

QB Battle Over: Jantz Gets Starting Nod For Iowa State

AMES, Iowa (AP) — Iowa State is giving Steele Jantz another crack as the starting quarterback.

The Cyclones are optimistic they'll see Jantz play like he did in a stunning win against rival Iowa last fall. They're also hoping they won't be forced to watch Jantz unravel like he did in 2011.

Coach Paul Rhoads announced Tuesday that Jantz, a senior, will start for Iowa State against Tulsa on Sept. 1, ending the competition between Jantz and sophomore Jared Barnett.

Rhoads said the staff was looking for three key factors in a starting quarterback: decision making, productivity with their feet and, most importantly, accuracy.

The Cyclones left fall camp feeling that Jantz had proven himself to be their best

option behind center.

"Overall, Steele just emerged in all of those areas as being the top guy at this point," Rhoads said.

Jantz started seven games for Iowa State in 2011 after transferring in from junior college. And it was his second appearance that left many believing that the Cyclones had found themselves a star.

Jantz was electric in taking down the Hawkeyes in triple overtime, 44-41, completing 25 of 37 passes for 279 yards and four touchdowns. But he went out and threw three interceptions the following week in a 24-20 win at Connecticut — and sustained a foot injury that affected him the rest of this season.

Jantz's play kept deteriorating, and the Cyclones yanked him in favor of Barnett, a

sophomore, in the first quarter of a loss to Texas A&M.

Barnett quickly reeled off three straight wins, including a program-defining upset of then-No. 2 Oklahoma State. But he struggled in a 27-13 loss to Rutgers in the Pinstripe Bowl and was benched in favor of Jantz.

Jantz threw 10 touchdown passes against 11 interceptions a year ago, including two in the bowl game. Still, Rhoads says Jantz's skill set is ideal for Iowa State's spread offense — as long as he's taking care of the ball.

"There's always that possibility, and it's a concern. Is he better? Sure he is. He's better in every way. He's a better athlete. He's a better runner, and I think we'd all agree that he was a pretty dynamic runner

a year ago. But as the season unfolds, we'll try to keep those mistakes minimized and in check," Rhoads said.

Rhoads said Barnett had figured out by the end of fall camp that Jantz was likely going to be the starter, adding that losing out to Jantz should motivate Barnett to improve.

Barnett will probably see the field in 2012 anyway, given how 2011 played out between the two. But Rhoads indicated that he doesn't want Jantz to play as though he is one mistake away from being yanked either.

"Not short leash. I informed them that I don't have a hook ready to use in the Tulsa game," Rhoads said. "But it's a position that will be evaluated every week just like every other position."

Big 12: New Commish Out To Alter League's Perception

AMES, Iowa (AP) — New Big 12 commissioner Bob Bowlsby views the league as healthy and stable, with its 10 members committed to each other.

Now he's trying to get everyone else to see it that way too.

Bowlsby said Tuesday that one of the Big 12's biggest immediate challenges is in changing the minds of those who saw the league brought to the brink of extinction more than once and still look at it as a shaky alliance of disjointed institutions.

Bowlsby acknowledged during a visit to Iowa State that even he was skeptical of how dedicated the Big 12's members were to each other. But Bowlsby said those concerns were alleviated by the leadership of the member institutions, and he left one of the nation's top athletic director jobs, Stanford, for the Big 12 in May.

"The private reality is much more stable and much more strong and much more forward-looking than the public perception is. I think we're still recovering from some of the tumultuous times over the last two years," Bowlsby said. "We're still moving in the direction that we'd like to eventually reside, but I feel very good about the reality of the conference at the present time."

The league still has some work to do to prove its stability. But Bowlsby said the Big 12 is in the "late stages" of solving the final issues with a lucrative new, multi-year TV contract. That, in turn, will allow the member institutions to officially sign a grant of media rights deal that would essentially make their commitment to each other iron-clad.

The Big 12 will also take on a new look this fall with the departures of Missouri and Texas A&M to the SEC and the additions of West Virginia and TCU.

Bowlsby isn't anticipating a drop-off after losing the Tigers and Aggies and is confident the league has a chance to end the SEC's stranglehold on the national championship in football.

"I like the dog we have in the fight. I think the top of our league is competitive with any in the country. There's no doubt about that. We add two good football schools in West Virginia and TCU, and I think our league top to bottom in our major flagship sports are better."

