

Rich Gannon is MVP

By JANIE McCAULEY
AP Sports Writer
ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) — Rich Gannon insists his slow road to success really isn't that different from the journey taken by many of the NFL greats.
It's just the veteran Oakland Raiders quarterback has something most of those men don't: MVP status.
"I think if you look around the locker room and look around the league, there's a lot of players who have had to go through some difficult times in order to get where they are in this league," the 37-year-old Gannon said Wednesday after being selected the NFL Most Valuable Player in his 15th season.
"I never lost faith in myself or my abilities. But again, you need opportunities in this business and up until about 1999 I didn't feel like I had a whole lot of opportunities."
Gannon's stardom didn't come easily.
He was traded to Minnesota only two weeks after New England drafted him out of Delaware in the fourth round in 1987.
He played for the Vikings until 1992, spent '93 with Washington, sat out the 1994 season after shoulder surgery, then became an effective starter in Kansas City from 1995-98.
Gannon left the Chiefs as a free agent in 1999, and he's been a sensation in Oakland ever since.
With Gannon leading the league's top offense, the Raiders won their third straight AFC West title. Oakland locked up home-field advantage and a playoff bye, and even swept its nemesis, Denver.
"This is a guy that I'm extremely proud of," coach Bill Callahan said. "He's a high character person, and his work ethic is unmatched of any pro that I've ever been around. I'm proud of the fact that not only has he done all these things and helped the team win, but he's let an offense capture a crown that hasn't been around here in a while."
Gannon broke the NFL completions record with 418. He led the league with 4,689 yards passing, nearly becoming just the second quarterback to go over 5,000 yards in a season. Dan Marino threw for 5,084 yards in 1984.

Gannon completed 67.6 percent of his attempts, had 26 touchdowns passes and only 10 interceptions. His 97.3 rating was second in the NFL to the Jets' Chad Pennington.
He also threw for more than 300 yards in 10 games, another record.
Yet that kind of stuff means nothing to Gannon.
"It's embarrassing, it's difficult to talk about," he said. "I'm just not very comfortable talking about myself and about individual accomplishments when really the focus of any good football team is team goals. And that's our goal here is to be champs."
Gannon is always praising his teammates, and even bought suits for his offensive lineman this season for their hard work in 2001.
Now, they're expecting a lot more.
"I'm looking for a car," center Barret Robbins said with a smile. "I'll pick it out."
Paul Hackett might be the man most responsible for helping Gannon get to where he is today.
Hackett, now the offensive coordinator for the New York Jets, was Gannon's offensive coordinator at Kansas City for three seasons. After Hackett had moved on to Southern California, he sent Raiders coach Jon Gruden a tape of Gannon — making a big play in a Chiefs game against the Raiders no less.
"It wasn't until the Raiders brought me here in '99 and gave me the chance to be the every-day starter that I really feel like it was a real opportunity for me to flourish and to play up to my abilities," Gannon said.
Gannon received 19 votes to edge Green Bay's Brett Favre. Favre, the only three-time winner of The Associated Press MVP award, got 15 votes from the nationwide panel of 48 sports writers and broadcasters who cover the league.
"I mean, it wasn't upsetting. Gannon was deserving of it," Favre said. "McNair was deserving of it. If I'd have won it fine, great. But it ain't the end of the world."
Gannon is the third Raiders player to win the award, after quarterback Ken Stabler in 1974, and running back Marcus Allen in 1985. St. Louis quarterback Kurt Warner won last year.

Texas rallies to beat LSU

DALLAS (AP) — Roy Williams announced he was coming back for his senior season at Texas several weeks before the Cotton Bowl because he didn't want that question to distract him from the game.
NFL teams might hope he re-thinks his decision.
Williams almost single-handedly rallied Texas from a 10-point deficit Wednesday, sending the No. 9 Longhorns to a 35-20 victory over LSU. He turned a short slant into a 51-yard touchdown, went 75 yards after a leaping grab to set up another score and snaked 39 yards for a TD on an end around.
"He might be the best football player I've seen all year," Tigers coach Nick Saban said.
After receiving a huge trophy as offensive MVP, Williams said he didn't deserve it — and didn't object when teammate Rod Babers slid it away. Williams then criticized himself for a false start and said he could do a better job of running routes.
"I don't feel like I'm the best receiver in the country," Williams said. "I don't think I've done what I'm capable of. I still have things to prove, things to learn, before I go to the next level."
LSU (8-5) would probably disagree. The Tigers came in with the second-best pass defense in the

country, allowing 143 yards per game — and Williams alone had 142 on four catches.
A strong start by the Tigers had put the Longhorns (11-2) down 17-7 three minutes into the second quarter.

