program into a consistent winner.

"This year's team looks to be physically stronger," Piece said. "Our players have worked hard in the weight room over the course of this past year as well as this summer and it seems to be paying off with improved morale and confidence. We have the potential to be much better in all phases of the game this year."

The 15 returning lettermen have a positive attitude headed into the campaign. The theme this season is, 'Whatever it Takes'. Pierce thinks 'it' will take some early success to carry over into the conference season for this team to be competitive.

"I believe our first game of the year is the most critical game on our schedule because this game does so much to set the tone for the season," the former Pittsburg State assistant coach said.

The opener sends Columbus east on route 96 to Carl Junction, Missouri. If the Titans can win against their new opponent, they will certainly take confidence with them on the road to Iola in week two. The Mustangs were one of two schools that fell victim to the Titans last season.

While three of the first four contests are away from home, Columbus does have the good fortune of hosting the two most powerful teams on the schedule. Baxter Springs and Parsons outscored the Titans 107 to 8 last fall. You can be certain that this proud group won't let that happen again.

Offensive Backs

The senior class has outstanding leadership, and the number one pilot will be quarterback Jim Gaither (6-2, 195). Gaither is a complete athlete who will be starting for the third straight year. Josh York (5-10, 185) is an able

backup. The running backs in the Single Wing offense have a fair amount of game experience. Juniors Josh Brown (5-8, 150) and Shane Schuberger (5-9, 165) will be joined by sophomore Matt Hess (5-10, 160) as candidates to become regulars. Freshmen Chris Delmont (5-9, 170) and Robert Hampton (5-9, 150) might be able to fulfill roles.

Receivers

The senior wide receiver trio of Clint Saporito (6-2, 170), Josh Hale (5-10, 165) and David Newberry (5-11, 165) will make for good competition in August drills. Senior Brian Rainey (5-11, 175) should get the nod at tight end. The junior tandem of Casey Garvin (5-10, 180) and Chuck Scammon (5-10, 175) will vie for the tight end vacancy on the other side.

Offensive Line

A pair of veteran offensive tackles are back for their senior campaigns. B.J. Gideon (6-0, 215) and Casey Lyons (6-0, 205) have made big improvements since the last time they competed on the football field. The coaching staff has high expectations for senior Zach Overman (6-0, 180) on the interior front. Freshman Jerad Tanner (5-10, 200) could step in to contribute as an untested talent.

Defensive Line

Senior Dustin Beaty (5-10, 220) rejoins Lyons as a returning starter on the defensive front. Overman and Tanner are other probable starters on a unit that lacks good depth.

Linebackers

Gideon doubles on defense as a quality linebacker. Brown, Garvin, Scammon and Schuberger will vie for playing time on the second line of defense for the Titans.

Defensive Backs

Gaither is a probable two way starter. The Columbus quarterback plays free safety in the secondary. Saporito brings excellent speed to the defensive backfield. Hale, Newberry and York and a long list of underclassmen will attempt to break into the lineup as defensive backs.

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Erie red devils

Conference: CNC
Classification: 3A
District: 8
Head Coach: Steve Oliver
Years at School: 10th
Record at School: 42-45

1996 Erie Red Devils Schedule

September		
6	Baxter Springs	Home
13	Girard	Away
20	Frontenac	Away
27	Riverton	Away
October		
4	Galena	Home
11	Northeast	Home
18	Southeast	Away
25	Cherryvale	Away
31	Caney Valley	Home

1995 Overall Record: 6-4
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 6
Defensive Starters Returning: 6
Total Returning Lettermen: 10

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 5, LOSE 4

One word describes the Erie Red Devils biggest strength this season. Attitude.

Steve Oliver enters his 10th season at Erie with a team full of confident players. The Red Devils qualified for the Kansas 3A playoffs last season, and the nucleus of that group is back.

"This team is quick and aggressive," Oliver said. "We don't have big numbers in our junior and senior class, but the kids that we do have are quality."

The September schedule is nightmarish for Erie. The first four opponents combined for a 30-6 record in 1995. Highly regarded Baxter Springs visits town for the season opening game. Then the Red Devils have three straight road games against Girard, Frontenac and Riverton. The Riverton game is a rematch of last year's opening round playoff game. Erie will try to atone for a loss against the Rams last November.

Oliver doesn't have any unrealistic illusions for the start of the season. "It starts with the second half of the season. By then we will have experience and should gain momentum headed into the district," the coach said.

Offensive Backs

Senior quarterback Clint Golay (5-10, 160) is the incumbent. Golay makes up for a lack of size with excellent speed and quickness. Freshman Dan Walters (5-7, 150) will tutor under the veteran quarterback and provide depth. Senior Aaron Hole (5-10, 170) is a returning starter with super strength who must try to replace graduated Brian McGowen at running back. McGowen rushed for 1026 of the Red Devils 1353 yards during the regular season last fall. Adam Yockey (6-0, 160) will likely get the nod at the other running back position. Yockey shined at defense and as the team's punter as a sophomore.

Receivers

Oliver calls senior wide receiver Cody Dye (6-0, 155) the hardest working Red Devil. The coaching staff will look to Dye to provide leadership to the entire offensive unit. Senior Jeremy Arthur (5-10, 145) is a speedy wide receiver who has improved himself in the off season. Tight end Justin Cook (6-2, 195) is a potential all-league selection with outstanding size. Cook might be moved to fullback for his junior campaign.

Offensive Line

The offensive line is a major question mark for Oliver and his staff. The Red Devils do not have a single starter returning to the trenches. The top priority during August practices will be to groom some undersized young players into competent offensive linemen.

Defensive Line

Sophomore defensive tackle David Yoho (6-4, 270) comes highly regarded after earning a starting spot his freshman season. The coaching staff has only just begun developing the potential of the biggest sophomore in the entire CNC. If Yoho continues to improve, he could carry this position group. Like the offensive front, the defensive line needs to find some underclassmen to emerge.

Linebackers

Hole and Cook will play both ways. Both are seasoned veterans at linebacker. Cook is extremely aggressive while Hole has the speed to cover a lot of ground.

Defensive Backs

Golay, Dye and Yockey double as defensive backs. All three have at least one year of starting experience. There are high expectations for freshman Brock Aday (6-0, 180). Oliver says Aday has a great nose for the ball and loves to hit. He could be the next star defensive back for the Red Devils.



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Fort Scott *tigers*

Conference: S.E.K.

Classification: 4A

District: 7

Head Coach: Bob Campbell

Years at School: 5th

Record at School: 19-17

1996 Fort Scott Tigers Schedule

September		
6	Nevada	Home
13	Independence	Away
20	Parsons	Home
27	Coffeyville	Home
October		
4	Labette County	Away
11	Pittsburg	Home
18	Girard	Away
25	Iola	Away
November		
1	Chanute	Home

1995 Overall Record: 6-3

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 8

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 17

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

Fort Scott High School has good class. Sure, Bob Campbell's Tigers will again have a 'classy' team that demonstrates good work ethics and sportsmanship. That's a given under the fifth year head coach. This season however, 'good class' also means a move from the Kansas 5A ranks to the 4A classification.

On paper, the Tigers appear to have the talent to make a serious bid for the S.E.K. Conference title. Given the fact that the team moves down a level for district and playoff competition, Fort Scott could potentially play deep into the post season.

"We do return a large number of starters from last year's team," Campbell said. "We're optimistic coming off a 6-3 season, but a few bad breaks and a few injuries could change things in a hurry."

The Tigers open the 1996 campaign against cross state rival Nevada. A trip to Independence is followed by a rigorous stretch against Parsons, Coffeyville, Labette County, and Pittsburg. By the time the district season starts, Fort Scott should be primed to be a legitimate state championship contender in 4A.

"A lot of people have picked us to win our district," Campbell said. "It won't be easy. We have split with Chanute the past four years, and I have tremendous respect for Craig Crespino and his Girard program. I feel that Kent Thompson will field the best Iola team that they have had in several years."

The Tigers' coaching staff will concentrate on finding some interior linemen in the pre-season. If they do, the skill position players will carry this team a long way.

Offensive Backs

There is brotherhood amongst the quarterbacks. Literally. Senior Matt Karleskint (6-2, 175) returns to lead the Tigers offense. Campbell says Matt is extremely balanced in his ability to run and pass. Younger brother Doug Karleskint (6-2, 170) has a lot of the same athletic qualities and will push hard for playing time as a junior. Senior Travis Stepps (5-9, 170) heads the list of running backs. A trio

of juniors will offer good competition for a regular spot in the Fort Scott backfield. Josh Regan (5-10, 180), Adam Gross (5-8, 145) and Mike Hutchinson (5-11, 155) all contributed last fall. Sophomore B.J. Pruitt (5-8, 145) will also figure into the equation.

Receivers

Senior wide receivers Nick Oberst (5-11, 170) and Quindale Floyd (5-11, 170) return as play-making pass catchers. Floyd was an All-Conference selection in his junior season. Junior Jesse Vachon (6-1, 155) and sophomore sensation Matt Bloomfield (6-1, 160) are both capable of helping the wide receiver corps immediately. Campbell is counting on junior tight end Danny Hutchinson (5-10, 165) to move into a starting role.

Offensive Line

The offensive line is relatively small, but somewhat experienced. Seniors Clint McKinnis (5-9, 205), Tony Fleeman (6-0, 215), Tim Guilfoyle (6-2, 195) and Andy Albright (5-6, 140) all return to the trenches. Chad Clary (6-1, 180) could fill the other spot in his junior year.

Defensive Line

Fleeman is the only returning regular on the defensive front. Guilfoyle and Albright will be asked to play both ways this fall. Sophomores Adam Lancaster (6-3, 230) and Justice Olsen (6-2, 195) are top newcomers who could earn a spot on this unit.

Linebackers

McKinnis is a veteran linebacker with outstanding ability. The senior is coming off an All-Conference junior year. Bolinger was also a starter at linebacker and is regarded as the Tigers biggest hitter. Danny Hutchinson will vie for the other starting spot along with some quality underclassmen.

Defensive Backs

Oberst and Stepps are seasoned in the secondary. Stepps returned as a defensive back after a stellar season last fall. Floyd could be the best athlete in the bunch and will likely earn a regular spot. Bloomfield has the best potential in the sophomore class and could find his niche on defense. Gross, Mike Hutchison and Vachon will provide depth.



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Fredonia yellowjackets

Conference: Tri Valley League

Classification: 4A

District: 11

Head Coach: Gene John

Years at School: 26th

Record at School: n/a

1996 Fredonia Yellowjackets Schedule

September

6	Labette County	Home
13	Humboldt	Away
20	Yates Center	Away
27	Neodesha	Home

October

4	Burlington	Home
11	Eureka	Away
18	Towanda Circle	Away
25	Douglas	Home
31	Augusta	Away

1995 Overall Record: 3-6

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 6

Defensive Starters Returning: 8

Total Returning Lettermen: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 6, LOSE 3

It is a step back in time for the Fredonia Yellowjackets. Gene John returns to coaching this fall after a six year hiatus. John coached for 25 seasons at Fredonia before leaving after the 1989 season. Also, the Yellowjackets return to the Tri Valley Conference. The seven-team league is being re-established after more than a decade.

"The football program has lacked consistency the last six years," John said. "We have had three different head coaches here since I left, and the school and the players need some continuity."

John is reunited with assistant coach Rex Pope. The two helped guide Fredonia to a state championship in 1983.

"We are relatively young, but I think there's talent. It's just a matter of molding this group of players," John said.

With John back at the helm, expect Fredonia to be a fundamentally sound team, and expect the Yellowjackets to be a better team than they have been in the recent past.

Offensive Backs

Senior Trent Henderson (6-2, 175) returns for his third season as the starting quarterback. Henderson is a good thrower with leadership qualities. Running back Brandon Tindle (5-11, 180) is perhaps the most athletic player on the roster. The senior has excellent speed and leaping ability, demonstrated by his 6'6" high jumping performance as a track athlete. Sophomore J.D. Schaumburg (6-0, 185) will relieve Tindle at times at tailback. Juniors Aaron Timmons (5-11, 160) and Tyler Beall (5-10, 155) are among a strong contingent battling for playing time in the backfield.

Receivers

Senior tight end Jeremy Florez (5-11, 200) has two years of starting experience on his resume and is a versatile pass catcher and blocker. Classmate Monty Fulghum (5-9, 150) is a big

play wide receiver. Senior Justin Sims (5-10, 160) will be counted on in the Yellowjackets Pro-I Offense. John will need to find some depth at the receiving corps.

Offensive Line

Seniors Bobby Baughman (6-2, 230), and Jamie Atwell (5-11, 175) will anchor the offensive line. Both are seasoned starters and both had a productive off-season in the weight room. Bobby Casper (6-2, 245) is a senior who missed the last two seasons with injuries, but brings potential with his size. Junior Brian O'Neal is versatile and could find his niche on the offensive line. John expects junior Josh White (5-11, 175) to be another contributor up front.

Defensive Line

The foundation of the Yellowjackets will be defense. Eight starters return on the unit, and John thinks the experience will allow his team to play an attack-style defense. Atwell returns along with fellow seniors Baughman and Dusty Ostrosky (6-0, 275). Sophomore Jarrod Claibourne (5-10, 200) is a top candidate at nose guard. Junior Marshall Sumner (5-10, 185) and Florez will most likely line up at defensive end.

Linebackers

A pair of solid sophomores will lead the line-backing corps. Brandon Reddick (5-11, 170), and Schaumburg were part-time starters last season. The linebackers will be a busy bunch with an aggressive defensive scheme in the works. The Yellowjackets will look for added depth in Timmons and a long list of underclassmen.

Defensive Backs

The secondary is probably the strongest position group on the team. Senior Chris Savedra (6-0, 170) is capable of being a playmaker. The junior combo of Jeff Arnold (5-10, 160) and Seth Fox (6-0, 170) will bring experience to the safety positions. Sims is a proven coverage man and Henderson may use his athletic ability on the defensive side of the football, too.



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Frontenac *raiders*

Conference: C.N.C.
Classification: 2A
District: 6
Head Coach: Leon Miller
Years at School: 8th
Record at School: 63-13

1996 Frontenac Raiders

September		
5	Caney	Home
13	Riverton	Away
20	Erie	Home
27	Northeast	Away
October		
4	Marmaton Valley	Home
11	Colgan	Away
18	Shiloh Christian	Away
25	Pleasanton	Home
31	Unkintown	Away

1995 Overall Record: 7-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 3
Defensive Starters Returning: 4
Total Returning Lettermen: 21

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 7, LOSE 2

A stranger who comes to town on a Friday in the Autumn could very well think that the entire population of Frontenac is in mourning. On the contrary. The residents wear black to celebrate Raider pride. In years past, the only mourners have been the teams that have faced the powerful class 2A school. This year should be no different.

Head coach Leon Miller lost a dozen quality seniors off of last year's playoff team. The good news is he welcomes back a strong nucleus of players.

"A lot of questions need to be answered in the pre-season," Miller said. "This team may not have the speed that we've had in the past, but this year's team is big, strong and physical."

As always, Miller admits the CNC will be very competitive. The Raiders have an extremely challenging road schedule beginning with a September 13th trip to traditional power Riverton. The annual Colgan showdown is at Pittsburg and it comes in week six this year, instead of the last week of the regular season. Also in the travel plans: a trip to Springdale, Arkansas to face Shiloh Christian and three out of four district games away from Spigarelli Field.

Offensive Backs

Quarterback Nate Ulepich (6-1, 180) is back after earning the starting spot as a sophomore. Tony Sighel (5-10, 208) moved from tight end to fullback and will play a major factor in the Raiders ground attack. Other seasoned ball carrier's are absent from the roster. Miller will have to find at least one underclassman to fill the void.

Receivers

Senior John Zafuta (5-9, 170) will have to assume a leadership role in the wide receiver

corps. Juniors Eric Jameson (5-9, 170) and Tony Chiappetti (5-8, 150) could prove to be valuable pass catching threats. Jameson changes roles after spending his sophomore season with the offensive line.

Offensive Line

Chad Ulepich (6-0, 215) will likely get the nod at strong tackle. Juniors John Moriconi (5-11, 180), Adam Clark (5-10, 165), Jedd Seely (5-10, 190), Glenn Harrison (5-9, 160), and Harvey Scruggs (5-10, 190) make the offensive line one of the most competitive position groups.

Defensive Line

Sighel and junior Scott Kunshek (5-11, 170) are returning starters at defensive end. Moriconi and sophomore Jordan Niegsch (6-0, 180) got some valuable playing time in the trenches last fall. J.P. Talent (6-1, 195) and newcomer Zeb Mingori (6-0, 210) are promising junior classmates who could earn their way into the starting lineup. Miller calls Mingori one of the hardest workers on the squad.

Linebackers

Chad Ulepich could turn out to be the most physical linebacker in the league. Scruggs is a strong candidate to fill another linebacker position. Seely is projected to be a nose-guard, but he might have to help out with the linebacking corps where he saw action in '95. With a lack of exceptional speed in the secondary, the linebackers will have to be sure tacklers.

Defensive Backs

Senior Dusty Hafner (5-10, 160) helped lead a defensive unit that gave up a stingy 12 points a game last season. Hafner is primed to be the leader of the secondary. Jameson, Zafuta and Chiappetti will battle for playing time with senior Heston Hamm (5-9, 160) and juniors Ryan Bevins (6-4, 175) and Tad Johnson (5-10, 190).



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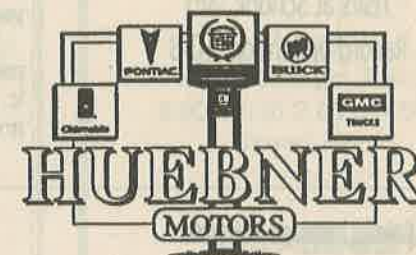
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Galena *bulldogs*

Conference: C.N.C.

Classification: 3A

District: 7

Head Coach: Blaise Bauer

Years at School: 3rd

Record at School: 10-8

1996 Galena Bulldogs Schedule

September

5	Picher	Home
13	Caney Valley	Away
20	Girard	Home
27	Colgan	Away

October

4	Erie	Home
11	Southeast	Away
18	Northeast	Home
25	Baxter Springs	Home
31	Riverton	Away

1995 Overall Record: 4-5

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 9

Defensive Starters Returning: 9

Total Returning Lettermen: 13

JAY'S PREDICTION -- WIN 5, LOSE 4

The Bulldogs new look last year went beyond a change in the color of their jerseys. There's a new attitude inside the helmets of the Galena players. Blaise Bauer is patiently turning this program around in his third year as head coach.

"This team has a chance to be competitive if we come together," Bauer said. "We have to develop a positive tradition and that takes time. Overall, we are excited about this year's team."

With 18 starters returning for the '96 campaign, there is certainly reason to be ecstatic. However, the vast majority of those veterans are two way players, meaning that the Bulldogs will have to be well conditioned, and they will have to avoid injuries.

Bauer sees a new type of dedication from his players, and a new commitment from the administration at Galena High School.

"This team is made up of blue collar workers. They are more reserved than past teams and they just like getting down to business."

The business plan moves into action on the first Thursday when the Bulldogs play host to Picher, Oklahoma. That first game could set the tone for things to come. A hazardous journey through the CNC Conference follows beginning with Caney Valley, Girard and Colgan.

"The kids are much stronger physically, and they have a better understanding of the system," Bauer said. "If we can get off to a good start we'll be competitive."

Offensive Backs

Senior Dave Wells (6-1, 170) returns at quarterback for the Bulldogs. Junior Shane Brown (5-9, 160) will contend for the job in pre season drills. Brown was the team's leading rusher as a sophomore. Sophomore Jarrett Boyes (5-11, 155) is also a possibility under center. A trio of experienced running backs will compete. Eric Bellamy (5-9, 155) and Pernell Love (5-11, 180) are juniors. Josh Roberts (5-9, 150) is only a sophomore.

Receivers

Wells was a top receiver a year ago, if he doesn't earn the start at quarterback, he will be expected to make contributions as a pass catcher. Senior Shannon Halstrom (6-0, 160)

is a versatile tight end. Junior Kyle Thompson (5-10, 140) has better than average speed and could fit into the wide receiver corps along with junior Jared Jarvis. Sophomore Tony Hopkins (5-10, 165) is a developing tight end.

Offensive Line

Unlike the previous two seasons of Bauer's coaching tenure, the interior linemen are the strength of the team. Senior tackle Chris Loch (6-4, 260) is a choice specimen on the offensive line. Loch was a second team All-CNC selection as a junior. Bauer says Loch has been one of the hardest workers in the weight room and should be even better this fall. The other tackle spot will be manned by junior Teddy Bogle (6-3, 265). Center John Bidwell (5-11, 210) returns for his senior campaign after earning post-season honors last year. Marshall Watkins, Joshua Haase, and Josh Curry could be called upon to assume duty on the offensive front.

Defensive Line

Loch, Bogle and Bidwell will be the heart and sole of the defensive front too. Loch will line up at defensive end while Bogle and Bidwell play at tackle. Sophomore Adam Shetley (6-2, 185) will likely see plenty of playing time. Senior Kenny Youngblood (5-11, 195) gets high praise from the coaches as a top newcomer.

Linebackers

Holstrom, Bellamy and Love will bring experience and abandon to the linebacker unit. Bellemy returns as the Bulldogs second leading tackler. Depth will come from senior Nathan Ezell (5-10, 140) and sophomore Tony Hopkins (5-10, 165).

Defensive Backs

Sophomore Clint ward (5-9, 145) is one to watch at defensive back. Ward was a regular in his freshman season and has made great improvements in his techniques. Wells will be the leader of the relatively young secondary. Brown is another seasoned coverage man. Jeremy Ezell (5-10, 150) could be ready to contribute in his sophomore year. Classmates Brian Ford (5-10, 155) and Boyes (5-11, 155) are capable back ups.

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Girard *trojans*

Conference: C.N.C.

Classification: 4A

District: 7

Head Coach: Craig Crespino

Years at School: 5th

Record at School: 32-10

1996 Girard Trojans Schedule

September

5	Colgan	Away
13	Erle	Home
20	Galena	Away
27	Caney	Home

October

4	Riverton	Home
11	Baxter Springs	Away
18	Fort Scott	Home
25	Chanute	Away
31	Iola	Home

1995 Overall Record: 8-2

1995 Playoff Record: 0-1

Offensive Starters Returning: 4

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 37

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

Friday night in the fall is showtime, but if Girard wants to continue to be successful, Craig Crespino thinks most of his team's wins will be earned from Monday through Thursday.

"With a lack of starting experience, we need to develop our young players and get them lots of repetitions in practice," said Crespino.

"We must maintain a strong work ethic and improve day to day as well as week to week," the coach added.

Nine starters return along with 37 lettermen from an 8-2 team a year ago. Crespino believes it is essential for his team to continue to be fundamentally sound and put team goals ahead of individual accomplishments. Those two things must be nurtured on the practice field.

"We feel we have competition at every spot," Crespino said. Our players know that they will have to work very hard in practice in order to earn a starting role."

The Trojans must again endure a grueling CNC schedule. Girard opens the season on Thursday, September 5th in the annual showdown with Colgan. The Trojans don't have to clash with Frontenac this fall, but league championship contenders Riverton and Baxter Springs are scheduled back to back in early October before the start of district play against Fort Scott. Crespino calls district 7 one of the most difficult in the state in class 4A.

Offensive Backs

Senior Ben Niggeman (6-3, 195) is back for his third season as the

Trojans starting quarterback. Niggeman is the team's offensive juggernaut. He's accounted for more than 2,000 yards of offense in his career, throwing for 11 touchdowns and rushing for 15 more. The most impressive statistic for Niggeman is his win-loss record as the starting quarterback: 12 wins, just four losses. A pair of seniors will likely get the nod in the backfield. Brian Davied (5-10, 160) and Brandon Callanan (5-9, 160) matured immensely last fall and will help provide leadership. Juniors Scott Franklin (5-8, 140) and Nate George (5-8, 160), along with sophomore Jon Mein (6-3, 195), will push for playing time.

Receivers

Bryce McFarland (6-3, 200) makes a move from offensive tackle to tight end this year. The athletic senior was all-league as a lineman, but the coaching staff thinks he will be better utilized as a pass-catching threat. Seniors Wayne Barr (5-9, 165), Justin Free (5-9, 165) and Matt Wiley (6-0, 185) will battle for a starting spot at wide receiver. Juniors Darrin Ciezlerle (5-9, 150) and Jason Krensel (6-0, 155) are two more possibilities.

Offensive Line

Senior Mike Sisney (6-4, 240) could be a dominating player according to Crespino. Sisney returns after an injury in '95. Classmate Adam Blazic (5-10, 205) is football smart and experienced. Seniors Judd Pride (5-10, 205) and Jimmy Clark (6-3, 240) along with junior Eddie Fox (5-9, 185) will vie for a position in the trenches. There are plenty of other offensive lineman candidates, including sophomore projects Chris Owens (6-3, 185), Josh Crocker (6-3, 215) and Chad Frakes (6-2, 245).

Defensive Line

The Trojans could have the best two defensive ends in the league with McFarland and Sisney back in the fold. There is a large crop of underclassmen to choose from to fill the other voids. Pride is a contender along with juniors Jessie Niederklein (6-2, 170), Richard Lane (5-11, 175), Brad Clutter (5-11, 170), Joe Landreth (5-10, 200) and Quinton Cramer (5-10, 200).

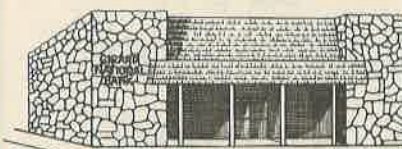
Linebackers

Blazic and Callanan will head up the strong linebacker unit. Blazic was the second leading tackler last fall and will likely play inside. Callanan is a skilled outside linebacker with two years of starting experience on his resume. A large pool of juniors will contend for a linebacker spot, including Mike Benso (5-8, 160), Nate Brackett (6-2, 170) and Franklin.

Defensive Backs

Niggeman and Davied could be called on to play 48 minutes of football every game. Both have starting experience in the secondary. Davied returns as the Trojans' top interception man. Junior Richard Lopez (5-11, 185) is Girard's starting punter and could make contributions as a defensive back. Barr, Wiley, and junior Gabe Evans (6-0, 150) could also be factors.

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Humboldt *cubs*

Conference: Tri-Valley
Classification: 3-A
District: 6
Head Coach: Don Walburn
Years at School: 21st
Record at School: 108-80

1996 Humboldt Bears Schedule

September		
6	Noodlesha	Away
13	Fredonia	Home
20	Altoona-Midway	Home
27	Cherryvale	Away
October		
4	Eureka	Home
11	Burlington	Away
18	Jayhawk-Linn	Away
25	Central Heights	Away
31	Yates Center	Home

1995 Overall Record: 5-4
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 4
Defensive Starters Returning: 3
Total Returning Lettermen: 11

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

Humboldt head coach Don Walburn says "From tackle to tackle, we will be the biggest we have been in quite some time." And Walburn should know. He has been at Humboldt for the past 31 years, the last 21 as head coach.

Walburn will be seeing something different this time around, though. Fredonia is on the Bears schedule for the first time in 20 years as a result of the resurrection of the Tri-Valley league and Walburn expects the Yellowjackets to be the team to beat. He picks Neodesha to finish runner-up and since Humboldt opens the season against those two teams, Walburn knows it'll be important to get things off on the right foot. "A good start can mean great things for a team," Walburn, said.

The Bears will spend training camp looking for some players to step forward and become team leaders. Only five seniors are back from last year's team and they will be counted on to keep the club in focus during the first few weeks of the campaign.

Offensive Backs

The skill positions are Walburn's biggest concerns as he prepares to open his third decade at Humboldt. Junior Jared Gant (6-0, 170) will get the nod at quarterback and needs to have a big year in order for the

Bears to be successful. Junior Mark Bauer (6-1, 185), the fastest player on the team, will see a lot of time at running back along with senior Beto Melendez (5-6, 190).

Receivers

John Wilhite (5-10, 150) has been given the "good hands" seal of approval from Coach Walburn. The senior will play the biggest role and catch most of the passes for the Bears in 1996. Junior tight end David Hart (6-0, 150) also earns high praise from his bench boss.

Offensive Line

The Bears don't appear to have any problems with depth along either line. Senior Matt Lower (6-0, 205) was a 2nd team all-conference selection at guard a year ago. Other starters returning are classmate Russell Downey (5-8, 170) at guard and junior Robert Owens (6-2, 225) at tackle. Walburn describes Downey as "quick and tough" and calls Owens "big and strong" but needing to become more mentally tough. Other lettermen waiting in the wings include senior John Hodgden (5-11, 190) and junior Jason Julich (5-10, 220).

