

Chiefs' draft pick will give away plan

By Doug Tucker

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — If quarterback Joey Harrington is still left when Kansas City picks No. 8 in the first round of the NFL draft on Saturday, fans may learn whether the Chiefs are angling to win now or win later.

If the plans are long-range, Harrington would be hard to pass up. Not only did he lead Oregon to a 25-3 record as a starter, he threw 27 touch-down passes and just six interceptions last year.

Short-range — and 65-year-old coach Dick Vermeil has just two years left on his contract — the Chiefs will go for a big-play defensive player who can make an immediate difference.

A tackle along the lines of North Carolina's Ryan Sims or Wisconsin's Wendell Bryant would provide instant help for a defense that was largely responsible for last year's 6-10 record.

"Everybody in the National Football League is in a win-now mode," said Vermeil. "That's why the league has done what it's done over the last few years. The Super Bowl teams have come out of nowhere, I'm not so sure anybody thinks, 'Well, 3-4 years down the road, we're going to be pretty good.'"

Another reason to consider Harrington would be the contract situation of Trent Green and his two backups. Not one of the three is signed beyond next season.

Green, 32, cost the Chiefs their first-round pick last year in a trade with St. Louis. Not only does he have a surgically repaired knee and 32 years on him, he also threw a league-high 24 interceptions.

Still, spending a first-round pick on a quarterback two years in a row would be, Vermeil says, "tough."

"Tough to do. Very, very tough to do," he added.

"Not impossible."

Most likely, the Chiefs will opt for a defensive tackle. They would love to have the 6-foot-4-inch, 310-pound Sims.

They also like Tennessee's Albert Haynesworth and John Henderson as well as Bryant.

"I'd like to get an impact defensive player," said Vermeil.

"Last year our three top defensive tackles from the year before were gone. If we could get an impact player with that first pick, it would be great."

The Chiefs might also look at cornerback, but a tackle would help sooner.

"It would be harder for him to be an impact player right off the bat because (cornerbacks) aren't always contested," Vermeil said. "You've got 65 defensive snaps. A defensive lineman is contested on every snap. A corner might not have the ball thrown at him more than 3-4 times a game."

Chuck Cook, the Chiefs' director of college scouting, describes Sims as a player "with a big motor."

"He runs to the football," Cook said. "Plays hard. Has good tools that we look for. He's athletic. He's instinctive. He just has upside."

John Bunting, Sims' head coach at North Carolina, was a former player and coach for the Chiefs and could possibly give his old team some special insight into the Tar Heel players.

"There's no question," said Vermeil. "You know him, you trust him. Plus, he knows us so well and what we look for. He's been on the field as a player for us and he's been on the field as a coach for us."

With the eighth pick, the Chiefs have their highest choice since 1989 when they took the late Derrick Thomas with the fourth choice in the first round.

"There's a lot of pressure," said general manager Carl Peterson. "It is a very important pick for this organization and will be in the future."

Come on ball, drop!



Cowboy David Griffith, a junior varsity golfer, watched a putt Tuesday at a tournament at Sugar Hills Golf Club. He shot a 54 over nine holes. The junior varsity next play Thursday, April 25, in Scott City, and the varsity play Tuesday in Hoxie.

Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

Rockies break streak with win at home

DENVER (AP) — Jason Jennings' elbow still bore an ugly bruise, but he was feeling no pain.

Pitching five days after taking a liner off his elbow, Jennings threw six innings and had an RBI double as the Colorado Rockies snapped a five-game losing streak with a 6-4 win over Los Angeles on Tuesday night.

The Rockies ended their skid despite being short-handed. Two of their best hitters left the game prematurely.

Third baseman Todd Zeile left the game after three innings when his wife, former gymnast Julianne McNamara, tripped at Coors Field and broke her ankle. Doctors were considering surgery for Zeile's wife, who is pregnant.

After four innings, right fielder Larry Walker left because of a sore right elbow. Walker had elbow surgery after the 1997 season and again in 2000. Manager Buddy Bell said X-rays were taken, but results weren't immediately available.

"We knew they were gone," center fielder Juan Pierre said. "I think guys stepped it up a little. We knew we didn't have Walker and Zeile coming up, so guys took it upon themselves to get the hits."

"This game is hard to explain sometimes," Bell said. "A lot of times as a player you just go into the game and try to do the best you can regardless of who is in the lineup with you. I don't know if that is any kind of psychological edge."

The Rockies erased a 4-2 deficit with four runs in the sixth. Colorado had five straight hits off Andy Ashby (1-1) to open the inning.

