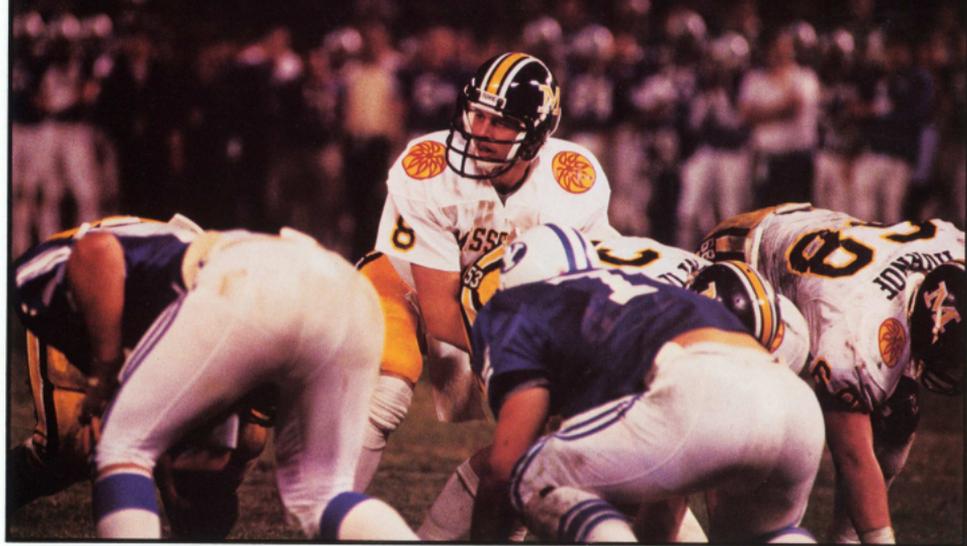


By James K. Gentry

THE '84 TIGERS:

GREAT EXPECTATIONS



Strong showings in the Holiday Bowl and spring practice propelled Warren Seitz to No. 1 in preseason charts.

DON'T BOTHER to remind Mark Heydorff of the lesson of 1980. He knows it too well.

"The players that year thought they were really going to have a good season," remembers Mizzou's defensive coordinator. "But they didn't do what was necessary to have a good season. It was a tough year."

Specifically, hopes were soaring as the Tigers entered the season as conference favorites with stars like Phil Bradley, James Wilder, Andy Gibler, Howard Richards, Van Darkow, Eric Wright and Johnny Poe.

Disappointment followed: Mizzou was 5-2 in the conference, lost to Purdue in the Liberty Bowl and was ignored by the final polls.

A few years later, the scenario is familiar. At least four publications have

Missouri in their preseason top 20s; some observers are talking Big Eight championship, and the Tigers themselves are thinking Orange Bowl.

"It's not a thing like, 'If we get to the Orange Bowl,'" noseguard Steve Leshe said after the spring game. "It's 'When we get to the Orange Bowl.'"

The coaches have thought about Miami, too. "I think this is the best group we've had depth-wise and talent-wise," Coach Warren Powers says. "I think realistically the players think they can [go to the Orange Bowl]." Even the Dutton-Brookfield training facility at the Tigers' practice field is decorated with two Orange Bowl related paintings.

IT'S NOT A PSYCH JOB, the Tigers insist. "This group is much more realistic about what it takes to win a cham-

pionship," Powers says. "You have to be ready to make a tough commitment. I think the mental attitude of this football team is that it knows what the challenge is it has in front of it. And the dedication and commitment to having a great year have been very real. We're being real honest with ourselves. We're asking, 'Are you putting out what it takes to be a champion?' That's the real key."

The optimism comes at a time when the athletic department urgently needs to have season-ticket sales end their downward spiral. Officials are hopeful. Few complaints have been heard on the new ticket policy, and the '84 schedule is void of the likes of Utah State and New Mexico State.

Although the final count won't be known until students return to Campus,

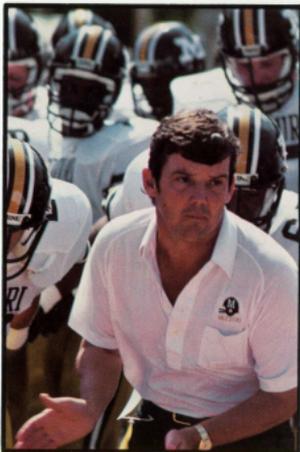
season-ticket sales may reach the range of last season's 31,724. Since season-ticket sales had tumbled from 47,052 in 1979, the flattening out is mildly encouraging. For sales to pick up now, however, it's all up to the Tigers.