Two newcomers to keep an eye on are junior tackle Luke Fitzimmons (5-11, 200) and sophomore center Michael Vannice (6-2, 230).

Defensive Line

Many of the players on the O-Line are interchangeable with those on the D-Line with one possible exception. Gant, the quarterback, is expected to pull double-duty at defensive end. Look for junior Chris Woods (5-10, 150) to see plenty of playing time on the defensive line as well.

Linebackers

Walburn is excited about the players he has returning at linebacker. He says Melendez is a tough middle linebacker and thinks Lower can develop into a fine player at that position. Walburn also likes what he sees from Julich. "Jason Julich loves to play the game," Walburn said. "We need a big year from him."

Defensive Back

Junior Jason Bauer (5-7, 155) is back to bolster the Bears secondary. Walburn says Bauer has the most athletic "savvy" of any of his returning starters. Wilhite is also back starting at D-back his junior year while Mark Bauer will also be counted on to contribute.

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Independence *bulldogs*

Conference: SEK Upper Division
 Classification: 5A
 District: 4
 Head Coach: Don Simmons
 Years at School: 6th
 Record at School: 30-16

1996 Independence Bulldogs Schedule

September		
6	Washburn Rural	Away
13	Fort Scott	Home
20	Chanute	Home
27	Labette County	Away
October		
4	Parsons	Home
11	Wichita Heights	Away
18	Pittsburg	Away
25	Arkansas City	Home
November		
1	Coffeyville	Away

1995 Overall Record: 8-2
 1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
 Offensive Starters Returning: 5
 Defensive Starters Returning: 5
 Total Returning Lettermen: 18

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 3, LOSE 6

Question for Independence head coach Don Simmons: "How do you replace quarterback Jay Alexander?"

The answer, very simply, "You don't."

Alexander has been lost to graduation after a brilliant career. The flashy quarterback and his senior classmates helped Simmons turn the Bulldogs program into a solid winning team. Alexander led Indy to a 28 and 6 record the past three seasons. Now, it's time for the Bulldogs to reload.

"We must find a quarterback that won't kill us," Simmons said bluntly.

If they do, the Bulldogs have enough quality returning starters (10) to stay competitive in the tough SEK Conference.

"The heart of this team will be the offensive line. We may be the biggest we've been with two starters returning and two more kids that have played a lot," Simmons added.

The offensive line will average 235 pounds across the middle. The group won't be pass blocking as often as they did with Alexander at the helm. Independence will return to the running game, and the offensive line will be a huge key if the Bulldogs want to have success.

Two long road trips are in store with away games in Topeka and Wichita on the schedule. The Bulldogs play two of the three district games on the road, and the home date comes against powerful Arkansas City.

Offensive Backs

There will be little time to groom the successor to Jay Alexander. The only prospect at quarterback on the pre-season roster is freshman Jeremy Simmons (5-9, 140). If Jeremy Simmons doesn't mature quickly,

the coaching staff may have to look for an athletic upperclassmen to make the change to signal caller. Senior running back lasece Lawrie (6-0, 185) is a returning starter who had his junior season cut short by an injury. Lawrie averaged more than 8 yards per carry and was the Bulldog's leading rusher in every game he played. Classmate Mark Denney (5-11, 175) is also a veteran running back. Denney is a good receiver out of the backfield, catching 33 passes for 259 yards last fall. Senior Jozee Thompson (5-11, 171) saw some playing time in the backfield and will be expected to be a main part of the offensive arsenal this year.

Receivers

If the Bulldogs can find somebody to throw the foot-

ball, senior wide receiver Tim Henderson (5-10, 174) has proven ability to catch it. Henderson had 39 receptions for 542 yards and five scores in '95. The all around athlete was an All-State selection. Junior Jason Simpson (6-0, 182) was a standout defensive back a year ago and will contribute to the receiving corps this season. Fellow junior Danny Julian (5-11, 174) and senior Sam Blackard (5-9, 169) will provide depth. Senior Graham Sikes (6-0, 178) and juniors Chris Confer (6-0, 191), Josh McClain (6-1, 200), and Luke Emmot (6-0, 180), will vie for a starting job at tight end.

Offensive Line

The bulky group of offensive linemen is led by senior guard Ron Burke (6-1, 221) and junior tackle Aaron Heckman (6-3, 249). Burke was versatile enough to line up as a blocking fullback at times last fall. Simmons thinks Heckman is one of the premier offensive linemen in the region. Support will come from senior Justin Bays (6-0, 215) and juniors Jed Newkirk (6-3, 244) and Nick McCollam (6-2, 242). Senior Ryan Wittum (6-2, 266) is another gigantic prospect up front.

Defensive Line

Lawrie is back as a regular at defensive end. The senior will use good speed and aggressiveness to help lead the defensive line. Bays, Heckman, McClain, McCollam, and Emmot are all short on experience but have good skills.

Linebackers

Denney is an even better defensive player. The senior is coming off an All-SEK junior season at linebacker when he intercepted four passes. He will be flanked by returning starter Stormy Munkirs (5-11, 186). Burke and Confer both saw spot duty at linebacker in '95 and could be key players in the defensive scheme this fall.

Defensive Backs

Thompson and Simpson made big plays in the secondary last season. Both return with a good understanding of the game. Henderson is a probable two way player, the junior had three interceptions last year and is a scoring threat after any turnover. Senior Matt Spencer (5-10, 180) was a contributor as a junior and could develop into a defensive starter. Classmate Peter Edwards (5-8, 149) is another strong candidate in the secondary. Underclassmen projects include sophomores Matt Howe (5-8, 150) and Wayne Briggans (5-9, 157) and freshmen Raymond Lockett (5-10, 161) and Derrick Darkis (5-10, 159).



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Iola Mustangs

Conference: SEK Lower Division
 Classification: 4A
 District: 7
 Head Coach: Kent Thompson
 Years at School: 2nd
 Record at School: 5-4

1996 Iola Mustangs Schedule

September		
6	Anderson County	Away
13	Columbus	Home
20	Lafayette County	Away
27	Burlington	Home
October		
4	Santa Fe Trail	Home
11	Parsons	Away
18	Chanute	Away
25	Fort Scott	Home
31	Girard	Away

1995 Overall Record: 5-4
 1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
 Offensive Starters Returning: 8
 Defensive Starters Returning: 9
 Total Lettermen Returning: 24

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 6, LOSE 3

Iola fans won't have any trouble recognizing the 1996 Mustangs. The nucleus consists basically of the same cast of players that have been on display the last two years. Coach Kent Thompson welcomes back 11 seniors who have been starters since their sophomore seasons.

That's a big reason why Thompson picks his own club to come out on top in the SEK Lower Division in 1996. Iola is going to have to go through Upper Division member Fort

Scott if they hope to make it to the post-season. The Tigers dropped down from class 5A and landed in the 'Stangs district along with Chanute and Girard. It should make for one of the most highly competitive districts in the entire state.

Offensive Back

Speaking of competition, there should be plenty of it in the Mustangs backfield at the start of the season. Coach Thompson and his assistants Pat Lonergan, Troy Adams and Greg Ptacek head into camp with a few question marks at the position. Although, they do have some players with starting experience returning.

Senior Josh Groves (6-0, 180) will handle the play calling in 1996. He'll be flanked by a pair of classmates Craig Yocham (5-10, 175) and Dan Isaacson (5-10, 175). The fullback spot will go to Hans Krohn (6-3, 220).

Receivers

While the wide receiver position appears to be wide open, Thompson does have a very capable athlete to serve as his number one tight end. Ryan Lonergan (6-3, 230) pos-

sesses the size, speed and catching ability to make some big plays this year. He has also caught the attention of his share of NCAA Division One and Two coaches.

Offensive Line

The O-Line is shaping up to be Iola's biggest strength heading into the campaign for two enormous reasons: Mike Baker and Mike Karr. Baker is a big senior at 6', 245 pounds. Karr is a HUGE junior at 6'2", 330 pounds. The size of the duo is an extreme rarity at the High School level. Both need to have even bigger seasons, though for the Mustangs to be successful this fall.

Defensive Line

Same story, different verse. Baker and Karr will play big roles as will Lonergan, who will work from the end position. The trio average a whopping 268 pounds and figure to throw that weight around quite a bit while getting after people this season.

Linebackers

This should be another strong point for the Mustangs in 1996. Look for Yocham and Krohn to set the tempo and provide the senior leadership. Krohn, like Lonergan, has caught the attention of his share of college coaches as well.

Defensive Backs

When Groves isn't calling offensive signals he'll be overseeing the action from the defensive secondary. He'll be joined at DB by Isaacson and whoever steps forward during camp. Thompson is concerned about the lack of depth at the position but has a large group of returning lettermen to work with.

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Jayhawk Linn *jayhawks*

Conference: 3 Rivers League

Classification: 3A

District: 6

Head Coach: undecided at press time

Years at School: n/a

Record at School: n/a

1996 Jayhawk-Linn Jayhawks Schedule

September

6	Waverly	Home
13	Pleasanton	Home
20	Marmaton Valley	Home
27	Uniontown	Away

October

4	Piper	Away
11	Pomona	Away
18	Humboldt	Home
25	Yates Center	Away
31	Central Heights	Home

1995 Overall Record: 4-5

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 6

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Lettermen Returning: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION – WIN 1, LOSE 8

Jayhawk-Linn may be the biggest mystery of all area teams heading into the 1996 season. Not only to their opponents, but to the Jayhawks themselves. Ray Harvey's departure after one year as head coach left a void that still hadn't been filled by press time.

Rex Bollinger, an assistant at Jayhawk-Linn the past two years, didn't think that was going to present a huge problem for the Hawks, though. "The seniors have already been through two systems. They are very resilient with a lot of football savvy. There is some good leadership there," says Bollinger. "The players know the veer and power offenses pretty well. Unless the new coach comes in with a totally new system, they should know what is going on."

The seniors are going to play a big role this season. Jayhawk-Linn figures to be a young team and the juniors and sophomores are going to be counted on to step in and do their part. A strong freshman class of about 10 players will also have to contribute. "We are young, but it is nothing we can't overcome," says Bollinger.

Offensive Back

The Jayhawks are going to be starting from scratch in their backfield this season. All of the starters from last year are gone. Aaron Dennis (5-9, 170) did see a lot of playing time, however and may wind up being the workhorse. The Willard twins will be expected to be a big part of the offense as well after seeing playing time as freshmen. Bollinger

says Jeremy and Joey (5-8, 170) hit the line hard and like to make their own holes along the way. Freshman Justin Daniels (5-11, 170) could make an immediate impact.

Junior Daniel Vaughn (5-8, 170) is the incumbent at quarterback after serving as signal caller for half of last season. Sophomore Grant Simons (6-2, 190) will push for playing time, though, after leading the Junior Varsity in 1995.

Receivers

Roland Thomas (5-11, 150) may be the most exciting player on the Jayhawks team because of

his ability to make things happen. "If you needed him to come up with a big play he was there to do it," Bollinger pointed out. The senior speedster proved that last year by running back a couple of kicks for touchdowns.

Sophomore tight end Jesse Barr (6-2, 210) also has excellent hands and has the size to make things happen along the line as well. Senior Mike Parker (6-3, 210) should see plenty of playing time at tight end again also.

Offensive Line

There won't be anything wrong with the offensive and defensive lines in Mound City this fall. The Jayhawks have plenty of size to go around. The four starters returning average over 220 pounds. Senior guards Don John Epps (5-8, 260) and Chris Holt (5-9, 190) started every game last season. The same goes for senior tackle Sam Shadden (6-2, 220). Sophomore Chris Otto (6-2, 225) will be back at the other tackle after serving as a reserve a year ago. The center position is still up for grabs.

Defensive Line

It's basically the same cast of characters as on the offensive line. Epps will be back at nose tackle and Shadden will man his tackle post again. Holt and Otto will also be expected to contribute defensively. Sophomore Matt Johnson (6-2, 210) should step in and see action on both sides of the ball as well.

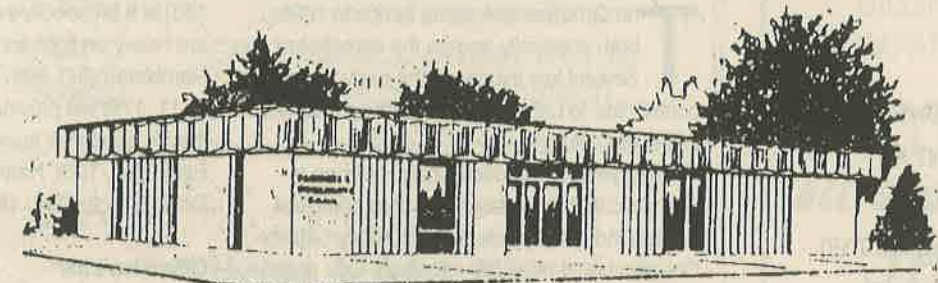
Linebackers

The Willard brothers will serve as bookends at outside linebacker again this year after starting at those spots their freshman season. But after you get past Parker, who also saw playing time at linebacker, the position is wide open. The Hawks will be looking for someone to step forward right away.

Defensive Backs

Drew Wonderly (5-11, 160) started every game at cornerback last season as a freshman and, according to Bollinger, will be a valuable asset this year. Other returners in the secondary include Vaughn at corner and Thomas at free safety. Freshman Jeremiah Randall (6-2, 155) could step in and play right away.

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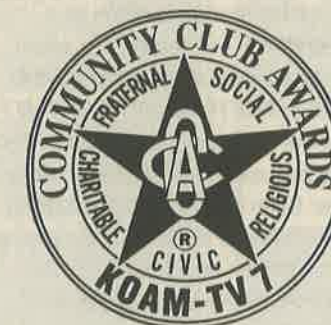
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Labette County *grizzlies*

Conference: SEK Lower Division
 Classification: 4A
 District: 8
 Head Coach: Craig Hartman
 Years at School: 3rd
 Record at School: 3-15

1996 Labette County Grizzlies

September

5	Fredonia	Away
13	Chanute	Away
20	Iola	Home
27	Independence	Home

October

4	Fort Scott	Home
11	Coffeyville	Away
18	Columbus	Away
25	Neesha	Home
31	Parsons	Away

1995 Overall Record: 0-9
 1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
 Offensive Starters Returning: 6
 Defensive Starters Returning: 7
 Total Returning Lettermen: 16

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 3, LOSE 6

The Grizzlies took some lumps in 1995, both physically and on the scoreboard. Several key injuries in the early season contributed to Labette County getting skunked in the win column.

Third year head coach Craig Hartman is optimistic that this season will be a complete turnaround. With 13 starters returning, Labette County should be vastly improved. One positive about being forced to play underclassmen last year is the fact that the Grizzlies' junior class is now very experienced.

Hartman is rallying his team by using the words of President Calvin Coolidge:

"Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with great talent. Genius will not, unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination are omnipotent."

The 16 returning lettermen have already shown persistence by working hard over the summer and by checking out gear this pre-season. If the effort continues, the Grizzlies should have a chance to be competitive every Friday night.

Offensive Backs

Quarterback Justin McCarty (6-0, 165) was thrust into action as a sophomore last season. His experience should pay dividends this fall. Senior Tyler Harrell (5-11, 160) will

compete for the job. Junior tailback Justin Bebb (5-8, 150) is perhaps the most athletic player on the roster. Bebb was the Grizzlies leading receiver in '95. He'll be looked to in the ground attack this fall. Darren Babcock (5-11, 168) brings senior leadership to the backfield. Hartman will seek some depth from junior fullback Joe Treiber (5-7, 190) along with some other underclassmen.

Receivers

Junior Adam Phillips (5-9, 155) is a returning starting flanker. Sophomore Sam Ellis (5-10,

155) is a prospective contributor. The Grizzlies are heavy on tight ends. Senior Jason Hambleton (6-0, 200) is a veteran. Jeremy Helt (5-11, 175) will provide senior leadership, and there's good size from underclassmen Charlie Black (6-0, 190), Nathan Clay 6-3, 170) and Drew Ricketts (6-4, 185).

Offensive Line

Two big seniors will pave the way on the offensive line. Toby Byrd (6-0, 235) and Josh Fiscus (6-0, 245) both started last year. Senior guard Toby Byrd (5'11, 190) saw spot duty. Sophomore center Matt McConnell (5-8, 180) is a likely regular.

Defensive Line

The defensive tackle spots look to be solid with seniors Jeremy Mustain (5-11, 245) and San Vail (5-11, 200) ready to build on their starting experience. Junior Matt Gilpin (6-0, 275) could clog the middle as well. Senior Ryan Good (6-0, 200) is a veteran defensive end. Ricketts and Clay will fight for the other spot. Hartman might have a difficult time keeping Byrd and Fiscus off the field. The two senior offensive linemen are liable to see action defensively.

Linebackers

Hambleton is back after finishing third on the team in tackles last fall. Chris Martin (5-9, 170) returns for his senior year at an inside linebacker spot. Big plays are expected out of junior Matt Horton (5-10, 175) who missed most of last year with an injury.

Defensive Backs

Despite their youth, Hartman considers the crop of defensive backs one of the stronger position groups on the field. Once again this year, Bebb will play on both sides of the football. Phillips will contend for a regular spot at the other corner. McCarty was the Grizzlies leading tackler at safety, and even though the junior will likely be playing quarterback, he's too good of a player to keep on the sideline on defense. Senior Evan Osgood (5-7, 140) has plenty of potential after playing a situational role in '95. Ellis could find a spot in the defensive backfield if he continues to progress.

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Neodesha *blue streaks*

Conference: Tri-Valley
Classification: 4A
District: 8
Head Coach: Rusty Arnold
Years at School: 2nd
Record at School: 5-4

1996 Neodesha Blue Streaks Schedule

September

8	Humboldt	Home
13	Baxter Springs	Away
20	Eureka	Home
27	Fredonia	Away

October

4	Cherryvale	Home
11	Yates Center	Away
18	Parsons	Away
25	Labetto County	Away
31	Columbus	Home

1995 Overall Record: 5-4
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 8
Defensive Starters Returning: 8
Total Lettermen Returning: 22

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 3

The Blue Streaks have the potential to be a very good football team in 1996. They have a large senior class coming back with a lot of experience in the offensive backfield. But as any coach will tell you, potential doesn't win football games. The Streaks still have to get it done on the field. "We are quick and aggressive," Head Coach Randy Arnold said. "We have a bunch of kids who don't back down. Our size may not be what it might need to be, but we have a lot of heart."

Neodesha returns almost all of their skill position players in 1996, but they may be even more exciting on defense. "I look forward to our entire defense. We like to swarm and punish people," Arnold said.

While Arnold and his assistants, Brian Masoner, Jim Arnold and Scott Stein are familiar with their players, they have a lot to learn about their opponents in 1996. There are five new teams on Neodesha's schedule including all three district foes.

Offensive Back

A big reason for Coach Arnold's optimism lies in the offensive backfield and the one-two attack of twin brothers Robbie and Ritchie Morrison (5-9, 155). Both have been starting since their freshman seasons. Ritchie will get the call at quarterback and the first guy he'll be looking to hand off to will be Robbie.

The latter Morrison stepped up big in district play last year after playing wide receiver most of the season and Arnold is expecting him to do it again. "Robbie is one of those players that could go where ever you need him," Arnold said.

Look for junior Jake Purdunn (5-11, 170) to see plenty of action at running back this fall as well.

Receivers

There will be a real battle for the starting jobs at wide receiver this fall. Arnold says he has six players that can play at any time. He expects to take

advantage of his receivers more this season as well. Seniors Jimmie Morrison (6-0, 180), Brian Mitchell (5-11, 160) and junior Chris White (5-8, 150) have the inside track right now after getting a couple of starts last year.

Senior Jeremy Grogan (6-1, 190) and junior Clint Schafer (6-0, 180) will probably have a few balls thrown their way at the tight end position.

Offensive Line

Mention the Blue Streaks offensive line and Arnold's eyes light up. "I think we have three of the premier guards and center around," Arnold praised. "They can stack up against anybody."

Senior Bryson Basore (6-1, 180) and junior Scott Jensen (6-0, 170) are the guards. Junior Justin Newland (6-0, 175) will line up at center. Senior Charles Fenech (5-11, 190), juniors Kendall Schultz (5-9, 165) and Eric Ball (6-1, 22) and sophomore Jamie Tallman (5-11, 180) will all be counted on to contribute.

Defensive Line

Mickey Carpenter (6-1, 260) didn't waste any time breaking into the starting ranks last year as a freshman. He'll be joined on the D-line by Newland, Grogan and Jimmie Morrison. The man in the middle at nose guard should be either Purdunn or Ball.

Linebackers

Scott and Bryson are back to anchor the line-backing corps. Senior Justin Huquenin (6-1, 180) will also be counted on to make a big impact. Several other players are ready to step in including Jensen, Basore and sophomores Tyson Carpenter (5-11, 180) and Tallman.

Defensive Backs

All of the starters are back including the Morrison twins. Robbie was an all-league selection last year at cornerback and Ritchie earned his share of accolades for his work at safety. Mitchell will man the other cornerback position.

"If our kids play up to their potential we'll have a good season," Arnold concluded.

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Northeast vikings

Conference: CNC
Classification: 3A
District: 7

Head Coach: Terry Phillips
Years at School: 1st
Record at School: 0-0

The Vikings will have to over-achieve to be effective this season. They have a new coaching staff and just ten returning lettermen. Head coach Terry Phillips realizes the challenge. "We will be a very young team relying on help from the underclassmen," Phillips said.

seniors Josh Malcolm and Chris Doyle.

Defensive Line

The defensive line will definitely have to develop quickly. Every position is up for grabs. Fields is a likely starter. He is one of the few players with varsity defensive line experience.

Linebackers

Seniors Malcolm and Craig Walker will anchor the linebackers. They return to Vikings defense as starters. Look for Randy Walker to Doyle to compete for starting positions with the linebacking corps.

Defensive Backs

This might be the most experienced part of the Vikings team. They return three starters in the secondary. Seniors Jimmy Walker and Warford will be teamed with Nelson to lead the defensive backfield. Junior Bret Garrett will have to help out as well on pass coverage.

Offensive Backs

Returning starting quarterback Jimmy England (5-10, 170) will have to use his experience and maturity to lead the younger players. Sophomore Marcel Nelson (5-6, 135) has varsity experience, but at defensive back. He will have to use his speed to convert to running back.

Wide Receivers

Look for Jason Warford (5-10, 185) to handle most of the receiving duties. He is the only returning starter at the position. The young players will have to make an immediate impact. The team needs to find a couple more players that can catch the ball on a regular basis.

Offensive Line

This is another position that will be young. Only junior Russell Horning (6-1, 250) returns as a starter. Denny Fields (6-3, 170) has varsity experience at tight end. Other players that will battle for starting spots are

1996 Northeast Vikings Schedule

September

6	Uniontown	Away
13	Colgan	Home
20	Southeast	Away
27	Frontenac	Home

October

4	Caney Valley	Away
11	Erle	Away
18	Galena	Home
25	Riverton	Home
31	Baxter Springs	Away

1995 Overall Record: 1-8

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 5

Defensive Starters Returning: 6

Total Returning Lettermen: 10

JAY'S PREDICTION -- WIN 3, LOSE 6

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Oswego *indians*

Conference: Mineral Belt League
Classification: 8 man Division 1

District: 2

Head Coach: Rod Wittmer

Years at School: 1st

Record at School: 0-0

1996 Oswego Indians Schedule

September

6	Hartford	Home
13	Cedar Vale	Away
20	Amoret, MO	Home
27	Gridley	Away

October

4	S. Coffeyville	Home
11	Thayer	Away
18	Chetopa	Home
25	St. Paul	Away
31	Elk Valley	Away

1995 Overall Record: 1-8

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 3

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 10

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 5

Rod Wittmer thinks that he has stumbled upon the fountain of youth. The first year head coach in Oswego says that the Indians youth is actually advantageous.

"Youth is not often considered a strength, but this team is full of energy and ready to work at anything they are asked to do, with full effort," Wittmer said.

The Indians do have some senior leadership, still, about two-thirds of this team will be made up of freshmen and sophomores.

"The seniors are hungry. They want to prove that they will be strong in leadership and be able to push the team to give all they have got," Wittmer adds.

Another positive for this 8-man football program can be seen in the Indians weight room attendance this summer. An 11 week program had an average of 21 of the 30 players pumping iron.

Oswego has set a realistic goal of reaching the .500 mark this year. If the Indians can mature in the early part of the season, they will be competitive in a tough district with Chetopa and St. Paul.

Offensive Backs

Senior quarterback Bryan Back (5-9, 175) returns as the starting signal caller. Back is a gifted athlete who was the Indians leading rusher last fall. Sophomore Brett Peine (6-0, 155)

is another quarterback who has big potential.

Two sophomore lettermen will handle the running back duties. Brad Napier (5-11, 150) and David York (5-11, 165) will get the majority of the carries.

Receivers

Tight end Andy Stammer (6-3, 185) sat out the '95 season, but the rangy junior has returned to the program this year. Wittmer will go on a talent hunt in August to find some quality underclassmen to round out the receiving corps. This will be a high priority with the passing game an

important part of the 8-man offensive attack.

Offensive Line

This position group shapes up to be one of the strongest on the Indians team. Senior guard Mike Brown (5-9, 180) and junior Adam Minor (5-10, 200) are quality returning starters. The sophomore combo of Kyle McCombs (6-1, 170) and Trevor Addis (5-10, 185) saw some action up front in their freshman season. Other candidates to earn a start in the trenches are junior Deke Strickland (5-8, 175) and sophomores Derek Taylor (5-8, 170) and Eric Wertz (6-1, 270). Strickland is another player who returns after sitting out last fall.

Defensive Line

Most of the interior linemen who play offense will be expected to contribute on the defensive front as well. Minor was a two-way starter as a sophomore and is likely to pull double duty again this season. Look for Addis, Stammer, Strickland, Taylor and Wertz to compete for the other spots on the defensive line.

Linebackers

Brown demonstrated outstanding linebacker skills in his junior season. The Indians top defensive player will have to lead the unit again this fall. In addition to his quarterbacking duties, Back will also likely start at linebacker. Depth comes from the sophomore class, with McCombs, Napier and York all competing for playing time on the second line of defense.

Defensive Backs

The secondary is sound with starting safety Matt Chayer (5-9, 125) and starting corner Tony Cavitt (5-6, 135) returning. Chayer is a senior and Cavitt is a junior. Both have the ability to stop the big play against 8-man attacks. Peine is likely to find his niche at the other cornerback. Wittmer will be scanning the large group of underclassmen for some other talented defensive backs.

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Parsons vikings

Conference: SEK

Classification: 4A

District: 8

Head Coach: Charlie Nally

Years at School: 16th

Record at School: n/a

1996 Parsons Vikings Schedule

September

6	Pittsburg	Away
13	Coffeyville	Home
20	Fort Scott	Away
27	Chanute	Home

October

4	Independence	Away
11	Iola	Home
18	Neodesha	Home
25	Columbus	Away
31	Labette County	Home

1995 Overall Record: 5-4

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 7

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 16

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 4

It is a common belief among coaches that it takes less time for a defensive unit to gel than it does for an offensive unit. Charlie Nally is hoping that there is some truth to that mindset. Parsons is loaded offensively, with seven starters returning. The primary concern is on defense where just a pair of regulars are back for the 1996 campaign. "We must rebuild our defense. Especially in the secondary and at defensive end," Nally said.

"This team works hard and the players have the right attitude towards competition. They are goal setters," added the Vikings coach of 15 years.

The first goal is to beat Pittsburg. Parsons opens the season on the road against the Purple Dragons. Nally says it's critical that the defensive unit develops quickly to have a chance in the first game, and in the early part of the season.

Offensive Backs

Shaun Hill (6-3, 185) is back after gaining some valuable experience as a sophomore starting quarterback. Hill is rangy and throws the ball well. Nally and his staff will need to find an able back-up. Junior Zac Nally (6-1, 180) will be counted on to lead the ground attack. Senior William Stringfellow (5-11, 165) and junior lettermen, Derek Pierce (6-0, 170) and Tremayne Darkis (5-9,

180) have plenty of potential at running back. Junior newcomers Charlie Perez (6-0, 185), and Adam Merrell (5-10, 170) will be competing for playing time.

Receivers

The Vikings will look towards senior tight end Jeremy Salisbury (6-2, 205) to provide leadership among the skill position players. Parsons is thin at the wide receiver spot. Junior Kevin Brownell (5-10, 150) could emerge to be a major contributor, but the

coaching staff will need more support from the crop of underclassmen.