For now, Bowlsby said that although the conference realignment madness that nearly wrecked the Big 12 will always be on the league's radar, the majority of its presidents are happy with the current 10-team model.

Bowlsby said the best way to ensure the league's long-term stability is to make the Big 12 into a conference so strong no school would ever want to leave.

"What we have to do is incentivizing people staying rather than penalize them leaving," Bowlsby said.

Golf: Yankton Scores Home Win Over BV

The Yankton Bucks put four golfers at 78 or better to beat out host Brandon Valley in a boys' golf dual on Tuesday at Fox Run Golf Course.

Brandon Valley's Trevor Tobin and Michael Whitney each shot 71 to tie for medalist honors, but the Bucks posted the next four best scores to finish at 302, one stroke better than the Lynx. Jace Guthmiller shot 36s on both sides to finish at 72. Mitch Schlingman and Lane Sawatzke each carded 76s. Logan Megard shot 78, Brandon Frick carded an 80 and Mason Sundleaf shot 87 for the Bucks.

Brandon Valley beat out the Bucks on the JV side, 339 to 350. Ben Jensen and Eric Stratman each shot 84s for Yankton.

Next up for the Bucks is a home dual with Mitchell on Tuesday, Aug. 28.

VARISITY: Yankton 302, Brandon Valley 303
INDIVIDUAL: Trevor Tobin BV 71, Michael Whitney BV 71, Jace Guthmiller Y 72, Mitch Schlingman Y 76, Lane Sawatzke Y 76, Logan Megard Y 78, Riley Duncanson BV 80, Brandon Frick Y 80, Tyler Anderson BV 81, Greg Koehn BV 83, Tanner Wehrkamp BV 85, Mason Sundleaf Y 87
JUNIOR VARSITY: Brandon Valley 339, Yankton 350
INDIVIDUAL: Alex Hamer BV 80, Tanner Fjerestad BV 83, Ben Jensen Y 84, Eric Stratman Y 84, Jason Shindler Y 87, Ryan Sjoberg BV 87, Carter Erickson BV 89, Zane Swenson BV 92, Matt Jensen Y 95, Nate Welch BV 95, Tyler Wenande Y 96, Brady Weidmeier Y 100

Dakota Valley 159, Vermillion 171

NORTH SIOUX CITY — Dakota Valley, led by Jacob Wenthe's 38, beat out Vermillion 159-171 in a varsity boys' golf dual Tuesday at Two Rivers Golf Course.

Dakota Valley's Ben Williams shot 39, and teammates Tommy Kenny and Thomas High each shot 41 for the Panthers in the nine-hole event.

Vermillion was led by Jay Munger's 42. Carter Andre, Andrew Heine and Peter Haught each shot 43.

VARISITY: Dakota Valley 159, Vermillion 171
INDIVIDUAL: Jacob Wenthe DV 38, Ben Williams DV 39, Tommy Kenny DV 41, Thomas High DV 41, Jay Munger V 42, Carter Andre V 43, Andrew Heine V 43, Peter Haught V 43
JV INDIVIDUAL: Blake Van Ginkel DV 43, Tyler Schrock DV 46, Trip Shuey DV 46, Jake Odens V 47, Tristen Meadows V 50, Rhett Chalup DV 51, Paul Schwasinger V 52, Peter Mackeprong DV 52, Ryan Owens DV 52, Sam Craig V 52, Josh Prescott V 54, Jameson Bull DV 58, Gavin Gilbertson V 70

MSU Football Coach Booked In Child Porn Case

EAGLE LAKE, Minn. (AP) — The head football coach at Minnesota State, Mankato, was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of child pornography, sheriff's officials said.

Todd Hoffner, 46, was in custody on suspicion of using underage people in a sexual performance and possession of child pornography, Blue Earth County Sheriff's Capt. Rich Murry told the *Mankato Free Press*.

Hoffner had not been formally charged by Tuesday evening, and it was not immediately clear whether he had an attorney. His home phone number was disconnected.

Messages left for sheriff's officials and prosecutors were not immediately returned to The Associated Press.

Hoffner was escorted off the football practice field Friday and has been on leave from his coaching position since then, the university said in a statement.

Spokesman Dan Benson added that a university investigation is pending.

"The University is not aware of any allegations affecting university students or program participants," Benson said in the statement.

Hoffner is in his fifth year as Minnesota State, Mankato's head football coach. He led the team to the playoffs in 2008 and 2009, and a share of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference title in 2011.