Families & Individuals
Call for Free, no obligation information on
Health Insurance*
@ Affordable Rates!
• A company whose A.M. Best rating is "A-(Excellent)."
• You cannot be singled out for a rate increase.
• You cannot be singled out for cancellation.
• Allows you to choose your doctors and hospitals.
• Flexible programs to fit your needs and your budget.
• PLUS over 100 valuable business benefits through association membership.
• A 30-day money back guarantee. *will contact you (may not be available in all states).*
Toll-free: 1-888-535-1512 **Independent analysis will evaluate insurance companies. Ratings are reviewed and offered annually.

**Economic Development Executive Director
For Anderson County and City of Garnett**
The City of Garnett seeks a qualified economic development professional to fill the position of Economic Development Director. The Economic Development Director is responsible for implementing programs to promote economic development expansion, retention, recruitment for both commercial and industrial activities and promote tourism projects. Three years experience in economic development work or related field, degree in business, public administration or related subject area preferred. Salary dependent upon experience and qualifications. Send resume and references to the City Manager, P.O. Box H, Garnett, Kansas, 66032. Applications will be accepted until a qualified candidate is selected. EOE.

CONVENIENTLY LOCATED AT THE CROSSROADS
OF COMFORT AND VALUE.

RAMADA
A very good place to be.SM

RAMADA.COM or 1.800.2 RAMADA
Ask for promo code LPGP to receive this discounted rate.

Lower: Cedar Rapids (2) Clinton Mele Hay (Des Moines area) Mt Pleasant
Nebraska: Kearney Lincoln (3) Norfolk North Platte Ogallala Omaha
Kansas: Lawrence Leavenworth Manhattan Salina Wichita (2) Missouri: Kansas City St. Joseph

Rooms at the LCP rate are limited and subject to availability at the participating properties noted. Standard rooms only are available at LCP rate. No additional charge for up to four people per available room. Blackout dates and other restrictions apply. Advance reservations required. Cannot be combined with any other offer, promotion or special rate. ©2002 Ramada Franchise Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. All hotels are independently owned and operated.

Scrapbook Garden
• Albums • Stickers • Rubber Stamps
Look no further for the perfect gift...
A Gift Certificate from Scrapbook Garden
is both practical and valued!

West Wichita - Maple & Ridge
(Across from Lowe's)
Toll Free: (866) 945-6366
www.scrapbookgarden.com • Hours: Mon-Sat 10-6, Sun 1-5, Call for evening hours

East Wichita - Kellogg & Rock
(North of Spanglers)
Toll Free: (866) 618-6366

Lined-up and ready to go



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

The Colby Lady Trojans open the conference portion of their basketball schedule Saturday at the Colby Community Building against Butler County. The Lady Trojans are 8-6 at this point in

the season. Game time Saturday is 2 p.m. The men will take on Butler at 4 p.m. **ABOVE:** The Lady Trojans in action earlier this season against Casper, Wyo.

Oklahoma upsets Washington State in Rose Bowl

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Oklahoma lived up to its vaunted defensive reputation against Washington State by not allowing the Cougars to hit any big plays in the Rose Bowl.
Making their first appearance in Pasadena, the No. 8 Sooners defeated the No. 7 Cougars 34-14 Wednesday.
Playing before a predominantly Washington State crowd, Oklahoma (12-2) shut out the Cougars until late in the game and nearly maintained its history of holding them scoreless. In the teams' previous matchups, the Sooners beat the Cougars 28-0 in 1938 and 21-0 in 1967.
"Defense played another one of those games," coach Bob Stoops said. "We're disappointed we didn't

shut them out."
Until the Cougars scored in the fourth quarter, Oklahoma had kept its bowl opponents out of the end zone in 13 consecutive quarters.
"We slacked up in the fourth and it leaves a bad taste in my mouth," said Sooners linebacker Teddy Lehman, who had six tackles, including two for losses. "It makes you mad at the end of the game to slack up and give them points. That's not our style."
Washington State was never successful in spreading Oklahoma's defense or getting big plays out of quarterback Jason Gesser, whose only touchdown came on a 37-yard

pass to Jerome Riley with 6:08 remaining in the game. By then, Oklahoma led 27-7.
"It's hard to do something on a

defense that's already good when we keep making mistakes," Gesser said. "They came with a lot of different blitzes."