Offensive Line

The foundation of the offensive line returns with senior center Ross Hetlinger (6-0, 205) leading the corps. Senior guards Chris Minor (6-0, 245), and Matt Huebner (6-0, 215) and senior tackle Wyant May (5-11, 220) are all seasoned veterans up front. Junior Chris Jacquinot (5-9, 175) plays bigger than his size. Senior Barney Pontious (5-10, 205) and junior Corbett Boss (6-0, 230) will be expected to make contributions.

Defensive Line

The defensive line will have to excel in the early season as the secondary develops. Fortunately for the Vikings, seniors Spencer Cramer (6-0, 210), and Rick Holsinger (5-10, 230) are back as returning starters. Junior Dustin Scott (6-2, 260) was a role player last fall, and could mature into an impact player. The top defensive ends are senior Mark Birmingham (5-11, 165) and junior Mike Ramsey (5-11, 160).

Linebackers

Senior Mark Lee (5-9, 170) is back after a productive off season. Hetlinger is a fundamentally sound tackler and will play two ways. Those two seniors will have to perform well on Friday nights, and they'll have to tutor some of the young players in practice during the week. The Vikings depth at linebacker is an area that will get plenty of attention during pre-season drills.

Defensive Backs

Pierce and junior Chas Thompson (5-8, 140) will have to rise to the challenge of filling the voids in the secondary. With limited experience, the defensive backs could be a target of opposing offenses in the early season. Junior Brad Bartelli (5-9, 160) has shown promise of evolving into a starting defensive back.

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Pittsburg *purple dragons*

Conference: SEK Upper Division

Classification: 5A

District: 4

Head Coach: Larry Garman

Years at School: 32nd

Record at School: 231-76-5

1996 Pittsburg Purple Dragons Schedule

September		
6	Parsons	Home
13	Webb City	Home
20	Blue Valley	Away
27	Parkview	Home
October		
4	Carthage	Away
11	Fort Scott	Away
18	Independence	Home
25	Coffeyville	Home
November		
1	Arkansas City	Away

1995 Overall Record: 7-2

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 2

Defensive Starters Returning: 1

Total Returning Lettermen: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 3

After 31 years as head coach at Pittsburg High School, Larry Garman has seen every possible obstacle. The veteran mentor has also learned to overcome every possible obstacle. With that in mind, Purple Dragon fans should not be worried at the fact that the 1996 team has just three starting players back.

"We have a close knit, hardworking group of players," Garman said. "We are very inexperienced in some positions, but this group does have an excellent attitude."

Attitude could mean everything this fall as the Dragons try to reload. The off-season conditioning program was as intense as ever, and Garman's troops have made tremendous improvements in speed, quickness and strength.

The lack of experience on the field will be compensated for on the sideline and in the press box. Garman's staff of assistants is without question the most experienced group of coaches that has stayed intact as a unit in the entire region. Dennis Watson, Mike Darlington, Merle Clark, Mark Bolinger, Ben Bernhardt, Lee Brunetti, and Bryan Mahnken will find a way to transform this youthful group into competitors.

While the experience in the lineup is off par from years past, the quality of opponents is not. Garman hopes his team can get off to a fast start with three out of the first four games at home. One huge hurdle in that span comes in week-two against rival Webb City. A non-conference test in Carthage follows, with a game against highly regarded Fort Scott coming in week-six. The district competition

includes matches with Independence, Coffeyville and Arkansas City.

The Purple Dragons should have no problem in getting motivated for the Independence game. The Bulldogs handed Pittsburg a disappointing loss last October to knock them out of the post-season.

Offensive Backs

Junior Dane Arck (5-11, 160) inherits the quarterback position at Pittsburg High. Arck performed well in spot duty last fall. Junior Josh Lawson (6-2, 200) is one of the few returning starters. Garman expects the big fullback to continue to improve. Seniors Chris Pryor (5-9,

150) and Joe Blundell (5-9, 165) have shown good ability at the junior varsity level and will be counted on to contribute. Doug Pickering (6-1, 175) is a junior with versatility. Classmate Jared Garrow (6-1, 165) and sophomore Jeremy Derringer (5-10, 180) will provide depth at the running back positions.

Receivers

The Dragons are likely to employ a conservative passing attack. Senior tight end Travis Akins (5-10, 170) will assume a leadership role among the pass catchers, while junior Neil Moore (6-1, 175) will be asked to make blocking his top priority.

Offensive Line

Senior Kyle Broyles (6-1, 240) returns as Pittsburg's premier lineman. Broyles was an all-SEK selection as a junior. Seniors Jud Horning (6-1, 230) and Mike Walters (6-2, 210) have limited experience, but good work ethics and should step into starting roles. A key to the success of the offensive unit will be the continued development of juniors Mark Broyles (6-3, 235) and Rowdy Susnik (6-2, 215).

Defensive Line

Kyle Broyles will be the main force on the defensive front at noseguard. Senior defensive end Shane Collins (6-3, 220) is another veteran to be reckoned with. Pickering is a leading candidate at the other end. Eric Munsell (6-0, 220) has worked hard to add 20 pounds to his frame since his junior year. Garman and his staff will have to scour the crop of young players to find help on the defensive line.

Linebackers

Lawson doubles as a hard hitting linebacker. Senior Drew Polen (6-2, 155) makes the transition from defensive back to linebacker after proving to be physical enough to initiate contact on every play. Juniors Andy Klekacz (5-10, 180) and Jeff Untereker (6-2, 185) have honed their skills at the junior varsity level and are considered to be potential starters this year.

Defensive Backs

Depth and experience in the secondary is a major concern for Garman and his staff. Pryor could figure to be a regular at defensive back along with athletic sophomore Adam Meier (6-0, 170). The defensive backfield offers any young, skill player the opportunity to earn a spot on the roster.

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Riverton *rams*

Conference: C.N.C.

Classification: 3A

District: 7

Head Coach: Doug Buckmaster

Years at School: 2nd

Record at School: 9-3

1996 Riverton Rams Schedule

September

6	Southeast	Home
13	Frontenac	Home
20	Colgan	Away
27	Erle	Home

October

4	Girard	Away
11	Caney	Away
18	Baxter Springs	Home
25	Northeast	Away
31	Galena	Home

1995 Overall Record: 9-3

1995 Playoff Record: 2-1

Offensive Starters Returning: 4

Defensive Starters Returning: 4

Total Returning Lettermen: 30

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 3

The Riverton players are wearing new tee shirts around town this summer. The attire reads, "Attitude is Everything."

Indeed, this year's group has a winning attitude. The Rams have been a perennial power throughout the 90's and they are coming off an impressive 9-3 season. Still, second year head coach Doug Buckmaster would like to see his players make a slight change in their overall disposition.

"This team is laid back," Buckmaster said. "As coaches we know we will have 40 to 45 young men who will be a pleasure to work with, they are real coachable. We are concerned about their intensity level, and how hard they will go out and compete. If the intensity comes, we are capable of being right in the middle of things."

The Rams must replace 14 starters overall. Overall team speed is an asset. Experience along the offensive line is a worry.

"We have large numbers at the offensive line position, along with good size, but the majority of the players lack Friday night game experience," Buckmaster said. "We are one year away from having good depth up front."

The opener against Southeast is vital for the Rams. The unproven players will have to make improvements every week if Riverton wants to have a chance at a district championship. Buckmaster thinks that Baxter Springs is the pre-season favorite to be the front-runner in the CNC league. He's counting on his players to make significant progress before the Rams and Lions clash on October 18th in their first district contest.

Offensive Backs

Senior Brad Price (6-0, 175) steps in to replace Jason Vanlandingham at quarterback. Price did a three year apprenticeship under the All-CNC performer, and brings some good skills to the position. Price played one complete game last year, and threw for 200 yards and two touchdowns on an impressive 16 of 25 night. Senior Matt Sturgis (5-10, 175) is the most experienced ball carrier returning. The fullback averaged almost 8 yards per carry in a backup role last fall. Aaron Hight (5-10, 170) showed big play ability in his sophomore season when he rushed for 159 yards and three touchdowns on 25 carries. Hight also returned two kickoffs for scores. Junior Ryan Crotts (6-0, 170) will offer competition at fullback.

Receivers

Senior flanker Travis Weaver (6-0, 175) and junior wide receiver Andy Martin (5-11, 160) are back in the Rams arsenal. Weaver is a genuine threat after averaging nearly 30 yards per catch last season. Martin has exceptional hands and runs great routes. In addition, Buckmaster thinks that Martin could play some situational quarterback. Senior Josh Giesel (5-10, 165) is a veteran defensive star who will likely find a spot in the offensive unit as well. Collin Burrows (6-2, 200) alternated at tight end and offensive tackle last season. The senior is an outstanding technique blocker.

Offensive Line

Senior Brandon Thomas (6-4, 255) is being touted as the best lineman in the league. The three year starter has improved his strength and quickness during the off-season, and the coaching staff expects him to be very motivated. Senior Justin Eakes (6-1, 185) could help at guard. Deriek Durbin (6-2, 190) is a junior tackle who will be given a long look in summer practice. Juniors Adam Anderson (5-10, 180) and Justin Burrows (5-11, 185) along with sophomores Josh Merrill (5-10, 210) and D.J. Venturella are green but all have potential up front.

Defensive Line

Thomas should take control of the defensive front, too. Collins has experience at defensive end. Eakes' specialty is defense, and the coaching staff expects the senior to play an important role at tackle.

Linebackers

Robbie Crane (5-11, 200) could develop into an excellent linebacker. Crane earned a starting spot at middle linebacker as a freshman, but suffered a season ending knee injury in the opening game last fall. After a successful rehabilitation, Buckmaster has lofty expectations for the young linebacker. "As far as work ethic, Robbie sets the standard," the coach said.

Defensive Backs

Giesel will be a third year player at corner for the Rams. Giesel has the best speed on the team and is a good run support player. Martin is also back as a veteran secondary performer. Finding some depth in the defensive secondary is an important objective.



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St. Paul *indians*

Conference: Mineral Belt League
Classification: 8 man Division 1

District: 2

Head Coach: Doug Tuck

Years at School: 8th

Record at School: 44-27

1996 St. Paul Indians Schedule

September

6	Colony-Crest	Home
13	Hartford	Away
20	Cedarvale	Home
27	Elk Valley	Home

October

4	Thayer	Away
11	Leroy	Home
18	Flinthills	Away
25	Oswego	Home
31	Chetopa	Away

1995 Overall Record: 5-4

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 5

Defensive Starters Returning: 6

Total Returning Lettermen: 13

If you want to see some competitive football in St. Paul, you won't have to wait until September. Head coach Doug Tuck expects pre-season practices to be heated. With half of the starting spots up for grabs, a strong group of underclassmen will fiercely compete to earn a spot on the field on Friday nights in the fall.

"This group will work hard and we will have competition at about every position," Tuck said.

The Indians will try to get back into the 8-man playoffs after a relatively disappointing campaign in '95. St. Paul has won 42 games in the last five years, and last seasons 5-4 finish was a bit of a letdown.

Team chemistry must come together as Tuck welcomes 20 underclassmen to the program.

"Last year we had seniors who were main contributors to our past playoff runs and then a bunch of young kids. We never really clicked as a group. Now, we really don't have that senior leadership, but at the same time we might be closer as a team," Tuck said.

New on the schedule is Hartford and Flinthills. The Indians will meet Chetopa and Oswego in district play. After losing a chance to qualify for the playoffs last year, you can bet that St. Paul will focus on the final two games of the regular season.

Offensive Backs

It will be a three man competition at the quarterback position. Senior Willie

Bradshaw (5-9, 150) has some part-time experience. Tuck says sophomores Seth Born (6-0, 160) and Greg Grefer (5-11, 150) show promise. Not a single experienced running back returns. The coaching staff thinks they might have to move some athletic players into the backfield to fill the void if nobody from the large group of freshmen or sophomores emerges to assume the role.

Receivers

Brian Wagner (6-1, 190) is a promising pass receiver. The junior earned first team Mineral

Belt League honors last year after catching 40 balls for over 400 yards. Sophomore Zack Westhopp (6-1, 170) is another threat. Westhopp was a standout on the Indian's junior varsity team in '95.

Offensive Line

The offensive line will be a key ingredient in the Indian's offensive attack. Senior Seth O'Brien (6-1, 190) was an MBL all conference selection last year and will be called upon to assume the leadership role. He's joined by a pair of returning starters in juniors Brian Wagner (6-1, 190) and Jered Venneman (6-1, 185). Sophomore Josh Smith (5-10, 160) could get thrust into a starting spot at offensive guard. The center position will be hotly contested with juniors Chris Dent (5-11, 160) and Aaron Coomes (5-10, 200) possible choices.

Defensive Line

O'Brien makes the move from linebacker to defensive end after adding size and strength in the off season. Gahman and Venneman return along with sophomore sensation Jason Wagner (5-10, 170) to make this group a force to be reckoned with. In '95 the Indians held their last six opponents to under 16 points in every game. The defensive line will have to perform if St. Paul wants to keep the streak intact.

Linebackers

Brian Wagner is back as one of the league's premier two-way players. Sophomore Joshua Schoenhofer (5-10, 185) has mammoth potential and some experience after starting as a 9th grader. Tuck says there is a large pool of underclassman with junior varsity experience ready to step up to complete the linebacking corps.

Defensive Backs

Bradshaw is the only defensive back who was a regular last season. The senior quarterback will be asked to be a big contributor in the secondary too. Born could find his niche at defensive back while his offensive skills develop.

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JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 7, LOSE 2

Southeast *Lancers*

Conference: CNC

Classification: 3A

District: 8

Head Coach: Greg Gorman

Years at School: 2nd

Record at School: 0-9

1996 Southeast Lancers Schedule

September

6	Riverton	Away
13	Uniontown	Home
20	Northeast	Home
27	Baxter Springs	Away

October

4	Colgan	Away
11	Galena	Home
18	Caney	Away
25	Cherryvale	Home
31	Erle	Home

1995 Overall Record: 0-9

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 6

Defensive Starters Returning: 5

Total Returning Lettermen: 22

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 2, LOSE 7

For the first time in five years, the name plate hanging above the football office in Cherokee remains the same. Greg Gorman is back for his second season at the helm for the Lancers, and this year's seniors are happy to see a familiar face.

"It's been a revolving door," Gorman said. "These kids haven't had any continuity in their first three years. Last year we weren't very good, but we improved every week. For the first time ever, the players won't be learning a new offense and a new system. The groundwork has been laid."

Gorman brought the relatively complex Delaware Wing-T offense to the program last year. The scheme suits the Lancers personnel, and after a full year, the players have a good grasp of the misdirection offense.

"Rome wasn't built in a day," Gorman said. "Our first goal is to win a game. Then a conference game. Then a district game."

If Southeast can accomplish those realistic goals, then the senior class can walk away with a real sense of pride. And, who knows, maybe five years from now those same seniors will come back to their old school for a visit and see Gorman's name still hanging above the door to the football office.

Offensive Backs

Junior Chris Burns (6-0, 155) is the heir apparent at quarterback. Burns steps in for brother Benji who graduated in May. Gorman calls Burns a strong armed,

all around athlete, illustrated by the fact that he was a starter on the basketball team as a sophomore. The Lancers will probably use a freshman at back-up. Sophomore fullback Brandon Craddock (6-2, 190) returns in the backfield. Craddock runs the trap play well and is an adequate blocker. Slender Jason Jones (6-0, 150) plays bigger than his size. The senior has a good grasp of the offense after starting last fall. The other running back spot is yet to be determined. Juniors Brandon Short (6-1, 215) and Tim Geoghagen (5-10, 215) will get

strong consideration. Sophomore Chandler Buzard (5-7, 140) is another possibility.

Receivers

Don't expect the Lancers to throw the ball often, but when they do, senior Nathan Egbert will be the prime target. Egbert returns after breaking his collarbone midway through the '95 season. Trevor Beyeler (5-9, 135) is a senior with some good experience. The tight end position is vital in the Lancers offensive game plan. Junior Rickey Vaughn (6-0, 180) has demonstrated ability. If Short or Geoghagen don't start in the backfield, Gorman thinks they could be utilized at tight end. Dusty Parks (6-1, 170) could make an impact as a freshman.

Offensive Line

Three seniors return as starters on the offensive line to give Southeast a solid nucleus to build an attack. Austin Amershak (6-0, 210) tested out as the strongest player on the roster. Wes Thompson (5-9, 180) is the logical choice to start at center, and Jeff Renn (6-3, 250) has size and a sound understanding of the offense.

Defensive Line

Renn and Amershak will likely start both ways on the line. The Lancers 4-3 defense calls for quick and aggressive play in the middle. Juniors Aaron Ritchie (5-10, 170), Jeff Han (5-9, 175) and sophomore Jess Scheney (5-11, 180) all fit the part. Sophomore Joe Clark (6-2, 210) is a leading candidate to see plenty of playing time.

Linebackers

Thompson will be expected to lead the line-backing unit. Gorman says the senior has good instincts and isn't afraid to fill gaps. Jones makes the move from defensive end to linebacker. Vaughn, Short, and Geoghagen should all contend for a starting role.

Defensive Backs

The Lancers' coaching staff feels pretty confident with three-fourths of the secondary. Edbert, Burns, and Beyeler all are seasoned defensive backs. Gorman will search hard to complete the unit. The coach says, "If we see anybody with intestinal fortitude, we'll suit 'em up."

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Thayer *flyers*

Conference: Mineral Belt League
Classification: 8-Man II
District: 4
Head Coach: Vern Minor
Years at School: 22nd
Record at School: 100-91

1996 Thayer Flyers Schedule

September

6	Loroy	There
13	Colony Crest	Home
20	Elk Valley	Home
27	Williamsburg	There

October

4	St. Paul	Home
11	Oswego	Home
18	Cedar Vale	There
25	Chetopa	There

November

31	Dexter	Home
----	--------	------

1995 Overall Record: 5-4
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 4
Defensive Starters Returning: 4
Total Returning Lettermen: 7

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 6, LOSE 3

Thayer's playoff hopes were literally trashed last fall when the Flyers finished in a 3-way tie for first in their district. The tie was broken by putting the names of all three schools in a trash can and drawing the winner. It was not exactly an ideal way to settle things to say the least. "Nobody was happy about it," says head coach Vern Minor. "It was just a bad deal."

It will definitely help fuel the fire for this season, though. The Flyers think they have the talent to make sure there isn't any question about which team advances to the post-season

despite losing six seniors from last year's club. "Usually when you graduate that many from this size school you think about rebuilding, but I don't think that's going to be the case," Minor said. "I think we are just going to reload because we have some good kids."

Offensive Backs

Minor says it all starts with quarterback Brian Rousselle (5-10, 150). The senior signal caller earned honorable mention honors in the Mineral Belt League last year thanks to his excellent speed. He can throw the ball, but his running ability is his biggest asset.

The Flyers lost two running backs to graduation including Todd Babcock, who racked up over 3,000 yards rushing during his career. But, Todd's

brother Chad (5-11, 190) is anxious to pick up right where his big brother left off. The junior will move to fullback after playing offensive guard a year ago. "Chad is big and powerful. He runs about a 5.1 seconds 40, loves contact and loves to get after it," coach Minor pointed out.

Senior Jared Powers (5-8, 140) was a second team all-league defensive end last year but will move to tailback this Fall. He is probably the quickest player on the team with a time of 4.9 seconds in the 40.

Wide Receiver

Wide receiver is wide open heading into camp this fall. Juniors Larry Raida (5-9, 140), Luke Thornton (5-10, 140) and John Stout (5-10, 140) will all be fighting it out for playing time.

Senior Nick Borror (6-2, 160) appears to have the starting tightend position locked up despite playing only sparingly on offense last year. Borror will also continue to handle all of the Flyers kicking duties.

Offensive Line

Minor is really counting on senior Adam Ellis (6-1, 230) to anchor the Flyers offensive line at center. Ellis was a first teamer last year, and according to Minor, he has to come through again in order for Thayer to be successful. Junior guard Vince Leck (6-2, 150) brings starting experience back to the team.

Three players are fighting for the other starting guard spot. Seniors Randall Stich (5-9, 140) and Ronnie Kissell (5-9, 190) have the experience, but sophomore Troy Babcock (6-0, 200) will be pushing for playing time.

Defensive Back

Chad Babcock, an honorable mention nose guard last year, will man the center of the defensive line again this fall. Leck, Raida and Troy Babcock will probably all see playing time at end.

Linebackers

Minor says he has the players to play the position, it's just a matter of finding out which one's want to hit. You can expect to see Ellis back at middle linebacker after earning second team honors at that spot a year ago.

Defensive Backs

Powers and Borror will probably both see time at safety. The cornerback spots are still up for grabs. Minor says Rousselle, Raida and Stich all have potential and will all have a shot at winning starting assignments during camp.



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Uniontown eagles

Conference: Three Rivers
Classification: 2A
District: 6
Head Coach: Jim Mason
Years at School: 5th
Record at School: 18-18

1996 Uniontown Eagles Schedule

September		
6	Northeast	Home
13	Southeast	Away
20	Pomona	Home
27	Jayhawk Linn	Home
October		
4	Pleasanton	Away
11	Central Heights	Away
18	Marmaton Valley	Home
25	Colgan	Away
31	Frontenac	Home

1995 Overall Record: 4-5
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 6
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Lettermen Returning: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION -- WIN 5, LOSE 4

There is a contagious attitude spreading around Uniontown. Do not be alarmed, the affliction is called confidence and head coach Jim Mason is happy to see that all of his players have been exposed.

"All during the off season our players have talked very positive about the upcoming season," Mason said. "They have fueled excitement in each other and in our community. We will not be cocky, but we will be confident. This group will strap 'em on and get after it."

The Eagles were forced to play a freshman quarterback and five sophomores for the majority of the '95 season. Mason feels the pains of the experience will be transformed into a quality team this fall.

"They all did well with it, and with a year of extra experience at the varsity level, we expect them to be extra tough this year," Mason added.

Mason says his team deserves to be successful after an intense off season conditioning program. All of the interior linemen have made significant gains in strength, and the skill position players return quicker than before.

Season opening games against Northeast and Southeast could give the Eagles another healthy dose of confidence before they embark on the Three Rivers portion of the schedule. Colgan and Frontenac are the elite teams in the district according to Mason. If Uniontown can knock off one of those opponents, they have a chance to compete for a district title.

Offensive Backs

Sophomore Levi Neville (5-9, 150) returns at quarterback after a learning

experience in '95. Mason has dubbed his young signal caller "The Franchise," and he is putting a lot of stock into the belief that Neville can lead the balanced offensive attack. Fullback Ryan Miller (5-10, 175) is recovering from a severe knee injury suffered during his sophomore season. The junior is a physical specimen and could be the Eagles main weapon if he stays healthy. Two freshman running backs will be asked to contribute. Jeremy Wiley (5-9, 160) is very mature physically and Levi's younger brother Jeremy Neville (5-10, 140) is working with the same genetics as his talented sibling.

Receivers

The receiving corps is youthful but experienced. Junior wide receivers Luke Shephard (5-9, 150) and Dereck Clayton (5-7, 130) were baptized by fire a year ago. Mason says of Clayton, "If you can throw it, he can catch it." Junior tight ends Sam George (5-10, 150) and Garth Herrman (6-3, 170) are good looking bookends around the offensive line. George was an honorable mention all-league performer as a sophomore. Senior Gary O'Brien (5-10, 150) will push for playing time.

Offensive Line

Seniors Mike Speer (5-7, 205) and A.J. Haught (6-1, 190) will head the troop of offensive linemen. Speer is perhaps the most intense player in the lineup and Haught is in excellent shape after spending the summer in National Guard boot camp. Seniors Jim Herrin (6-0, 205) and Vern Schubert (5-11, 210) will vie for starting spots in the trenches. Schubert is a transfer with good work habits.

Defensive Line

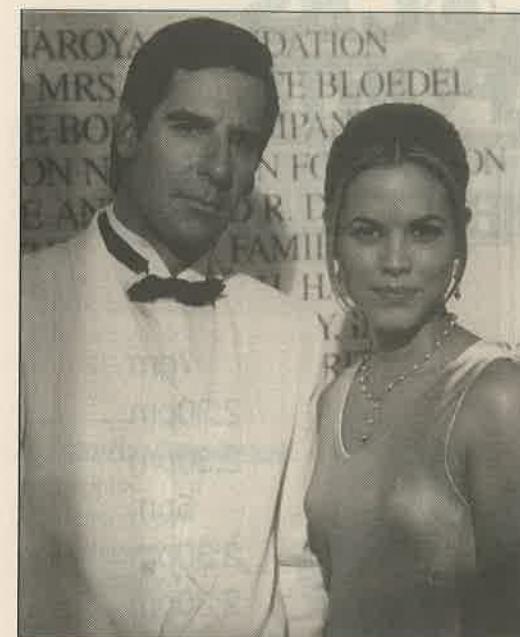
Speer will be valuable as a two way starter on the line. His defensive skills are stronger than his offensive ability. Haught should be conditioned enough to play every down as well. The Eagles coaching staff will look for juniors Mike George (5-7, 160) and Scott Jackson (5-8, 160) along with sophomore Ryan Irsik (5-11, 215) to compete for a regular position on the defensive front.

Linebackers

The junior combo of George and Miller will team to make the linebacking unit a strong point of the defense. Both have good mobility and a year of experience behind them. There should be good competition among the underclassmen to provide depth, with many of the untested players physically fitting into the mold.

Defensive Backs

Three starters return to the secondary, including speedy senior Brandon Pitts (5-6, 130). Neville and Shepard will play both ways as defensive backs. With an ability to cover a lot of ground, O'Brien may be best suited as a safety.



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Sept 28	Virginia Tech at Syracuse	2:30pm
Sept 28	Kentucky at Florida	5pm
Oct 5	TBA	2:30pm
Oct 12	LSU at Florida	2:30pm
Oct 12	Florida State at Miami	2:30pm
Oct 19	TBA	2:30pm
Oct 26	TBA	11am
Nov 2	Notre Dame vs. Navy (Dublin, Ireland)	11am
Nov 11	Notre Dame at Boston College	2:30pm
Nov 16	TBA	2:30pm
Nov 23	TBA	11am
Nov 29	Virginia at Virginia Tech	1:30pm
Nov 30	Miami at Syracuse	2:30pm
Dec 7	Army vs. Navy	11am
Dec 31	Norwest Sun Bowl	1pm
Dec 31	FedEx Orange Bowl	6pm
Jan 1	Cotton Bowl	12:30pm
Jan 1	Tostitos Fiesta Bowl	7pm

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Seneca
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Carl Junction *bulldogs*

Conference: Big 8
Classification: 3A
District: 12
Head Coach: David Hedrick
Years at School: 3rd
Record at School: 5-15

1996 Carl Junction Bulldogs Schedule

September		
6	Columbus	Home
13	Cassville	Away
20	Neosho	Away
27	East Newton	Home
October		
4	McDonald Co.	Home
11	Aurora	Away
18	Monett	Away
25	Mount Vernon	Home
November		
1	Lamar	Away
7	Seneca	Home

1995 Overall Record: 4-6
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Lettermen Returning: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 5

When head coach David Hedrick took over the Bulldog's program two years ago he set out to make Carl Junction improve by 'leaps and bounds'. The 'leap' is complete. The 'bounds' could come this fall.

After suffering through a 1-9 season in 1994, the Bulldogs finished with a respectable 4-6 record a year ago. The vast majority of that team is back, and that's reason enough for optimism in Bulldog territory.

"We are certainly looking forward to the '96 season," Hedrick said. "We have just completed our second year in the off-season conditioning program and I feel like we truly have a better opportunity to match up to our opponents."

Hedrick has seen a dramatic change in the work ethic and attitude of his players after the modest success last season. The number of players interested in being a part of the program has increased, and that fact should help Carl Junction become a deeper team, especially in the special teams.

A season opening test awaits the Bulldogs against Columbus High School. The close proximity of the schools should help this develop into a serious rivalry. The Big 8 Conference schedule is as challenging as ever, with Seneca, Monett, and Aurora expected to field quality teams.

"I don't know that any game will make or break our season at this stage of our program. The most important game all season long will be the next game," Hedrick adds.

The second step towards rebuilding this program will be as difficult as the first step. However, with the experience and spirit that is present in Carl Junction this year, the Bulldogs will have a genuine chance to be better than average.

Offensive Backs

Senior Chris Roy (6-2, 175) has some experience playing behind Grant Dennis who was lost to graduation. Roy has good size and is hungry to be a part of the Bulldogs major turnaround since his sophomore season. Hedrick will need to find a back-up signal caller. Seniors Colby Mitchell (6-3, 210) and Austin Lawrence (5-10, 180) will compete at fullback. Paul Dudley (5-7, 145) is a junior tailback who possesses the best speed at the

position group. Junior Josh Bolinger (5-10, 165) will compete for a starting position along with a slew of underclassmen.