Todd Helton singled and scored on a double by Greg Norton, who had re-

placed Zeile in the lineup. Todd Hollandsworth followed with an RBI single up the middle. Jose Ortiz singled and Gary Bennett lined a run-scoring single that handcuffed Eric Karros at first. Ortiz scored on pinch-hitter Terry Shumpert's double-play grounder.

"It's nice to come in here and see some smiles," said Bennett, who had two hits. "Big hits at key times have been eluding us here early on. Maybe this will get us going."

Jennings (1-1) went six innings, allowing nine hits and four runs — all on homers in the fourth. Jennings departed in the third inning of his last start with a bruised pitching elbow, the result of a drive off the bat of Arizona's Steve Finley.

"Having to come out of my last game was a pretty bad experience," Jennings said. "I was fortunate to recover quick enough to get the start. My elbow was fine. It just felt a little stiff toward the last inning or so."

"I had a problem with the big inning last year and I never seemed to recover from it. Tonight, I knew I had to keep us in the game."

Jose Jimenez pitched a perfect ninth for his third save.

Ashby said he "couldn't make a pitch in the sixth inning. I couldn't get an out. My control was a big problem."

The Dodgers, who managed only an infield single off Jennings in the first three innings, cracked three homers in the fourth to take a 4-2 lead.

Hiram Bocachica led off with a homer, his second. With one out, Paul Lo Duca hit a solo homer, his first. Karros singled and Marquis Grissom hit his first homer, a 412-foot shot to right-center.

Tiger is better, works harder

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — There is no mystery.

Tiger Woods, the most recent Masters champion, is tougher, smarter, meaner, more talented, more competitive, better at handling pressure and works harder than everybody else. It's not hard to see why the competition always cracks — no matter how many times Woods pretends he has no clue.

"I don't know," he said one more time Sunday, "you've got to ask them." Somebody did.

The longer it continued the more it

started to resemble a testimonial dinner.

"The thing about Tiger is, he's the only leader that you don't have any hope he'll falter," Phil Mickelson said.

"He doesn't let anything take him out of his place," Brad Faxon said.

"There's something that's going on with him that's not going on with us," Davis Love III said. He didn't dare elaborate.

This much is certain. Sooner or later, they all crumble to the man who finishes in the red shirt.

baseball scoreboard

NATIONAL LEAGUE West Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for San Francisco, Arizona, Los Angeles, San Diego, Colorado.

NATIONAL LEAGUE Central Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Houston, Chicago, Milwaukee.

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for New York, Florida, Montreal, Philadelphia, Atlanta.

Monday's Games table listing scores for Chicago Cubs 6, Montreal 4, N.Y. Mets 7, Atlanta 6, Pittsburgh 6, Milwaukee 1, Los Angeles 5, Colorado 2, Arizona 14, St. Louis 5, San Diego 4, San Francisco 3.

Tuesday's Games table listing scores for Montreal 8, Chicago Cubs 4, Florida 7, Philadelphia 6, N.Y. Mets 3, Atlanta 1, Houston 8, Cincinnati 3, Pittsburgh 5, Milwaukee 1, Colorado 6, Los Angeles 4, Arizona 5, St. Louis 3, San Francisco 5, San Diego 1.

Today's Games table listing scores for Atlanta (Maddux 1-0) at N.Y. Mets (D'Amico 1-0), Pittsburgh (D. Williams 1-1) at Milwaukee (Sheets 1-2), Los Angeles (Ishii 2-0) at Colorado (Hampton 0-3), St. Louis (Morris 3-0) at Arizona (Schilling 3-0), Chicago Cubs (Bere 1-1) at Montreal (Ohka 1-1), Philadelphia (Wolf 0-0) at Florida (Penny 1-1), Houston (C. Hernandez 0-0) at Cincinnati (Haynes 1-1), San Francisco (Ainsworth 1-0) at San Diego (Jarvis 0-3).

Thursday's Games table listing scores for Houston (Oswalt 2-0) at Cincinnati (Reitsma 0-0), N.Y. Mets (Leiter 1-0) at Montreal (Vazquez 0-0).

AMERICAN LEAGUE Central Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for Cleveland, Minnesota, Chicago, Kansas City, Detroit.

AMERICAN LEAGUE West Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for Seattle, Oakland, Anaheim, Texas.

AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for Boston, New York, Toronto, Tampa Bay, Baltimore.

Monday's Games table listing scores for Boston 4, N.Y. Yankees 3, Chicago White Sox 13, Baltimore 4, Seattle 13, Texas 11, Boston 14, Toronto 3, Detroit 9, Tampa Bay 3, Baltimore 5, N.Y. Yankees 4, Minnesota 8, Kansas City 5, Chicago White Sox 10, Cleveland 5, Anaheim 6, Texas 5, Seattle 6, Oakland 2.

