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Snell signs with Western;

By ERIC WOELHLER
and ANDY DENNIS
Daily News Sports Writers

At least five Southcentral Kentucky high school football players signed national letters-of-intent with colleges today, but the biggest name is still undecided.

Players from this area signing with colleges today included Chris Snell of Warren Central with Western Kentucky University, John Crabbe of Central with Austin Peay State, Andy Britt of Russellville with the University of Kentucky, John Ross of Monroe County with Murray State and Donte Key of Franklin-Simpson with UK.

Another prospect, Marlon Jones of Bowling Green, postponed signing with Western until Thursday.

But Damon Hood, Kentucky's "Mr. Football" this season after rushing for 2,519 yards on 487 carries for Central, is still unsigned and doesn't plan to sign today, according to Central coach Joe Hood.

Kentucky, UCLA from Wisconsin, Tennessee and Penn State are the five battling for the 6-2, 220-pounder's services.

"(Penn State coach Joe Paterno) is supposed to be at his home (Thursday) night," Hood said. "That's the last I heard."

Today's signees

— Snell, a 6-2, 220-pound linebacker for Warren Central, was the leading tackler for the Dragons during the past two seasons. He has better than a 3.0 grade-point average and has qualified under NCAA requirements to play for Western next season by passing his American College Test.

Besides Snell, Western signed three other prospects as of about 10 a.m. today, and Coach Jack Harbaugh expects to sign about 20 before the signing period ends Sunday.

Jones, a Bowling Green running back who rushed for more than 1,000 yards last season, was scheduled to sign with the Hilltoppers today. But Bowling Green coach Dan Haley said Jones' signing has been postponed until 9 a.m. Thursday at the high school.

Jones, a 6-1, 170-pounder, along with Sandy Whitney, formed the nucleus of the Purples' wishbone offense attack last season. The Purples were ranked No. 1 in Class 3-A much of the season before falling to Owensboro Senior High School in the second game of the playoffs.

— Crabbe, a 6-4, 215-pound center, signed with Austin Peay after also considering Morehead State, Coach Hood said.

— Britt, an All-State lineman for Russellville's Class A champion Panthers, signed with UK.

"I think UK has a chance to be one of the best — if not the best — team in the Southeastern Conference," Britt said. "I want to be part of that."

Britt, who has a 4.0 grade-point average at Russellville, had not indicated other schools he was considering.

— Monroe County's Ross signed with Murray State.

Ross, a 6-foot, 234-pound fullback, also considered Tennessee Tech and Vanderbilt.

"He's going to be very, very good college player," Monroe coach Sam Clark said this morning. "He's got the size and the strength. He benches 350 pounds. He's also graduating second in his class."

Another Monroe County player, defensive back Jabbar Pipkin, has already committed to playing for the University of Kentucky but doesn't take his ACT test until Saturday and hasn't signed, Clark said:

— Key, a Franklin-Simpson tight end, announced last week that he would be signing with UK.

Western signees

Western Kentucky's three signees other than Snell included Roderick Carter, a 6-foot-3, 195-pound defensive back from Chass High School in Cartersville, Ga. He had nine interceptions in nine games as a senior, and he chose Western over Division I-AA schools Tennessee-Chattanooga, Georgia Southern and East Tennessee.

Harbaugh describes Carter as "a great athlete with great range. He can really run."

Another defensive back, Dwayne Scrivener of Louisville Male High School, stands 6-0 and weighs in at 180. Harbaugh says Scrivener "is tough in man-to-man coverage."

Also, Daryl Houston, a quarter-back-wide receiver from Boca Raton, Fla., chose Western over the University of Minnesota. He was an all-state performer in his junior and senior years at Spanish River High School, and he measures at 6-2, 180.

Harbaugh doesn't expect all of Western's potential signees to sign today.

Britt chooses UK
Western Kentucky: With help from the coach's son, the Hilltoppers have gone international, adding two Canadians.

They are fullback-linebacker Sheldon Benoit and linebacker-defensive end Tom Hpz. And there's hope of signing a third Canadian.

Western coach Jack Harbaugh said he received tips on the prospects from his son, John, who is an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at Cincinnati.

"My son subscribes to a recruiting service from there, so he went up and looked around, liked what he saw and kept an eye open for me," Harbaugh said. "I saw some tapes and feel good about them. I like their size and athleticism.

"Football is limited in Canada and players don't have the experience that players (in the United States) might have, but you have 13 grades in Canada, so we're getting players who are a little older and more mature."

In all, Harbaugh signed 14 players, with hopes of luring five or six more.

Western returns 16 starters, including nine on offense, from a team that finished 2-8.

Cincinnati
WKU signs 18; Jones picks TSU

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor
Western Kentucky University football coach Jack Harbaugh says his latest recruiting class fills needs while leaving voids.

Harbaugh signed 18 recruits to national letters-of-intent Wednesday, including Warren Central's Chris Snell. Bowling Green's Marlon Jones was expected to sign with Western on Wednesday, but he opted for Tennessee State today at Bowling Green.

Harbaugh got several athletes from Kentucky to make good on his promise to do just that. He nabbed a slew of defensive backs and a couple of quarterbacks. He got a lot of what he was looking for — fast, quick athletes.

"We feel we've improved the overall athleticism of our team," Harbaugh said.

But Harbaugh was also disappointed in what he didn't get.

"We lost some running backs we were interested in, and we didn't fare as well with offensive and defensive linemen we were interested in," he said. "We got a good running back (in John) Alford from Boone County, but we didn't get as many running backs as I had hoped we'd get.

"Backs and linemen are needs we'll have to address at another time.

Alford, a 6-foot-1, 185-pounder, was a find. He was second to Central's Damon Hood in Kentucky in touchdowns with 28. He also had better than 1,600 yards rushing for Class 4A semifinalist Boone County.

"He averaged 8.1 yards a carry," Harbaugh said. "He's a great inside runner with the ability to get tough yards.

The lone lineman is a 6-foot-7, 255-pound monster from Catholic Central High School in Ottawa, Ontario. Adam Warmuth, a rugby and basketball player as well, was the eighth-rated football player in eastern Ontario.