Receivers

Kyle Amos (5-10, 165) returns for his senior season after an outstanding junior year. Amos caught 22 balls for 276 yards at the wide receiver position and can be expected to put up bigger numbers this fall. The Bulldogs haven't had a single play go for more than 35 yards in the past two seasons. Amos has the potential to change that statistic. Senior Joe Starks (6-3, 185) and junior Bryce Ransom (6-1, 175) have good hands and both are good blockers. Competition will come from Senior Brian Bolton (5-10, 165).

Offensive Line

Long hours in the weight room have paid off for a trio of senior returning interior linemen. Clay McCallister (6-1, 190), Jeff Grant (5-10, 185) and Kyle Hawkins (5-10, 195) aren't huge, but they will bring good footwork and an understanding of the offensive schemes to the offensive line. Senior Rhett Elliott (5-11, 205) and juniors Corban Radley (6-2, 230) and Justin Reynolds (6-0, 195) will battle for the remaining two spots up front.

Defensive Line

Mitchell will man the middle at noseguard. McCallister and Grant will be called upon to play both ways in the trenches. Elliot, Radley and Reynolds will have to contribute to the defensive front unless the Bulldog coaching staff can find some of the younger players to step in.

Linebackers

Starks and Ransom will be the leaders of the linebacker troops. Both made great strides last fall. Bolton and Bolinger will compete for a regular spot on defense after seeing limited playing time last season.

Defensive Backs

Roy was a full time player at free safety last year. The Bulldogs quarterback is too big of an asset defensively to only play quarterback. Lawrence will most likely get the starting nod at the other safety position. Amos and Dudley double as cornerbacks. Junior Drew Atherton (5-11, 150) will push for playing time. Hedrick calls junior Trent Carrender (5-9, 180) a top newcomer who will get an opportunity to play in the secondary.



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Carthage *tigers*

Conference: Southwest
Classification: 4A
District: 12
Head Coach: Jesse Wall
Years at School: 1st
Record at School: 0-0

1996 Carthage Tigers Schedule

September		
6	Lebanon	Away
13	Hillcrest	Home
20	open	
27	Joplin	Away
October		
4	Pittsburg	Home
11	McDonald Co.	Away
18	Neosho	Home
25	Nevada	Away
November		
1	Harrisonville	Home
7	Webb City	Home

1995 District Record: 1-2
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 3
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Total Returning Lettermen: 13

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 5

There is a new head coach, a new offensive scheme and a new defensive package at Carthage High School. Still, first year mentor Jesse Wall wants to get back to something old.

"We are striving to build on the tradition of excellence which has been established by former coach Ray Harding," Jesse said. "We want a disciplined team that will win with class."

Wall takes over for Harding after serving as an assistant at Webb City for many years. The former Pittsburg State star offensive lineman is looking forward to his first head coaching job.

"We have excellent senior leadership. That leadership, along with the hard work the kids have done this summer and during camp should pay off," Wall said.

Carthage will have extra motivation when assistant coach Kenny Sutton returns to the program. Sutton was involved in a severe car wreck last year and is expected to be back on the sidelines after a grueling rehabilitation.

All of the new pieces will have to come together quickly if the Tigers want to live up to their lofty expectations. Carthage opens with Lebanon and then plays Hillcrest before an open date. Then it's into the fire with consecutive games against Joplin and Pittsburg. The season finale at home against Kurt Thompson and the Webb City Cardinals will be intriguing as the two old friends go up against each other, possibly with playoff ramifications.

Offensive Backs

Junior quarterback Jared Patrick (5-7, 150) looks to be the top candidate to play quarterback. As Patrick develops, senior running back Jerry Poston (5-11, 195) will have to lead the offensive backfield. He has a tough act to follow. Scott Daniels got the vast majority of carries for the Tigers last season. Daniels has graduated and will be a member of the Missouri Southern football team this fall.

Receivers

The receiving corps is a big question mark headed into August drills. Jubal Shields (5-11, 198) is a junior with some playing experience. Wall and his staff will sift through the crop of young players to complete the starting lineup.

Offensive Line

The Tigers have three voids to fill on the offensive front. The good news is that seniors Eric Waters (6-0, 235) and Charlie Loveless (5-10, 222) are back as returning starters. Offensive line play is Wall's specialty, and if he can find some underclassmen willing to work hard, they should be able to learn quickly.

Defensive Line

The defensive line will have to play well in the early season to keep Carthage competitive while the new offense takes shape. Down linemen Ryan Simmons (6-0, 185) and Tony Gourley (5-10, 220) return for their senior year with added size and a starting experience. There are three strong candidates to play defensive end. Senior Bridger Shields (5-11, 195) was consistent last year. Brother Jubal Shields will battle with fellow junior Chris Brown (6-0, 185) on the other side. Don't be surprised to see all three of these players earn a spot somewhere on the defensive unit.

Linebackers

Poston is the kind of player that could play every down every Friday night. The Tigers will look to the senior linebacker for leadership. Senior Andy Waynick (5-8, 172) has slimmed down since his junior year. Waynick's off-season workouts will make him more mobile at linebacker. Junior Craig Kyte (5-9, 180) broke into the starting lineup last season and will have to continue to excel in Carthage's new defensive package.

Defensive Backs

The defensive backfield will have to make up for a lack of size with an abundance of speed. Senior Jake Charleston (5-10, 160) can cover a lot of territory. Patrick is a potential two-way player, and junior Paul Norbury (5-5, 140) could make his mark in the secondary.

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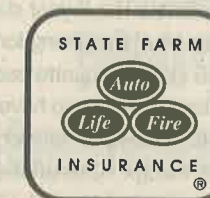
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Diamond *wildcats*

Conference: Independent
Classification: 2A
District: 11
Head Coach: Jarrod Borland
Years at School: 1st
Record at School: 0-0

1996 Diamond Wildcats Schedule

September		
8	Pierce City	Away
13	Sarcoile	Home
20	Mount Vernon	Home
27	Greenfield	Home
October		
4	Miller	Away
11	Bye	
18	Marionville	Home
25	Stockton	Home
November		
1	Ash Grove	Away
7	East Newton	Away

1995 Overall Record: 2-7
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 6
Total Lettermen Returning: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 5

There is a new coach in town and he's promising to shake things up. Jarrod Borland is preparing for his first season at the helm of the Wildcats after spending the last two campaigns as an assistant in Eldon, MO. The first thing Borland did was change the uniforms to a more modern look with the hopes of installing a new attitude among his players.

Unfortunately, Borland's first good look at those players didn't come until the start of camp July 22. The University of Missouri graduate considered that just one more challenge to conquer, though. "We look to have a great year and begin a winning tradition in Diamond football," Borland said.

Another challenge Borland and his assistants, Dustin Miller, Richard Curran and Jon Oettinger face in 1996 is overcoming the team's lack of size. The Wildcats hope to counter that with a solid group of experienced linemen and good speed in the backfield.

Offensive Backs

Robert Creekmore (5-10, 140) is expected to pack most of the punch. Creekmore is a 3-year starter who did a little bit of everything for the Cats in 1995 including quarterback. Coach Borland is hoping to have him concentrate solely on running back this year, though. Classmates Brian Trevino (5-9, 145) and J.T. Trujillo (5-10, 150) will also see plenty of time at running back.

Junior Josh Merriman (6-1, 180) will be at the helm of the Wildcats this fall. He started the last few games of the 1995 campaign and earned his stripes as a top-notch field general. The Wildcat coaches are impressed with Merriman's passing accuracy. Freshman Joey Petty will serve as an apprentice in 1996.

Receivers

Split end Ben Cramer (5-11, 140) will more than likely be the beneficiary of all of those lobs. The senior is the best receiver on the team and possesses good hands and above average

speed. Junior Matt Vance (5-10, 150) will also be called on to haul in his share of passes.

Wildcat fans will want to keep an eye out for Will Bridges (6-3, 185) as well. Bridges' athleticism on the basketball court has the coaches thinking about moving the senior from tackle to tight end this season. Junior Beau Johnson (6-0, 160) will line up in that position from time to time also.

Offensive Line

The Wildcats are set at guard. Senior starters Zack Kuhn (6-1, 230) and Josh Addington (5-11, 200) are back for another campaign. Borland describes both as being quick and very aggressive. Classmate Ryan Felty (6-1, 200) is back to defend his starting tackle position while freshman Jake Merriman will be expected to contribute right away.

Defensive Line

Kuhn, Addington and Felty are all two-way starters and if you think they're aggressive on offense, wait til you see how they are on defense. The trio of trench masters take on a whole different attitude when they line up on defense.

Linebackers

This appears to be the weakest point on the Diamond squad heading into the season simply because of the lack of depth and experience. Bridges is the only starter returning at the position, however Trujillo and Vance have seen playing time at linebacker. Borland says shoring up the linebacker spot will be one of his first goals during training camp.

Defensive Backs

Creekmore is the main man in the Wildcat secondary. Borland describes his free safety as "...a heavy hitter type. One of those guys who'll come up and make the play." Sophomore cornerback Manny Long (5-10, 130) is the only other starter returning at defensive back. Trevino and Johnson will probably get the majority of the playing time at the other spots.



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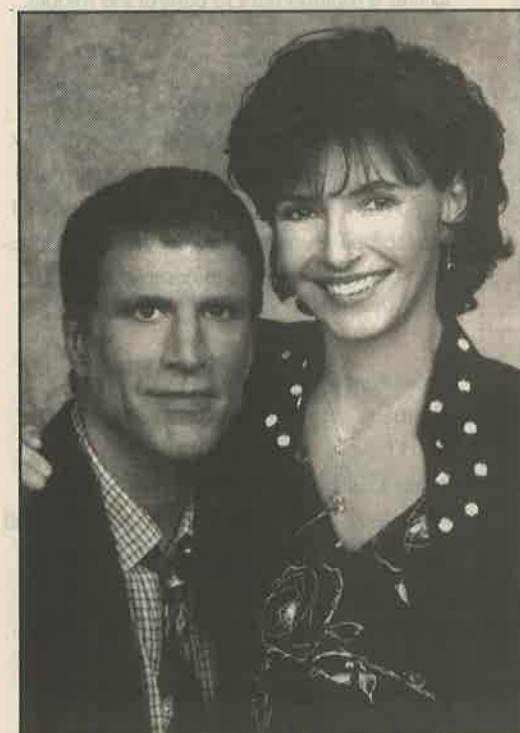
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East Newton *patriots*

Conference: Big 8
Classification: 2A
District: 11
Head Coach: Larry Bunn
Years at School: 6th
Record at School: 25-30

Larry Bunn figures his young team has seven games to mold before attempting to win a fifth consecutive District Championship. With 13 players graduated from the '95 team that won the most games in school history, the Patriots have a big challenge ahead.

"Our young players are a talented group, but the Big 8 is a tough place for youngsters to cut their teeth," Bunn said. "If we stay healthy, we will try to make a run at districts."

The conference season sends East

Newton on the road for three of its first four games. While most of the underclassmen have little on-field experience, they have been a part of a successful program and Bunn is hoping that the winning attitude is contagious. The Patriots are banking on Senior leadership from Tim Gripka and Jake Hobson to stay competitive in the Big 8. If East Newton can improve throughout the conference portion of the schedule, they should have a chance at keeping a streak of 13 consecutive district wins intact.

Offensive Backs

Gripka (6-0, 155) returns as the Patriots' signal caller. He's a proven winner and understands the offensive scheme. Junior Floyd Renner (5-10, 170) was injured the last two

years, but will be counted on heavily at running back. Bunn calls sophomore Clay Brown (5-11, 175) an extremely talented athlete that could make a big difference. Other ball-carrying candidates include sophomores Bryan Johnson (5-9, 135) and Patrick Chelf (5-6, 160). Johnson is a potential big play man while Chelf is an untested transfer from Texas.

Receivers

All around athlete Matt Breedlove (5-8, 135) and Joey Wimsatt (5-8, 140) are juniors that

will handle the majority of the pass catching duties. Bunn will need to find some depth to complete the corps.

Offensive Line

Hobson (5-5, 175) will anchor the young unit at tackle. The other four interior spots are up for grabs. Bunn calls the offensive line one of his biggest concerns. The fate of the Patriots could ride on whether the voids can be filled.

Defensive Line

The senior combo of Jamie Gossett (5-10, 195) and Matt Harris (6-3, 210) returns. Both players will be counted on heavily in the early season to keep the Patriots in games against explosive Big 8 Conference offenses. Standout noseguard Dan Cullers has been lost to graduation and Bunn will need to find a replacement to control the middle.

Linebackers

Hobson will pull double duty and lead the team defensively at linebacker. Renner saw some action at the position last season and could find his niche on the defensive side of the football. Bunn will look for an underclassman or two to emerge to complement the position group.

Defensive Backs

There's a strong possibility that the Patriots won't have a single senior in the secondary. Juniors Kyle Hedrick (5-11, 165) and Bryan McFarland (5-11, 160) have good speed and good size for the position. Depth shouldn't be a problem with Breedlove, Wimsatt, Johnson and Brown all competing for spots. Gripka proved to be a capable defensive player in the secondary in his sophomore season, and Bunn might choose to use his quarterback as a two-way player while this group matures.

1996 East Newton Patriots Schedule

September

8	Lamar	Away
13	Aurora	Home
20	Cassville	Away
27	Carl Junction	Away

October

4	Monett	Home
11	Seneca	Home
18	Mt. Vernon	Away
25	Ash Grove	Home

November

1	Stockton	Away
7	Diamond	Home

1995 Overall Record: 8-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 2
Defensive Starters Returning: 2
Total Returning Lettermen: 10

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 6

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Jasper eagles

Conference: WEMO
Classification: 1-A
District: 4
Head Coach: Grant Reed
Years at School: 3
Record at School: 6-13

1996 Jasper Eagles Schedule

September		
6	Cass Midway	Away
13	Drexel	Away
20	Adrian	Home
27	Rich Hill	Away
October		
4	Archie	Home
11	Osceola	Away
18	Appleton City	Home
25	Open	
November		
1	Lockwood	Home
7	Liberal	Away

1995 Overall Record: 3-7
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 5
Total Returning Letterman: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 4

It shouldn't take Jasper head coach Grant Reed long to figure out what kind of team he is going to field this season. The Eagles open the season against Cass-Midway, a team they haven't faced in two years. But Reed is already calling it the Eagles' biggest game of the season. "The first game usually shows the heart of your players. It points out adjustments that need to be made and where we need to get better," says Reed.

The season opener will also be one of the first chances Reed and his assistant coaches, Steve Hummel and Bill Hodge, will have to see most of their players in action. The majority of the club is made up of freshmen.

However, that hasn't hurt their drive and determination. "This year's team, while not senior dominated, has shown dedication in the weight room," Reed says. "I feel that this group of young men have the 'want to win'."

There are more players to work with this season, too. Reed is expecting about 30 players to compete this fall after only suiting up 23 a year ago.

Look for the biggest changes to come on defense this season. Defensive coordinator Hodge, who is returning to Jasper after two years at Lone Jack, MO, is planning to change the defensive scheme from a 5-3 to a 4-4.

Offensive Backs

According to Reed, replacing Robert Chapman at quarterback will be his biggest concern on offense. Junior Michael DeGraff (6-0, 160) is ready to step in and take over after spending last season at tight end. However, look for freshman Justin Storm (5-7,

130) to challenge DeGraff for playing time. Storm adds a different dimension because he can also play running back and run the option.

The rest of the backfield is in place. Senior Zac Whiteley (5-11, 210) is ready to pick up where he left off in 1995 when he rushed for 960 yards. Whiteley has beefed up to 210 pounds, yet still runs the 40 in only 4.7 seconds. Junior Ronnie Fleniken (6-0, 170) is returning to the team after sitting out the 1995 season. Fleniken, a stand-out for the basketball Eagles, possesses good speed and will team with Whiteley for a great one-two punch. Altogether, Coach Reed is expecting a solid ground attack.

Receivers

DeGraff won't have any trouble recognizing his favorite target at receiver. Junior Jason DeGraff (6-11, 160), Michael's identical twin brother, will be hauling in passes from his split end position. He'll be joined by senior flanker Seth Bruffet (5-5, 120) whom Reed calls the strongest person on the team percentage-wise. Junior tight end Chevy McKinzie has shown how athletic he can be on the track where he qualified for state in both the high jump and pole vault. McKinzie is the fastest player on the Eagles squad with a time of 4.65 seconds in the 40.

Offensive Line

Probably the biggest strength for this year's Jasper team is the offensive line. Five players with varsity experience are back including senior tackle Fred Reyes (6-0, 235). Reyes is a two year starter who broke the Eagles' old bench record in the weightroom by lifting 330 pounds. He will be joined in the trenches by senior guards Kyle Etcheson (6-1, 170) and Trent Dodson (6-0, 170).

Junior Nathan Wine (5-10, 170) will hold down duties at center. Also, look for junior Tye Dodson (6-1, 215) and sophomore Jeremy Pennington (5-9, 150) to make an impact.

Defensive Line

"Defensively we will need to mature as the season progresses. We are not very big or exceptionally fast, but several players have had varsity experience," Reed says. That includes Reyes, Wine and Etchison. Sophomores Devin Berryhill (5-11, 250) and Casey Rives (6-0, 220) will also be back in 1996.

Linebackers

When Whiteley isn't running over people on offense, he'll be running into them on defense. The big running back will have a lot of company in the linebacking corps this season, though. Fleniken's return will free things up on the inside and allow Wine to move to the outside. Jeremy Pennington (5-9, 150) will also be called on to step it up after earning a varsity letter his freshman season.

Defensive Back

Two year starter Jason DeGraff is back to anchor the defensive secondary from his cornerback position. Brother Michael won't be far off and McKinzie should also see playing time at free safety.

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Joplin eagles

Conference: Ozark

Classification: 5A

District: 12

Head Coach: Mike Loyd

Years at School: 1st

Record at School: 0-0

Mike Loyd ushers in a new era at Joplin High School. The former Northeastern Oklahoma A&M Junior College coach succeeds Mickey Heatherly who retired from the Eagles program after nine seasons at the helm. Loyd brings an impressive resume to Joplin High School. After a brilliant career at Joplin Memorial High School, Loyd went on to play quarterback with the St. Louis Cardinals and a pair of Canadian Football League teams. With ten starters returning from last years club, and a fresh attitude, the new man in charge has reason for optimism in his debut season.

"We could be very competitive if the senior class provides the proper type of leadership," Loyd said.

Joplin's schedule is as interesting, and as challenging, as it has been in years. In addition to the regular Ozark Conference foes, the Eagles play perennial powers Webb City and Blue Springs. Other attractive opponents include Carthage, Coffeyville and Nevada.

Loyd has a transition to make from coaching extremely talented, but sometimes undisciplined players, to coaching developing players in a more stable environment. The former Norseman head coach should thrive in his new surroundings.

"This team is hungry to win and to compete, and to get into the playoffs," Loyd said.

If the Eagles can improve and gain confidence throughout the month of September, a post-season berth is well within reach.

Offensive Backs

No doubt Loyd will bring some of his high scoring offensive schemes from NEO A&M to the Joplin attack. Loyd must find a quarterback to run the show. Junior Tony Fogleson (5-9, 170) is athletic and could be a good student with the former NFL signal caller as his tutor. Senior Doug Wilson (5-8, 240) is a strong, hard-running fullback who should provide leadership in the backfield. A tailback will have to emerge to complement the running game. Junior Mark Graham (5-10, 155) is lightning quick and could develop into a threat as a ball carrier. Senior Chad Doerge (5-6, 160), junior Josh Flager (5-7, 163), or sophomores Tierra Fields (5-10, 170) and Jay Hall (6-0, 200) will have to contribute.

Receivers

The starting tight end tandem of junior Will Shagets (5-11, 185) and senior Brad Borello (5-10, 170) returns. Senior tight end Jeff Newman (6-3, 200) will push for a starting nod. Wide receiver coach Jeff Greene will look to senior Dan Pinkerton (6-1, 175) to be a big play man. There is plenty of skilled pass-catching juniors competing for a spot, with Mario Rogers (6-0, 170), Brian Strickland (5-10, 165), and Alex Belt (5-11, 155) all very capable.

Offensive Line

There is a degree of uncertainty on the offensive line. Senior Shane Munn (6-3, 250) is the only returning starter and will anchor the unit. Senior Mark Hedrick (5-9, 220) has some valuable experience up front. The other three spots are up for grabs. Offensive Coordinator Dick Kruse will have to find some younger players who possess good brawn and good brains to make the Eagles an efficient offensive team.

Defensive Line

The defensive line might be the most solid position group on this team. Senior Archie Jordan (6-2, 210), junior Travis Hicks (6-3, 250) and Wilson all return with more size and more strength than a year ago. Newman is a likely starter at defensive end. It will be imperative for this group to shine in the early season while the offense develops.

Linebackers

Junior Jeremy Stout (5-9, 185) is a versatile linebacker with a nose for the football. Doerge and Flager lack classic linebacker size, but could find their niche on the defensive side of the football. Darren Hotelling moves from coaching the wide receiver to coaching the linebacker. He must find some additional talent from the corps of underclassmen.

Defensive Backs

There is not a lack of depth in the defensive secondary. Bookend starters are junior Brian Strickland (5-10, 150) and senior Peston Wynn (5-10, 155). Both are experienced and aggressive. Fogleson is an able cover man and could see the field on passing situations. Rogers and Fields will battle to become a regular at defensive back.



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1996 Joplin Eagles Schedule

September

6	Hillcrest	Home
13	Blue Springs	Home
20	Webb City	Away
27	Carthage	Home

October

4	Coffeyville	Away
11	Nevada	Away
18	Central	Home
25	Kickapoo	Away

November

1	Parkview	Away
7	Glendale	Home

1995 Overall Record: 6-4

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 4

Defensive Starters Returning: 6

Total Returning Lettermen: 14

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 3

Lamar *tigers*

Conference: Big 8
Classification: 3-A
District: 12
Head Coach: Mike Rader
Years at School: 7th
Record at School: 30-31

1996 Lamar Tigers Schedule

September		
6	East Newton	Home
13	Nevada	Away
20	Butler	Away
27	Aurora	Home
October		
4	Cassville	Home
11	Monett	Away
18	Open	
25	Seneca	Home
November		
1	Carl Junction	Away
8	Mount Vernon	Away

1995 Overall Record: 8-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 5
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Total Returning Lettermen: 21

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

1 1996 could be the year for the Lamar Tigers. Coach Mike Rader and his staff welcome back only 12 starters from last season's club that went 7-3, but 10 of those positions are filled by seniors. That group of players is 21-11 in their three years of varsity action and looking to go out on top.

Standing in their way, as usual, will be the defending state champion Seneca Indians. But the schedule makers were kind to the Tigers this season. Lamar has a bye the week before taking on the Indians, giving Rader about two weeks to prepare for Seneca.

Rader feels the Tiger's rigorous conference schedule should also help them get ready for big games. "We feel the Big 8 is one of, if not the toughest 3A conferences in the state. Last year, in a supposedly down year for the league, Seneca went 14-0 and won a state title. If we can be competitive here we feel we can play against anyone in the state," Rader says.

Offensive Backs

Brent Thieman (5-8, 165) will be counted on to carry the load (not to mention the ball) for the Tigers in 1996. The senior running back rushed for 800 yards a year ago and will have to have another big season in order for Lamar to remain competitive. He will get help from a handful of other returning lettermen who also saw time in the backfield last season. Seniors Jared Ferris (5-10, 175) and Brice Caruthers (6-0, 185) will fight for playing time along with junior Jim Hillman (6-0, 195).

Michael Miller (5-8, 150) appears to have the inside track at quarterback. The senior signal caller started a year ago and has the edge in experience. Look for junior Courtney Roth (6-1, 165) to see some playing time at quarterback as well.

Receivers

Nathan Furst (6-2, 160) is back to head up the receiving corps. Furst started for Coach Rader as a sophomore a year ago. He'll be teamed up with senior letterman Zach Masterson (6-2, 165). Shane Taylor (6-3, 180) will handle responsibilities at the tight end position.

Offensive Line

It all starts up front with Tyler Timmons (5-11, 225). Timmons has been a mainstay in the Tiger trenches since he was a freshman and would like nothing more than taking the team to the top in his final season. The same goes for classmates Andy Van Gilder (6-4, 250), who started at tackle last season and Brian O'Sullivan (5-11, 210), who started at tackle. Those three will be pushed by a trio of other familiar faces on the O-line. Senior guards Jeremy Loveall (6-0, 180), Nick Jeffries (5-10, 180) and Dusty Bronson (6-0, 170) all saw some playing time a year ago and are being counted on to step forward this fall. Junior Brian Parrish (6-3, 190) appears to have won the battle for the starting center position.

Defensive Line

Timmons isn't only limited to work on offense. He is a 3-year starter at nose guard also and will be expected to anchor that unit as well. Senior tackles Chad McCulloch (5-11, 220) and Jared Ellis (5-11, 260) are both expected to retain their starting roles and make major contributions. Loveall, Bronson, Taylor and Arty Turbeck (6-3, 250) have also seen playing time at D-line and should push for more this fall.

Linebackers

Rader says the 1996 Tigers will be a defense oriented team which means he's counting on some players who were only spot starters a year ago to become full-time players this season. That is especially true at linebacker where O'Sullivan and senior classmate Brandon Vaughn (5-9, 160) are the only returning starters. Those two will handle anything that comes their way on the outside. Among the players vying for the remaining positions are three lettermen: Caruthers, Parrish and Hillman.

Defensive Back

The secondary may be the strongest part of Lamar's team in 1996. Miller and Roth should both hold down their starting cornerback spots unless Rader decides to have one of them concentrate solely on the quarterback job. Other lettermen returning at D-Back include Masterson and Ferris. And according to Rader, Thieman is ready to step into the secondary, if needed.

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Liberal *bulldogs*

Conference: WEMO

Classification: 1-A

District: 4

Head Coach: Rich Johnson

Years at School: 2nd

Record at School: 5-5

1996 Liberal Bulldogs Schedule

September

6	Rich Hill	Away
13	Archie	Away
20	Appleton City	Home
27	Cass-Midway	Home

October

4	Osceola	Home
11	Adrian	Away
18	Drexel	Away
25	Lockwood	Away

November

1	Open	
8	Jasper	Home

The grace period is over at Liberal High School. The Bulldogs have had one season to get to know head coach Rich Johnson, now it's time to take the next step: a move Johnson fully expects his club to make during his second season at the helm. "The players are working hard in the off-season. With a year of experience under a new coaching staff and new philosophy, the team should play well and be very competitive," said Johnson.

A big reason for Johnson's optimism lies on defense, where the entire unit is expected back with the exception of a couple of linemen. There are 14 lettermen in all returning from last year's team that finished 5-5 and according to Johnson, they are bigger, faster and stronger.

Notice he didn't say TALLER. None of the 10 returning starters are taller than 5'10". But this is football, not basketball, and size of the player doesn't measure the size of their desire to win. "If the returning players come out and play well, and the newcomers stay with the team and contribute, look out! Liberal can be pretty good this year," Johnson says.

Rich Hill, Adrian and Cass-Midway figure to give Liberal the most trouble during the conference campaign. But, as usual, Lockwood will probably be the Bulldogs biggest obstacle in their bid for a playoff berth. If they can make it to their bye week November 1 undefeated in district play, the post-season will be in sight.

Offensive Backs

This could very well be the most talented part of the 1996 Bulldogs. Senior running back Mark Cochran (5-10, 170) is back, along with sophomore running back Landon Ison (5-9, 145) and classmate Jason Ball (5-9, 140). But the Bulldog's biggest returning weapon is quarterback Jeremy Sturgell (5-8, 145). Coach Johnson may be the senior signal caller's biggest fan. "Jeremy Sturgell will be a player to watch this year. He is a unique story because I know there is nobody in the country that works harder. He is a great competitor and loves the game of football. He is probably the most coachable and exciting athlete I have ever been around," says Johnson.

Look for newcomers Jerrett Overstreet (6-1, 175) and Brian Ball (5-10, 180), both juniors, to see some playing time in the backfield as well.

Receivers

Junior Mason Davis (5-10, 150) is back to lead the Bulldog receiving corps in 1996. He will get help from two of the biggest tight ends in the conference. Brent Fast (5-10, 205), who started as a freshman a year ago, as well as Kevin Kirby (5-10, 180), who is back for his junior season, are both expected to make big contributions. The tallest member of the Bulldog's ballclub will also line up at tight end. Ben Hindricks is a 6' 2", 170 pound freshman who is hoping to make an immediate impact.