Tuesday's Games table listing scores for Boston (Oliver 1-0) at Toronto (Eyre 1-2), Tampa Bay (Kennedy 0-1) at Detroit (Redman 0-2), Baltimore (Towers 0-2) at N.Y. Yankees (O. Hernandez 1-1), Kansas City (Byrd 2-0) at Minnesota (Radke 2-0), Cleveland (Baez 2-0) at Chicago White Sox (Buehrle 3-0), Texas (Valdes 0-2) at Anaheim (Schoeneweis 1-1), Seattle (Moyer 1-1) at Oakland (Fyhrie 0-0).

Thursday's Games table listing scores for Kansas City (Suppan 1-1) at Minnesota (Milton 2-1), Tampa Bay (Rupe 1-1) at Detroit (Weaver 0-1), Anaheim (Ortiz 1-1) at Oakland (Mulder 2-1), Baltimore (Erickson 1-1) at N.Y. Yankees (D. Wells 2-0), Cleveland (Colon 3-0) at Chicago White Sox (Ritchie 1-1).

Avalanche center to play

DENVER (AP) — Colorado Avalanche center Peter Forsberg has been cleared to play for the playoffs.

Forsberg, a six-time All-Star, was expected to miss four months after having foot surgery on Jan. 10. But he has been skating with the team for more than two weeks and was cleared to play on Tuesday.

"The leg has felt great and there was a lot of progress made last week," said Forsberg, who is expected to be in the lineup against Los Angeles on Thursday. "I am really healthy now and I feel great. It will be great to get back."

Forsberg has had four foot surgeries

and his spleen removed in the past 11 months.

"There were lots of smiling faces. That is for sure," Colorado coach Bob Hartley said of the team learning the news. "It is great news at this time of the year to be adding a world class player to your roster."

Forsberg said last week that he wasn't sure if he would be ready for the playoffs after experiencing pain in his foot.

He said he began feeling better late in the week and possibly could have played Sunday against Dallas in the season finale.

basketball scoreboard

Western Conference Midwest Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for x-San Antonio, x-Dallas, x-Minnesota, x-Utah, Houston, Denver, Memphis.

Western Conference Pacific Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for z-Sacramento, x-L.A. Lakers, x-Portland, x-Seattle, L.A. Clippers, Phoenix, Golden State.

Eastern Conference Atlantic Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for z-New Jersey, x-Boston, x-Orlando, x-Philadelphia, Washington, Miami, New York.

Eastern Conference Central Division table with columns W, L, Pct, GB and rows for y-Detroit, x-Charlotte, Milwaukee, Toronto, Indiana, Atlanta, Cleveland.

Monday's Games table listing scores for Chicago 21, Philadelphia 60, x-clinched playoff spot, y-clinched division, z-clinched conference.

Tuesday's Games table listing scores for Indiana 99, Cleveland 95, Washington 116, New York 112, Orlando 102, Atlanta 95, Charlotte 88, Miami 81, Milwaukee 105, Toronto 89, Detroit 103, New Jersey 98, San Antonio 95, Phoenix 71, Dallas 96, Utah 87, Denver 101, Houston 70, Sacramento 120, Golden State 106, L.A. Clippers 92, Memphis 84.

Today's Games table listing scores for Atlanta at Boston, Chicago at Charlotte, Cleveland at Toronto, Miami at Orlando, Milwaukee at Detroit, New Jersey at New York, Denver at Minnesota, Philadelphia at Indiana, San Antonio at Utah, Memphis at Seattle, Dallas at Phoenix, Houston at Portland, Sacramento at L.A. Lakers, L.A. Clippers at Golden State.

Nuggets' coach not sure if job is permanent

DENVER (AP) — Mike Evans' tenure as the Denver Nuggets coach may or may not end Wednesday night in Minnesota, but he figures there's no sense worrying about it now.

Evans was named the Nuggets' interim head coach in December when Dan Issel resigned. While other coaches — Bill Cartwright in Chicago and New York's Don Chaney — have

had the interim tag removed, Evans has played out the season not knowing what the future will hold.

Nuggets general manager Kiki Vandeweghe said he hopes to have a coach in place before the NBA draft June 26.

The Nuggets may end up turning back to Evans. Denver is just 17-37 under Evans, but the record doesn't

reflect the team's improvement over the last few months. The players have responded to Evans' easygoing style and have played hard for him on most nights.

"I didn't ask for this. It was thrust upon me," Evans said. "I could have refused it, but I didn't. I chose to take a chance with it. I'm happy with what we've been able to achieve."

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