"He possesses great feet and is very agile for his size," Harbaugh said. "He has the potential to develop into an outstanding lineman.

Another stud in the class is Daryl Houston. A quarterback-wide receiver from Boca Raton, Fla., he chose Western over Big 10 school Minnesota of Division I-A.

Houston was an all-state performer as a junior and a senior.

"I like him a lot," Harbaugh said. "He's an exceptional athlete. He was quarterback there one year, and he's played wide receiver and defensive back.

"Minnesota made him a good offer. That we were able to hold on to him is a real plus for us.

Among an array of defensive backs is Roderick Carter, a 6-foot-3, 195-pounder from Chass High School in Cartersville, Ga.

"He's got a town named after him," Harbaugh said in jest. "He played football one year there, his senior year and had nine interceptions in nine games.

"He's a tall, lanky lad who is another exceptional athlete. He could come in and help us early.

Jones signs with TSU

Jones, a 6-1, 170-pounder who rushed for more than 1,000 yards last season for Bowling Green, struggled with his college choice before opting to play at Tennessee State.

"It was a tough decision — real tough," Jones said. "I think it playing time would have been equal at Western or Tennessee State. Th really wasn't a part of my decision.

Jones will be at a receiver position at TSU.

"Marlon has terrific speed and has great instincts," Bowling Green coach Dan Haley said. "I think a lot of the collegues feel that right now he doesn't have the upper body bulk to carry the ball a lot of times.

"Jones' decision was based on playing in the metropolitan area of Nashville.

"Really it was because I'm studying in business management and being in a bigger city would help me land a better job," he said.
Former Topper Burnett bound for WFL

Former Western Kentucky University football star Webbie Burnett has signed a one-year contract with the new World Football League. He'll report to the league's combine this week in Orlando, Fla.

The former Hilltopper defensive lineman will also get a look in the Buffalo Bills' National Football League training camp in late July.

"Things are going well," Burnett said. "I'm really looking forward to playing in the WFL, and then I'll see what I can do in Buffalo."

Also bound for the WFL combine are former Hilltopper linebacker Russell Foster, linebacker Xavier Jordan, wide receiver Anthony Green and defensive back Jonathan Watts.

Eddie Godfrey, a defensive back and standout on kick returns for Western's 2-8 1990 squad, has been invited to the National Football League's combine.
Ex-Hilltoppers make final WLAF rosters

Former Western Kentucky University football players Webbie
Burnett and Russell Foster have made the final rosters for two World
League of American Football teams.

Foster, a 6-foot, 219-pound linebacker, will play for the London.
Monarchs. Former Hilltopper defensive lineman Burnett (6-3, 283) is
on with the Raleigh-Durham Skyhawks.

The 10 WLAF teams will begin play Saturday.
Western’s Harbaugh searching for offensive style, quarterback

By JOE MEDLEY

By Daily News Sports Editor

Jack Harbaugh has entered spring football practice not knowing who his quarterback would be the following autumn.

But Western Kentucky University's head coach has never come into spring practice not knowing what his offensive system would be.

"I don't know, I wish I knew," he said. "It's kind of scary."

Harbaugh must face the question as the Hilltoppers were scheduled to start practice at 3 p.m. today, weather permitting.

Near the end of a disappointing 2-8 1990 campaign, Harbaugh had decided he would go with young option quarterbacks Eddie Thompson and Jarius Malcome in 1991.

With a non-option-oriented system, Western's offense had failed to score several times after reaching the 20-yard line, and Harbaugh is an option coach.

But in the second half of the last game, a 22-21 loss to Tennessee-Chattanooga, long-forgotten backup Bob Barnett complicated things. He completed 10 of 12 passes for 183 yards and two touchdowns.

"In one half of football, Bob Barnett really caught our eye and changed our thinking," Harbaugh said.

Throw Edmonson County product Brian Browning's powerful arm into the equation, and the split-back passing game looks like a great option.

"In the spring, we’re going to put in some option plays and go with our option guys half of the time," Harbaugh said. "The other half, we’ll put in some play-action passes with our passers and see how that works.

"We expect to have a system and a quarterback by the end of spring, but right now I don’t know how it’s going to come out."

Each quarterback is unique, making the decision that much more perplexing.

Barnett is a gamer.

"We have kids who are better throwers, and we have kids who are better athletes," Harbaugh said. "But when he’s in the game, Bob just seems to rise to another level. He competes. His touch on the ball, his awareness and anticipation all seem to get better.

Browning is a legend in Brownsville for his passing records.

"He is by far the most gifted passer in the bunch," Harbaugh said. "He just has a problem making the right decisions sometimes. But experience makes you better that way, and he’s a senior. The spring will be critical for him to show how far he’s come."

"Miko" Malcome and Thompson have speed.

"‘Miko’ is an excellent athlete and a super option quarterback," Harbaugh said. "He needs to improve his leadership qualities.

"Eddie is another excellent athlete with great feet, and he’s more of a leader. His leadership really caught our eye. But he’s small (5-feet-9). He doesn’t have great physical tools."

There is another name to toss into the quarterback battle. Thad Sutter is a tall, left-handed passer who transferred from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa.

With such decisions to make, Harbaugh wants to pass on his options.

"I don’t want to be the one to decide," Harbaugh said. "I want the kids to go out here in spring and decide what we’re going to do."

Harbaugh hoped to practice today and Thursday and have a scrimmage Friday afternoon in Smith Stadium. If rough weather prevails, practice might not start until early next week.

Additions and subtractions

A number of players who had eligibility remaining won’t be back next season, most notably running backs, Vance Turpin and Willie Thomas, receiver Lanie Fomas and center Brad Thomas.

"Most were guys who had been here four years and decided to move on rather than play their redshirt year," Harbaugh said. "Willie had had a lot of injuries and decided he didn’t want the torment of playing any more."

Offensive lineman Harvey Sloniker sat out last season for disciplinary reasons, but he’s expected to shore up an already strong, experienced front next season.
WKU quarterback Barnett quits team

Western Kentucky University football coach Jack Harbaugh's quarterback dilemma got more complicated after learning senior Bob Barnett quit the team.

