

# Tedford's turnaround has Bears in first bowl since 1996

By BOB BAUM  
*AP Sports Writer*  
PHOENIX (AP) — Virginia Tech seems a bit disappointed to be in the Insight Bowl. The California Bears hardly could be more thrilled. The Hokies have grown to expect better than this mid-level bowl played Friday night in a baseball park. "We may be disappointed not playing in a BCS bowl game, but we are playing in a great bowl game," said Hokies' coach Frank Beamer, who added that he won't know until the game begins whether his

players will approach the contest with the intensity they might bring to a bigger bowl. Six games into the season, Virginia Tech was unbeaten and No. 3 in the country. Even after a loss at West Virginia, the Hokies' beat Miami to climb to No. 5. Then things fell apart with losses to Pittsburgh, Boston College and Virginia. The lone win down the stretch came in overtime against lowly Temple. "The reason we lost four out of the last six is because we weren't playing together," Hokies line-

backer Vegas Robinson said. "Everybody was out there doing more than they were supposed to do. Guys were out of position. I feel like we're calmed down now. We're level headed. We're ready to get back at this thing." Cal won four of its last five to finish 7-6 and earn its first bowl bid since 1996. Tedford inherited a 1-10 team a year ago and led the Bears to a 7-5 season. The last year of probation for long-ago NCAA infractions kept the team out of a bowl game. Despite having just nine return-

ing starters, Cal finished tied for third in the Pac-10, and was the only team to beat conference champion and No. 1-ranked USC — 34-31 in triple-overtime on Sept. 27. "Last year we had the best turnaround in college football, and this year the key fact is that we're in a bowl game," Tedford said. The game could be a shootout, with Cal's high-powered offense going against an offense on Virginia Tech (8-4) that features running back Kevin Jones. He will forgo his senior year of eligibility in favor of the NFL.

"I did what I felt was best for me," Jones said. "I hate to leave my teammates and my coaches. That's the only thing that made it a tough decision." Jones set school season records for yards rushing (1,495) and 100-yard games (eight). The Bears say they're prepared. "He's a great back, but it's nothing we haven't seen before in Stephen Jackson and Darren Sproles," Cal linebacker Joe Manningo said. "He has Stephen Jackson's strength and Darren Sproles' speed. It makes it kind of difficult

for us to focus on one characteristic." California almost certainly will be without its biggest offensive threat, wide receiver Geoff McArthur, who broke his forearm in practice on Sunday. McArthur was second to Pittsburgh's Larry Fitzgerald this season in receiving yards at 115.7 per game. He had 85 catches for a school record 1,504 yards and 10 touchdowns. Tedford must count on his other receivers in an offensive system that produced a mind-boggling 729 yards in a 54-7 victory over Washington on Nov. 15. "Someone will step up in that spot and will have a great opportunity," Tedford said. "We have split the reps evenly so everybody is ready to go." Cal is as balanced as any team could be, producing 254.7 yards per game through the air and a Pac-10 leading 170.8 on the ground, behind running back Adimchinobe Echemandu. Echemandu, who did not play football the previous two seasons due to academic problems, earned all-conference honors with 1,161 yards rushing this season. "Stopping the run and the pass — they have them both," Robinson said.

# Kennedy will appeal \$30,000 fine for hit on Colts receiver

DENVER (AP) — Kenoy Kennedy, the Denver Broncos' hard-hitting strong safety, will appeal a \$30,000 fine, the latest in a series of escalating NFL punishments. Kennedy was fined for a helmet-leading tackle last weekend against Indianapolis.

"I didn't expect it, but there is nothing I can do about it. Just appeal it and go about my business," Kennedy said. Kennedy was called for a personal foul when he lowered his helmet and hit Colts receiver Reggie Wayne on an overthrow ball in the Broncos' 31-17 victory Sunday. "They said I led with my head. But how do you tackle? I've never seen a guy go up and butt a guy with

his chest. I don't know what to do," Kennedy said. "Maybe I should drop-kick them, or do something like that. I don't know." NFL spokesman Greg Aiello told The Associated Press on Thursday he could not comment on the matter. Last season, the NFL fined Kennedy a total of \$17,500 for two tack-

les and suspended him for one game for a third. The suspension cost him \$25,294 in lost pay. He was fined \$7,500 for a Sept. 8, 2002, hit on St. Louis receiver Isaac Bruce, and \$10,000 for an Oct. 6, 2002, hit on San Diego's Fred McCrary. Both receivers were deemed to be in a defenseless position when Kennedy hit them.

Kennedy was suspended after a helmet-to-helmet hit on Miami wide receiver Chris Chambers a week later. Chambers suffered a concussion. Broncos coach Mike Shanahan publicly defended Kennedy after those hits. He said videotape showed McCrary wasn't in a defenseless position and that another player pushed Chambers' head down and into the path of Kennedy's helmet.

Shanahan said Kennedy's hit on Bruce wasn't intentional, but called the fine legitimate. "I'm still flying around out there," Kennedy vowed. "I'm still going to play." Echemandu, who did not play football the previous two seasons due to academic problems, earned all-conference honors with 1,161 yards rushing this season. "Stopping the run and the pass — they have them both," Robinson said.