Offensive Line

The Bulldogs are loaded with returning players at O-line. Three starters will be back to hold down duties. Tackle Shawn Naccarrato (5-10, 220) and guard Brian Flowers (5-10, 200) are both seniors with good size and starting experience. Another returning starter is Kyle Hoover (5-10, 210) who will handle the snap at center once again his junior season. Senior Scott Townsend (6-1, 225) and sophomore Josh Sprouls (6-2, 220) are also back for another year of action, while senior Brian Lemmons (6-2, 235) and junior Jason Banwart (6-1, 210) are two newcomers to keep an eye on.

Defensive Line

This may be the biggest question mark on the Bulldogs this season. Coach Johnson says his team is lacking a little depth at this position and will have to work to prevent injuries. Naccarrato and Flowers will be back to handle chores at end and tackle, respectively and Kirby and Townsend will challenge for starting time in 1996. Look for Lemmons to also make an impact at tackle.

Linebackers

All four starting linebackers are rarin' and ready to go this season. Cochran and junior Wade Miller (5-10, 165) will try to shut down anything that comes their way on the outside and Hoover and Fast will take care of everything on the inside. It should prove to be a very formidable wall. "These individuals are willing to work for success. These athletes have put a lot of effort into turning this program around," says Johnson.

Defensive Back

Sturgell will quarterback the secondary from his free safety position in 1996 and will get help from two other returning starters in Davis and sophomore Adam Wolf (5-9, 150). Jason Ball will also see action at D-back along with newcomer Overstreet.

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JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 7, LOSE 3

McDonald County *mustangs*

Conference: Southwest
Classification: 4A
District: 10
Head Coach: Bruce Stancell
Years at School: 4th
Record at School: 14-26

1996 McDonald County Mustangs

September

6	Mt. Vernon	Home
13	Seneca	Away
20	Nevada	Home
27	Reeds Springs	Home

October

4	Carl Junction	Away
11	Carthage	Home
18	Webb City	Away
25	Willard	Home

November

1	Republic	Away
8	Neosho	Away

1995 Overall Record: 5-5
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 5
Defensive Starters Returning: 5
Total Returning Lettermen: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 6

McDonald County's nickname is perfect for the 1996 edition of it's high school football team. The Mustangs are young and full of energy and it is up to head coach Bruce Stancell to tame them in time for a grueling campaign. "We will be extremely young and lacking experience," said Stancell. "But with a lot of hard work in the pre-season we could become very competitive."

Stancell has a small, but good, group of seniors he is counting on to provide leadership this season. He says his players are soft-spoken but hard workers and fun to coach.

McDonald County's 1996 road schedule doesn't offer a lot of room for error. Stancell's 'stangs travel to defending 3A state champion Seneca in week two, head North to meet perennial power Webb City in week seven and wrap up their district schedule at Republic and Neosho.

Republic isn't the only new district opponent on Mac County's calendar, though. Willard will pay a visit to Anderson October 25.

Offensive Backs

McDonald County may be young over-all, but not in the offensive backfield. There is a whole stable of veteran Mustangs returning. Senior Nick Martin (5-11, 170) is back to call the signals with junior

Wes Dumond (5-10, 160) backing him up. Claude Knight (5-8, 160) and Troy McClain (6-0, 180) are back for their senior seasons as starting running backs and look for junior Charlie Agro (5-10, 160) to carry the ball as well.

They will all have the benefit of learning from Stancell, who starred at running back for Pittsburg State University.

Wide Receivers

Starting experience is a little harder to come by at wide receiver. Jeremy Ball (5-9, 140)

appears to have the inside track at a starting position after seeing time at the position a year ago. Stancell does have three veteran tight ends he can turn to, though, if he needs to throw the ball. Senior Adam Rubottom (5-11, 165) earned honorable mention all-conference honors for his work at that spot a year ago. Classmate Doug Adams (5-10, 160) and junior Dusty Demeritt (6-0, 205) will also be counted on to perform.

Offensive Line

Juniors dominate the line of scrimmage for McDonald County. Luke Spurgeon (6-0, 190) and Mike McCormick (6-0, 200) are candidates for the guards spots, Mark Hagee (6-3, 205) is the incumbent center and James Miller (6-3, 185) is a returning tackle.

Defensive Line

The parts are interchangeable with several players expected to see double-duty on offense and defense once again this year. Hagee and Miller are both slated to see time at end, Spurgeon, Demeritt and McCormick will be gunning for starting time at tackle.

Linebackers

The linebackers may very well be the biggest strength of the '96 Mustangs. McClain was a second team selection last year and Adams earned honorable mention honors. Knight and Rubottom were both starters last year as well and juniors Seth Cooper (5-8, 180) and Dusty Miller (6-3, 175) both saw playing time.

Defensive Back

Stancell is counting on Martin to call the shots on defense as well this year. The Mustangs starting quarterback was a first team free safety a year ago. Bell and Dumond also saw time in the secondary last season and will have to step forward in order for the Mustangs to be successful.

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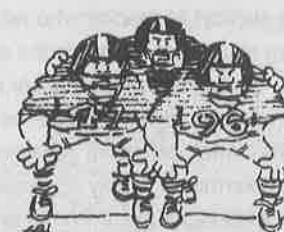
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Neosho wildcats

Conference: Southwest
Classification: 4A
District: 11(last season)
Head Coach: Ray Godfrey
Years at School: 5th
Record at School: 22-21

1996 Neosho Wildcats Schedule

September		
6	Aurora	Away
13	Monett	Home
20	Carl Junction	Home
27	Nevada	Away
October		
4	Seneca	Away
11	Webb City	Home
18	Carthage	Away
25	Republic	Home
November		
1	Willard	Away
7	McDonald Co.	Home

1995 Overall Record: 8-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 0
Defensive Starters Returning: 2
Total Returning Lettermen: 9

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 5

Ray Godfrey is hoping that winning is contagious. The Wildcats certainly caught the victory bug last fall. While experience is down, excitement is up for Neosho. Godfrey has turned this program around in his four seasons as head coach. With just two full-time starters returning, continued improvement this season is a Herculean task.

"We will be very young and inexperienced, but I feel like the kids will play hard and compete," Godfrey said.

"It will probably take a few games before we find out how we will play together. Hopefully by the time district play starts, we will have come together to compete for a championship."

The beginning of the schedule should be pretty accommodating to that plan, but back to back games against Seneca and Webb City in early October could be the better barometer. The Wildcats are reigning district champs. This year, Godfrey's team faces a new twist in district play. Republic and Willard replace El Dorado Springs and Lebanon on the schedule.

Offensive Backs

Senior Aaron Mitchell (6-0, 180) is the Wildcat's best athlete on the field. That's why the former running back will most likely be calling signals for Neosho this fall. If Mitchell

doesn't prove to be an able quarterback, sophomore Jeremiah Durbin (6-0, 170) is a possibility. Anthony Moore (5-10, 190) is a good bet to get the majority of the carries at running back. At least one underclassman will have to emerge to put some punch in the offensive backfield.

Receivers

Senior Aaron Patterson (6-2, 180) is a returning letterman with better than adequate speed and good hands. Newcomer Chris Nelson (5-10, 150) is a top newcomer at

wide receiver. Godfrey will search the crop of underclassmen to find some depth at this position group.

Offensive Line

Juniors Brad Johnson (6-2, 195) and Ryan Long (6-2, 225) will be called upon to provide leadership and productivity up front for the Wildcats. Sophomore J.T. Mendenhall (6-3, 240) lacks experience, but definitely has the size to contribute. The junior trio of Drew Tignor (5-10, 225), Jeff Snow (5-10, 185), and Bryan Clark (6-0, 225) will have to mature quickly in the early season if Neosho is going to score consistently during conference and district play.

Defensive Line

Godfrey calls the defensive line one of the stronger position groups on this team. Senior Rocky Olbrey (6-0, 205) has gained 15 solid pounds in a year. Long, and Johnson could develop into quality defensive ends. Mendenhall, Tignor, Snow, and Clark are all potential two-way starters in the trenches.

Linebackers

Moore is a stalwart linebacker who returns as a regular starter. Moore made the switch from inside 'backer to outside 'backer early last season and could very well be the key to the Wildcats overall defensive scheme. Godfrey is determined to play aggressively with the linebacking corps. If Dumin isn't the regular quarterback, he'll be asked to use his mobility and athleticism as a linebacker.

Defensive Backs

Count on seeing Mitchell in the secondary, in addition to his offensive contributions. The senior made some big plays and caused some key turnovers at strong safety last fall. Senior David McNeil (5-10, 160) played a role in the defensive backfield and could earn a starting spot. Patterson and Nelson are among the other candidates in the secondary.

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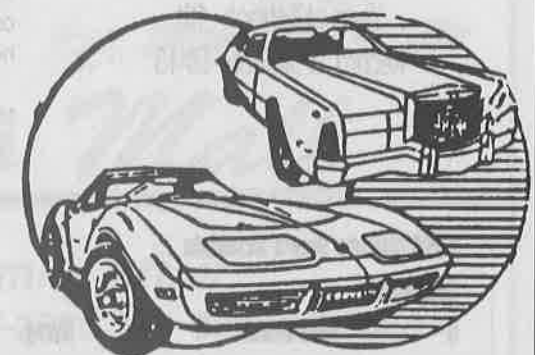
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Nevada *tigers*

Conference: Southwest

Classification: 4A

District: 11

Head Coach: Bruce Humphrey

Years at School: 4th

Record at School: 18-13

1996 Nevada Tigers Schedule

September

8 Fort Scott Away

13 Lamar Home

20 McDonald Co. Away

27 Neosho Home

October

4 El Dorado Home

11 Joplin Home

18 Lebanon Away

25 Carthage Home

November

1 Webb City Away

7 Harrisonville Away

1995 Overall Record: 5-5

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 8

Defensive Starters Returning: 8

Total Returning Lettermen: 35

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 4

Bruce Humphrey says his players are a blue collar work force. They must be unionized, because only a few of them are pulling double-duty. Humphrey welcomes back 16 starting position players, and only a few of them will play both offense and defense. That fact should translate into the Tigers having fresh legs throughout their games. Thirty-five lettermen return to provide plenty of depth and continuity in Humphrey's fourth year at the helm.

"We will be the biggest and the strongest team I've had here," Humphrey said.

"The players work hard and they are enjoyable to be around due to their personality. They are very coachable," Humphrey added.

The Tigers have already seen the benefits of their new weight room added on this year. Humphrey insists this team is his biggest and strongest in his tenure at Nevada. With a slew of new opponents on the schedule this year, it's time for the Tigers to muscle up against teams like Joplin, Fort Scott and Lamar. Humphrey points to the Southwest Conference clash against Webb City on November 1st as the key game.

"Webb City is big. We haven't beat them in my career," Humphrey said.

Offensive Backs

The Tigers will have to replace quarterback Chadd Jones who has signed a scholarship with the University of Arkansas. The probable young man under center is senior Matt Thompson

(6-0, 175). Junior Justin Hoover (6-0, 165) will add competition to the quarterback search. Speedy senior Justin Lee (5-11, 155), and senior powerback Kirk Buck (5-11, 200) return as ballcarriers. Three juniors, Jeff Smith (5-11, 170), Carl Miller (6-0, 170), and Jamie Gallester (5-9, 155) are lettermen who will be expected to make contributions.

Receivers

Three starting pass catchers are back. Senior tight end Mike Kotz (6-0, 181) and senior wide receiver Nate Gulliford (5-10, 152) should provide the leadership. Tyler Jones (5-11, 165) is

an athletic junior wide receiver. Juniors Loban Markman (5-9, 155), Kenny Lile (6-3, 193), Ryan Russ (6-0, 180), and Jeremy Bell (6-0, 170) add arsenal to the passing attack.

Offensive Line

Every returning starter on the offensive line has put on at least 15 pounds of quality bulk since last fall. Senior Brent Nelson (5-10, 200) has been penciled in at center. Classmates Anthony Wolfe (6-1, 250), and Richard Smith (6-2, 275) will play tackle. The junior combo of Ryan Comeau (5-10, 215), and John Jeffries (6-0, 207) have valuable experience at guard. The position group is loaded with other potential blockers including juniors James Gaitner (6-2, 270), Jamie Wheeler (6-1, 225), and Aaron McCoy (6-1, 215) along with seniors Luke Mitchem (6-0, 240), Rex McIntire (6-1, 188), Doug Baker (6-0, 168) and Justin Goode (6-0, 178).

Defensive Line

Familiar faces anchor the defensive front. Smith could be among the elite in the conference at defensive tackle. Gaitner, McCoy and Mitchem will see plenty of action on the interior. Junior defensive end Chris Lewis (6-0, 220) sat out last season with a knee injury, but could make an impact in '96. Lile and McIntire could make some big plays at defensive end.

Linebackers

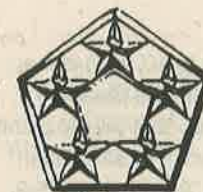
Seniors Derek Morerod (5-10, 180) and Justin Ogle (6-0, 185) will concentrate solely on the defensive side of the football. Both are extremely aggressive and both have a starting experience. Nelson is a strong candidate for the third starting spot. Smith will compete with Russ (6-0, 180) and Bell (6-0, 170) to give the Tigers depth at the linebacker position.

Defensive Backs

The secondary is one of Humphrey's primary concerns heading into the new campaign. Junior Andy Warner (5-10, 150) is back to lead the charges. The rest of the defensive backfield will likely be young with junior Brach Pisciotta (5-10, 161) fighting for a spot with Hoover, Markaman, and Gallester.

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Seneca *indians*

Conference: Big 8
Classification: 3A
District: 12
Head Coach: Tom Hodge
Years at School: 15th
Record at School: 140-27

1996 Seneca Indians Schedule

September		
6	El Dorado Springs	Away
13	McDonald County	Home
20	Monett	Away
27	Cassville	Home
October		
4	Neosho	Home
11	East Newton	Away
18	Aurora	Home
25	Lamar	Away
November		
1	Mt. Vernon	Home
7	Carl Junction	Away

1995 Overall Record: 14-0
1995 Playoff Record: 4-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 1
Defensive Starters Returning: 2
Total Returning Lettermen:

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 8, LOSE 2

Football is king in Seneca and this fall the Indians set out to defend their Missouri Class 3A Crown. Tom Hodge knows the task is a major undertaking. Just three starters return from last year's undefeated state championship team.

"With our inexperience, it's a tough act to follow," Hodge said.

Hodge enters his 15th season with an unbelievable average of 10 wins per season. The veteran coach says he doesn't know what to expect from this year's youthful crop, except, "they will work hard and hit people."

That mindset is what the Seneca Football Tradition is all about. Hodge points to early season games against El Dorado Springs and McDonald County as being critical for his young team to gain confidence. He expects the Big 8 Conference to be very competitive this fall, but the consensus among league coaches is that Hodge's Indians are still the team to beat.

Offensive Backs

Two talented juniors vie for the starting quarterback spot. Justin Thiel (5-10, 165) and Mike Blain (5-11, 175) each have different strengths and one will have to emerge as the offensive playmaker. The Indians have always featured a standout ball carrier, and there are several candidates to become the successor to Brandon Neal at tailback. Seniors Andrew Wilson (5-11,

160) and Jeremy Massey (5-10, 170) could prove to be the answer, or junior running back Adam Hughes (5-11, 170) might fill the void.

Receivers

Seneca hasn't thrown the football too often in years past, but when they have, they've turned the passing attack into big yardage. Seniors Bryan Hamilton (5-9, 170) and Jeff Long (5-10, 160) are ones to watch in the Indians air-attack. Those two will be pushed hard by several underclassmen trying to earn a starting position.

Offensive Line

Senior guard Rob Yust (5-10, 170) is the only returning starter from the State Champion offensive unit. Yust will get plenty of help up front from senior tackles Ethan Wilson (5-11, 175) and Tobin Schultz (5-9, 180). Both have contributed on the offensive line since their sophomore seasons. Junior guard Chris Elbert lettered last year and could be an intrgal part of the corps that makes the running game go.

Defensive Line

Wilson and Schultz are projected as two way starters on the interior lines. The remaining defensive line positions are up for grabs. The Indians aren't likely to outscore opponents in the early portion of the season, and finding some capable young defensive linemen will be a priority in summer camp.

Linebackers

Hodge will field an underclassmen linebacking corps with a lot of potential. Juniors Blair, Hughes and Elbert were not regular starters last year, but all three are fundamentally sound tacklers and saw plenty of action as sophomores. A pool of younger players will compete for a spot at linebacker, and at least one will have to step into the lineup and play a major role. A lack of team speed is one of the big concerns of Hodge and the linebacking corps will have to play well enough to help make up for the absence of speed.

Defensive Backs

The top contenders in the secondary are all probable offensive starters as well. Wilson, Hamilton, Long and Massey are all senior defensive back candidates that could share the responsibilities. If Thiel doesn't earn the starting quarterback position, he'll be counted on as a mainstay in the defensive backfield. Seneca hasn't given up many big plays over the years, and if this group pans out, they won't again this fall.



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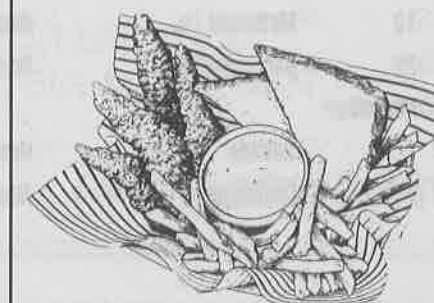
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Webb City *cardinals*

Conference: Southwest

Classification: 4A

District: 11

Head Coach: Kurt Thompson

Years at School: 7th

Record at School: 61-11

1996 Webb City Cardinals

September

6	Branson	Home
13	Pittsburg	Away
20	Joplin	Home
27	KC Central	Home

October

4	Lebanon	Home
11	Neosho	Away
18	McDonald Co.	Home
25	Harrisonville	Away

November

1	Nevada	Home
7	Carthage	Away

The senior class at Webb City has some unfinished business to attend to. This group watched the Cardinals win back to back state championships in 1993 and 1994, and they had lofty expectations of carrying on the strong tradition. After 7-2 and 6-3 seasons as sophomores and juniors, this year's seniors feel like they haven't reached their goals.

"We feel like we have a chance to be a good team if our players are willing to sacrifice themselves to make the necessary commitment," said head coach Kurt Thompson.

Four home games in the first five weeks make a challenging schedule a little bit more palatable. The Cardinals travel to Pittsburg for their annual

border battle with the Purple Dragons, and they host Joplin High School in a game that will undoubtedly draw the biggest crowd in area high school football. Thompson expects the seven returning defensive starters to keep his team competitive in the early part of the season. Neosho appears to be the team to beat in the Southwest Conference. A regular season finale against Carthage could be very interesting with Thompson meeting long-time Webb City assistant coach Jesse Wall for the first time since Wall took the head coaching job with the Tigers.

The Cardinals should be primed for the conference season, and with some luck, the seniors could finally attain their long awaited goals.

Offensive Backs

The Cardinals option attack only works with a talented quarterback. A high priority will be to find a replacement for Shawn Mayes. August will be audition month for possible Webb City signal callers. Senior Matt Mense (5-9, 185) may have to make the transition from running back to quarterback. Mense performed well as a ball carrier last season before an injury cut his season short. Junior Josh Chapman (6-1, 175) will offer competition at quarterback. Senior Ryan Burpo (5-10, 160) is pound for pound one of the toughest players in the Southwest Conference. Mark Bertrand (5-10, 190) returns for his senior season as a proven ground gainer. Classmate Scott Murray (5-10, 180) is a contender for the third spot in the backfield. Depth will come from junior Adam Schooley (5-9, 160) and sophomore Tyrone Wynne (5-8, 150).

Receivers

The offensive juggernaut could be senior Tracey Wistrom (6-5, 210). The tight end schooled opposing defenders last fall with his leaping ability and his athleticism. Wistrom could emerge to be so instrumental, that folks around Webb City might approach older brother Grant (University of Nebraska starting linebacker) and ask, "hey, aren't you Tracey's big brother?" For years, it's been the other way around. Wistrom will be complemented at tight end by seniors Scott Spence (5-9, 180) and Chris Buffett (5-11, 185). Senior Austin Midcap (5-10, 155) returns as a big play wide receiver.

Offensive Line

The offense will be led by returning starters Josh Beecham (5-10, 190), Caleb Miller (6-0, 205), Chad Rose (5-9, 210) and Nathan Hoenshell (6-1, 195). The senior quartet will be relied on to provide leadership. Continued progress from senior Adam Collard (6-3, 205) and juniors Philip Stotts (5-10, 205) and Andy Martinez (5-8, 205) is critical to complete this position group.

Defensive Line

Rose and Collard will have to perform on the defensive front too. Thompson hopes that senior Vance Endicott (6-1, 185) develops into a quality defensive end. Stotts, Martinez and junior Brian Bard (6-0, 200) will push for playing time. Numbers are down in the crop of underclassmen, but sophomore Andrew Shull (6-2, 175) is one of the young defensive linemen who will be given an opportunity to prove themselves.

Linebackers

The linebacking corps has plenty of depth with Wistrom, Miller, and Bertrand back as veteran starters. Damon Outt (5-8, 155) will contend for a starting spot as a junior. Sophomore Tyson Adams (5-8, 160) could make contributions at linebacker.

Defensive Backs

Burpo is the only returning starter in the secondary. The senior will have to carry the burden in a young defensive backfield. Schooley and Wynne are possible starters. If Chapman doesn't start at quarterback, he'll use his talents as a defensive back. Junior Richie Adkins (5-10, 160) has put on the necessary size in the off-season. Sophomores Cole Shewmake (5-9, 140) or Wynne could be called on to mature quick.

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Afton eagles

Classification: 1A

District: 6A

Head Coach: Choo Thomas

Years at School: 3rd

Record at School: 3-17

The number of players is up, the experience level has risen, and optimism abounds for the Eagles. For the first time in three years at Afton, Choo Thomas has a large number of familiar faces reporting to summer camp. It's a big contrast from last August when just 21 players checked out gear.

"This group is determined to turn things around and be more competitive," Thomas said.

Last year the Eagles struggled with just a single win. With a scheduled opener against '95 state playoff participant Berryhill, followed by district games at Wyandotte and at Chouteau, the going could be rough in the early season. But Thomas is determined to let this team mature into winners by mid-season.

"Our week-four game against Picher is big. It's a team with similar talent and a game we will have a good chance to win. If we do win, it will give us confidence throughout the remainder of the season."

Offensive Backs

Senior Cody Cook (5-9, 155) is poised to lead the offense at quarterback, Cook made good progress as

a junior and should be a team leader. A pair of junior running backs have plenty of experience. Trent Horton (5-7, 150) has been a starter at running back since his freshman year and could produce some big numbers. Eric Crane (5-10, 160) is a hard runner and good blocker. Some young talent will have to emerge to provide depth.

Receivers

Experienced pass catchers are a commodity. In fact, the Eagles only return one. Junior

tight end Matt Tipton (5-11, 150) will be counted on heavily, especially in the early season. Thomas and his staff will search for help from the underclassmen.

Offensive Line

The offensive line will be the Eagles biggest asset. Seniors John Rhoten (5-8, 250) and Rob Rhoten (5-8, 240) can open holes in a hurry. Classmates Caleb Kyles (5-8, 150), Rickie Ramey (5-10, 200), and Brandon Carter (5-10, 160) are all experienced. Thomas has plenty of depth at this position group and expects the guys up front to carry the burden in the early season.

Defensive Line

Expect opposing running backs to become 'Rhoten Sandwiches' as John and Rob play as two-way linemen. Junior Cody Alexander (5-10, 180) is an experienced down lineman. Ramsey and Kyle provide depth. Tipton and Carter will likely get the start at defensive end.

Linebackers

There's a good chance that Cook will have to play on the defensive side of the football as well. The Eagles' quarterback played in the secondary last fall, and moves up to a linebacker position for this campaign. Junior Shawn Hilton (5-9, 150) will be counted on to contribute.

Defensive Backs

Senior Jason Cederblom (5-9, 150) returns as one of the Eagles top covermen. Horton and Crane will likely fill out the secondary. Thomas will look to the pool of underclassmen to find some depth at the position.

1996 Afton Eagles Schedule

September

6	Berryhill	Home
13	Wyandotte	Away
20	Chouteau	Away
27	Picher	Home

October

4	Liberty	Away
11	Colcord	Away
17	Commerce	Home
25	Quapaw	Away

November

1	Fairland	Home
8	Kansas	Home

1995 Overall Record: 1-9

1995 Playoff Record: 1-8

Offensive Starters Returning: 9

Defensive Starters Returning: 7

Total Returning Lettermen: 15

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 2, LOSE 8

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BlueJacket *chieftains*

Classification: 8-man Class C

District: 4

Head Coach: Michael Brumley

Years at School: 5th

Record at School: 9-27

1996 Blue Jacket Chieftains Schedule

September

6	S. Coffeyville	Away
12	Chetopa	Home
19	Ketchum	Away
27	Copan	Home

October

4	Yale	Home
10	White Oak	Home
17	Welch	Home
25	Shidler	Away

November

1	Bowlegs	Away
8	Butner	Away

1995 Overall Record: 0-10

1995 Playoff Record: 0-0

Offensive Starters Returning: 4

Defensive Starters Returning: 4

Total Returning Lettermen: 6

JAY'S PREDICTION – WIN 2, LOSE 8

The few, the proud, the Chieftains. Michael Brumley has one main goal for his Bluejacket football team: Finish the season.

A head count in May revealed that only ten players had firm plans to suit up for the 8-man program. With a total 9th grade through 12 grade enrollment of 58 students, numbers are always a big concern for Bluejacket. A couple injuries can deplete the forces enough to make it impossible to field a team.

"It's a difficult, almost overwhelming situation," Brumley admits. "It's tough for the kids to get excited. You have to prepare like you will have enough players to compete every week, but you really never know."

The Chieftains head coach is extremely proud of the young men that choose to play. Brumley says several of the top athletes in school decided not to come out for the team last fall.

"I give credit to those who played. They certainly earned my respect, and the respect of the fans," Brumley said.

The numbers situation became so desperate a couple years ago, that a girl actually put on pads to practice with the team.

"She did well, she even intercepted my starting quarterback in practice," Brumley said.

If Bluejacket can stay healthy enough to field a team for the entire season, they could be competitive. One-half of the starters are back, and the Chieftains have an attractive schedule with four consecutive games at home in the mid season.

Brumley thinks the future of Bluejacket football is bright with a very impressive group of 8th graders coming through the ranks. This fall, the upperclassmen will try to help lay a foundation for that future.

Offensive Backs

Senior quarterback Bruce Demaree (6-2, 175) will lead the Chieftains I-formation

offensive attack. Demaree is intelligent and has decent arm strength. The running back position was hit hard by graduation. Freshman Jared Jones (5-11, 210) is already huge and already a pretty good football player according to Brumley. Randall Thompson (5-8, 145) moves from tight end to running back for his senior campaign.

Receivers

Tight end Clinton Nigh (6-0, 253) returns for his junior year. Nigh makes up for his lack of speed with exceptional pass catching ability. Sophomore Rocky Ferdig (5-4, 110) is a petite wide receiver with some experience.

Offensive Line

A pair of young offensive linemen return for Blue Jacket. Sophomore Howard Matney (6-0, 160) is perhaps the hardest worker on the team. Freshman Fred Epperson (6-0, 235) has tremendous potential. Brumley calls the big, fast and athletic Epperson, 'fearless'.

Defensive Line

Sophomore Glen Black (6-0, 235) has only played one season of football, but has impressed the coaching staff with his abilities as a defensive lineman. Epperson, and Matney will be the mainstays up front. Nigh is more offensive minded, but he will make contributions at tight end as well.

Linebackers

Demaree returns for his second season at linebacker. The senior made big improvements over the course of the frustrating season. Jones is an instinctive, 'Mike Ditka' type of player at linebacker according to Brumley.

Defensive Backs

Senior Randall Thompson (5-9, 150) brings an excellent attitude to the secondary. The free safety improved every game in '95. Two sophomore defensive backs will be counted on as cornerbacks. Lloyd "Splinter" Wood (5-6, 140) and Ferdig are small, but both have good quickness and some experience.