"He just decided that football wasn't for him anymore and he chose to concentrate on academics," Harbaugh said.

Barnett, who was competing against senior Brian Browning, junior Eddie Thompson, freshman Meco Malcomb and sophomore Thad Sutter for the starting job, was a front runner.

"He had an excellent shot at it," Harbaugh said. "In fact, he was a front runner going in.

"Our plans are the same. We've got some quarterbacks who can run the option and some guys who can do some other things. The competition has been very good. The players responded in a positive way and they've been helpful to each other.

"It's a healthy situation with good competition."
Harbaugh likes possibility of Gateway Conference jump

Joe Medley
Daily News
Sports Editor

It won't increase the travel budget. It'll make scheduling much easier. There's an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Gee, going to the Gateway Division I-AA football conference sounds pretty good to Western football coach Jack Harbaugh.

Oh, did we forget to mention the league is regarded as one of the better conferences in I-AA?

"Even when I was at Pittsburgh and Michigan, the Gateway was always looked at as one of the better I-AA conferences," Harbaugh said. "It's a very fine conference."

But in playing the role of Norman Schwarzkopf, Harbaugh warns against euphoria. The Gateway isn't a done deal.

The league invited Western in for football only, and it appears to be an offer Western's Board of Regents won't refuse.

Western's football schedule is already set for the 1991 season, but the gridiron marriage could happen as early as the 1992 campaign.

"(Talks are) pretty far along," Western athletics director Jimmy Feix said. "Actually, the ball may be in our court on this one. It may be down to our decision to make."

Now, back to the euphoria.

This season could be a preview for life in the Gateway as 1990 league champion Northern Iowa leads a contingent of four league teams on Western's schedule.

NIU, of course, has junior quarterback Jay Johnson, the nation's second-leading passer as a sophomore.

The Gateway also sports Illinois State, Southern Illinois, Western Illinois, Eastern Illinois, Indiana State and Southwest Missouri.

"It's a Midwest league, and that's a hooted for football," Harbaugh said. And that means entry into one of the better recruiting markets. Harbaugh said Western might have a recruiting advantage.

"What's nice about it as far as the Gateway goes is that the other schools are kind of bunched in together. We'd be the southern representative in the league."

Here's the bonus: Western will still get to play intra-state rivals Murray State and Eastern Kentucky. Both schools are bound to a 10-year contract with Western.

Western will play Ohio Valley Conference member Eastern early in the season each year, some time during the first three weeks, when OVC schools are allowed to play outside their league. After this season, Murray State will play Western in the season's final week for nine straight years.

Getting in the Gateway became quite a fallback for Western after the OVC added Southeast Missouri and Tennessee-Martin.

That left the OVC schools, natural rivals for independent Western, with few scheduling options, which meant Western might have to travel further and pay more in travel expenses.

There would be plane trips in the Gateway to foreign landmarks like Northern Iowa, Western Illinois and Southwest Missouri. But that rings up to little or no effect on Western's travel budget, Harbaugh said.

"We've already got a couple of plane trips budgeted in each season," he said.

So nine years after Western declared its independence from the OVC, the school is seeing that membership has its advantages.

"We exchanged financial information with the schools, and they're spending on football is very comparable to ours," Harbaugh said. "It's a very good marriage. We're very compatible."

Jog-a-thon

The football jog-a-thon is Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at Smith Stadium. Players are looking for sponsors to give money for each mile run. Harbaugh said the money will go to renovations for the football office and locker room.

"We set a goal for each player to get at least $100 in sponsorships," he said. "They'll run as many miles as they can."
Harbaugh appears leaning toward option, Thompson

Jack Harbaugh, who has a direction for his offense and maybe even a starting quarterback. But first, let's meet "TD."

The abbreviation for "touchdown" is also the name of Western Kentucky University football coach Harbaugh's Christmas present — a ylacious terrier pup given to him by daughter Joni Harbaugh.

"Isn't this an ugly dog?", Coghe Harbaugh asked anyone who saw the pup at a Western football scrimmage Tuesday night in Smith Stadium. As TD growled on the coach's fingers, he told the story behind the name.

"We scored so few touchdowns last season that I called him TD," Jack Harbaugh said, referring to a painful 2-8 season in 1990 that saw Western drive inside the 20-yard line several times but rarely score a touchdown.

If Tuesday's scrimmage was any indication, Jack Harbaugh will need a new pup named "Extra Point" a year from now.

Touchdowns were plentiful as the defensive players scrimmaged the defense. No score was kept, but option quarterbacks Jarius "Meco" Malcome and Eddie Thompson faked, dashed and passed the Hilltoppers to several big plays.

"That's the big difference," Jack Harbaugh said. "We've got big-play guys. It's like having weapons when you have guys who have the quickness and presence of mind to bust a big one. They make something out of nothing."

Which brings us to the questions of offense and quarterback that have dogged Jack Harbaugh since the merciful end to the 1990 season.

Thompson, the Fort Knox product who shelved his quick feet last season under Proposition 48 guidelines, appears to have the edge at quarterback.

That means Jack Harbaugh may be on the threshold of finally starting his program — the option offense — after two seasons on the sidelines.

Continued On Page 5

Column 1, This Section
Until now, Jack Harbaugh has had only, hold-over quarterbacks from the pass-happy Dave Roberts era. Thompson and Malcome are option quarterbacks, and they’re exciting. Both may see a lot of action next season, along with senior drop-back passer Brian Browning, as Harbaugh steals some smoke from Louisville coach Howard Schnellenberger’s pipe.

“Schnellenberger played Browning Nagel for a quarter then brought in (Jeff Brohm) for a few series,” Jack Harbaugh said. “We may do that next season. ‘We’d like to do some things with Brian because he’s had a better spring than I ever thought he would. We could run the option for a quarter, then bring in Brian for a while and see where we stand.”

The option apparently will be the main attraction.

“It allows you to spread the field more and make things happen,” Jack Harbaugh said.