Come Home to CFI
NOW HIRING
Company • O/O
Singles • Teams
800-CFI-DRIVE • www.cfidrive.com

THE STRIKE ZONE **League Results**

December 16 - First Nighters League				December 26 - King Pin League			
Team	Won	Lost	Pins	Team	Won	Lost	Pins
Young 'Uns II	22	10	25752	TJs Tire Repair	24	8	25360
Outcasts	19	13	25005	Cheney Repair	21	11	21638
Code Red	18	14	25351	Colby Fertilizer	17	15	24573
Schlick Construction	18	14	25143	Wolf Lawn Care	16	16	24637
Woolter Well & Pump	16	16	24959	5 Pony Men	15	17	24626
Colby Implement	15	17	25263	Colby Bowl	15	17	24463
Frontier Equity	10	22	24644	Beringer Hardware	15	17	24329
Colby Bowl	10	22	24222	Colby Automotive	13	17	24785
First high individual game: Travis Blubaugh, 255				McCarty Dairy	13	19	18230
First high individual series: Travis Blubaugh, 670				Twisters	11	21	24344
December 18 - Powderpuff League				First high individual game: Ralph Wolf, 277			
Team	Won	Lost	Pins	First high individual series: Ralph Wolf, 688			
Coors	39	21	34676	Team Standings			
Garst Seeds	33.5	26.5	34736	Team	% Won	Won	Lost
JL Graphics	32.5	27.5	34551	Pepsi Renegades	65.6	21	11
Western Sprinklers	27	33	34418	Silver Bullets	65.6	21	11
Colby Bowl	27	33	34410	City Slickers	59.4	19	13
Comfort Inn	21	39	34485	Colby Automotive	53.1	17	15
First high individual game: Monica Miller, 171				Farm Credit	51.6	16.5	15.5
First high individual series: Lesley Wagoner, 492				Huffles Construction	50.0	16	16
December 17 - Early Bird Ladies League				Cummins Mid-America	50.0	16	16
Team	Won	Lost	Pins	Colby Lumber	46.9	15	17
NW Vacuum Center	39.5	24.5	37345	United Commercial Travelers	46.9	15	17
Sharons Hallmark	39	25	36668	Wark's Embroidery	46.9	15	17
The Plitter Pats	37.5	26.5	36843	Harrison's Grumpy Old Men	34.4	11	21
Bowlerettes	32	32	36921	HAJOCA	29.7	9.5	22.5
Total Image	31	33	36892				
Jeans Rollers	25	39	36695				
Vacant	25	39	0				
Vans Merry Four	23	41	36927				
First high individual game: Dee Hovda, 187							
First high individual series: Dee Hovda, 508							

Brought to you each week by these sponsors:

TO WAAS TIRE
I.O. HAW TIRE
ESTABLISHED 1947
Jim Wallin,
Store Manager
910 South Range • Colby
462-3957

Litter Critters
ALAN & KELLY FOCKE
* PARKING LOT SWEEPING
* PRESSURE WASHING
MOBILE: 785-443-3481
785-462-8399

COLBY LUMBER
COLONY PAINTS • STANLEY DOORS
LUMBER • BUILDING MATERIAL
MARVIN & ANDERSON WINDOWS
1760 W. 4th • Colby • 462-2181

Dillons
FOOD STORES
1605 S. Range
Colby, Kansas
785-462-1300

ColbyBowl
FUN CENTER
GAME ROOM • POOL ROOM
SNACK BAR/LOUNGE • PRO SHOP
Charles & Vern Schwanke, owners

The Colby Free Press
155 W 5th
Colby, KS
785-462-3963

GAMBINO'S DAILY SPECIALS
Mondays - Lg. Pizza for Med. Charge
Tuesdays - "Time is the price" 6 p.m. to close, the time you call is YOUR price for a Med. 1-topping pizza
Wednesdays - Pepperoni Night - Lg. Pepperoni Pizza - \$8
Thursdays - Two 2-topping Reg. Calzones - \$10
Fridays - Family Night - Lg. 1-topping pizza, order of breadsticks and 4 Med. drinks - \$15
Saturdays - 2nd Pizza Deal
Sundays - 2 Med. Mobsters - \$18
FAMILY DINING
CARRY OUT
DELIVERY
1100 W. 4th
462-9977