

No. 1 'Bama comes calling on Tigers

Kansas City Star
COLUMBIA, Mo. — Like many of his Missouri teammates, Brad McNulty knows he will have his

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

hands full this weekend.

Alabama, the No. 1 team in the land, is here today. McNulty, a red-shirt freshman center from Texas — who is making just his second collegiate start — will be lined up across from senior nose guard Jesse Williams, a 6-foot-4, 320-pound behemoth who bench-pressed 600 pounds this summer.

Six. Hundred. Pounds. "I was aware of it at the time," McNulty said, respectfully.

The scarier thing is this: While Williams is a good player, he is but one piece of a Crimson Tide defense that's loaded with size, speed and NFL-caliber talent.

"Not many teams score many points (against them)," Tigers receiver T.J. Moe said with a chuckle.

Indeed. While Williams and other potential NFL Draft picks, such as cornerback Dee Milliner and linebacker Nico Johnson, help the Crimson Tide pass the eye test, Alabama's defensive stat line is even more formidable.

At 5-0, the defending national champions have allowed an average of 191 yards and seven points per game — the best marks in the nation. The Tide also lead the nation in turnover margin. They've recovered six fumbles and recorded nine interceptions while committing only three turnovers.

In other words, this is exactly the kind of team that Missouri's struggling offense — which ranks 80th in the nation in scoring, with 25 points per game, and 95th in the nation in total offense, at 356 yards per game — probably doesn't need to see right now.

"They're No. 1 in the nation in almost every statistical category," Missouri Coach Gary Pinkel said. "Obviously, it's difficult, but that's the challenge, and that's what's fun about playing in a game like this."

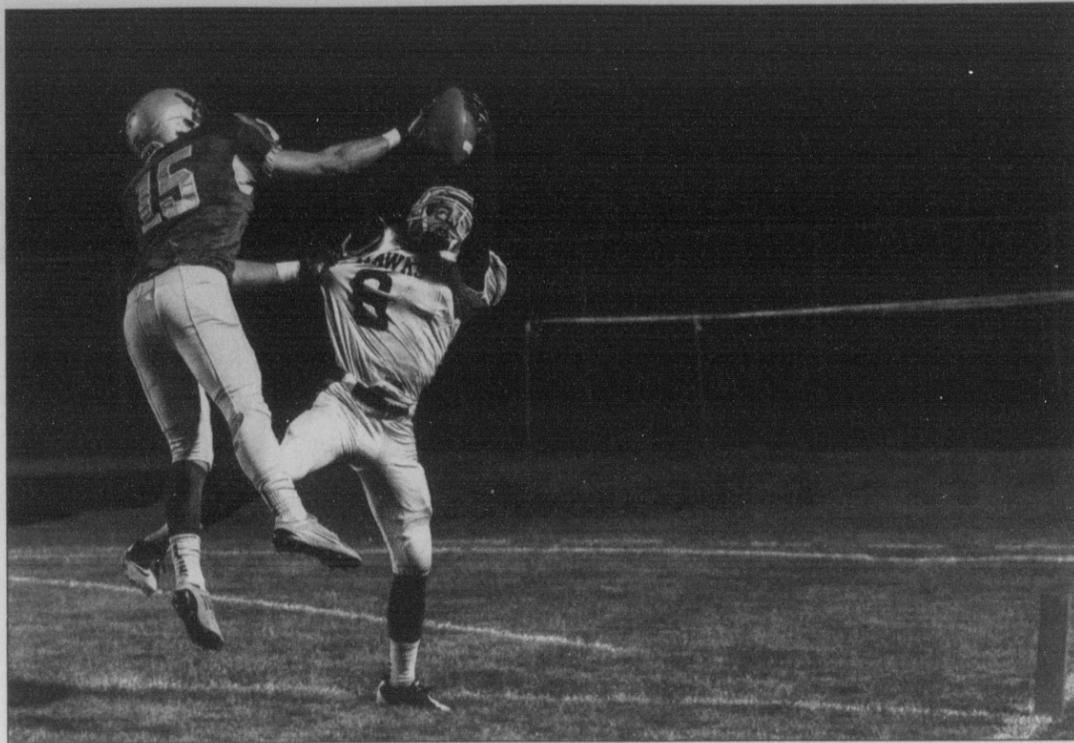
It would certainly be a lot more fun if Missouri's offense wasn't so banged up. Jack Meiners and Mitch Morse, regular starters on the Tigers' offensive line, will miss the game because of knee injuries, while left tackle Elvis Fisher will again play on a balky knee.