While Thompson has the upper hand, Malcome and Browning did well enough in Tuesday’s scrimmage to make things interesting.

“It’s not that Eddie played badly, but Meco and Brian lifted their level of play a little tonight,” Harbaugh said. “I haven’t seen the film, but Meco really closed the gap.”

Thompson spun and bolted his way for a slew of yards and threw for a touchdown on a play designed for his talents. He faked a pitch left, rolled right uncontested and hit a wide-open Joey Johnson, who fell backwards into the end zone to complete a 35-yard play.

“The pass was a little off, but Eddie sold the defense on the fake so well that Joey was so wide open,” Jack Harbaugh said. “That’s the dimension Eddie gives you.”

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Western football
Continued From Page 1-B

Hill

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Several running backs played well, including Bowling Green High School product Roscoe Echols, who scored a touchdown on a goal-line play.

"Roscoe made some nice moves out there. He's really got an instinct for it," Jack Harbaugh said.
Ex-Top Godfrey expects to get call during NFL draft

A Daily News report

"Where Eddie Godfrey fits into the alphabet soup that is professional football is not clear yet, but the Western Kentucky University senior hopes he finds out today."

"The NFL is the only league I'm focusing on," Godfrey said. "If things don't go well, then I might try the CFL. The WLAF would be my third choice. But, right now, I'm not thinking about any league but the NFL."

The National Football League draft begins today and ends Monday. Godfrey, a 5-foot-9, 180-pound cornerback from Lakeland, Fla., said he expects to be chosen.

"I'm confident I will be drafted — by which team and in which round, you just don't know," Godfrey said.

At tryouts for NFL scouts, the Pittsburgh Steelers, New York Giants and Tampa Bay Buccaneers seemed most impressed, Godfrey said. Lately, the Detroit Lions and Minnesota Vikings have shown interest, he said.

"I'd like to be drafted by a team where I could go, make the team and contribute, rather than a team where I'd have to sit on the bench and wait to help out," Godfrey said.

"But in reality, where I end up makes no difference. I just want to play."

"Speed would seem to be Godfrey's biggest asset," one scout said.

EDDIE GODFREY

"My speed has been a blessing," Godfrey said. "It's the reason I've gotten as far as I have.

"Godfrey said he'll spend today in his Keen Hall dorm room.

"I'm not going to watch the draft; I'll probably just wait up here," he said. "I'll stay up here, and wait for the phone to ring.""

Other Tops

Riley Ware, a defensive back who played in 1988 and 1989 at Western, signed a free-agent contract with the Detroit Lions. Two of Ware's former teammates are playing in the World League of American Football — defensive lineman Webbie Burnett with the Raleigh-Durham Skyhawks and linebacker Russell Foster with the London Monarchs.
Thompson to start; Browning to play

Joe Medley
Daily News
Sports Editor

Wake up the Echols
Roscoe Echols, a junior and former Bowling Green High School star, will be one of the primary tailbacks next season.

"It's looking like our two main tailbacks are going to be Herb Davis and Roscoe Echols," Harbaugh said. "Herb (a senior who ran for 679 yards last season) has the experience, and Roscoe really did some things this spring."

The young 'uns
Echols and Thompson look to be the most promising new faces. Harbaugh also said to watch for redshirt sophomore defensive back Reggie Gordon; junior linebacker David Bledsoe; sophomore defensive lineman Charles Webster; sophomore defensive end Joe Phil; and redshirt freshman wide receiver Mike Brumbelow.

More new faces
Lenny Vanden Bos, Willie Berrios and Ron Fishback are the latest additions to Western's football coaching staff.

Vanden Bos of Kalamazoo, Mich., will work with Western's defensive backs. He came from Albion College in Michigan, where he served as defensive coordinator.

The Britons led the MIAA in defense all three years Vanden Bos was there and ranked among the top 10 in the nation in scoring defense (9.0 ppg) once.

Both Berrios and Fishback are graduate assistants who will serve in a variety of assignments.

Berrios, 23, is also a Western Michigan alumnus. He was an All-Mid-American Conference defensive end and team co-captain. Fishback, 28, served as an assistant football coach at three Florida high schools.

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Godfrey not drafted; Baseball Tops face Evansville at home

By ERIC WOHLER
Daily News Sports Writer

The phone never rang.

From Miami defensive tackle Russell Maryland — the first pick — to John Carroll quarterback Larry Wanke — the last — 334 professional football prospects were drafted by NFL teams Sunday and Monday.

Eddie Godfrey, a Western Kentucky University defensive back, wasn’t one of them.

"It’s just how the business works," Godfrey said. "I expected to go in the middle to late rounds or maybe have to go the free-agent route. I’ll be a free agent. It doesn’t bother me."

Godfrey, a 5-foot-9, 180-pound cornerback, said this morning that his agent already was at work to find him a spot in a training camp. Seattle and Tampa Bay are interested.

"I’m going to wait and hear from all the other teams and see who offers the best deal," Godfrey said. "I’ll just play the waiting game."

Godfrey said he would look at his options in the Canadian Football League and World League of American Football if he fails to make an NFL roster. But for now at least, he is still focusing on the NFL.

"I’m just happy to get this free-agent shot," Godfrey said. "Just because you’re drafted doesn’t mean you’re going to make the team. I’ll be in camp just like they will."

Baseball

With records dating back to 1910, Western’s baseball team is the school’s oldest. With a win at South Alabama on Sunday, the current crop of Hilltoppers earned the program’s 1,000th win against 760 losses.

Today, Joel Murrie vies for his 400th career coaching victory. Western (26-19-1) plays Evansville at 3 p.m.

The hottest Hilltoppers going into today’s game are Paul Jackson and Brad Worley.

Jackson, a sophomore outfielder, is on a seven-game hitting streak. In those games he has 12 hits in 25 at-bats with 10 RBI, seven runs scored, three home runs and a triple. His average on the season has climbed to .284.

Worley, a junior infielder who got off to a slow start in the spring after fall knee surgery, is now hitting .299. Worley is riding an eight-game hitting streak.