He has a 34-13 record at Minnesota State, Mankato, and was named NSIC coach of the year in 2009. He was previously the offensive coordinator at the University of South Dakota.

He is married and has three children.

National Football League: Steelers

RB Dwyer Providing Stability



Philadelphia Eagles Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie tackles Pittsburgh Steelers Jonathan Dwyer in the first quarter of a preseason game at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, Penn. from Aug. 9.

New Offensive Coordinator Haley Brought Aboard To Spark Rushing Game

PITTSBURGH (AP) — There is nothing imposing about Jonathan Dwyer. No flash. No ankle-breaking open field moves.

That isn't the way the third-year Pittsburgh Steelers running back operates. He is more direct than dazzling. Get the ball. Pick a hole. Go. Repeat.

No wonder Dwyer has looked so comfortable in no-nonsense offensive coordinator Todd Haley's new system. With Rashard Mendenhall still rehabbing a surgically repaired knee, and Isaac Redman nursing a hip injury, the Steelers have turned to the soft-spoken Dwyer to provide the thump in the running game during the preseason.

So far, so good. Dwyer has 83 yards on 10 carries through two games, including 43 yards while working with the first team in a 26-24 win over Indianapolis on Sunday night. The performance was typical Dwyer. He never made it outside the tackles while gashing the

middle of the Colts defense.

"I just want to contribute," Dwyer said. Given the way the Steelers expect to run the ball with Haley calling the plays, he will almost certainly get a shot even after the regulars are ready to go.

Pittsburgh parted ways with former offensive coordinator Bruce Arians in the offseason and turned to Haley to restore a little grit to a unit that struggled to move the ball on the ground at crucial times in recent years.

The Steelers haven't finished in the top five in the NFL in rushing touchdowns since Jerome Bettis retired following the 2005 season, instead relying more and more on quarterback Ben Roethlisberger's arm.

While the two-time Super Bowl winner remains among the league's elite, he has also taken a beating the last few seasons. He missed one game last year and was slowed in several others due to a left ankle injury. The

Steelers invested in upgrading the offensive line during the offseason, drafting Stanford guard David DeCastro in the first round, and former Ohio State tackle Mike Adams in the second. They have even added a full-time full-back to the mix, something missing the last several seasons as the Steelers worked out of a one-back set.

The goal is to take some of the heat off Roethlisberger and put pressure on opposing defenses by coming at them relentlessly with the ground game. It worked wonders for Haley in Kansas City in 2010, when the then-Chiefs head coach rode the legs of Thomas Jones and Jamaal Charles to an unlikely AFC West title.

Haley would love to get similar production from a talented — if injury riddled — stable of

STEELERS | PAGE 8

Nebraska Volleyball Team Savors Last Season In Coliseum

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska has won 94 percent of its volleyball matches at the NU Coliseum since 1975, and every home date has been sold out since 2001.

So why are the Cornhuskers giving up that home-court advantage and moving across campus to another arena in 2013?

Christy Johnson-Lynch, the Iowa State head coach and a two-time All-American for Nebraska in the mid-1990s, wondered the same thing.

"It has such great tradition and it's so hard to play there, so hard for opponents to win there," she said. "Initially I thought they were crazy."

Coach John Cook is confident the intimidating atmosphere the Coliseum is famous for can be re-created at a reconfigured Devaney Sports Center.

But that's next year. This year will be a season-long celebration of the 86-year-old Coliseum and what it has meant to one of college volleyball's most successful programs.

"The tradition is in the air, it's in the walls," senior outside hitter Hannah Werth said. "The people who came before us, we

hold their names when we play and step on the court. We're not just representing ourselves or this team or this year, but a history. We have to honor that."

The fourth-ranked Huskers open this weekend with home matches against Saint Louis and defending national champion UCLA. More than 4,500 fans dressed in red will walk through the Roman columns at the entrance and sit together in wooden bleachers that run right up to the court.

They'll cheer. They'll chant. They'll do both loudly.

They'll be the seventh woman. "You feel so much pressure in that environment," Johnson-Lynch said. "It's hard for players to talk to each other, it's hard for coaches to communicate. I think it's worth a couple points a game."

"Critical games, critical points, when the pressure is there, it's even harder. It's like you feel the fans are weighing you down, and they're right on top of you."

Nebraska is 509-33 all-time in the Coliseum and has gone unbeaten at home in 19 seasons.