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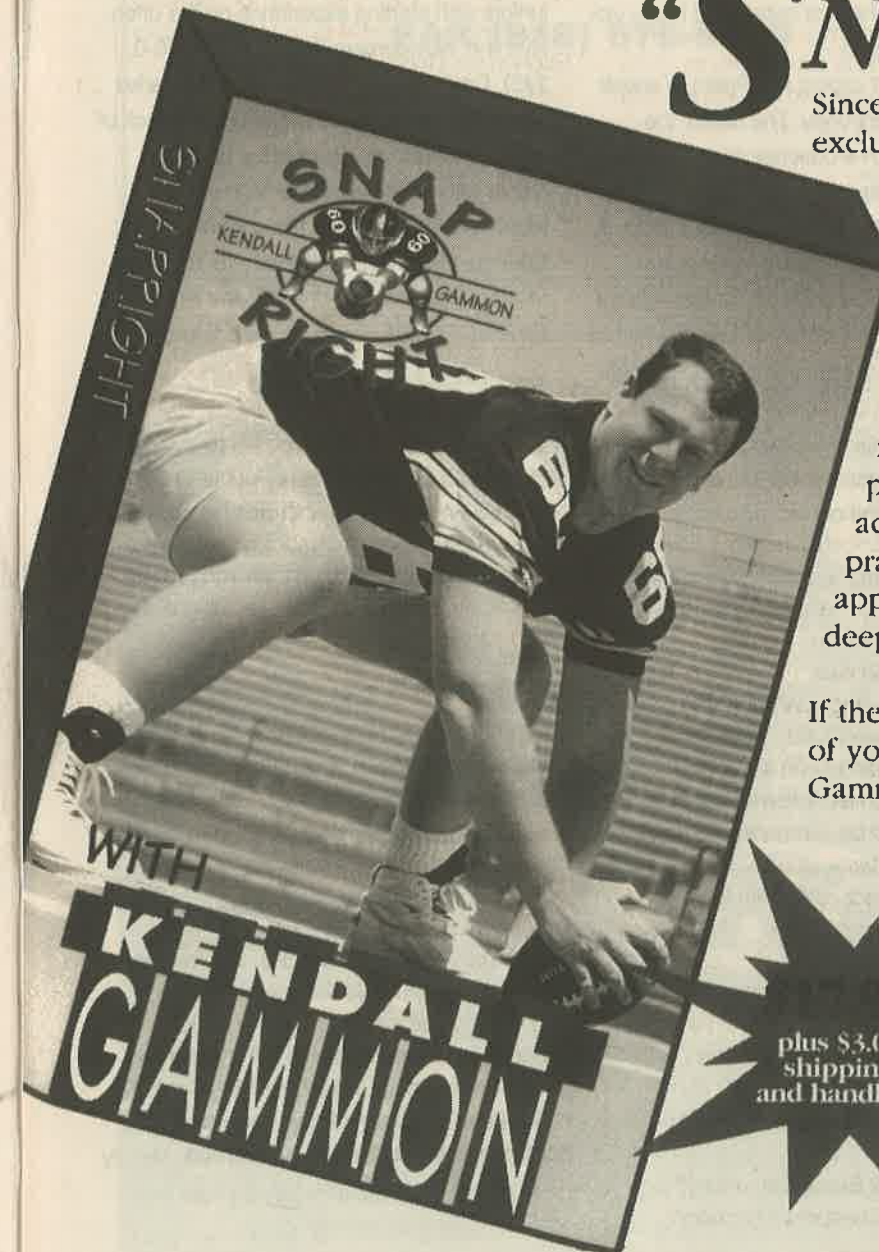
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Commerce *tigers*

Classification: 1A
District: A-6
Head Coach: Rick Trimble
Years at School: 7th
Record at School: 29-36

A Tiger turnaround appears to be eminent after a disappointing 2-8 finish in '95. Rick Trimble has the luxury of fielding seven players, each with two years of starting experience behind them. Commerce moves down to the Oklahoma 1A classification this year after struggling with 2A opponents.

"I feel that we could be a very competitive team; they are a bunch of great, hard working young men that are capable of many victories," Trimble said.

Don't expect the Tigers to sneak up on anybody. The rest of the District A-6 coaches are giving this team the respect it deserves. With an opening game against the Joplin High School Junior Varsity team, followed by a home contest against Fairland, Commerce could get off to the successful start to help rekindle confidence. However, the Tigers must face powerful Kansas and Wyandotte in back to back games at the end of September.

Offensive Backs

Senior quarterback Justin Reading (6-1, 185) will be directing the offense for a third consecutive year. Reading is a seasoned veteran who has proven to be a threat as a runner or as a passer. Junior Jon

Jennings (5-10, 160) will be the workhorse running back, and underclassmen wing-backs Heath Whorton (5-8, 135) and Tyson Trimble (6-0, 145) provide speed in the Tigers' misdirection offensive scheme.

Receivers

Senior tight end Nathan Watson (6-5, 215) should tower over all defenders and will provide a short route passing threat on every down. Junior Jeff Thomas (6-0, 205) is back for his third season at tight end. The sopho-

more tandem of Tim Lewis (6-1, 145) and Scott Williams (6-0, 170) will provide for good competition in the Tigers' two tight end alignment.

Offensive Line

Trimble has some concerns about his interior line on both sides of the football. Aaron Romine (6-0, 200), Aaron Crockett (5-10, 200), and Kevin Grundy (6-1, 160) are three juniors with starting experience on the offensive line. Newcomers Brian Guzman (6-0, 245), David Vanatta (6-5, 245) and Charles Crow (6-2, 230) should make up for a lack of experience with an abundance of size. Depth will not be a problem with sophomores Jake Perry (6-0, 190), Johnny Eddings (6-0, 185), Mike Perry (5-10, 180), Michael Alexander (6-0, 230), and Bruce Smith (5-11, 225) vying for a starting spot.

Defensive Line

Chad France (5-8, 150) and Michael Grube (5-11, 160) are undersized, but hard-nosed with starting experience. Trimble is hoping Guzman, Vanatta, or Crow will materialize as quality defensive linemen.

Linebackers

The linebacking corps is as solid as any in District 6A. The Tigers are loaded with three starters returning. Seniors Jessie Burnett (6-0, 205) and Brian Piper (6-0, 185), along with Sophomore sensation Brandon Trimble (5-8, 160) should wreak havoc on opposing offenses. Senior newcomer James Chumley (5-10, 175) will compete for playing time.

Defensive Backs

Reading and Jennings could pull double duty as starters in the defensive backfield. Both are too athletic to just play offensively. Sophomores Tyson Trimble and Nick Mondy (6-0, 175) are back after being thrust into varsity action as ninth graders.

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JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 3

Grove *ridgerunners*

Classification: 4A
District: 4A-3
Head Coach: Darrell Mastin
Years at School: 1st
Record at School: 0-0

1996 Grove Ridgerunners Schedule

September		
6	Jay	Away
13	Dewey	Away
20	Vinita	Home
27	Locust Grove	Home
October		
4	Coweta	Away
11	Miami	Home
17	Skiatook	Home
25	Wagoner	Away
November		
1	Catoosa	Home
8	Stillwell	Away

1995 Overall Record: 1-9
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 6
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Total Returning Lettermen: 40

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 5

The Grove Ridgerunners aren't squaring their corners, they don't begin every sentence with 'sir', and the only formation they line up in is the 'I'. Still, there is a slight military influence on this team.

First year head coach Darrell Mastin brings experience from the United States Air Force Academy. Mastin played and coached at the Academy and at the Air Force Prep School, and he gives new structure to a program that struggled in 1995.

"We're taking a fundamental approach," Mastin said. "I want to instill discipline and pride. For example, we have a dress code in the weight room this summer. Nothing extravagant, but the players are required to wear a shirt and proper footwear."

The Ridgerunners averaged 40 young men at every summer weight room session. The players were on time, and took a business like attitude to the workouts. That same philosophy will carry over to the football field. Mastin is getting back to the basics in all phases of the game.

"I want to keep it simple," the coach says.

The schedule will not be simple. Grove should be able to get off to a fast start when they open against Jay in the annual Delaware County Bowl. The opponents get increasingly more talented with Vinita, Skiatook and Stillwell looming.

Offensive Backs

It shapes up to be a three man race at the quarterback position. Senior Matt Clouse (5-10, 165) is a solid all around athlete who returns after breaking his collarbone last fall. Junior Dusty Crowder (6-0, 160) took over for Clouse after the injury last season. Crowder moved over from wide receiver and has asked the coaching staff for an opportunity to try to keep the quarterback job. Junior Kip Short (5-10, 170) is another candidate. Short got some experience as a sophomore, but his season was also cut short by a dislocated shoulder. Senior Mike Lovelace (5-10, 185) is the Ridgerunners' 'Big Gun' at running back. Lovelace is the second strongest player on the team. Mastin says the senior is explosive and capable of, "consistent flashes of brilliance." Junior fullback Matt Sitton (5-10, 180) also figures into the picture.

Receivers

A pair of quality tight ends will be the key in Grove's offensive attack. Senior Dirk McReynolds (5-10, 210) is vastly improved from a year ago. Zachery Mastin (6-0, 210) makes the move from offensive tackle to tight end. The coach's son has good hands and better blocking ability. Both players will be an important part of the unbalanced formation. Junior Lucas Hillis (5-9, 150) is a speedy wide receiver and slot back who will be a constant threat.

Offensive Line

Senior Clayton Jackson (6-0, 230) has the best strength on the team. The offensive guard has emerged as a team leader and his classroom smarts carry over to the trenches. Mike Thompson (5-11, 165) has an offensive line-man mentality. Despite his small size, coach Mastin says the senior is too talented not to find a spot in the offensive lineup. Thompson will play some guard, and may even be experimented with as a blocking fullback.

Defensive Line

Jackson, McReynolds and Zachery Mastin will anchor the defensive front. Mastin proved to be fearless last fall when he went up against some 300 pound offensive tackles. The sophomore combo of Josh Miller (6-1, 230) and Brian Proctor (5-9, 225) should make major contributions. The two underclassmen have good feet and natural strength.

Linebackers

Thompson is a seasoned linebacker. Lovelace and Sitton will utilize their above average speed and tackling ability in the Ridgerunner's 4-3 alignment. Defensive coordinator Larry Schackelford will take a good look at some of the younger players to add depth at the linebacker position.

Defensive Backs

The opposition would be smart not to mess with junior defensive back Wes Cunningham (5-9, 150). Cunningham is an accomplished boxer and martial arts student. A wrist injury limited his playing time on the football field last year, but the coaching staff expects Cunningham to be a key in the secondary this fall. Hillis returns as a corner. Mastin touts the junior as being able to play man to man with anybody in the state of Oklahoma.

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Ketchum *warriors*

Classification: 8-man

District: 4

Head Coach: James Dawson

Years at School: 6th

Record at School: 25-25

"You Can't Stop the Chop."

That's the battle cry in Ketchum this fall as the Warriors make a run at their third straight Oklahoma 8-man playoff appearance. Head coach James Dawson has witnessed a major metamorphosis of this year's seniors.

"Two years ago we made the post season for the first time in 14 seasons," Dawson said.

"It changed the kids' attitude. They are real excited because they know that they are capable of competing with anybody in the state. We're not in awe of anyone."

Indeed, the Warriors have come a long way in recent times. In '95, their playoff loss was to eventual state runner-up Morrison. Six starters return on both sides of the football, and in the 8-man game, that equates to having three-fourths of the nucleus back on the field.

Ketchum has a very manageable schedule. Traditionally, the first two district games, and the last two district games have been key, and the Warriors will enjoy home field advantage in all of them.

"For their sake, I hope this team does well," Dawson asserts. "They have worked hard and they are very deserving."

Offensive Backs

All of the skill position players are seasoned starters for the Warriors. Senior quarterback Brad Farrar (6-1, 170) is a versatile athlete who ran for 700 yards and passed for

700 yards as a junior. Dawson says his signal caller has a good understanding of the offensive schemes and has good leadership qualities. Junior fullback Charlie Cunningham (5-11, 190) has been a regular since his freshman season. His move from tight end to fullback last year paid off as Cunningham rushed for more than 1,000 yards. Running back James Long (5-10, 185) returns for his senior season after gaining 600 yards last fall. Long is a confident and aggressive leader and may inspire Cunningham as the two have a friendly battle to become the leading ground gainer.

Receivers

Senior Tracy Autry (6-3, 175) leads a talented pass catching corps. Dawson calls the rangy receiver, "our ace in the hole." Senior Eric Robbins (5-7, 150) is the most experienced and most consistent target. Cory Rubink (6-0, 170) didn't play football until last year, but really prospered his junior season by utilizing good speed and the ability to go after any ball thrown his way.

Offensive Line

Dustin Moore (6-0, 275) is extremely agile for his size. The senior is capable of playing guard or center and will anchor the offensive front. Junior Daniel Baker (6-0, 195) returns after seeing significant playing time last fall. The Warriors have some voids to fill on the offensive line. C.J. McCord (5-11, 170) is a top candidate. McCord demonstrated some unselfishness last year in his junior season. Due to a heart condition, his playing time in the trenches was limited, so he concentrated on special teams, and developed into an all district kicker.

Defensive Line

Dawson thinks Baker has the heart and desire to become an outstanding noseguard. Moore, Autry, and Cunningham will compete with several quality underclassmen to earn a spot on the three-man defensive front.

Linebackers

The Warriors will get a lot of mileage out of Farrar and Long as they are the incumbent linebackers. Both players attended a speed camp in the summer and hope to use the extra step of quickness they developed to lead the team in tackles.

Defensive Backs

Robbins will be the big hitter in the secondary. Senior Gary Hitchcock (5-10, 165) has very good speed and is capable of preventing the big play. There's a whole troop of underclassmen that defensive coordinator Lew Hill will search through to complete the defensive backfield.

1996 Ketchum Warriors Schedule

September

6	Prue	Away
13	Welch	Away
20	Bluejacket	Home
27	Webber Falls	Home

October

4	Foyil	Home
11	Watts	Away
17	Wolfeoka	Away
26	Cave Springs	Away

November

1	Oaks	Home
8	Central Sallisaw	Home

1995 Overall Record: 5-5

1995 Playoff Record: 0-1

Offensive Starters Returning: 6

Defensive Starters Returning: 6

Total Returning Lettermen: 13

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 8, LOSE 2

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Miami wardogs

Classification: 4A
District: 3
Head Coach: Bob Homer
Years at School: 15th
Record at School: 100-60

1996 Miami Wardog Schedule

September		
6	Vinita	Away
13	Jay	Away
20	Okmulgee	Home
27	Coweta	Home
October		
4	Locust Grove	Home
11	Grove	Away
18	Wagoner	Home
25	Stilwell	Away
November		
1	Skiatook	Home
8	Catoosa	Away

1995 Overall Record: 7-4
1995 Playoff Record: 0-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 8
Total Returning Lettermen: 18

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 8, LOSE 2

Bob Homer won his one-hundredth game at Miami High School last fall. The 15 year veteran should build on that record in 1996. Fifteen returning starters are back on this senior dominated team. The Wardogs admittedly have one of their most difficult schedules in recent memory. Six opponents qualified for the post-season last year.

"This is an aggressive and hard-nosed team," said Homer, "We should be competitive, but the schedule is very tough."

Miami travels to Vinita for the opener, and they have a week-four date with district champion Coweta. Last year, the Wardogs lost a 24-21 heart-breaker to Coweta. The seniors will have revenge on their minds on September 27th.

Homer knows his team will have to stay healthy to prosper. Although the starting players are experienced, depth is a concern. If the senior class provides leadership to the up and coming players, the Wardogs will make a run at the district championship.

Offensive Backs

Senior Nathan Rapp (5-11, 190) and junior Keoni Sajulga (5-8, 160) will compete for the starting quarterback position in August. Both are inexperienced. A stable of senior running backs should lessen the burden put on the untested quarterback. Johnathan Ellis (5-8, 160)

was the leading ground gainer the past two year. He'll be pushed by Tony Black (5-10, 170), Adam Lushenko (5-10, 170), and Shane Mercer (5-6, 155). Athletic senior David Bates (5-9, 180) and junior David Gilstrap (5-9, 160) will vie for playing time. Seniors Josh Murphy (5-10, 190) and Josiah Plemmans (5-9, 175) are the fullback candidates.

Receivers

Ryan Kenney could be the most talented

skill position player on the field. The senior wide receiver returns as the leading pass catchers from 1995. Potential starting tight ends include senior Ryan Smith (5-11, 190) and junior Josh Javert (6-0, 170).

Offensive Line

The offensive line has experience and size. Seniors Casey Lipscomb (6-0, 240), Jerry Reece (6-2, 235), and Matt Spillman (5-10, 190) will be counted on to lead the attack. Reece has been a solid starter for two years. Chad Kettleman (5-10, 200) was the first player to start for Homer as a freshman. He returns for his sophomore season more mature physically and could be a huge asset to the offensive line. Depth will be sought in seniors Mike Leonard (5-8, 200) and Chris Tillman (6-3, 245), along with underclassmen Brad Heard (6-4, 230) and Kyle Baldrige (6-0, 240).

Defensive Line

Lipscomb, Tillman and Reece are likely two-way starters on the line. Leonard is a veteran noseguard capable of congesting the middle. Spillman should get the nod as the strong side defensive end, while Smith and sophomore Matt Rhodes (5-11, 200) battle for a start on the other side.

Linebackers

The linebacking core could be the best in District 3. Murphy returns as the Wardogs' leading tackler. He'll be complemented by veterans Plemmans and Kettleman. Homer will have to find some back up strength from the crop of newcomers.

Defensive Backs

Leadership in the secondary will be sought in Ellis and Kenney. The speedy senior tandem can cover a lot of ground in the defensive backfield. Black, Lushenko and Mercer were all back-ups at cornerback as juniors. They must fill the voids in pass coverage. Rapp and Gilstrap may be asked to play a role defensively in long yardage situations.



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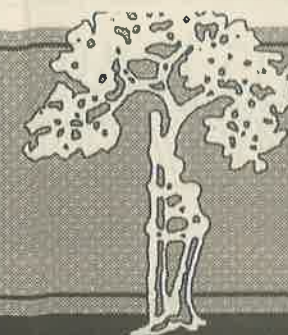


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		Game
Sat., July 27	10 PM-1 AM	Japan Bowl 96: Pittsburg vs. San Diego
Mon., August 12	8-11 PM	New England at Dallas
Thu., August 15	8-11 PM	Oakland at Atlanta
Regular Season		
Sun., November 3	8-11 PM	San Francisco at New Orleans
Sun., November 10	8-11 PM	New York Giants at Carolina
Sun., November 17	8-11 PM	Minnesota at Oakland
Sun., November 24	8-11 PM	Green Bay at St. Louis
Sun., December 1	8-11 PM	New England at San Diego
Thu., December 5	8-11 PM	Philadelphia at Indianapolis
Sun., December 8	8-11 PM	Minnesota at Detroit
Sun., December 15	8-11 PM	Seattle at Jacksonville
Sun., December 22	8-11 PM	Denver at San Diego

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Picher gorillas

Classification: 1A
District: 6A
Head Coach: Willie Ng
Years at School: 3rd
Record at School: 7-13

1996 Picher Gorillas Schedule

September		
5	Galena	Away
13	Chouteau	Away
20	Chelsea	Home
27	Afton	Away
October		
4	Colcord	Home
11	Commerce	Away
17	Quapaw	Home
25	Fairland	Home
November		
1	Kansas	Away
8	Wyandotte	Home

1995 Overall Record: 3-7
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 9
Defensive Starters Returning: 9
Total Returning Lettermen: 11

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 5

Willie Ng enters his third year as head coach of the Gorillas, and most of his starting lineup has been around since the beginning of the Ng era. Seven of the nine seniors have at least two years of starting experience on their resumes and it should add up to a very competitive team in the difficult 6A district.

"They may not be the most athletic team," Ng said, "but they play lights out every down. They play with reckless abandon and they are very aggressive."

The experience of nine offensive starters and nine defensive starters gives Ng reason to believe his team will make a run at the district title. Ng has stressed fundamental, assignment oriented football and the effort should reap some big wins for the Gorillas. Six of Picher's seven losses last season were by margins of at least two touchdowns. That fact should give this senior dominated team added incentive to redeem themselves. Ng is concerned about finding some leaders among the ranks. If he does, Picher could put together it's best record this decade.

The Gorillas open the season across state lines in Galena, KS. That first Friday night will be a good barometer to see just how good this team can be.

Offensive Backs

Injury plagued senior Jeremy Herd (5-10, 190) makes the move from quarterback to tight end. That leaves senior Jeremy Beckwith (5-8, 140) as the apparent starting signal caller this fall. Beckwith will need to assume a leadership role offensively. Senior running back Chad Davis (5-10, 190) has been the Gorillas' top ground gainer the last two years. If Davis can stay healthy, he will make a run at the 1,000 yard mark. Clint Epperson (5-10, 180) is one of the few underclassmen expected to start. The sophomore running back was a starter as a ninth grader.

Receivers

Lanky Jeff McCoy (6-0, 150) is the Gorillas'

veteran pass catcher. McCoy led the team in catches in each of the last two seasons. Junior Michael Phillips (5-9, 160) will likely get the nod at the other wideout position. Herd will be a constant threat as the Gorillas' tight end. He understands the offense better than anyone and he runs well after the catch.

Offensive Line

Ng calls offensive lineman John Kelly (5-10, 185) his best interior player. Just a junior, Kelly will be expected to display leadership qualities across the front. Seniors Jeremy Patterson (5-9, 194), Cecil Bench (5-10, 202), and Gabe Clevenger (5-11, 215) are experienced in the trenches. Sophomore Jake Walker (5-11, 205) is a transfer from Miami who could make an immediate impact, and senior Richy Powers (6-2, 230) could find his niche on third and short and goaline situations.

Defensive Line

Bench, Clevenger and Powers could be asked to play both ways. Junior Michael Davis (5-9, 160) has overcome deafness to become a reliable noseguard. Senior Justin Crouch (5-10, 165) is penciled in as a potential starter at defensive end, while Ng and his staff look to an underclassman to emerge on the other side. Freshman Richard Paxson (5-9, 180) is a good bet to earn the other starting defensive end roster spot.

Linebackers

Herd will play linebacker with great intensity. He could get even more aggressive this year after being relieved of his quarterbacking duties. The unit has depth with Kelly and Patterson back as experienced starters and Epperson contending for playing time defensively.

Defensive Backs

Davis and McCoy will provide good footspeed in the secondary. The athletic Beckwith could also contribute at defensive back. The coaching staff is excited about the potential of freshman Brent Judd (5-8, 155) in pass coverage.

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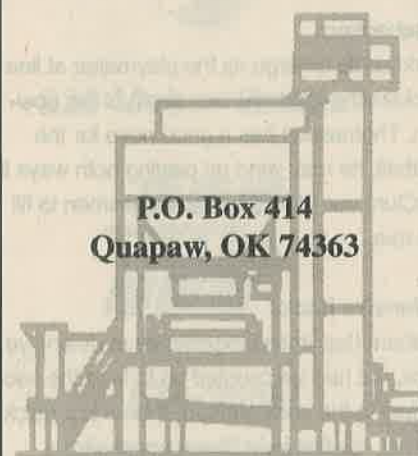
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Quapaw wildcats

Classification: 1A

District: 6A

Head Coach: Mike McClure

Years at School: 4th

Record at School: 30-9

1996 Quapaw Wildcats Schedule

September

5	Chelsea	Away
13	Adair	Home
20	Fairland	Home
27	Kansas	Away

October

4	Wyandotte	Home
11	Choteau	Away
17	Picher	Away
25	Atton	Home

November

1	Colcord	Away
8	Commerce	Home

1995 Overall Record: 12-2

1995 Playoff Record: 3-1

Offensive Starters Returning: 4

Defensive Starters Returning: 2

Total Returning Lettermen: 17

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 6, LOSE 4

No doubt, Mike McClure was rather emotional at graduation ceremonies at Quapaw High School this Spring. The Wildcats head coach saw two of the areas' most talented players move on. Gone are standout quarterback Adam Thomasson and running back Darren Maute, the catalysts behind Quapaw's back to back appearances in the Oklahoma state semi-finals. McClure has some big voids to fill, but the veteran coach (16 years, 146-39 overall) has consistently found ways to build champions before.

"We hope that a carry over from our recent past successes will help this team compete," McClure said. "We have some young men who possess the ability to be successful, but it will take time for them to blend together into a cohesive unit."

McClure isn't as worried about the opponents as he is about his own team.

"Our toughest opponent? It may be the Quapaw Wildcats, time will tell."

The importance of pre-season camp in August will be magnified if this group wants to win. The young Wildcats will be thrown into the fire in week four with a trip to Kansas. The following week they host Wyandotte.

Offensive Backs

Sophomore Nick Truelove (5-10, 140) is the heir apparent to Adamsson at quarterback. Junior Bucky Barnes (6-1, 190) has good size and starting experience at fullback and will be get plenty of carries. Classmates Trampas Thomasson (5-6, 140) and Danny Barnett (5-6, 160) will have to mature quickly to make the running game move.

Receivers

Shaun Burki (6-0, 150) is the veteran in the

position group. McClure will call on senior Gary Graham (5-6, 140) to contribute. Kyle Neal (6-2, 170) has never played, but the senior possesses athletic ability and good hands and could be a real surprise in the Wildcats' offensive arsenal.

Offensive Line

The big guys up front will have to perform in the early season. McClure thinks the offensive line is the strongest position group on the team. Juniors Dustin Wall (6-3, 225) and Tyson McKibben (6-0, 220) both have starting experience. Support will have to be found in Albert Ray (6-0, 180), Zach Stivers (5-6, 150), James Gray (6-1, 230), Jay Price (6-1, 190), or Anthony Jackson (6-0, 230).

Defensive Line

Barnes and Ray will be the contain men at defensive end. McClure believes the defense lacks great speed, so their performance will be critical. Gray and Jackson have good size and are liable to find their niche defensively. Junior Jason Baird (5-10, 180) is a newcomer who will be counted on to make an impact. Barnett is capable of disrupting offenses with his above average quickness.

Linebackers

Burki could emerge as the playmaker at linebacker. The Wildcats lack depth at the position. Thomasson has a good nose for the football, he may wind up playing both ways if McClure can't find any underclassmen to fill the role.

Defensive Backs

Graham has limited experience at defensive back, but he'll be counted on to lead the secondary in the early season. If Neal is a quick learner, the first year player could earn a starting spot on defense. It will be important to find some young players to step forward and contribute in the secondary.

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Vinita *hornets*

Conference: Verdigris Valley
Classification: 3A
District: 3A-3
Head Coach: L.P. Williams
Years at School: 16th
Record at School: 126-48

1996 Vinita Hornets Schedule

September		
6	Miami	Home
13	Nowata	Away
20	Grove	Away
27	Collinsville	Home
October		
4	Dewey	Home
11	Kellyville	Away
17	Pawhuska	Away
25	Oologah	Home
November		
1	Jay	Away
8	Cascia Hall	Home

1995 District Record: 13-1
1995 Playoff Record: 3-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 5
Total Returning Lettermen: 27

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 10, LOSE 0

Winning football games has become a habit in Vinita and L.P. Williams expects the healthy addiction to continue in his 16th year at the helm. This year's seniors have won 22 games and lost just five since they joined the strong program. Vinita is coming off a tremendous year in which they finished as Oklahoma class 3A state runner-ups. With 27 returning lettermen back in uniform, the Hornets are a good bet to make a run at a Sooner State title. "These kids know how to play and they expect to win," Williams said.

Williams isn't taking anything for granted this fall. The Hornets open the season against rival Miami. Each week will offer a new challenge, including an October 25th showdown with Oologah.

"Every game is critical. These programs are getting so good, there aren't any weak sisters anymore," Williams added.

If everything falls into place, and if the Hornets find some depth, Vinita will feed the winning habit to the hilt.

Offensive Backs

Senior quarterback Jeff Williams is one of the best in the region. Williams accounted for 27 touchdowns last season. Sixteen of his 49 completions went for scores. With 4.4 speed in the 40 yard dash, Williams is a burner, and could do the most damage to defenses as a runner. Senior Travis Bryant (5-11, 195) is back after racking up nearly

900 yards at running back last fall. Bryant is also capable of producing big plays as a receiver out of the backfield. He caught five touchdown passes as a junior. Senior Eric Allen (5-9, 160) is another returning starter who averaged 7 yards a carry in '95.

Receivers

The Hornets have a one-two punch at wide receiver with Timothy Morgan (5-10, 165) and Kurt Surine (5-11, 170). Heath Hartley (5-11, 175) is an all around athlete who will complement the split ends. Added support comes from senior Ryan Clayborn (6-1, 165) and junior Josh Lee (6-2, 170).