Meanwhile, Western’s leading hitter, Warren Central High School graduate Chris Turner, has watched his average slip since peaking at .490 two weeks ago. Turner is now the Sun Belt Conference’s second leading hitter at .427.

Jeff Ledogar, after pitching a complete game against USA on Sunday and giving up only two unearned runs, is now the league’s leader in earned-run average at 2.33.

Western is tied for third in the Sun Belt’s West Division behind South Alabama and Alabama-Birmingham. The team the Tops are tied with, South Florida, plays a three-game series at Denes Field beginning at 1 p.m. Saturday.

The top three finishers in both of the Sun Belt’s divisions advance to the conference tournament. Jacksonville, Old Dominion and Virginia Commonwealth have clinched playoff spots from the East Division.

Golf

The men’s team travels to Columbus, Ohio, for the Kepler Invitational to be played Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Led by Ron Poore’s 230, Western placed sixth in the Sun Belt tournament last weekend.

The women’s team finished its season at the Lady Jag Invitational in Mobile, Ala., placing last among 18 teams with a 685. Freshman Jennifer Moore was Western’s best finisher individually with a 685.

Odds and ends — Paulette Monroe, a sophomore center for Western’s women’s basketball team, is an alternate for the Olympic Sports Festival’s South team. Fifteen players and three alternates were chosen for each team during tryouts Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The festival will be in August in Los Angeles. Only players younger than 21 were eligible; Western’s Renee Westmoreland, Lea Robinson and Latonia Bland also tried out.
WKU's Godfrey signs with Buccaneers

Eddie Godfrey, a senior defensive back on Western Kentucky University's 1990 football team, signed a free-agent contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Tuesday.

A 5-foot-9, 180-pound cornerback, Godfrey was not selected in the National Football League draft on Sunday and Monday. But he said Tuesday that he would sign as a free agent with the Bucs.

"They need some help in the defensive backfield — at both cornerback and safety," Godfrey said. "Also, I can also return kicks, and they can use someone there."

Godfrey, a native of Lakeland, Fla., said he would travel to Tampa Bay within the next two weeks for an orientation meeting with the team.

He is the second former Western defensive back to sign with an NFL team this spring. Riley Ware, who played for the Hilltoppers in 1988 and '89, signed with the Detroit Lions.
Western will join Gateway conference football

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Western Kentucky University today accepted an invitation to join the Division I-AA Gateway football conference.

With the final mail-in vote reaching the league’s St. Louis office Tuesday, the Gateway presidents unanimously approved the invitation. Western football has a home for the first time since it left the Ohio Valley Conference in 1982.

Western joins the Gateway in football only. The rest of Western’s athletics programs reside in the new conference formed by the merger of the Sun Belt and American South.

Jimmy Feix, the outgoing athletics director and former football coach, said he’s “thrilled” that Western became the eighth football school in the Gateway.

Western has suffered great expense to keep its football program as an I-AA independent since 1982. Feix was coach then.

“Just sitting here looking at the invitation, and it’s a sight for my sore old eyes,” Feix said. “I remember the day when (former AD Johnny Oldham) came into my office and told me we’re leaving the OVC.

“The first two years, it wasn’t so bad. But it became clear that the football program needed a conference membership, and this is a long-time dream for me.”

Western will join Southwest Missouri State, Northern Iowa, Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Southern Illinois, Illinois State and Indiana State.

Western football coach Jack Harbaugh said the conference move will relieve scheduling problems brought on by the recent expansion of the OVC. The OVC is at nine teams, leaving few opportunities for Western to schedule them in an 11-week season.

“As it is, we’ve got six or seven games scheduled for 1992,” Harbaugh said. “We lost Tennessee Tech, and the Austin Peay game is in jeopardy. We won’t play Eastern Kentucky in 1992.

“What this does is make it a lot easier to schedule, and we won’t have to fly to Texas and everywhere else to play people. There are a couple of long trips in the Gateway, but we can schedule them in alternating years.”

The move will also put Western into a conference that has an automatic bid into the NCAA I-AA playoffs. The Gateway has put two teams in the playoffs each of the last two seasons, and six of seven members have made the playoffs.

The annual membership fee for the Gateway is $5,500. There is a revenue-sharing setup for television money, “but there aren’t many opportunities for television,” Gateway commissioner Patty Viverito said.

She said she’s “elated to have Western. They’re such a perfect fit competitively, philosophically and geographically.”
ST. LOUIS — The Gateway Conference announced yesterday that Western Kentucky University will become a member of the seven-team NCAA Division I-AA football conference beginning in 1992.

Gateway commissioner Patty Viverito said officials of the Gateway schools unanimously supported the league's expansion and that Western was a "perfect fit . . . competitively, geographically and philosophically."

The Hilltoppers have been an independent in football since 1982 after competing in the Ohio Valley Conference from 1948-1981. Western has a 14-10-1 record against Gateway members, Viverito said.

Western will join Indiana State, Eastern Illinois, Illinois State, Northern Iowa, Southern Illinois, Southwest Missouri State and Western Illinois in the Gateway.

"I'm extremely pleased and excited with the prospect of membership in the Gateway Conference," Western football coach Jack Harbaugh said. "It has an outstanding group of coaches and very strong programs."

Jimmy Feix, former head football coach and retiring athletics director at Western, also hailed the school's move into the Gateway.

"This is quite a boost to our football program," he said.

The Gateway has had an automatic bid to the NCAA I-AA playoffs since 1986. Western Kentucky will be eligible for the Gateway title and automatic bid in 1992.

Western Kentucky, 2-8 last season, will share Gateway members Indiana State, Eastern Illinois, Illinois State and Northern Iowa this fall.
As Western football season nears, promotions, scheduling make news

Pretty soon — believe it or not — the Hill will be alive with the sounds of football.

Western Kentucky University is less than a month away from the start of football practice. Freshmen arrive Aug. 11.

But things are already happening on the Western football scene. Here’s a look at what’s news on the gridiron:

Promotions

New athletics director Louis Marciani and football coach Jack Harbaugh are already at it.

