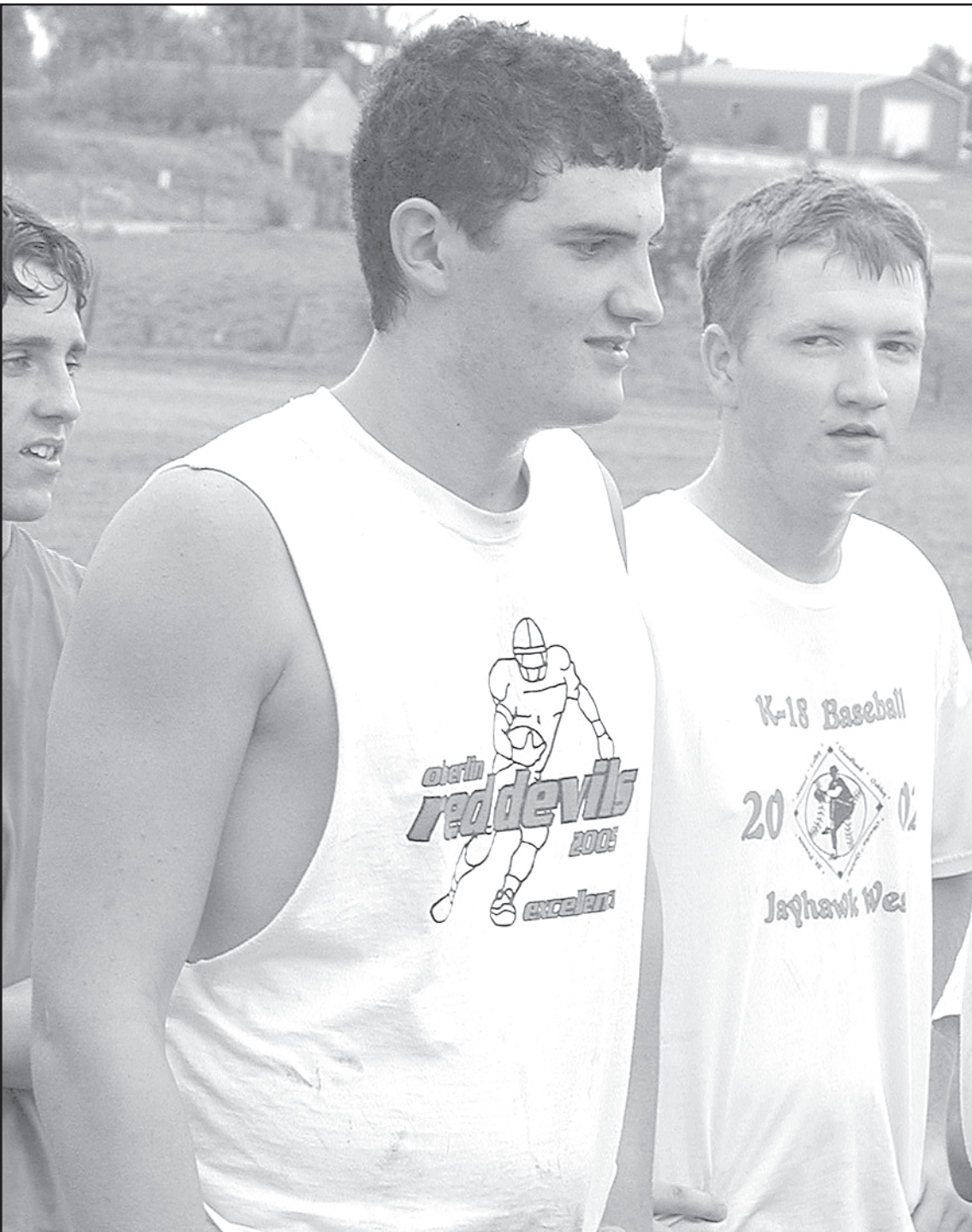


Sports



SENIOR RED DEVIL TIGHT ENDS ANDY GILLIAM (LEFT) AND KURT OLSON (RIGHT) will be key contributors to the 2006 team this season. In certain situations Coach Trevor Williams will use both players on opposite ends of the line.

