

# Cougars open season with defensive holes to fill

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — University of Houston coach John Jenkins was trying to maintain his trademark smile Tuesday despite the attrition that has cost him three safeties since the start of preseason practice.

Kevin Batiste and Darren Woods have been declared scholastically ineligible and on Monday Zach Chatman was suspended from the team after he was charged with carrying a gun on campus.

Defensive tackle Sam Fa'aita also failed to make his summer school grades, leaving the Cougars scrambling to shore up a defense that was ranked among

the worst in the country last season.

Houston's defenders ranked 90th among the 106 NCAA Division I-A school in scoring defense and they were 84th in total defense.

The Cougars will open their season at Tulsa Saturday with a freshman and junior college transfer as the free safeties.

"What we have to do is move on and work with the guys that are here," Jenkins said. "There are some excellent athletes there. They just have to play."

The safety losses have left the starting job to Thomas McLaughlin, a freshman from Houston Langham Creek and Stewart Carpenter, a junior college transfer as the backup.

Chatman and Woods were listed 1-2 at the free safety position prior to the dismissals.

Houston athletic director Rudy Davalos said Chatman was arrested Saturday night when he was stopped by campus police. There had been some altercations on the campus, Davalos said, but Chatman had not been involved. They happened to stop him. He was not in a fight," Davalos said.

Chatman, a senior from Beaumont, also has been suspended temporarily from school pending the outcome of a hearing.

Jenkins has a different quarterback dilemma, too many quarterbacks.

Jenkins said he would wait until Thursday to announce the starting quarterback for Saturday's

opener. He will choose among Donald Douglas, the expected choice, Jimmy Klingler and junior college transfer Kyle Allen.

"They've had a wonderful two-a-day competition," Jenkins said. "Each one has different ingredients to offer. Rather than come out and say what I'm going to do, I'll have that competitive process continue on through the week."

Douglas, with scrambling and passing abilities, started two games last season for injured David Klingler. He completed 37 of 59 passes for 520 yards and four touchdowns.

The two teams haven't played since 1988 when the Cougars prevailed 82-28 in the Astrodome. In Houston's last visit to Tulsa, the Hurricane won 31-24 in 1985.

# Frogs look for battle against revenge-minded Lobos

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

When Texas Christian faces New Mexico on Saturday, it could be much closer than the Horned Frogs' Leon Clay-paced 60-7 triumph over the Lobos in last year's initial meeting at Fort Worth. The Lobos also are no stranger to SWC opponents. Most of those battles have taken place with Texas Tech, and the Red Raiders lead that series 27-5-2 to give the SWC a 35-5-2 lead over UNM.

New Mexico's Dennis Franchione joins the Horned Frogs' new head coach Pat Sullivan with

just one spring session to look over their charges. Franchione has compiled an enviable 80-19-2 (10th year) overall mark with stops at Southwestern (Kan.), Pittsburg State and Southwest Texas State. Sullivan has been part of a winning tradition at Auburn as the on-the-field and Academic All-America choice assisted six Tigers' teams with a combined record of 52-16-3 and two SEC titles from 1986-91.

TCU appears to want to establish more time of possession on offense and to play the fine containment defense that helped the team post its best record since

1984 last fall.

The Lobos, who finished strongly with wins over Air Force and Colorado State in their final three games, have committed to strengthening their football program and to playing with year-long consistency. Franchione has been successful (.802 career winning percentage) at all his previous stops and should have the Lobos playing with greater confidence.

TCU's returning standouts in the secondary — CB Anthony Hickman, FS Tony Rand and SS Greg Evans — join with much-improved junior Rico Wesley to pose

one of the SWC's most rugged pass defenses. RBs Curtis Modkins and Derrick Cullors combined for 1,015 yards and 13 TDs rushing last year while running almost exclusively from one-back sets.

Though the loss for the season of LB Reggie Anderson (spring knee injury) hurts, DE Tunji Bolden and DT Royal West provide good anchors in front of the speedy secondary. QB Leon Clay has racked up 2,244 passing yards and 27 TDs in his last nine games and may be one of the nation's best when he is at 100 percent in the health department.

# Gibbs eager to see Sooners mature against Texas Tech

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NORMAN, Okla. — A young Oklahoma football team begins its season Thursday night against Texas Tech. Coach Gary Gibbs is eager to watch the growing-up process.

Gibbs says 23 players who will suit up against the Red Raiders have never played a down for No. 15 Oklahoma, or have played only sparingly. That includes four starters on defense and three on offense.

The two-deep depth chart only

lists 10 seniors to go along with 14 players who are true freshmen or redshirted freshmen. If Gibbs is concerned, he didn't show it Tuesday.

"I'm excited about this football team," he said at his first weekly news conference of the year. "We've had excellent practices. Our team's excited about the season, they're anxious to play."

"Obviously with the inexperience and youth, you're concerned about how they're going to react to certain situations. But you also know they're going to enter the

season and this contest with a lot of enthusiasm.

"I think we're a team that believes we'll be successful. And with that youth we still can blend in a lot of key players who have played a lot of football here at Oklahoma."

At the top of that list are quarterback Cale Gundy and outside linebacker Reggie Barnes.

Gundy threw for 1,228 yards last season while Mike Gaddis was running for 1,240 yards. This year, the offense is expected to revolve more around Gundy.

Barnes was an All-Big Eight pick last year and Gibbs believes he can be one of the best in the nation this year.

"We still have question marks and really we're not going to be able to answer those questions until Thursday night," Gibbs said.

He has an idea what he'll see from the Sooners.

"I think we'll go out and play lights out," he said. "I think we'll play hard, I think we'll play with a lot of enthusiasm and I think we'll be an exciting football team to watch and be part of."

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