Marciani has said his goal is to see Western average 12,000 fans for six home games in 1991, and he has a specific target audience.

“We really want to go after families,” Marciani said. “We want Western football to be the thing that families go do on Saturday.”

Family ticket packages and other perks are in development. One promotion Harbaugh is excited about is a proposed Meet the Hilltoppers night on Aug. 31.

“We’re looking at having a scrimmage that night, and we’ll have hamburgers and hot dogs and invite families to come out,” Harbaugh said. “Lou and I have sat down and talked a couple of times, and he has some really great ideas.”

Scheduling

Western will challenge for the Gateway Conference title in 1992.

At a recent conference meeting, Harbaugh was able to work all of the Gateway schools into the 1992 schedule, making the conference title and automatic bid to the NCAA Division I-AA playoffs attainable during Western’s first year in the league.

The Gateway includes Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Illinois State, Southern Illinois, Indiana State, Southwestern Missouri, Northern Iowa and Western.

“When we went there (to the meeting) it looked impossible, but things worked out,” Harbaugh said.

There were sacrifices. Western won’t play Eastern Kentucky in 1992.

But Eastern is on the schedule from 1993 to 2000. Also, Murray State will play Western in the season finale from 1991 through 2000.

“We’re talking with Middle Tennessee to try to work out some kind of deal with them,” Harbaugh said.

“We’d like to have Eastern, Murray and Middle as our three non-conference games.”

A peak at 1991

Harbaugh says he will at last lay the foundation for his program in 1991.

Sophomore quarterback Eddie Thompson will run Harbaugh’s beloved option offense, which Harbaugh hasn’t had the personnel to employ until now. And Brian Browning will help out with his passing talents in spells.

Western is coming off a 2-8 season, and the program is on an eight-game losing streak going into the Sept. 7 opener at Austin Peay.

But Harbaugh said 1991, his third season on the Hill, may mark the start of something good.

“The first two years were patch years,” Harbaugh said. “We’ve been moving people here and there and patching things up.

“It worked OK the first year (Western finished 6-5 in 1989), but it didn’t last year. Our offense wasn’t nearly as productive as it needed to be, and our defense has been inconsistent.

“This year will hopefully be the beginning of the foundation. I don’t know if it’ll be a championship year — a Division I-AA championship year — but at the end I hope we’ll have a solid, solid foundation.”
Harbaugh would like

ST. LOUIS — Western Kentucky can't compete for the 1991 Gateway Conference football championship this year, but Coach Jack Harbaugh would settle for an asterisk.

The Hilltoppers will enter the Gateway in 1992, but there are four league opponents on the 1991 schedule. Harbaugh wants to use 1991 to say "hello" and "nice to beat you."

"Hopefully, this year we can get a little asterisk by our name, though this league hasn't been too good to us in the past," Harbaugh said at Gateway media day Monday in spite of Western's 14-10-1 record against Southern Illinois, Illinois State and Indiana State. We want to send a message that we're ready to play in this league and compete for the league title."

Harbaugh, Athletics Director Louis Marchanti and Sports Information Director Paul Just listened as the league's seven coaches and Commissioner Patti Viverito serenaded them with welcomes before a gathering of about 100 school officials and media members from around the Gateway.

Western's helmet sat at the head table next to those of its four 1991 league foes and the rest of the Gateway schools, including Southwest Missouri State, Southern Illinois and Western Illinois.

Harbaugh said he's looking forward to this season's preview of life in the Gateway.

"They play a knock-you-down, bruising, bloody-your-nose kind of football around here," Harbaugh said. "There's a tradition of teams with strong defenses and analysts."

Gateway asterisk in 1991

Western will be aligned with what will be called the Gateway Football Conference, with Viverito as commissioner. She'll also be assistant commissioner of the Missouri Valley, concentrating mostly on women's sports.

Doug Elgin, the former assistant commissioner of the Sun Belt Conference, is atop the Missouri Valley.

Under the Arch

The Gateway coaches picked Northern Iowa to win the Gateway title in 1991, though Coach Terry Allen sounded off his disbelief.

"We're inexperienced in the trenches, and most people will agree that's where games are won," he said. "Plus, we have to go on the road to play Western Kentucky and Southwest Missouri."

UNI finished 8-4 overall in 1990 with a 5-1 league mark, good enough for the right to defend its league title in 1991. The Panthers will return quarterback Jay Johnson, who was second in the nation in passing efficiency last season.

The coaches picked Southwest Missouri to finish second, followed by Illinois State, Eastern Illinois, Indiana State, Western Illinois and Southern Illinois.

SIU finished last as predicted in 1990 at 2-9 and 1-5. Upon learning of SIU's forecasted fate, Coach Bob Smith quipped, "It must be media day. We're picked to finish last again."
With Boeckman out, Harbaugh needs a punter

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Though 17 of 21 football signees for Western Kentucky University will report today, one Proposition 48 victim leaves Coach Jack Harbaugh looking for a punter.

Louisville Trinity's Ricky Boeckman, who punted for the Kentucky All-Stars in their 27-7 loss to Tennessee in Lexington this summer, didn't make the NCAA-imposed minimum of 18 on the American College Test to qualify for freshman eligibility.

Punting is one of Harbaugh's greatest concerns after the graduation of Todd Davis, who averaged 40.3 yards on 55 kicks in 1990.

Boeckman's absence will be opening up Green High School product Breck Largen a shot. While backup quarterback Brian Browning has been punting, Largen was the only true punter in camp during spring practice.

The only other Prop. 48s are Keith Cummings, a 6-foot-3, 193-pound safety from Woodbine, Ga.; Daryl Houston, a 6-0, 170-pound quarterback from Boca Raton, Fla.; and Merkell Rice, a 6-0, 180-pound quarterback from Callatinn, Tenn.

Harbaugh couldn't be reached for comment Saturday, but Western sports information director Paul Just said, "Jack indicated to me all of the Prop. 48s will come here." The freshmen, including Warren Central product Chris Snell, will practice Monday. The rest of the team will arrive Wednesday and begin practice Thursday.