# Roy's leaving tops sport stories

By DOUG TUCKER  
*AP Sports Writer*  
KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — This was a year like no other for followers of the Kansas Jayhawks. At various times throughout 2003, they experienced euphoria and despair, anger and pride. They were made to feel shocked, embarrassed and reassured. That Mark Mangino got the football team to its first bowl game in seven years seemed to many like a mere footnote to a rollercoaster year. But one thing during this unpredictable year was entirely predictable — Roy Williams' deciding to leave after 15 years to become head coach at his alma mater in North Carolina was voted sports story No. 1 in Kansas. Just three years after turning down the Tar Heels and promising to be a Jayhawk forever, Williams

changed his mind. The most popular man in the state instantly became one of the most resented. Printing shops worked around-the-clock churning out T-shirts such as the one that Roy particularly disliked. "Benedict Williams," it said. In voting by AP member newspaper and broadcast stations, Jayhawk events were chosen as five of the top six stories altogether. Shouldering its way into the pack at No. 2 was the remarkable season Bill Snyder's Kansas State football team is having. After a three-game losing streak at midseason ended their dreams of a national championship, the Wildcats wound up winning the North Division title and then shocked unbeaten and No. 1 Oklahoma in the Big 12 championship game. It was Kansas State's first conference football championship since they played in the Big Six in 1934.

Their bid to the Fiesta Bowl was their first invitation to a BCS bowl. No. 3 in the voting was Kansas' charge to the NCAA championship game against Syracuse. It was the second straight Final Four appearance by Williams' team and made Williams' departure a few days later even harder for fans to swallow. But Chancellor Robert Hemenway did not have to look long and hard for his replacement. The hiring of 40-year-old Bill Self on Easter Sunday was voted story No. 4. No. 5 was perhaps the most embarrassing episode for Kansas fans. Al Bohl, who had incurred the wrath of Williams and Mangino both, was fired as athletic director the day after the Jayhawks got home from the Final Four. Making the day even more memorable was an astonishing news conference Bohl held in his driveway when he blamed his firing on Williams and said the coach had "crushed me in his hand like a dove." The increasing success of the football team was No. 6. In just his second year, Mangino guided the Jayhawks to a 6-6 record, making them eligible for their first bowl since 1997. They were subsequently invited to the Tangerine Bowl to play North Carolina State.

At No. 7 was the Kansas State women's basketball team, headed by all-star center Nicole Ohlde. Ranked among the nation's elite all year, they made an unexpected early exit from the NCAA tournament but began 2003-04 again ranked in the top 10 and drawing big crowds to Bramlage Coliseum. Lew Perkins' being lured from Connecticut to replace Bohl as Kansas athletic director, and subsequently making sweeping changes in the front office was voted No. 8. Kansas State's beating Nebraska at Lincoln for the first time since 1968 was voted No. 9, followed by a pair of powerhouses continuing their winning ways in the state's prep football championships, Olathe North and Pittsburg St. Mary's-Colgan.

Reese, who spent the last two seasons with Pittsburgh, got a \$200,000 signing bonus and an \$800,000 salary for 2004. PHOENIX (AP) — The Arizona Diamondbacks agreed to one-year contracts with a pair of free-agent pitchers, giving Shane Reynolds a \$1 million deal and Steve Sparks a \$500,000 agreement. Reynolds, 36, was an NL All-Star in 2000 and went 11-9 with a 5.43 ERA for Atlanta last season. NEW YORK (AP) — Former NBA All-Star center Alonzo Mourning was released from the hospital where he received a kidney donated by his cousin. Mourning said he was in "a lot of pain" as he left New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. He was joined by the cousin, Jason Cooper, who volunteered to give Mourning one of his kidneys.

Walker, 30, played second base for the Boston Red Sox this year, hitting .283 in 144 games. He said he is not going to try to replace Cubs second baseman Mark Grudzielanek, who agreed to a one-year deal Dec. 7 that guarantees him \$2.75 million. BOSTON (AP) — The Boston Red Sox agreed to a \$1 million, one-year contract with free agent second baseman Pokey Reese.

# Lofton completes his contract; Sox sign Reese

NEW YORK (AP) — Kenny Lofton completed his \$6.2 million, two-year contract with the New York Yankees. Lofton hit .296 last season for Pittsburgh and the Chicago Cubs with 12 homers, 46 RBIs and 30 steals. CHICAGO (AP) — The Chicago Cubs got another left-handed hitter, agreeing to a \$1.75 million, one-year contract with free-agent infielder Todd Walker. Walker, 30, played second base for the Boston Red Sox this year, hitting .283 in 144 games. He said he is not going to try to replace Cubs second baseman Mark Grudzielanek, who agreed to a one-year deal Dec. 7 that guarantees him \$2.75 million. BOSTON (AP) — The Boston Red Sox agreed to a \$1 million, one-year contract with free agent second baseman Pokey Reese.

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People are the subject of God's existence. Humanity was created to fulfill an eternal destiny and few ever discover the unseen presence of God. Would you create this universe and not watch over it? Believe it or not, God is in your business whether you want Him there or not. Your business is His business! It's just a matter of time until we all figure this out.

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