Veteran *Kansas City Star* sports editor Joe McGuff told *Missouri Alumnus* last winter, "The only thing that will reverse the decline is to have an awfully good football team. And fans must perceive that it will be good at the beginning of the season."

TO GET ACROSS that perception quickly, officials are "making a big effort to sell out the Wisconsin game," Joe Castiglione, director of marketing and promotions, says of the home opener. "We want to set the tone and have people there at the start to set the enthusiasm level. We need the fans at every step of the way. We're saying, 'Hop on the bandwagon now while there's still room.'"

To create the excitement, coaches and athletic officials have been on the road. "We've had meetings around the state," Castiglione says. "It's helped create new enthusiasm in areas where there's been none before."

"We're being extra aggressive in attacking the marketplace to generate new enthusiasm and support for the



Coach Warren Powers begins his seventh Tiger season with a new three-year pact.

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Kickoff (6 p.m.)



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NOTE: Football tickets must be purchased through the Athletic Ticket Office (314) 882-2386.

program. We've seen good results so far. But it's not going to happen overnight."

PROMOTIONAL efforts include more than 150 billboards touting the Tigers, an emphasis on group ticket sales, ventures with corporations, Tiger paws on highways, walks and merchandise, and a two-minute film running in 50 movie theaters across the state.

"But the bottom line remains," Castiglione says. "If the product is not appealing to the mass public, you won't get repeat business. The product has got to be good."

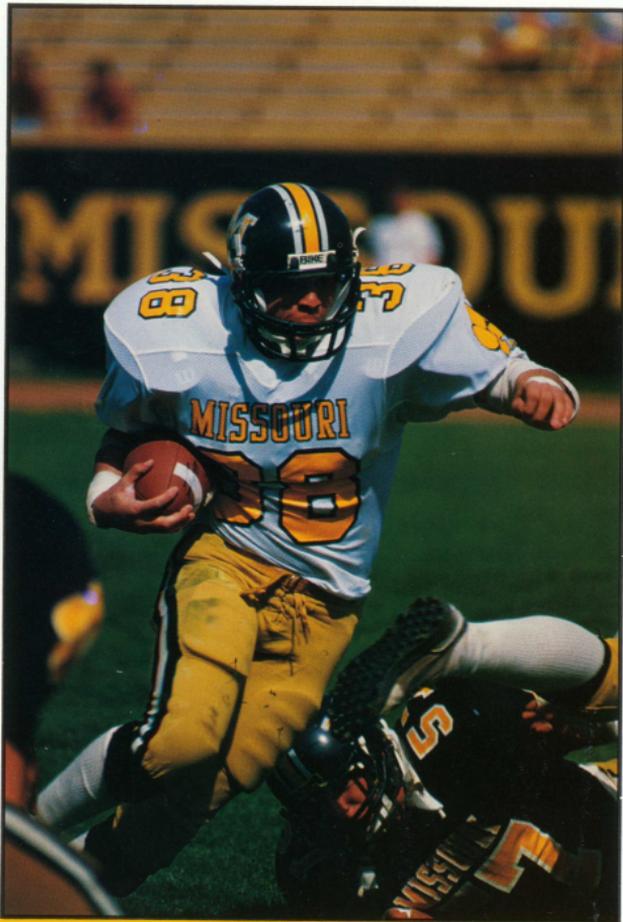
Powers thinks the product will have appeal. "I'm excited about this year. We have experience in the key areas. We've got the best skill players—quarterback, running back and receivers—we've had in the last three or four years. We've got all sorts of potential at running back. The offensive line, although fairly young, could be one of our better ones. And with us in our second year with this offense, we're further along. The players and coaches know it better. We hope we'll be more productive and will score more points."

Marlon Adler returns for his third season as starting quarterback, although 1983 backup Warren Seitz entered fall practice No. 1 on the depth chart. Adler ran for 12 touchdowns last season, the most ever by a Mizzou quarterback, and passed for 11 more. His 1,870 run-pass yards was the third-best total offense for one season. Besides an impressive spring, Seitz also did well in the Holiday Bowl.