Johnson coached the Cyclones to a five-

set win there in 2009, marking the first time Iowa State beat Nebraska on any court in 77 meetings.

Only Hawaii, UCLA, Penn State, Texas and Kansas State have won more than one match in the building since the sport's NCAA era began in 1981.

"There are a lot of tough venues," Penn State coach Russ Rose said. "The venue isn't what makes it tough. It's the opponent... When you go play Nebraska, you know you're going to play a well-trained team that's physical and with a confident, loud crowd."

The Coliseum opened in 1926 and was home to the men's basketball team for a half-century. When basketball moved to the Devaney Center, the volleyball team became the sole tenant.

Crowds grew as coach Terry Pettit's young program established itself as one of the nation's best. The Huskers won national championships in 1995, 2000 and 2006 and produced Olympians in Lori Endicott, Allison Weston, Nancy Metcalf and Jordan Larson.

Many of the same fans from the '80s are still coming to matches. The sellout streak will stretch to 165 matches when Saint Louis

visits Friday.

Last year's average attendance of 4,522 — 102 percent of the listed capacity — ranked second nationally behind Hawaii's 6,814.

The Huskers will challenge Hawaii for No. 1 in attendance beginning next year because volleyball capacity at the Devaney Center will be more than 7,500.

The men's and women's basketball teams will move to a new downtown arena next year, opening up the Devaney Center for volleyball. The additional seating is one of the main reasons for moving.

All courtside seats already are sold for next year at Devaney.

Cook, looking around the Coliseum, said, "Now the question will be, 'Can the designers re-create this?' If you look at the drawings and designs, they're going to take a really great swing at that. I think people are going to be really happy."

Before moving, the Huskers have 15 more matches to play at the Coliseum. Cook said his team will savor each one.

"It's very, very important to our team and our program how we finish this year here," he said.

Softball: Gazelles Split With Riders

SIOUX FALLS — The Yankton Gazelles split a season-opening girls' softball doubleheader at Sioux Falls Roosevelt on Monday night. Yankton won the opener 4-2 but the Rough Riders held on to win game two, 7-6.

YANKTON 4, ROOSEVELT 2: The Gazelles scored three runs in the top of the sixth to rally for the victory, thanks to a go-ahead ground out by Karlee Kozak.

Jessica Wirth was 3-3, while Kozak, Abby Schulte and Brooke Loecker all had one hit and an RBI. Hannah Horn had a hit and Andi Sprakel added an RBI.

Jaclyn Arens picked up the win,

striking out two batters.

ROOSEVELT 7, YANKTON 6: The Rough Riders took a 7-4 lead into the bottom of the sixth before Yankton scored twice in the bottom of the frame. The game ended on a ground out with the bases loaded.

Schulte was 3-3 with three RBI, two runs scored and a steal of home plate. Arens drove in two runs, while Horn and Wirth each added a single.

Arens suffered the loss, again recording two strikeouts. Yankton returns to action Sunday for two games in Sioux Falls. The Gazelles play Tracy, Minn., at 11 a.m. and Jackson, Minn., at 2 p.m.

Houston Bids For Bowl, Playoff Rotation

HOUSTON (AP) — The city of Houston wants to become a part of college football's playoff system.

Houston submitted a bid on Tuesday to host the new Big 12-Southeastern Conference bowl and join the rotation for semifinal games in the sport's new postseason format, which begins in the 2014 season.

The champions of the Big 12 and Southeastern Conference or replacement teams from those leagues would meet in the bowl game, at least temporarily dubbed the Champions Bowl. The game would be played at Reliant Stadium, home of the NFL's Houston Texans.

Cotton Bowl organizers have also expressed interest in being part of the playoff rotation and hosting the title game at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, as have officials from the Chick-fil-A Bowl in Atlanta.

Reliant Stadium has hosted a bowl game — currently the Meineke Car Care Bowl — since 2006. The venue, which also has a retractable roof, was the site of the 2004 Super Bowl and the 2011 Final Four. It is slated to host the Final Four again in 2016.

"We're really honored and very proud of the bid that we've put forth," said Heather Houston, the executive director of the Meineke Car Care Bowl. "We feel like it'll stack up against any other market..."

The bid is for 12 years, Houston said, and the goal is for the city to land one of the semifinal games in four of those years. The deadline for cities to submit bids is Wednesday, she said.

The Meineke Car Care Bowl has drawn high attendance the past three years. Last season, a crowd of 68,395 watched Texas A&M defeat Northwestern.