Most important, starting quarterback James Franklin — who was beginning to look like his old self in the first half of Missouri's 19-15 loss to Vanderbilt last Saturday — will again sit out because of a sprained knee ligament.

That means red-shirt freshman Corbin Berkstresser — who struggled mightily against Vandy, completing only nine of 30 passes — will get the call in a game that will be nationally televised by CBS. "I think he'll be fine; he'll settle down," Pinkel said. "I think he's very capable. ... He's not the first quarterback to have a tough day."

While Missouri would certainly love to take refuge in its running game — running back Kendal Lawrence is averaging a respectable 5.7 yards per carry — Alabama is third in the nation in rush defense, allowing just 65 yards per game.

It's safe to say Berkstresser is going to have to iron out the kinks in his delivery — something Pinkel alluded to Monday — and make plays with his arm to give his team any chance of winning.



Justin Turner photos/Freelance

Cedar Rapids Jefferson's Blake Bernauer (6) hauls in a touchdown pass over Reid Bonner of Iowa City West last night during an MVC football game at West.

Slow start, then Trojans shine

Jefferson gives West a pretty good tussle early in a 71-14 defeat

By Jason Brummond
Correspondent

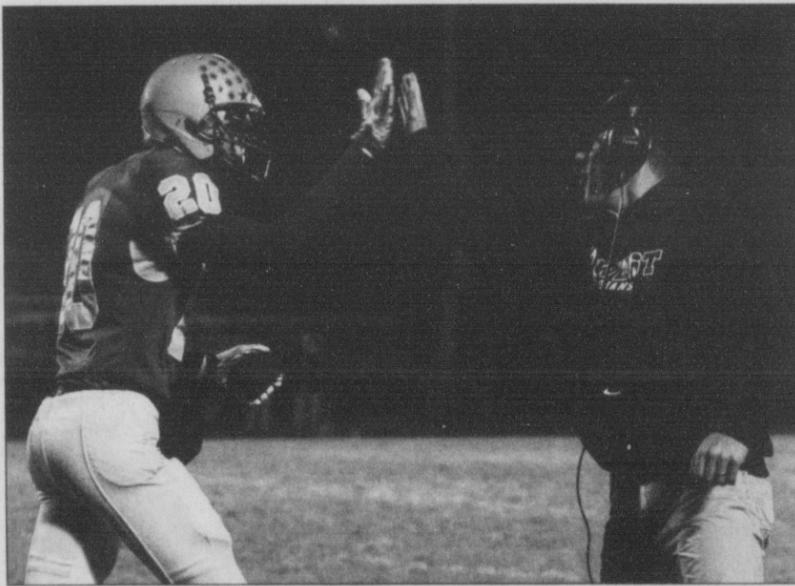
IOWA CITY — Call it a Boot hangover, but it didn't last long.

No. 2 Iowa City West's potent offense looked rusty in the first half. The Trojans even trailed 7-0 before rattling off 29 unanswered points and 42 in the second half in a big 71-14 win over Cedar Rapids Jefferson last night at Trojan Field.

The Trojans (8-0, 5-0) clinched the Mississippi Division title behind Ezra Reiners' 118 yards and three touchdowns.

West's 437 points this season set a Mississippi Valley Conference record, topping Iowa City High's 423 in 1993. The Trojans are a win from their first undefeated regular season since 1999.