Offensive Line

Seniors Travis Lalicker (5-8, 230) and Matt Lawon (6-1, 215) will help pave the way for the Hornets' explosive offense. The difference between a good season and a great season may be determined by how well some younger offensive linemen develop. Senior Dink Bass (6-2, 290) has huge potential. Classmates William Fry (6-0, 190), Travis Hartley (6-2, 240), and Brandon Lins (6-1, 235) are expected to push for a regular spot in the trenches.

Defensive Line

Junior Kelly Sayahnjad (6-1, 255) will take center stage at noseguard on the defensive front. Unlike last year, Williams might have to use a few interior linemen on both offense and defense. Lalicker and Lawson are candidates to play both ways. Junior Jake Rhinehart (6-0, 185) is a potential down lineman. Amongst the players vying for a job at defensive end are Fry, senior Pat Henderson (5-10, 170) and juniors Justin Hale (5-11, 175) and Shawn Lawhon (5-10, 165).

Linebackers

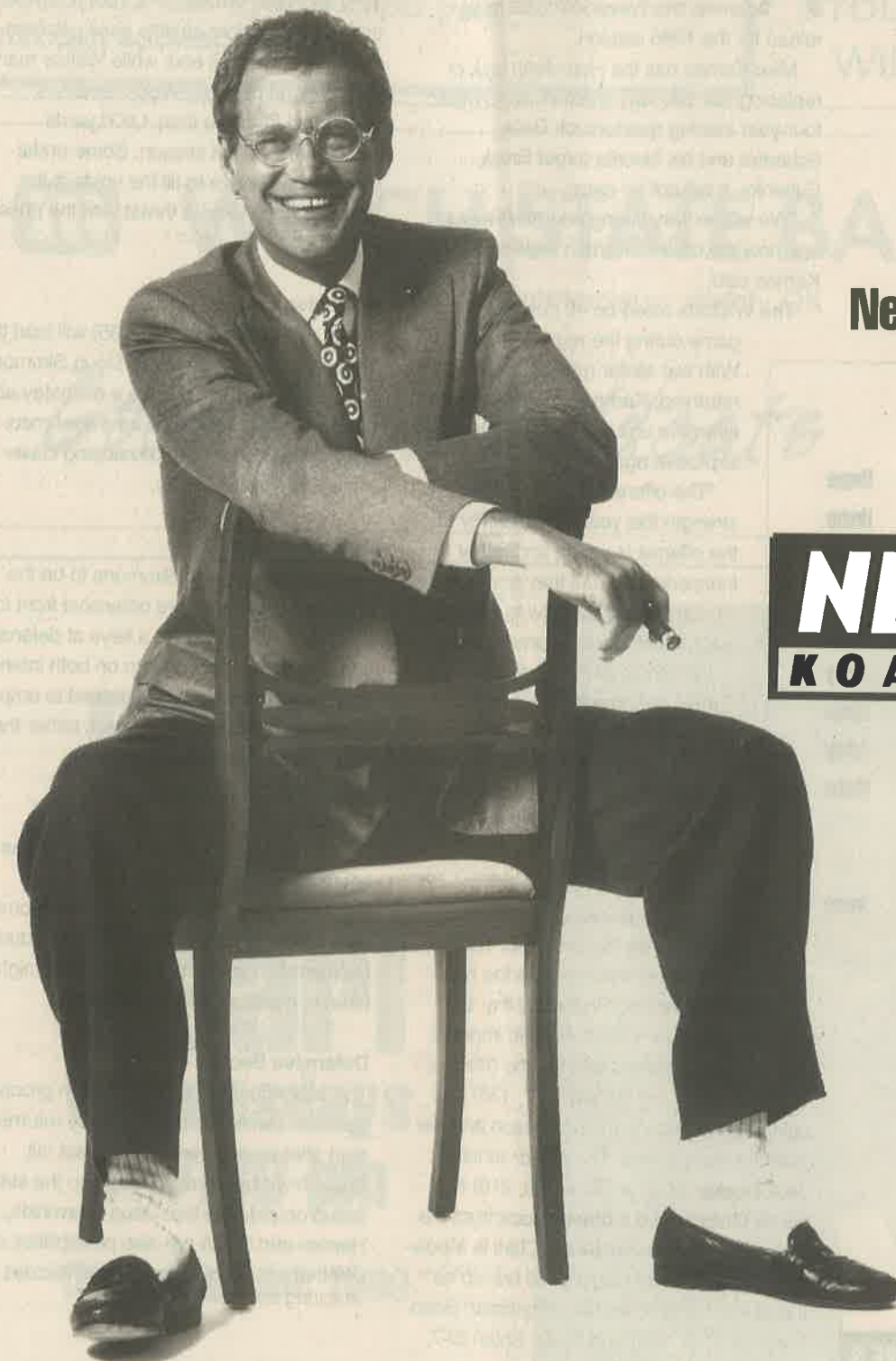
Senior Clay Osburn (5-10, 190) will focus on defense and play linebacker. Together with Bryant, the Hornets will have speed to burn on the second line of defense. Junior Jacob Folks (6-0, 175) is a promising understudy who could make contributions. Williams and his staff will have to find some reinforcement from the younger players.

Defensive Backs

Williams has put confidence in returning starting defensive backs James Lingo (5-11, 150) and Hartley. The two seniors will be called upon to provide the entire defense with leadership. Both are seasoned veterans in the backfield, capable of producing turnovers and making big plays. Seniors Brian Hardrick (6-2, 170) and Pat Henderson (5-10, 170) could break into the starting lineup. Competition in the secondary will be fierce with juniors Kyle Wayman (5-10, 160) and Leon Slinker (5-6, 140) among the aspiring defensive backs.

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Welch *wildcats*

Classification: C
District: 4
Head Coach: Mike Karnes
Years at School: 4th
Record at School: 27-5

After running the table in the regular season and winning two playoff games, the Welch Wildcats must reload for the 1996 season.

Mike Karnes has the Herculean task of replacing star two-way lineman Jered Miller, four-year starting quarterback Gabe Scheafer and his favorite target Brock Eubanks. It will not be easy.

"We will be very young and must wait to see how the underclassmen develop," Karnes said.

The Wildcats rolled up 42 points per game during the regular season. With two stellar running backs returning, Karnes thinks this year's offensive unit has the potential to be explosive again.

"The offense is probably our strength this year. The majority of the offense is young and rather inexperienced, but they are hard workers that know how to win and want to win again," Karnes said.

With three of their first four games at home, Welch has the chance to get off to a fast start. Back to back games against powerful Foyil and White Oak could very well dictate the fate of this year's Wildcat program.

Offensive Backs

Junior Chris Bozarth (5-6, 120) steps onto the scene as the heir apparent to Schaefer. Bozarth is tiny, but quick, and he has worked hard to improve his skills and understanding of the offense. Sophomore Jimmy Harden (5-7, 135) has gained 25 pounds in the off season and will push for playing time. The senior running back tandem of Jake Clark (5-8, 210) and Derek Grigsby (5-8, 165) are back from the high scoring offensive attack. Clark is a powerful fullback, while Grigsby will line up as tailback in the "I" formation. Freshman Sean Freeman (5-6, 135) and Phillip Shinn (5-7, 125) add depth.

Receivers

Part time contributors Doug Rexwinkle (5-5, 125) and Glen Walker (5-7, 160) return for their senior seasons as able pass catchers. Rexwinkle is a split end, while Walker mans the tight end position. Welch receivers accounted for more than 1,000 yards through the air last season. Some underclassmen will have to fill the voids in the Wildcats hope to be a threat with the passing attack.

Offensive Line

Junior Josh Rutledge (6-0, 235) will lead the troops up front. Sophomore Doug Simmons (6-0, 230) is expected to be a mainstay after seeing some playing time as a freshmen. Support will come from developing classmate Billy Vail (5-7, 175).

Defensive Line

Expect Rutledge and Simmons to be the dominant players on the defensive front too. Clark and Walker will be a keys at defensive end. Depth is a big concern on both interior lines, and Karnes might be forced to employ schemes that require quickness rather than size.

Linebackers

The linebacker corps is almost as thin as the offensive and defensive lines. Monty Rexwinkle (5-6, 155) showed good promise as a fundamentally sound linebacker during his freshman season, and Freeman might have to make an immediate impact.

Defensive Backs

The secondary is the best position group on defense. Defensive back Grigsby returns to start after a solid performance last fall. Bozarth will be asked to step into the starting lineup on defense too. Doug Rexwinkle, Harden and Shinn are also possibilities on a unit that will need to make many tackles.

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1996 Welch Wildcats Schedule

September		
8	Copan	Home
13	Ketchum	Home
20	Foyil	Away
26	White Oak	Home
October		
4	Bowlegs	Away
11	Shidler	Home
17	Bluejacket	Away
25	Butner	Home
November		
1	open	
8	Webbers Falls	Away

1995 Overall Record: 12-1
1995 Playoff Record: 2-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 2
Defensive Starters Returning: 3
Total Returning Lettermen: 7

JAY'S PREDICTION - WIN 6, LOSE 3

Wyandotte *bears*

Classification: 1A
District: 6A
Head Coach: Jim Herring
Years at School: 4th
Record at School: 28-7

1996 Wyandotte Bears Schedule

September		
6	Westville	Away
13	Afton	Home
20	Colcord	Home
27	Commerce	Home
October		
4	Quapaw	Away
11	Fairland	Away
17	Kansas	Away
25	Kiefer	
November		
1	Chouteau	Home
7	Picher	Home

1995 Overall Record: 11-1
1995 Playoff Record: 2-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 6
Total Returning Lettermen: 22

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 10, LOSE 0

Beware of the Bears. Wyandotte is loaded with talent, full of confidence, and overflowing with potential. Jim Herring's team could contend for an Oklahoma state title.

"With some luck, this could be the best overall team that I've coached," said Herring.

Barring any bad luck, the veteran coach of 26 years could be lead the Bears to the class 1A championship. Herring welcomes 13 starters back from last years' 12-1 team, and most of them are only juniors. Despite the wealth of talent, Herring isn't taking anything for granted.

The Bears will be tested on the first Friday night of the season when they make a trip to Westville.

"Westville will be a crucial game. It will tell us if we are going to be as good or better than last year."

Herring thinks the district season will also be a big challenge. He says the addition of Commerce and Chouteau into the district make it very competitive.

Offensive Backs

The biggest task in August appears to be for the Bears to find a starting quarterback. Junior Steven Herring (6-2, 180) has good skills and good athletic ability, but is untested under center. Classmate Brandon Bartley (6-1, 180) will push for the starting nod. All three starting running backs return. Junior Matt Howard (5-9, 175) is the leader of

the attack. Howard rushed for 881 yards and scored 15 touchdowns in '95. Fellow juniors James Bear (5-10, 175) and Nick Baker (5-11, 180) should rack up plenty of yards, and junior speedster Scott Worley (6-1, 165) will provide big play potential. Jon Marlow (5-9, 140) could see action as a freshman.

Receivers

Seniors Nick Hamilton (5-9, 165) and Shaun Fritchey (6-0, 180) were part time starters a

year ago at split end and tight end respectively. Aaron Hance (6-0, 165) and David Sherwood (6-1, 160) are a pair of juniors who should make some plays. Hance is a burner while Sherwood is a possession receiver. Junior Ryan Whitlock (5-11, 145) could contribute the passing game. Senior John Cook (6-0, 190) could play a role at tight end. Cook hasn't played football the last two years, but was a standout basketball player last winter.

Offensive Line

A trio of junior offensive linemen have outstanding ability. Seth Adams (6-4, 270), Adam Butterfield (6-1, 210), and Phil Laxton (6-0, 240) could, "play for any high school team in the region," according to Herring. All three qualified for the Oklahoma state weight lifting meet. Junior Eric Lofland (5-9, 195) compliments the group as a returning starter. Senior Shawn Crane (6-1, 245) and junior Jason Marlow (6-1, 200) could also play a key role on the offensive line.

Defensive Line

Adams, Laxton, Lofland, and Marlow will be the mainstays on the defensive front as well. Fritchey should earn the starting nod at one defensive end, while Bartley, Sherwood, and Worley compete for the other spot.

Linebackers

The "Killer B's" lead the linebacking corps. Backer, Bear and Butterfield all have part time starting experience at the position and should make the majority of the tackles for Wyandotte. Sophomores Casey Marlow (5-8, 145) and Curtis Lofland (5-9, 150) are other candidates.

Defensive Backs


Hamilton will lead the secondary. Herring has experience at free safety, but might not be used if he's the starting quarterback. The pool of defensive backs is deep, with Howard, Hance, Ryan Whitlock (5-11, 145) and James Jones (5-9, 150) all possible starters.



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S.14 LOUISVILLE
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O. 5 TEXAS TECH
O.12 NEBRASKA
O.19 OKLAHOMA*
O.26 IOWA STATE*
N. 2 TEXAS
N. 9 TEXAS A&M*
N.16 MISSOURI*
N.23 OKLAHOMA ST.

KANSAS STATE

MANHATTAN, KAN.
(10-2)
A.31 TEXAS TECH*
S. 7 INDIANA ST.*
S.14 CINCINNATI*
S.21 RICE
O. 5 NEBRASKA*
O.12 MISSOURI
O.19 TEXAS A&M
O.26 OKLAHOMA*
N. 9 KANSAS
N.16 COLORADO
N.23 IOWA STATE*

OKLAHOMA STATE

STILLWATER, OKLA.
(4-8)
A.31 SW MISSOURI ST.*
S. 7 TEXAS TECH@
S.14 TULSA*
S.21 UTAH STATE*
O. 5 TEXAS
O.12 COLORADO
O.19 IOWA STATE*
O.26 MISSOURI
N. 2 TEXAS A&M*
N. 9 OKLAHOMA*
N.23 BAYLOR*
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BOULDER, COLO.
(10-2)
A.31 WASHINGTON ST.*
S. 7 COLORADO ST.
S.14 MICHIGAN*
S.28 TEXAS A&M
O.12 OKLAHOMA ST.*
O.19 KANSAS
O.26 TEXAS*
N. 2 MISSOURI
N. 9 IOWA STATE*
N.16 KANSAS STATE*
N.29 NEBRASKA

MISSOURI

COLUMBIA, MO.
(3-8)
A.31 TEXAS
S.14 MEMPHIS*
S.21 CLEMSON*
S.28 IOWA STATE
O. 5 SMU
O.12 KANSAS STATE*
O.26 OKLAHOMA ST.*
N. 2 COLORADO*
N. 9 NEBRASKA
N.16 BAYLOR
N.23 KANSAS*

TEXAS

AUSTIN, TEXAS
(10-2-1)
A.31 MISSOURI*
S. 7 NEW MEXICO ST.*
S.21 NOTRE DAME*
S.28 VIRGINIA
O. 5 OKLAHOMA ST.
O.12 OKLAHOMA@
O.26 COLORADO
N. 2 BAYLOR*
N. 9 TEXAS TECH
N.16 KANSAS
N.29 TEXAS A&M*
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IOWA STATE

AMES, IOWA
(3-8)
S. 7 WYOMING*
S.14 IOWA
S.21 NORTHERN IOWA*
2.28 MISSOURI*
O.12 TEXAS A&M*
O.19 OKLAHOMA ST.
O.26 BAYLOR
N. 2 KANSAS*
N. 9 COLORADO
N.16 NEBRASKA*
N.23 KANSAS STATE

NEBRASKA

LINCOLN, NEB.
(12-0)
S. 7 MICHIGAN ST.*
S.21 ARIZONA STATE
S.28 COLORADO ST.*
O. 5 KANSAS STATE
O.12 BAYLOR*
O.19 TEXAS TECH
O.26 KANSAS*
N. 2 OKLAHOMA
N. 9 IOWA STATE
N.29 COLORADO*

TEXAS A&M

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS
(9-3)
A.24 BYU@
S.14 SW LOUISIANA
S.21 NORTH TEXAS*
S.28 COLORADO*
O. 5 LOUISIANA TECH*
O.12 IOWA STATE
O.19 KANSAS STATE*
O.26 TEXAS TECH*
N. 2 OKLAHOMA ST.
N. 9 BAYLOR
N.16 OKLAHOMA*
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KANSAS

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(10-2)
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S.14 TCU
S.28 UTAH
O. 5 OKLAHOMA
O.12 TEXAS TECH*
O.19 COLORADO*
O.26 NEBRASKA
N. 2 IOWA STATE
N. 9 KANSAS STATE*
N.16 TEXAS*
N.23 MISSOURI

OKLAHOMA

NORMAN, OKLA.
(5-5-1)
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S.21 SAN DIEGO ST.
S.28 TULSA*
O. 5 KANSAS*
O.12 TEXAS@
O.19 BAYLOR
O.26 KANSAS STATE
N. 2 NEBRASKA*
N. 9 OKLAHOMA ST.
N.16 TEXAS A&M
N.23 TEXAS TECH*
@DALLAS, TX.

TEXAS TECH

LUBBOCK, TEXAS
(9-3)
A.31 KANSAS STATE
S. 7 OKLAHOMA ST.@
S.21 GEORGIA
S.28 UTAH STATE*
O. 5 BAYLOR*
O.12 KANSAS
O.19 NEBRASKA*
O.26 TEXAS A&M
N. 9 TEXAS*
N.16 SW LOUISIANA*
N.23 OKLAHOMA
@IRVING, TX.

MIAA

WEEK 1

Saturday, August 31
Wayne (Neb.) State @ ESU
All other MIAA schools are idle

WEEK 2

Saturday, September 7
TSU @ Valdosta (Ga.) State
Quincy (Ill.) @ UMH
South Dakota ST @ NWMSU
MWSC @ Nebraska-Kearney
Fort Hays (Kan.) State @ ESU
Augustana (S.D.) @ CMSU
PSU @ Eastern Illinois
MSSC, SBU, WU are idle

WEEK 3

Thursday, September 12
Southwestern (Kan.) @ CMSU

Saturday, September 14
Mankato (Minn.) State @ NWMSU
Missouri Valley @ UMR
Quincy (Ill.) @ MWSC
MSSC @ NE (Okla.) State
SBU @ Ouachita Baptist (Ark.)
TSU @ Southwest Missouri State
WU @ Fort Hays (Kan.) State
PSU, ESU are idle

(Weeks 4-12 are MIAA Games)

WEEK 4

Saturday, September 21
NWMSU @ SBU
MSSC @ ESU
TSU @ UMR
MWSC @ WU
PSU @ CMSU

WEEK 5

Saturday, September 28
UMR @ NWMSU
WU @ TSU
ESU @ MWSC
CMSU @ MSSC
SBU @ PSU

WEEK 6

Saturday, October 5
MWSC @ SBU
MSSC @ UMR

MWNSU @ CMSU
TSU @ PSU
ESU @ WU

WEEK 7

Saturday, October 12
NWMSU @ TSU
PSU @ MWSC
UMR @ ESU
CMSU @ WU
SBU @ MSSC

WEEK 8

Saturday, October 19
ESU @ SBU
WU @ UMR
CMSU @ TSU
MWSC @ NWMSU
MSSC @ PSU

WEEK 9

Saturday, October 26
PSU @ ESU
SBU @ WU
TSU @ MWSC
UMR @ CMSU
NWMSU @ MSSC

WEEK 10

Saturday, November 2
ESU @ NWMSU
MSSC @ TSU
MWSC @ CMSU
UMR @ SBU
WU @ PSU

WEEK 11

Saturday, November 9
CMSU @ SBU
NWMSU @ WU
PSU @ UMR
TSU @ ESU
MWSC @ MSSC

WEEK 12

Saturday, November 16
ESU @ CMSU
PSU @ NWMSU
SBU @ TSU
UMR @ MWSC
WU @ MSSC

1996 Football Schedule (as of June 4)

Coffeyville C.C. *red ravens*

Conference: Jayhawk JUCO
Head Coach: Skip Foster
Years at School: 8th
Record at School: 50-20-2

Skip Foster's 1995 football squad was transformed from an average team into a good team. With the vast majority of starters returning this fall, the Red Ravens could make the transition from 'good' to 'great'. "I am really excited about this upcoming year," Foster said. "I feel like we have an excellent chance of having one of the better teams since I've been head coach."

Those are meaningful words from the leader of the 1990 and 1991 Junior College National Championship teams.

"The way this group performed in the off-season program impresses me. They have excellent athletic ability and a great attitude. This team really wants to win the Jayhawk Conference," Foster adds.

With 15 starters back from the '95 team, the Red Ravens appear to be among the elite in the very competitive Jayhawk Conference. Foster has his entire veteran coaching staff back again this season, and an impressive crop of recruits on campus.

An October 5th home date against Hutchinson looms large for Coffeyville. Unlike most of the rest of the league, Coffeyville does not play any games outside of the Jayhawk conference. At least not until after the league championship game.

Offensive Backs

A lightning quick offensive unit starts with sophomore quarterback William Gerald Neasman (5-10, 180). The

Florida product runs a 4.3 40 yard dash and is a weapon as a passer and runner. Running back Mike Jenkins (5-9, 200) is a burner with sub 4.5 speed and incredible strength for his size. The California native started slow his freshman season, but finished with more than 1200 yards of total offense. Jenkins broke three Coffeyville JUCO lifting records in the off season. Kings Mountain, NC sophomore Phillip Crosby (6-0, 240) returns as the starting full-back. Joey Dozier (6-0, 205) is also an experienced ball carrier. Freshman tailback Derrick Foster (6-0, 195) rushed for more than twenty-

two hundred yards at Texas class 4A state champion Texas City High School.

Receivers

Sophomore wide receiver Ken Goard (6-0, 170) is an in-state athlete with all the necessary tools. He'll try to replace Maurice Little who will be playing at the University of Oklahoma this year. The tight end position has returning starter Emory Folsom (6-3, 227) back after an impressive freshman campaign.

Offensive Line

Sophomores Vincent Byrd (6-1, 270) and Michael Nelson (6-4, 275) are seasoned guys up front. Two massive incoming freshman, Greg Robinson (6-6, 315) and Scott Pitt (6-3, 270) are expected to make an immediate contribution.

Defensive Line

A set of Sunshine State defensive linemen will cloud up the middle. Sedrik Edwards (6-8, 275) hails from Ft. Myers, FL. Sophomore classmate Marquis Gibson, (6-2, 210) from Apopka, FL is the Red Ravens best division one prospect. Gibson registered eight quarterback sacks and 16 tackles for losses at defensive end last fall. Another Florida import, freshman Terrell Jurineack (6-4, 240) was considered one of the state's premier pass rushers in his senior year of high school.

Linebackers

Bert Keys (6-1, 260) is deceptively quick for his size. The sophomore linebacker squats 600 pounds and runs a 4.67 40 yard dash. Keys returns after compiling 9 tackles for losses a year ago. Sophomores Mike Campbell (5-11, 200) and Chuck Osborn (5-11, 220) are fundamentally sound linebackers with starting experience.

Defensive Backs

Two starting safetys return in the form of Mike Murphy (6-1, 195) and Ben Weber (6-1, 185). Defensive coordinator Mike Foster will put a high priority on finding two quality cornerbacks to complement the veterans in the secondary.

1996 Coffeyville Community College

Red Ravens Schedule

September

7	Highland	Away
14	Butler County	Away
21	Dodge City	Home
28	Independence	Away

October

5	Hutchinson	Home
12	Fort Scott	Home
19	Garden City	Away

1995 Overall Record: 6-3-1
1995 Playoff Record: 1-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 8
Defensive Starters Returning: 7
Total Returning Lettermen: 23

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 0

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Fort Scott C.C. *greyhounds*

Conference: Jayhawk JUCO
Head Coach: Ron Chismar
Years at School: 4th
Record at School: 14-13-2

1996 Fort Scott Community College Greyhounds Schedule

August

31 Garden City Home

September

7 Dodge City Away

14 NEO A&M Home

21 Independence Home

28 Butler County Away

October

5 Highland Home

12 Coffeyville Away

18 Hutchinson Home

1995 Overall Record: 5-4-1
1995 Playoff Record: 1-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 4
Defensive Starters Returning: 4
Total Returning Lettermen: 19

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 4, LOSE 4

The greyhounds have stopped running in Frontenac, but up Highway 69, they are ready to break out of the starting box again. Ron Chismar returns for his fourth season at Fort Scott Community College. While 15 of his graduated seniors have moved on to four year colleges, there are still some quality players back for the 1996 season.

"We had six players sign with division one programs, and nine others have been lost to other four year schools," Chismar said. "Our freshman and red-shirts must be able to fill in for those losses. The ability of these players to perform in the spotlight will determine the ultimate success of this year's team."

The eight returning starters for the Greyhounds are solid football players. The real test comes in August when the other personnel battle to fill the gaps.

Chismar has turned this program into a consistent competitor. He feels if this year's edition can win the close games, then they will have a legitimate chance to be near the top of the Jayhawk conference.

Fort Scott has an extremely challenging schedule. The good news is that three of the first four games are at home. It's also beneficial to the Greyhounds that two of the highly regarded Jayhawk conference opponents come in the final two weeks of the season. If Fort Scott makes continuous improvement in the early weeks, they could have a chance to pull off an upset against Coffeyville or Hutchinson.

In addition to the regular league foes, the Greyhounds have a week-three game on the docket against NEO A&M.

"The match-up will hopefully provide a competitive local rivalry for the fans to get involved in. Pre-season scrimmages against NEO A&M over the past three years have been very intense, and it will be interesting to see if that trend continues," Chismar said.

Offensive Backs

Local product Tyler Ropp (6-3, 210) has a tough act to follow at quarterback. The athletic Ropp will have to replace All-American Colin Harris who has moved on to North Carolina State. Ropp should feel comfortable in his familiar surroundings, and will likely assume a leadership role on the offensive unit. Sophomore running back Troy McChristian (6-0, 225) returns with starting experience. The coaching staff is eager to see if freshman running back Marcus Reaves (5-9, 195) can live up to some large expectations. Reaves was the North Carolina high school player of the year. Sophomores Jamiel

Carody (6-0, 245) and James Isenhower (5-9, 170) will also play a role in the offensive backfield.

Receivers

The Greyhounds lost a pair of receivers to division one programs. Experienced sophomores Marcus Duncan (5-9, 160) and John Leaphart (6-1, 185) are the top candidates this fall. Duncan is a Kansas City, KS product who also doubles as an extremely dangerous kick returner. A pair of sophomore tight ends are back. Alonzo Jackson (6-3, 240) and Virgil Thomas (6-1, 245) are better than average blockers and big targets as pass receivers.

Offensive Line

Chismar calls the offensive line the strongest position group on the field. Sophomore Aaron Starnes (6-3, 285) is a major college prospect who will line up at tackle. Wichita, KS product Steve Games (6-1, 275) complements him in the trenches. The Games & Starnes combo will look for help from sophomore Justin Henton (6-1, 260) and Fort Scott native Matt Harris (6-2, 265).

Defensive Line

Sophomore Andrae Rowe (6-2, 265) will be a force on the defensive front. The Boca Raton, FL product will be expected to provide leadership on defense. Nathan Rutledge (6-3, 235) and Maurice Stewart (6-2, 255) got limited playing time in '95 and will have to earn starting spots this fall. Angelo Banks (6-5, 275) is a highly regarded incoming freshman who could make an immediate impact.

Linebackers

The linebacker corps is a bit of a concern with just one returning starter back from last season. Sophomore London McKinnis (6-0, 230) is a vicious hitter from Shawnee, KS whose skills improved throughout his freshman campaign. Classmate Jason Anders (5-11, 210) is a returning letterman who could play a role. Hewitt Gordon (5-9, 215) is a quality recruit who should be in great shape for camp after playing in the Kansas Shrine Bowl All-Star game.

Defensive Backs

The secondary will likely produce more big plays than they will give up. The position group looks solid with sophomore Melvin Ridley (5-11, 185) leading the way as the top pass defender. Shawn Greer (6-0, 210) is also back for his sophomore season. Green is more physical and will provide valuable run support. Olathe, KS freshman Derek Coleman (5-10, 175) could earn a starting spot at corner.

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Independence C.C. *pirates*

Conference: Jayhawk JUCO
Head Coach: Bob O'Meara
Years at School: 4th
Record at School: 13-15

Head coach Bob O'Meara sets sail for his fourth year at the helm of the Pirates' ship. Once again this year, it's a trip through uncharted waters.

"The Junior College game is a little different than everybody else. We have to reload every season," O'Meara said. "We think that we've gotten a little bit better every fall, and after a strong recruiting year, this year should be no different."

Under O'Meara, Independence Junior College has been consistently competitive in the always difficult Jayhawk Conference.

"The conference is getting more balanced," the coach says. "Every time we step onto the field, we know that we can win if we play well, or we could lose if we play poorly."