—Herald staff photo by Jim Merriott

Nebraska Huskers want top conference spot

By JIM MERRIOTT

Husker nation, beware. Four of the top college football preview magazines have picked the University of Nebraska to finish atop the Big 12 Conference North.

Hopefully, Husker fans will not have received the jinx prior to opening kick-off.

No matter who wins the North, be it Nebraska, Iowa State, Missouri or Colorado, they have to play the South, and that most likely means no Big 12 Championship.

The University of Texas, Oklahoma and most likely Texas Tech are the powers in the conference. It's going to be bad enough this year that the Huskers catch both USC and Texas in the regular season.

The question is, can Coach Bill Callahan — in his third year with a 13-10 record — continue to improve?

As far as I am concerned, Frank Solich got the shaft at Nebraska and still should be coach. Callahan will have to prove to me that beating Colorado was no fluke.

If he beats the Buffs again this year, he will have my attention. If he beats them three years in a row, he will have proven to me he is the real deal. I want to believe, but in the back of my mind I still think of him as an Oakland Raiders guy who lost the Super Bowl. I find it difficult to believe that a coach who took a team to the Super Bowl one year can so quickly fall out of grace the following year with his owner.

Something just doesn't smell right. If the Huskers can keep from getting beaten up by the Trojans and Longhorns, they might have a chance. These two games are the keys to the future. The Men of Corn must prove to themselves and the Husker Nation that they can stay

with USC.

If by some miracle Nebraska beats the Trojans, then they are in the driver's seat.

Three of the four non-conference games are cupcakes. If the Huskers should stumble early, however, team confidence could wobble their knees going into the Iowa State game. Iowa is also a big corn state and the Cyclones feel they have something to prove after losing in overtime 27-20 last season.

Ron Prince at K-State is making the Nebraska game the same type of rivalry that Bill McCartney made it at Colorado. K-State will be out for blood. This is Prince's chance to make a statement, so the Huskers had better be ready.

If Nebraska blows out the Wildcats, Prince will have to go back to the drawing board. If not, there could be trouble.

Missouri is on the rise, and the Huskers had better not look past Mulberry, Kan., native Dennis Franchiones' Texas A&M team or Dan Hawkins' Colorado Buffs, last year's Big 12 Northern Conference champions.

The Huskers are returning five seniors on offense and seven on defense, which is a good thing.

The offense is in the hands of senior quarterback Zac Taylor, who will handle Callahan's West Coast offense. Gone are the proud days of the Power-I smashmouth option offense of controlling the football, the secret to winning in the old Big 8 conference. Controlling the clock won games, and if they held it long enough, the Big Red went home smiling.

It isn't that far back to remember when the Huskers went into Folsom Field in Boulder headed for the Big 12 conference title in 2001 with an

11-0 record, only to be upset 62-36 by Colorado. I know because I was there, right in the middle of the field, after the game. It was the quietest exodus that Nebraska fans have ever made from Boulder.

The Huskers lost 25 players to graduation last year, 10 on offense, 12 on defense and three on special teams.

A good point is that they are returning 53 players; 27 offensive, 23 defensive, and three special teams.

Another good point is that the Huskers got a ringer when Butler County Community College running back Kenny Wilson, 6-0 and 220 pounds, signed. He is the real deal. I watched him last season when he played Hutchinson. He has the moves and breakaway speed similar to Barry Sanders. He is a name to remember and if he doesn't get hurt, fans will see him play in the NFL in the future.

The Big Red has been picked to finish first in the Big 12 North by the experts from college football magazines such as *Street & Smith*, *Phil Steele's College Football Preview*, the *Sporting News* and *Lindy's Big 12 Football Review*.

Until the Huskers prove their consistency, a run for the northern title most likely will boil down to their final game against Colorado on Friday, Nov. 24. If the Huskers win at home against the Buffs, they deserve the title, but if the Buffs upset the Huskers, the title could end up in possibly a three-way finish between Iowa State, Colorado and Nebraska.

Any way you look at it, the winner will have to face the stronger southern conference in the Big 12 Championship in Kansas City's Arrowhead Stadium Saturday, Dec. 2.

Two vie for tight end position

By JIM MERRIOTT

One of the key positions the Decatur Community High Red Devils need to fill this fall is tight end.

The tight end position is a critical line position, where normally larger receivers line up on the strong side of the offensive line formation.