Dual offense

The dual passing-option offense Harbaugh has conceived for 1991 means senior quarterback Brian Browning will share time with sophomore Eddie Thompson. But Browning, an Edmonson County product who first signed with the University of Louisville and transferred to Western, doesn't mind.

"I've struggled over the years, and I'm just happy going into it knowing I'll have a chance to play," Browning said. "You can't go around being disappointed.

Harbaugh plans to start most games with Thompson running the option, Harbaugh's offense of choice. Then Browning will come in and do what he does best -- throw and throw some more. Whatever works best will be the offense of the day.

"I've been supportive of it since we started it in the spring," Browning said. "I think it's really going to keep people off-balance.

"The offensive line will have to adjust from run blocking to pass blocking, and that'll probably be the hardest thing."

Western offensive line coach Rick Denstorff says his hogs will have no trouble with the dual option.

"You've got to pass block anyway," Denstorff said. "I think the new offense will cause a lot more problems for the defense then it will the offense.""}

Family plan

Western is offering families a 50-percent discount on season tickets.

Families can buy general-admission season tickets for upper-deck seating at $18 an adult and $6 a child. A 6-16. There is a minimum of one adult and one child per order, and mail orders must be accompanied by an additional $1 for postage and handling.

The plan is available starting Monday, and it will run through Sept. 10 for Western's six home games.

The Hilltoppers will open the season at Austin Peay State in Clarksville, Tenn., on Sept. 7, then it's back to L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field for Murray State on Sept. 14.

Western's home schedule includes Morehead State on Sept. 21, Middle Tennessee on Oct. 5 after an open date, Troy State for an Oct. 19 homecoming, Northern Iowa on Oct. 26 and Eastern Illinois on Nov. 9.

For more information on the family plan and other football ticket options, call the Western ticket office at 745-5222.
Recruiting Louisville

Some veteran high school football coaches from Louisville are praising Western's revamped recruiting efforts there.

"Western really seems interested in players from up here again," Mike Fletcher, who has coached several years at Class 4-A power Fairdale, said. "Until the new coach came in, Western seemed a lot less interested in Louisville talent. But they work hard up here now."

Western assistant coach Doug Mallory recruits the Louisville area. In the class of freshmen who reported Sunday, Mallory boasted Fairdale cornerback Tim Comstock, Waggener free safety James Reed and Male cornerback Drake Scribner.

Mallory also signed all-state punter Ricky Boeckman out of Louisville Trinity. Boeckman didn't qualify to play as a freshman under NCAA Proposition 48 guidelines, but he's expected to put a foot into the 1992 season.

Harbaugh said beefed-up recruiting in Louisville come from his mandate to take Kentucky talent. "Counting walk-ons and partial scholarships, we'll have 11 or 12 Kentucky kids coming in this year," Harbaugh said. "I said when I came here that I wanted us to get out all around Kentucky looking for talent. If there was no highway close to some towns, then I told my assistants to take a wagon.

"There's not enough talent out there (in Kentucky) to build a program around, but there are a lot of good kids in Kentucky we want to get."

Hometown kids

At least three of five Bowling Green products figure to contribute this season.

Junior Roscoe Echols, one of four from Bowling Green High School, took the starting tailback job away from senior Herb Davis.

"Roscoe won the job by far in the spring," Harbaugh said. "In our offense, you have to be able to run inside, and Roscoe showed he could do that better than Herb."

Bowling Green High's Breck Largent could be the starting punter with Boeckman out, and high school teammate Eddie Sharer is a backup linebacker.

"Eddie will see a lot of time on special teams," Harbaugh said.

Rounding out the Bowling Green High bunch is Jody Long, who will be a backup offensive lineman. "Jody is a solid backup," Harbaugh said. "Give him about another year, and he'll really contribute for us."

Warren Central graduate Chris Snell will have to wait his turn, but Harbaugh likes Snell's tenacity.

"He was one of those players who was always around the ball," Harbaugh said. "He did for Central's defense what Damon Hood did for its offense."

Hood, a freshman at Kentucky, was the state's "Mr. Football" after rushing for better than 2,000 yards in 1990.
Esteemed ex-coach trying to inspire athletes to degrees

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

With 30 years of football coaching behind him, Oree Banks has begun a new mission he hopes will lead to higher graduation rates among college athletes.

A who's-who in the coaching business, Banks just started conducting academic-minded seminars for 'athletes' at campuses across the nation. He brought his slides, graphics, videotapes and film to a post-practice session for Western Kentucky University's football team on Saturday.

It would seem Banks doesn't have time to spread his good news. He's a full-time faculty member at West Virginia State College, in Charleston, and he does a weekly call-in show for University of West Virginia football.

But he says his experiences in coaching at Grambling, South Carolina State, South Carolina, Virginia and Wisconsin, to name a few, make it easy for him to find time for his mission.

"It's simple," he said. "In all my years of coach, I saw too many athletes never get their degrees."

The American Football Coaches Association commissioned Banks to do his seminars, and West Virginia State College pays his expenses to drive and fly around the country.

In the early stages of his travels, Banks has been to Morehead State and Concord State. Tennessee State is his next stop.

He'll talk to football and basketball players because those sports have the lowest graduation rates.

I tell them you've got to get that degree, and you've got to get a degree that's marketable - one that will get you a job when you graduate," he said.

"Then I teach them networking, which is something most kids don't know about."

Banks says athletes should use their wide exposure to make connections in their field of study. "These kids get a lot of handshakes," he said. "But they can't be taking money, because that's illegal."

"What they need to do is make those connections, see if they can get involved with an organization and get a head start."

Banks takes exception to the fashionable notion that coaches should be held responsible for graduation rates.

"I tell coaches that they are in a position to make a contribution," Banks said. "But they can't be given the sole responsibility."

"It all starts in the home. Parents have to motivate kids to do well in school. And the public schools are..."

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Banks

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go to have to do a better job
preparing them for college.

"After that, it's up to the kids
how they do."

That's why Banks hopes to in-
clude high schools in his visits.

"I want to talk to ninth-graders
and stress to them the importance of
getting a good core curriculum and
preparing for the ACT (American
College Test) and SAT (Scholastic
Aptitude Test)." Banks said.