O'Meara has had huge success in preparing his players to go on to four year institutions. The Pirates 1994-95 team was named the NJCAA Academic Team of the year after accumulating the best overall grade point average in the nation.

"Bob O'Meara has brought maturity and stability to the football program," school president Dr. Don Schoening said. "He brings out the best in the players, and compensates for not having the most talented players."

This fall, the Pirates do have some phenomenal athletes. Linebacker Kwesi Daniels (5-11, 215) is getting attention from some top-25 division one college coaches, and running back Dedrick Weddington (5-10, 190) has potential to be one of the best junior college ball carries in the nation. However,

Independence will have to rely on many new players to fill voids. O'meara admits that he won't know what to expect until days before the August 31st opener at Dodge City.

Offensive Backs

Weddington is a versatile sophomore running back who will lead the attack. The Aurora, CO product has excellent speed and the ability to hurt defenses as a runner or pass catcher. At least one other running back will have to emerge in the Pirates option offense. Quarterback Terence

Coleman (5-11, 190) returns as the pilot of a balance charge. The sophomore from Alto, TX has improved immensely in his decision-making abilities when throwing the football. Freshman Dirk Henderson (6-2, 175) will compete for playing time.

Receivers

The receiving corps is a big question mark. O'Meara says he intends to use the passing game, but some targets will have to be found by receiver coach Tim Davis. Tightend Trent Hysten (6-2, 230) is an incoming freshman with potential.

Offensive Line

The offensive line will be anchored by sophomore Marcus Collins (6-2, 300). Collins was a key element in the trenches a couple of years ago, and returns to Independence with his final year of eligibility. Girard High School product Eric Pommier (6-2, 280) is a top recruit who has to be ready to play as a freshman. Eric follows his older brother Aaron to Independence.

Defensive Line

The defensive front will be the best overall position group on the team. Sophomore lineman Dustin Loveless (6-2, 265) comes to the team from the University of Oklahoma. Bobby Sanborn (6-2, 240) is an incoming freshman from Burlington, KS with high expectations. O'Meara and his staff recruited six out of state defensive ends, all of them have great credentials.

Linebackers

Daniels has all the tools to become as good as former Independence linebacker Terrell Farley (University of Nebraska leading tackler). "Kwesi plays so hard, and he will fly all over the field," O'Meara said. "He's almost like another coach on the field." Topeka, KS product Brannon Smith (6-0, 205) will lend support.

Defensive Backs

The defensive line and linebackers will have to compensate for an absence of experience in the secondary. Defensive coordinator Dennis Caryl will make the defensive backfield his main focus when summer camp begins.

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1996 Independence Community College Pirates Schedule

August		
31	Dodge City	Away
September		
7	Butler County	Home
14	Hutchinson	Away
21	Fort Scott	Away
28	Coffeyville	Home
October		
5	Haskell	Away
12	Garden City	Home
19	Highland	Home

1995 Overall Record: 4-5

1995 Playoff Record: 0-1

Offensive Starters Returning: 2

Defensive Starters Returning: 4

Total Returning Lettermen: 21

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 5, LOSE 3

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NEO A&M *golden norsemen*

Conference: Southwest JUCO
Classification: NJCAA
Head Coach: Dale Patterson
Years at School: 1st
Record at School: 0-0

1996 NEO A&M Golden Norsemen Schedule

September		
7	Kemper Military	Away
14	Fort Scott	Away
21	Ranger, TX	Home
28	Tyler, TX	Home
October		
5	Trinity Valley, TX	Away
12	Navarro, TX	Home
19	Kilgore, TX	Away
28	Cisco, TX	Home
November		
2	Blinn, TX	Away

1995 Overall Record: 7-3
1995 Playoff Record: 0-0
Offensive Starters Returning: 3
Defensive Starters Returning: 3
Total Returning Lettermen: 20

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 7, LOSE 2

There is a sense of newness in Miami, Oklahoma this fall as NEO A&M enters a new conference with a new head coach. Unfortunately for the Golden Norsemen, there will also be several new faces in the starting lineup.

Although Dale Patterson has a different title in front of his name, and some added responsibilities, the first year head coach is actually an establishment on the NEO A&M campus. In June, Patterson become the first ever former Norsemen player to become head coach at the school when he was picked to replace Mike Loyd. Patterson is certainly no stranger to the program, he was an assistant in Miami for 15 seasons. The former defensive coordinator was an important part of the success Loyd enjoyed when he won 44 games and lost just 7 times in his five year tenure.

Patterson has some big voids to fill with just six starting players returning from last years' 7-3 club. The challenge looms larger when you take into account that the Norsemen will begin play in the Southwest Junior College League. The Conference is regarded as the best in junior college football in recent years.

Look for the 'Norse to get off to a fast start as the inexperienced players develop. A favorable schedule has NEO A&M playing Kemper Military, and Fort Scott Junior College on the road to open the season, followed by two home dates to start the conference season. Defending national champion Blinn Junior College won't be reckoned with until the final regular season game, and that should give the young Norsemen time to gain confidence.

Offensive Backs

Patterson doesn't have a single quarterback on his returning letterman list. Filling the position will be the highest priority when the team opens summer drills.

"We can be very competitive if we can find a quarterback to be a consistent passer to open up the running game," Patterson said. "A quarterback MUST come through for us."

The running back position is sound with pre-season All-American Reggie Skinner (5-10, 215) back for his sophomore season. Skinner was an 8-man high school football phenom. He holds the national high school record for most touchdowns scored, and he set the NEO A&M record for most yards in a season last fall. Sophomore Johnny

Humphrey (5-10, 190) returns to provide quality depth. The fullback position will be hotly contested with A.J. Walker (6-2, 215) and Richie Calmus (6-1, 205) returning. Calmus has added 25 pounds of bulk since his freshman season. Newcomers Joe Thomas (6-2, 225) and Chris Osburn (5-11, 240) could play roles in the backfield.

Receivers

Sophomore Rodney Smith (6-1, 200) is the only regular pass catcher back this season. The Galveston, TX native has good speed for his size. Corey Greene (6-1, 190) saw some quality time at wide receiver during his freshman year. Allen Carroll (5-11, 180) is a recruit with great potential.

Offensive Line

The Norsemen could field one of the largest offensive lines in the conference. Pryor, OK sophomore Chad Felts (6-5, 300) is mammoth and experienced in the trenches. Freshmen Bill Sagely (6-4, 275) and Robert Faling (6-5, 290) will be expected to make an immediate impact.

Defensive Line

Marvell Galloway (6-2, 265) makes the transition from linebacker to defensive end. The Broken Bow, OK native should be the leader of the defensive front. Sophomores Wesley Woodward (6-3, 280) and Eric Hill (6-2, 290) will be counted on to take their skills to the next level after playing backup roles in '95.

Linebackers

Sophomore Curkey Green (5-11, 230) had a productive off season. Green slimmed down and should be more mobile for his second year as a starter at linebacker. The NEO A&M coaching staff has high expectations for Kendon Carter (6-1, 225). The freshman could develop into the next great linebacker in the Norsemen's program. Sophomore Clay Harris (6-1, 230) is back to battle for a starting spot with the incoming freshmen recruits.

Defensive Backs

Cory Ivy (5-10, 185) is back for his second season in the Norsemen secondary after a stellar freshman year. The pre-season All-American from Moore, OK has great speed and instincts at defensive back. Donnie Caldwell (6-1, 205) and Mike Carter (5-11, 175) both hail from Lawton, OK and will help make the secondary one of the best units in the Southwest Junior College Conference.



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Sunday 9/22 EAGLES at FALCONS	Sunday 9/29 JETS at REDSKINS	Sunday 10/6 OILERS at BENGALS	Sunday 10/13 RAVENS at COLTS	Thursday 10/17 SEAHAWKS at CHIEFS	Sunday 10/27 BILLS at PATRIOTS

Missouri Southern *lions*

Conference: MIAA
Classification: NCAA DIVISION II
Head Coach: Jon Lantz
Years at School: 8th
Record at School: 42-28-1

There is an old football adage that says, "offense sells tickets, defense wins championships." In 1993, the Lions went against that notion by using an explosive offense to complete an undefeated regular season and win the MIAA Conference crown. This year, if the Lions want to make a run at the league championship, the defense will have to be the catalyst.

"We have a chance to be competitive, and we could improve on last year's record," head coach Jon Lantz said.

Do not be deceived by the cautious words of the 8th year head coach. The Lions have an extremely good chance to surpass last fall's respectable 6-4 mark. Consider the fact that Missouri Southern started a true freshman at quarterback in '95, they lost three of their games by eight points or less, and they have perhaps the best defense in recent history returning. You can understand why the Lions could make a run towards the top of the MIAA.

Missouri Southern will not be expected to outscore any opponents. At least not early. The coaching staff installed the veer offense in

the spring, and no doubt the unit will need several games to fine tune their timing and become familiar with their assignments. In the interim, a veteran defensive team will be relied on to carry the load.

Five of the six returning defensive regulars are seniors. Four year starters Richard Jordan and Steve Halvorson will have to help win early season games as the offense develops confidence in the new attack.

"It's very important for us to get off on the



Sophomore QB, Brad Cornelson

right foot," Lantz said.

The Lions season opener doesn't come until September 14th when they travel to Tahlequah, Oklahoma to renew a series with Northeastern State. The Redman were the 1994 NAIA National Champion and the '95 runner up. They will have played two games already when the Lions visit this year. Lantz sees Pittsburg State, Northwest Missouri, and Missouri Western as the top teams in the conference. Two of those three opponents travel to Fred Hughes Stadium.

The Pittsburg State game comes October 19th on the road. A one-point loss last year to the eventual NCAA Division II runner-up will negate any mental advantage the Gorillas might have had. The Lions believe that they can win this game. By week six, the new offense should be meshing and the defense will have a good grasp on the Pittsburg State option attack after seeing it in practice every day.

The Lions coaching staff will experiment with several personnel and position changes

in August. An excellent recruiting class should provide depth on the roster.

If the Missouri Southern defense can endure the early season schedule, the Lions could have enough momentum to be a legitimate contender in November. And that will certainly sell some tickets at Fred Hughes Stadium.

Offensive Backs

Sophomore Brad Cornelson (5-10, 175) is back after an superb debut as a freshman. The Texhoma, Oklahoma native averaged close to five yards per carry while gaining an understanding of the college game. If Cornelson eliminates some interceptions, he could become one of the conferences premier signal callers. Incoming freshman Rodney McClure (6-3, 195) has an impressive high school resume. McClure led Hazelwood East to a Missouri class 5A state championship with 27 touchdown passes. The Lions will have to replace Albert Bland

at running back. Miller, Missouri product Justin Taylor (5-9, 185) has been moved from defensive cornerback to running back and should excel as a ball carrier. Senior Wardell Anderson (6-1, 205) out of Joplin High School showed big play potential by averaging nearly 10 yards per carry in limited action in '95. Wallace Clay (5-8, 185) was a part time starter who gained over 300 yards as a sophomore. Former Seneca, Missouri star Mac Whitehead (5-9, 185) is a transfer from Southwest Baptist and is ready to be a factor from the start. Carthage, Missouri freshman Scott Daniels (5-11, 190) is a confident young man who could develop into a contributor.

Receivers

The wide receiving corps is experienced and lightning quick. Senior James Thrash (6-2, 205) led the Lions in catches despite having his season cut short by a broken collarbone suffered mid-season. Thrash is a former



Senior DE, Richard Jordan

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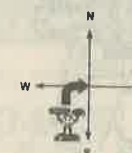
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JAY'S PREDICTION – WIN 7, LOSE 3

MIAA conference track champion in the 100 and 200 meter dashes. Sir Avington (5-10, 180) is also back after earning a starting spot last fall. Sophomore Camell Matthews (6-2, 185) was a stellar special teams player as a freshman, he could push for playing time at wide receiver. After brief stints at Kansas State and at Central Missouri, senior Brad Hocker (6-0, 210) has settled into the Lions program. Hocker was named the Missouri state player of the year by USA Today when he was a senior at Archie High School. The tight end is ready to live up to his billing. Simeon Long (6-1, 215) moves from linebacker to tight end for his senior campaign.

Offensive Line

Consensus All-American Yancy McKnight has been lost to graduation creating a major void to fill. Senior Harry Hodge (6-3, 285) returns for his fourth year as a regular and will have to lead the unit. Former standout defensive lineman Joe Streich (6-3, 280)

makes an unselfish move to the offensive side of the football. Matt Lock (6-4, 275) is a versatile senior lineman who can play guard or tackle. Andy Saltink (6-3, 270) has added some size and ability and will compete for a starting spot as a redshirt sophomore.

Defensive Line

The defensive front will be built around senior Richard Jordan (6-2, 260). The consensus pre-season All-American will dictate how opposing offenses form their game plans. Lantz calls Jordan, "One of the best in the league, and in the country." Jordan ruled the field from his defensive end position in '95, accumulating nearly 100 tackles, 12 of them for losses. In addition, the Vian, Oklahoma product registered seven quarterback sacks and two interceptions. Complementing Jordan on the defen-



Sophomore OL, Joe Streich

sive line will be four year starter Steve Halvorson (6-5, 275). Halvorson was a mainstay at tackle last fall, and he hasn't stopped improving. Sophomores Jereko Lovett (6-4, 235) and Shad Burns (6-2, 235)

will compete for the other tackle spot. Another Jordan, NEO A&M transfer Travis Jordan (6-5, 280) comes to Missouri Southern with great credentials. Former 'Norse teammate Adam McKellips (6-4, 245) is a highly regarded defensive end.

Linebackers

The bigger the game, the better senior linebacker Matt Wehner (6-0, 195) plays. The fifth year player was third on the team in tackles last season. Sophomore Marque Owens (5-11, 230) was a part-time starter as a true freshman. The Sherman, Texas native has added 15 pounds of strength to his frame in the off season conditioning program. Two local incoming freshmen will be given a chance to earn playing time. Jarrett Cook (6-2, 210) from Seneca and Dusty Van Gilder (6-1, 215) from Lamar are quality recruits.

Defensive Backs

The secondary is strong with three of the four regulars back on the field. Rob Townsend (5-11, 180) started every game last year at free safety and led the Lions in interceptions. The senior from Girard, Kansas plays intelligently and fearlessly and will be counted on to assume a leadership role in the secondary. Strong safety Geno Pierce (5-10, 200) is the big hitter of the bunch. Expect to see the senior blitz on a regular basis. Sophomore cornerback A.J. Jones started seven games for the Lions at corner, and is expected to be the premier coverman in the defensive backfield. Junior Travis Cagle (5-10, 180) is a former walk-on who will push for a starting role.

Special Teams

Kicker Eric Jackson and punter Branton Dawson have both been lost to graduation. The coaching staff hopes that Carl Junction, Missouri incoming freshman Mark Lewandowski (5-8, 150) will be able to assume the place-kicking duties. Taylor is a dangerous kick returner.

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Pittsburg State *gorillas*

Conference: MIAA
Classification: NCAA DIVISION II
Head Coach: Chuck Broyles
Years at School: 7th
Record at School: 69-8-2

1996 Pittsburg State Gorillas Schedule

September				
7	Eastern Illinois	Away	7 PM	
14	open			
21	Central Missouri	Away	7 PM	
28	Southwest Baptist	Home	7 PM	
October				
5	Truman State	Home	2 PM	
12	Missouri Western	Away	1:30 PM	
19	Missouri Southern	Home	7 PM	
26	Emporia State	Away	1:30 PM	
November				
2	Washburn	Home	1 PM	
9	Missouri-Rolla	Away	1 PM	
16	Northwest Missouri	Away	1 PM	

1995 Overall Record: 12-1-1
1995 Playoff Record: 3-1
Offensive Starters Returning: 7
Defensive Starters Returning: 5
Total Returning Lettermen: 31

JAY'S PREDICTION — WIN 9, LOSE 1

For the 11 Pittsburg State seniors who walked off the field in Florence, Alabama last December, a 27-7 loss to North Alabama in the NCAA Division II National Championship game marked a disappointing end to a brilliant career. For the 31 Gorilla underclassmen who were an important part of the runner-up team, the exit from Braly Municipal Stadium was only a temporary one. Pittsburg State expects to return for redemption in 1996.

"The loss in the National Championship was an ending to the season, but it was also a start to the 1996 season," seventh year Gorilla head coach Chuck Broyles said. "We wanted very badly to win that game. Honestly, we were a young team that probably exceeded expectations last year. We had 20 freshmen and or sophomores on our 44-man, two-deep roster for the championship game. Now, we have 20 sophomores and juniors, and 11 more seniors with championship game experience heading into the '96 campaign. It might be a little more difficult to exceed expectations this year, but we're anxious to give it a whirl."

With 12 quality starters back, it could be the Gorillas' opponents that will be taken for a ride. Pittsburg State has compiled the best record in college football this decade. Broyles took over the program in 1990, and he has preceded to win 69 times in 79 games. His overall record makes him the second winningest active collegiate head football coach in the nation.

"I don't know that you can pin-point a true

formula for success," Broyles said. "There are a lot of intangibles that factor into it. Our players work extremely hard, and so does our coaching staff."

The nucleus of that coaching staff is back again. At a level of college football where there are normally many assistant coaching changes from year to year, Broyles has been able to retain some of the best football minds in the region.

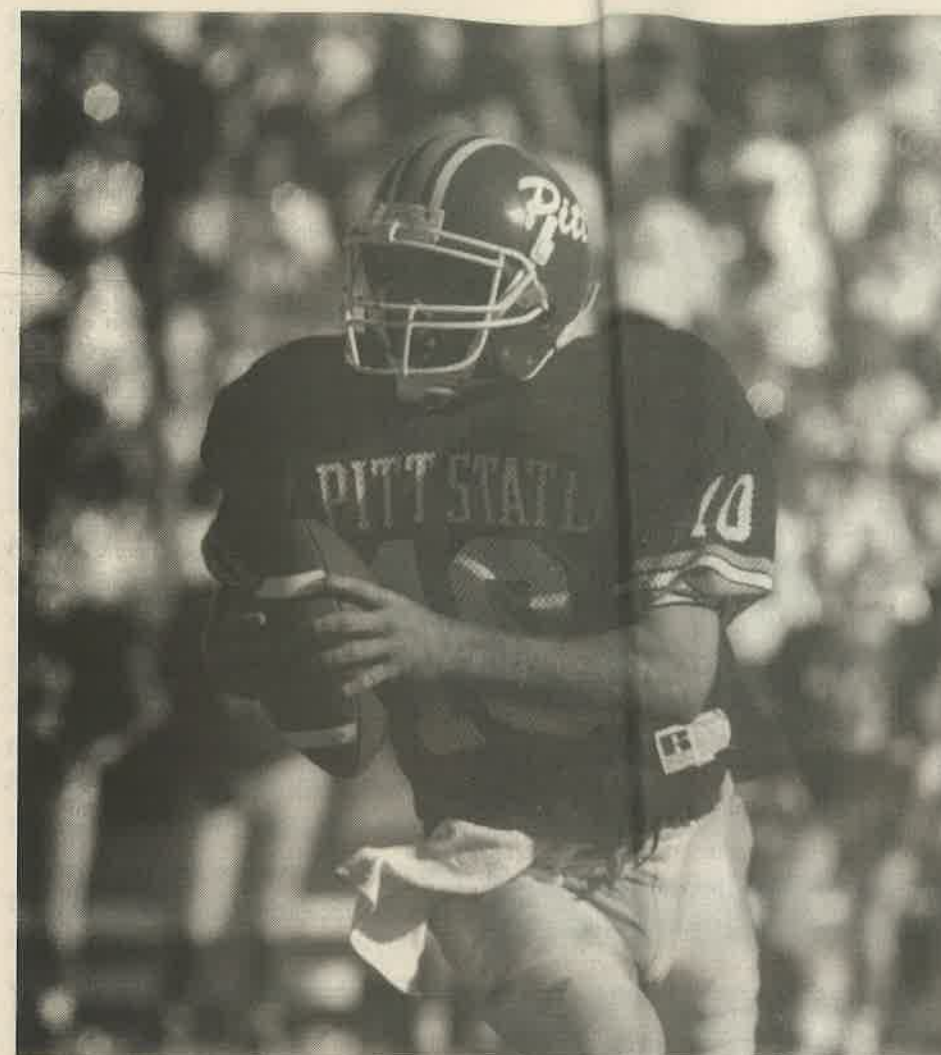
"Chuck shows great loyalty to the staff, and in turn it makes it easy to be loyal to him," running back coach John Roderique said. "Everybody is pretty happy here."

Offensive Coordinator Tim Beck and Defensive Coordinator Anton Stewart both embark on their eighth season as assistant coaches at Pittsburg State.

For the first time since 1988, the Gorillas only have four regular season home games. The first road trip is a season opener in Charleston, Illinois against I-AA national qualifier Eastern Illinois on September 7th. The Panthers posted a 10-2 record in '95 and they finished the season ranked 12th in the nation.

"Really, it's a good measuring block for our players and for our program," Broyles said. "We've come a long way, but there's still a lot of road in front of us. We just want to keep moving forward."

This year's road takes the Gorillas to Warrensburg to face always competitive Central Missouri State and to Missouri Western. The Griffons are being picked by many in the conference to challenge Pittsburg State for the league title. The Missouri Western game is followed by a home date against Missouri Southern. The Lions are the only team to beat Pitt State in



Junior QB, J.J. Dalton

an MIAA game since the Gorillas joined the conference in 1989.

"Mostly, it's a 100-odd person effort, driven by a common goal to be the best. It all starts with attitude," Broyles said.

The prevailing attitude around Pittsburg, and throughout the MIAA conference is that the Gorillas have a legitimate chance to play for their fourth National Championship in six seasons. If some of the younger players develop during the regular season, Pittsburg State could walk off the field in Florence with their first title since 1991.

Offensive Backs

Fifth year senior quarterback Jeff Moreland completed his eligibility last season. Moreland was a tremendous leader who helped the Gorillas win the National

Championship in his freshman year. Waiting in the wings are Pittsburg native J.J. Dalton (5-9, 176) and Zack Siegrist (6-3, 209). Dalton is well schooled at running the option offense. The junior rushed for 228 yards on 36 carries in limited action last fall. Dalton is relatively untested as a passer in game situations. He threw just 13 times in '95, completing 8 passes. Siegrist enters his sophomore season of eligibility as the co-number one quarterback on the depth chart. As a true freshman, the Andover, Kansas product impressed the coaching staff by completing 8 of 9 passes for two touchdowns. Neither quarterback emerged as the sure starter during spring drills. The real competition begins on August 12th when the veteran players report to camp. At running back, junior Justin Johnson (6-0, 182) returns after

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Junior RB, Justin Johnson

making the most of his playing time last fall. Johnson has deceptively good speed and quickness and is back after gaining 562 yards in the second half of the '95 season.

Junior Levon Madden (5-10, 165) had an exceptionally good spring and could earn a start after rushing for 193 yards last fall. Transfer Andrew Wilson (6-0, 190) is back in

his hometown. The redshirt sophomore has had nagging injuries, but brings great potential. Alex Wendler (5-11, 192) is a hard runner with some experience.

Receivers

The senior pass catching combo of Chris Hudson (5-10, 175) and Chucky Aikeri (5-8, 168) returns after leading the team in receptions last year. Hudson averaged nearly 20 yards per catch and hauled in five touchdowns. Aiken caught 31 balls for 469 yards. Both players have breakaway speed, and the ability to run after the catch. Tight end Jerry Ross (6-

4, 245) is a huge target. The Junior made several big plays last year, including a critical touchdown reception against Texas A&M

Kingsville in the national semifinal game. Ross will be pushed by Milwaukee native Jim Golonski (6-4, 220).

Offensive Line

Senior Bob Goltra (6-7, 296) could be one of the more dominating offensive linemen in division two football this fall. The Fort Scott, Kansas native has made significant improvements in his technique and foot-speed and will add leadership to the entire offensive unit. Sophomores Brent Baker (6-3, 276) and Ty Duncan (6-3, 291) will battle for the other tackle spot. Nevada, Missouri product Brandon Claypool (6-1, 272) returns after a magnificent freshman season at center. Another local talent, Pittsburg's Michael John (6-2, 290) could earn a starting guard position after grooming for three seasons. Patrick Cook (6-1, 262) is a young guard who will be counted on to contribute as well.

Defensive Line

Senior Anthony Randle (6-2, 245) is the leading returning tackler. Randle started 13 games and made 80 tackles in '95 at defensive end. Sophomore Ben Peterson (6-3, 248) made constant improvement as a freshman and will likely get the nod at the other end. The middle of the defensive line is solid with Webb City sophomore Chad Webb (6-1, 272) already a seasoned veteran. Mike Reynolds (6-5, 255) started 13 games as a sophomore and is back at the other defensive tackle spot. Juniors Clayton Kent (6-4, 235) and Nate Apple (6-1, 276) could also fill key roles.

Linebackers

Gorilla linebacker Eric Hendrick (6-0, 202) is expected to be the defensive unit's leader. The senior registered three sacks and eight tackles for losses last fall. Hendrick combines intelligence, great speed and leaping ability to be one of the premier linebackers in the conference. Sophomore Dion Meneley (6-4, 210) and junior Steve Tucker (5-10, 192) will vie for playing time at the

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other outside linebacking position. Inside linebacker Matt Pinamonti (6-2, 237) is a vicious hitter with good mobility for his size. The Pittsburgh native was a special teams star as a freshman and should be an every down player this season. Mark Cook (6-0, 203) is tops on the pre-season depth chart at the other inside linebacker position. Cook will be challenged from yet another Pittsburgh High School product. Transfer Poncho Sales (5-11, 240) has all the skills to be a terror on the inside. If Sales reports to camp in shape and stays healthy, he has potential to fill the void left by All-American linebacker B.J. McGivern who has been lost to graduation.

Defensive Backs

All-American Chris Brown and All-MIAA selection Jason Gorman are gone from an elite defensive backfield. Senior Phillip Simons (5-9, 170) is a very gifted athlete who has 24 career starts in the Gorillas secondary. In addition to his defensive duties, Simmons excelled as an offensive running back last season before leaving the team after just four games. Senior Justin Ferrell

(6-1, 181) provides support at the other corner. Randy Reed (6-2, 166) is a converted wide receiver who could find his niche on defense. The free safety position will be fiercely contested between junior Brad Homer (5-10, 177) and sophomore Randy Reed (6-2, 166).

Special Teams

Sophomore punter Brian Moorman (6-0, 160) is a pre-season All-American after bursting on the scene last fall. Moorman averaged more than 42 yards per punt, with 25 balls landing inside the opponents 20 yard line. The Sedgwick, Kansas native is likely to kick-off too. A track athlete in the spring, Moorman is capable of running down kick returners and could be a threat in fake punt situations. Junior Josh Barkus (6-0, 183) will handle the place kicking duties. Barkus made 13 of 20



field goal attempts last year, and was 7 of 8 from inside 30 yards. The rest of the Gorillas' special teams have traditionally made big plays, and this year should be no exception.



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1996 Kansas City Chiefs

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Sept. 1	Houston Oilers	Away	12:00
8	Oakland Raiders	Home	12:00
15	Seattle Seahawks	Away	3:00
22	Denver Broncos	Home	12:00
29	San Diego Chargers	Away	3:00
Oct. 7	Pittsburgh Steelers	Home	8:00
17	Seattle Seahawks	Home	7:00
27	Denver Broncos	Away	3:00
Nov. 3	Minnesota Vikings	Away	12:00
10	Green Bay Packers	Home	12:00
17	Chicago Bears	Home	12:00
24	San Diego Chargers	Home	12:00
28	Detroit Lions	Away	1:30
Dec. 9	Oakland Raiders	Away	8:00
15	Indianapolis Colts	Home	12:00
22	Buffalo Bills	Away	12:00

1996 St. Louis Rams

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
Sept. 1	Cincinnati Bengals	Home	12:00
8	San Francisco 49ers	Away	3:00
22	Washington Redskins	Home	12:00
29	Arizona Cardinals	Away	3:00
Oct. 6	San Francisco 49ers	Home	3:00
13	Carolina Panthers	Away	12:00
20	Jacksonville Jaguars	Home	12:00
27	Baltimore Ravens	Away	12:00
Nov. 3	Pittsburgh Steelers	Away	12:00
10	Atlanta Falcons	Home	12:00
17	Carolina Panthers	Home	12:00
24	Green Bay Packers	Home	7:00
Dec. 1	New Orleans Saints	Away	3:00
8	Chicago Bears	Away	12:00
15	Atlanta Falcons	Away	12:00
21	New Orleans Saints	Home	3:00

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