The tight end helps in the development of running plays by adding an extra blocker to the side of the field where the majority of running plays go. Their secondary responsibility is to become a receiver if the primary receivers are covered during a pass play, said Coach Trevor Williams.

"This season we have a fine group of young men," said Williams. "Currently, we have 43 players out for the team, with the possibility of one or two additional players coming out after school starts."

The obvious question is: How big a force will the tight ends be?

Returning for their senior season are Andy Gilliam and Kurt Olson, who provide the team with size and experience.

Red Devil tight ends will be required to go over the middle to catch passes, where the tough yardage lies, Williams said.

Gilliam and Olson are battling for playing time, the coach said. It would not be surprising to see them rotate turns bringing in plays from the sideline, he said, as they are both capable of handling the position.

In short-yardage situations, the Red Devils will most likely line up in a two-set tight end formation, with tight ends at both ends of the offensive line blocking for the power running game.

The Red Devils' first day in pads was last Thursday. When the pads

start popping, the players will sort out who will become the starter.

—Herald staff photo by Jim Merriott

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Jennings 15th Annual

Firemen's FunDay Saturday, August 26, 2006

Always held the 4th Saturday of August
Parade Theme

~ Small Towns Pullin' Together ~

8:00-9:30 HEALTH FAIR — Senior Center — sponsored by Decatur County Health Systems, and Decatur County EMS
HEMAGRAM \$25 (Must be fasting) (includes thyroid tests and cholesterol breakdown as well as usual 28 screen tests)
PROSTRATE CANCER SCREENING \$20
FREE SKIN CANCER SCREENING courtesy of Dr. Andrea
FREE BLOOD PRESSURE/BLOOD SUGAR CHECKS/DIABETIC EDUCATION

8:00-10:00 KOLACHE COFFEE — Senior Center — and Welcome to Dr. Andrea — sponsored by the United Methodist Church (Free will offering). Please stop by and introduce yourself to Dr. Andrea.

HORSESHOE TOURNAMENT - Broken Wheel Bar and Grill starts at 9. (3 Categories — Ladies; Men (20 yrs and older); Teens (19 yrs and under). \$1 entry fee. Proceeds to Fire/EMS. 1st prize each category.

KOLACHES SOLD ALL DAY - 75¢ each OR \$9⁰⁰ Dozen (Prune, cherry, apple, poppy seed, apricot, peach, cottage cheese)
FIREMEN'S RAFFLE

TV ~ SURROUND SOUND SYSTEM ~ PORTABLE DVD PLAYER (Winners announced at auction - need not be present to win)

10:00 - 5:00 WOBBLE - TRAP SHOOT - Football Field (north edge of town - follow signs) Bring your own shotgun and plenty of shells!!

10:00 - TRAIN RIDES FOR KIDS — Main St. (courtesy of Greg Otter, Lenora)

10:00 CAKE WALK - City Hall (sponsored by Mary Wahlmeier).

11:00 - 12:00 - DUNK TANK (City Hall yard)

11:00 - 4:00 - CZECH MUSEUM OPEN - Free Admission

11:00 - 5:00 - BINGO - Senior Center (closed at Noon until after the parade). Tickets 3/\$1 or 50¢ each.

11:30 - LUNCH COUNTER OPENS (Fire Station)

12:00 - 12:30 - LINE UP FOR PARADE - south end of School Street. (Pennsylvania Ave.) Please be prompt. All entries Appreciated (No Pre-Registration) (No entry fee)

1:30 PARADE - MAIN STREET
2:30 CHILDRENS GAMES RESUME - dunk tank; coin search (sponsored the The Bank).

FUNNEL CAKES, SNO-CONES SOLD ALL DAY

3:00 - CHILDREN'S TRACTOR PULL (City Hall yard. Ages 4-12 Registration at 2:30; sponsored by Decatur County Farm Bureau; sanctioned for State Fair)

TUG-O-WAR (MAIN STREET)

4:00 - FIREMEN'S TEAM BARREL COMPETITION
6:00 - HOG ROAST - Fire Station (Smoked Pork sandwiches, beans, chips)

7:00 - AUCTION - (donated items) Raffle winner announced. Street Dance with Aaron Traffas Band to follow the auction

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