West threw an interception on its first pass and then bit on a halfback pass to fall behind 7-0 in the opening minutes. The Trojans, coming off their first win in eight years over Iowa City High in the Battle for the Boot, re-



Iowa City West's Jeremy Morgan (left) high-fives a West coach after intercepting a pass in the first half last night against Cedar Rapids Jefferson at West.

sponded in a big way.

Reiners' 1-yard run tied it up midway through the quarter and a Jeremy Morgan's interception and return to the 2-yard line set up the go-ahead score.

West's Reid Bonner's 64-yard punt return for a TD was the highlight of the night. Bonner broke

at least five tackles on the swirling run. He appeared to be wrapped up at one point but broke through.

Jefferson (1-7, 1-4), which has been shut out in three games, had a strong first half against one of the state's best teams.

Layne Sullivan jumped a slant pass on West's

first play for an interception. Jefferson converted the turnover into a 30-yard TD on a nifty halfback pass from Michael Moncivais to Blake Bernauer for a quick 7-0 lead. Bernauer hauled in a 30-yard TD pass from Sullivan with 14 seconds left in the half to get the J-Hawks within two scores.

Kennedy continues late-season push toward a berth in playoffs

By K.J. Pilcher
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — Cedar Rapids Kennedy used a hot start to stay on fire.

Donovan Kosman returned the opening kickoff 89 yards for a touchdown and Alex Hillyer scored four times in the first half to ignite the Cougars to a third straight win, 48-7, over Dubuque Hempstead last night at Kingston Stadium.

The effort has been good throughout the season, but the Cougars own an increased sense of urgency to earn an eighth straight postseason berth.

"Seniors have figured out they're getting toward the end of this thing and

they want to keep playing," Kennedy Coach Tim Lewis said before the game. "They're looking back to what we've done in the past with the late runs."

"We've played decent at times the last few games and we decided we were starting a new season the Jefferson (game) week, and we were going to take it one game at a time from there."

Kennedy (3-5, 2-3 division) tallied 252 yards on the ground, dominating Hempstead in the first half. Hillyer ran through and by the Mustangs regularly before the break, capping Kennedy's first two drives with 4- and 10-yard touchdown runs.

The Hillyer effect was apparent when he ran for gains of 26, 34 and 6 yards on consecutive plays to account for the Cougars' entire fourth offensive drive. Hillyer also added a 5-yard touchdown as time expired in the first half, giving the Cougars a 41-0 lead at the break.

Hillyer, who is second in Class 4A in rushing yards, amassed 221 last night to give him 1,203 this season.

The struggles continued after the break for Hempstead (0-8, 0-6 division), which fumbled on the first play from scrimmage in the second half. Kennedy took advantage on Alex Boomershine's 3-yard TD. Boomershine

MVC standings

SCHOOL	DIV.	ALL
Mississippi Division		
Iowa City West	5-0	8-0
Dubuque Senior	3-2	6-2
Waterloo East	3-2	5-3
Iowa City High	3-2	4-4
Cedar Rapids Kennedy	3-2	3-5
Cedar Rapids Jefferson	1-4	1-7
Dubuque Hempstead	0-6	0-8
Valley Division		
Cedar Rapids Xavier	5-0	8-0
Cedar Falls	5-1	7-1
Cedar Rapids Prairie	3-2	5-3
Waterloo West	3-2	3-5
Linn-Mar	2-3	3-5
Cedar Rapids Washington	0-5	2-6
Dubuque Wahlert	0-5	1-7
THURSDAY		
C.R. Prairie 44, C.R. Washington 6		
FRIDAY		
Iowa City West 71, C.R. Jefferson 14		
C.R. Xavier 24, Cedar Falls 7		
C.R. Kennedy 48, Dub. Hempstead 7		
Waterloo West 40, Dubuque Wahlert 0		
Linn-Mar 33, Iowa City High 20		
Waterloo East 31, Dubuque Senior 21		

added two rushing TDs.

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MVC/Saints close at Linn-Mar

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locker room.

Woods' catch, an acrobatic snag in the back-left corner of the end zone, broke a 7-7 tie.