THE TIGERS have proven players at other skill positions. Eric Drain, Mizzou's leading rusher with 685 yards and a 4.1 yard-per-carry average, returns at fullback, and Andy Hill and George Shorthose are back as receivers. Shorthose, a converted running back, led Mizzou in receptions with 32 for 483 yards and topped the Tigers with 721 yards in all-purpose running.

Last season's offense was handicapped by the lack of consistent production at tailback. Powers thinks this year will be different with transfer Manny Henry—a standout in the spring game—Darrell Wallace, Jon Redd, Herbert "Junebug" Johnson and Vernon Boyd.

Despite the loss of four starters, the offensive line could be solid. Offen-



Manny Henry, a 210-pound transfer from Minnesota, is a top contender for the tailback slot. With four other hopefuls, "We've got all sorts of potential at running back," says Powers.

sive tackle John Clay (6-5, 280 pounds), who played behind All-America Conrad Goode last season, has emerged as the leader. "He may be an All-Big Eight player this year, could be All-America," says offensive coordinator Larry Beightol.

THE STRENGTH of the defense will be the interior line with Robert Curry (6-3, 264), Pat Burns (6-4, 261) and Mich-

ael Scott (6-5, 275) at tackles and Leshe (6-2, 255) at noseguard.

The only problem in either offensive or defensive lines may be academic, with several players counting on summer school grades to keep them eligible.

"On defense we have to replace our ends, that's our main concern," Powers says. "We lost two pretty good ones in Bobby Bell and Taft Sales. Our second-

dary should be much stronger—it was our Achilles heel last year. We were 10th nationally in defense but we kept giving up big plays." The starters at ends will be Lenson Staples (6-4, 240), who played a good bit when Sales was injured, and former running back Eric Troy (6-1, 202).

THE LINEBACKING CORPS has only one proven performer, but Heydorff isn't concerned. Tracey Mack, who made the switch from fullback to become the Tigers' No. 2 tackler last season, will be at strong linebacker. The other starter will be Mike Vestweber, who was a spring surprise after moving from defensive end. Sam Harris, expected to be a backup, will not return because of academic problems.

The status of two linebacking recruits counted on for fall help is uncertain. Steve Vandergriff, considered by many the nation's top linebacking prospect, underwent shoulder surgery in June and won't be ready until mid-

season. He may redshirt. And Chris Jensen had a knee operation last year, and the coaches must wait until fall practice gets under way to evaluate his progress.

The secondary looks good. "The second week of spring practice it [secondary] was better than it was all last season," Heydorff says. "We really shored it up by moving Ron Floyd and Cameron Riley over from offense." Cornerbacks will be Terry Maticchak and Jeff Hooper. Safeties will be Jerome Caver and Anthony Frazier.

Off the field the Tigers appear to be in good shape, too. Powers made only one change in his coaching staff this winter—adding Jim Elam as a replacement for the departed Charlie Sadler—compared with the major revision a year earlier. "This is our second year together," Powers says. "We know more about each other. It has a settling effect on the team and the coaches." Powers plans to continue the more supervisory role he adopted last season, leaving the

detail work to Heydorff and Beightol.

With football generating most of the revenue for the athletic department budget, the declining ticket sales of the last few years have been painful. Since the athletic department receives no outside funds, there is little room for maneuvering when things go bad. That was evident in June when the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee recommended that the chancellor approve a 2 percent increase in the athletic department budget. The increase of about \$149,000 brings the athletic department budget for 1984-85 to \$8.7 million.

ADDITIONAL REVENUE may or may not be generated by extra televised football games after June's Supreme Court ruling that the NCAA cannot regulate schools' appearances.

More certain, however, would be the increased income that would come with a championship season. That would be a lesson worth remembering. □

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TIGERS '84

Date	Opponent
Sept. 8	Illinois
Sept. 15	WISCONSIN
Sept. 22	MISSISSIPPI STATE
Sept. 29	NOTRE DAME
Oct. 6	COLORADO
Oct. 13	Nebraska
Oct. 20	Kansas State
Oct. 27	*IOWA STATE
Nov. 3	Oklahoma
Nov. 10	Oklahoma State
Nov. 17	KANSAS

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