Schulte completed 9 of 11 passes for 105 yards in the first half.

The Saints held Cedar Falls to 99 yards of total offense and just four first downs in the first half of action.

Ryan Persick converted a 30-yard field goal to

cap the Saints' first drive of the second half to make it 17-7.

Cedar Falls, which dropped to 7-1 overall and 5-1 in division play, is at Dubuque Hempstead next week.

Hempstead is winless this season after losing last night to Cedar Rapids Kennedy.

■ Comments: (319) 368-8857; jeff.linder@sourcemedianet

Bears roll, in playoffs once again

West Branch is in the high school football playoffs for the 21st time.

Getting four touchdowns from Cole Cook — two through the air and two on the ground — the Bears rolled past Eddyville-Blakesburg, 62-22, last night in a Class 1A-6 game at home.

Cade Jones rushed for 101 yards and three touchdowns and Bo Bowler added 105 yards and two TDs as West Branch improved to 3-2, 6-2.

— Jason Miller, correspondent

DECORAH 63, OELWEIN 0 — Mikail Suvorov rushed for 90 yards and scored two touchdowns as the top-ranked Vikings rolled in Oelwein.

Josey Jewell added 90 yards and two TDs as Decarah improved to 5-0, 8-0.

Holt Johansen added to the rout with three touchdowns and 68 rushing yard.

— Darin Svenson, correspondent

DYERSVILLE BECKMAN 51, NORTHEAST 6 — Mitch Steger rushed for 72 yards and two touchdowns and returned a kickoff 72 yards for a score for Beckman.

WEST DELAWARE 27, CRESTWOOD 8 — Ryan Dudak rushed for 214 yards and four touchdowns as West Delaware coasted to victory in Cresco.

— Bill Logan, correspondent

DEWITT CENTRAL 44, ANAMOSA 6 — Mitchell Green ran for one touchdown and passed for another as Central won in Anamosa.

Connyr Lewis led Anamosa, completing 11 of 24 passes for 185 yards, including a 54-yard TD pass to Austin Holub. Josh Schulte caught eight passes for 89 yards.

— Daryl Schepanski, correspondent

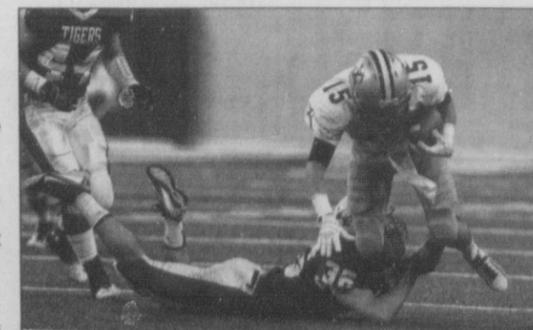
NORTH LINN 49, EAST BUCHANAN 6 — Brendan Schott rushed for 165 yards and three touchdowns and added a 50-yard TD pass as North-Linn (4-4) won in Winthrop.

SPRINGVILLE 42, WEST CENTRAL 6 — Drake Coonrod rushed for 80 yards and scored three touchdowns and also ran a fumble back 75 yards for a score to lead Springville in Maynard.

Sam Scriber completed 7 of 10 passes for 103 yards and two touchdown passes to Jake Hulett as the Orioles (7-1, 6-1 8-Player District 4) locked up the No. 2 spot in the district and qualified for the playoffs for the first time in school history.

ALBURNETT 34, BELLEVUE 15 — Alec Philipp rushed for 124 yards and two touchdowns and threw for 158 yards and two more TDs for the Pirates.

MOUNT VERNON 21, CAMANCHE 0 — Marshall Tuerler rushed for more than 130 yards and a Jake Mueller interception set up a key touchdown by Trey Ryan as the Mustangs (5-3, 3-2 in 2A-4) won in Camanche.



Kyle Grillo/The Gazette

Bryce Grimm of Cedar Rapids gets his legs taken out from under him by Cedar Falls' Nick Clark last night at the UNI-Dome in Cedar Falls.