"You've got to get to these kids
carly."

Banks applauds the spirit of
NCAA rules aimed at better aca-
demic performance by athletes. But
he says the 20-hour rule passed in
January allowing all athletic pro-
grams only 20 hours of practice a
week falls short.

Proposition 48, which requires
minimum scores on college entrance
exams and grade-point averages in
high school core curriculum, is
another rule Banks would like to see
modified. Freshmen not meeting
these standards are ineligible to play
sports their first year.

"They need to require a lower
score for kids who have a higher
grade average in the core cur-
riculum," he said. "That would en-
courage kids to do better in their
classes.

"The NCAA needs to stress cur-
riculum and academic performance
more and not rely so heavily on test
scores. Some kids don't test well,
but they get through college by
working hard. Others test well and
flunk out."

"In a lot of cases, one test keeps a
kid from getting a scholarship, and
he never gets the chance to go to
college."

Banks has no illusions about what
he can accomplish with his semi-

"There's just no way you can
hope to graduate everybody," he
said. "But I tell coaches we can
work to improve those graduation
rates."

"These kids need to know there's
something beyond sports. For some,
when the sport is over, their life is
over."

"Athletics can help them. If it
wasn't for athletics, I wouldn't be
where I am now. But they need to
know they must prepare to live
afterward — to make a useful con-
tribution to society."
Strader and Tyler to make the call for 1991 Toppers

A twist through the static and whistle of a transistor radio on some football Saturday might turn up a surprise.

One familiar voice will say, "Holy smoke, sports fans," and the other will follow, "Right you are."

No, these aren't two distant signals competing for the same frequency. They are Wes Strader and Bud Tyler, two long-time broadcasters of Western Kentucky University sports.

And yes, they will be together — for a whole season.

Competitors of broadcasts past, Wes and Bud will call Western football games together for the 1991 season. They've called together before, but Southcentral Kentucky sports historians can say it will be Wes' and Bud's first full season together.

And Bud will say, "Right you are."

Now, legend has it that these guys were fierce competitors at one time. After all, they called on competing radio stations, and we all know how nasty these media wars get.

Then again, things aren't always as they sound.

"In town, we liked to think of ourselves like wrestlers," Wes said before a sheepish smile. "And then we'd meet outside of town and travel together.

"At times we were very competitive, and had Bud and I been of a nature to do so, we could've taken more of a personal side. But we've always had a lot of respect for each other."

Joe Medley
Daily News
Sports Editor

In fact, Wes and Bud would even help each other if one had a technical problem. Things were quite chummy.

"We've always been good friends," admits Bud, who last called Western sports in 1982. "As far as competition, I've never considered Wes a competitor."

OK, but we all know media types have egos. So who's better — Wes or Bud?

"Bud has a better voice, but I do a better job," Wes said through a familiar grin. Bud was more political. "Oh, we're both about the same, I guess. We're even."

"It's only fitting that it was Western that brought Wes and Bud together for their first full season. Both have been calling Western games for more than 25 years.

Bud started in 1956, helping Bob Proctor on Western games and calling Bowling Green High School's games as well. Bud took over Western's games in the early 1960s.

Wes has been calling Western football and basketball since 1964. He saw every football game Jimmy Feix coached.

They've called together before, mainly on road games to cut costs. They called the 1973 Division II championship football game together. It was Western vs. Louisiana Tech.

"I called the first half, and Bud called the second half," Wes said. "I had us in pretty good shape at halftime, and Bud blew it in the second. We lost 34-0. I always told him he lost us the national championship."

Both men love Western. Anyone who listens knows that. But their love for Western radiates in different ways.

"I'm probably a homer," Bud said. "I tend to say 'we' instead of 'Western.'"

Wes will do play-by-play and Bud will paint the airwaves with color. Wes said he's still looking for an analyst.

Hilltopper Athletic Foundation director Gary West will remain the color man in basketball, and it's uncertain who'll join Wes for the 1992 football season.

But Wes and Bud are thrilled to at last work together for their first season.

"I'm looking forward to it very much," Bud said. "For me to get a chance to work with Wes is great. I know I'll really enjoy it."
WKU set to host the Heritage Bowl

Preparations are complete for the fourth annual Heritage Bowl set for Friday night in Western Kentucky University's L.T. Smith Stadium/Felix Field.

The event will mark the high school football season opener for Bowling Green and Warren Central. Central will clash with Paducah Tilghman at 6 p.m., followed by Bowling Green and Fort Knox at about 8:30.

"We feel like we've got two really good matchups," said Fred Hensley, director of Western's University Relations department. "The committee met yesterday (Monday) and feels comfortable with everything. We'll be ready at 6 p.m. Friday.

Central jumps to Class 3-A after two straight years as runner-up in 4-A, and Bowling Green is coming off an 11-1 season.

Fort Knox will feature former Bowling Green coach Wilson Sears, who replaced Joe Jaggers as head coach in the spring. Ex-Western assistant coach Lee Murray is on Sears' staff.

Tickets are on sale at Bowling Green High School (842-1674) and at Western's ticket office (745-5222)."
COACH JACK Harbaugh (left) has worked the quarterback draw into Western Kentucky's offense for 1991 at the urging of his wife Jackie, who has liked the play since son Jim Harbaugh used it to score a touchdown against Notre Dame.

Harbaugh using wife's favorite play

8-26-91

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Burn Phillips became famous for a play he called the "Bombardier," and Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh has one that fans may remember as "Jackie's Play." Jackie Harbaugh, Jack's wife, just loves the quarterback draw, a play where the quarterback drops back as if he was going to pass, then bolts up the middle while the defense watches decoy receivers.

"Every time we get down close to the goal line, she tells me it's time to run the 'quarterback draw,'" Jack Harbaugh said.

"I just kept thinking you never see the 'quarterback draw,' and it works very well when you get down to the 10- or 5-yard line," Jackie Harbaugh said. "You can take like you're going to pass the ball, and the quarterback takes it in the end zone or you could use it to get a first down.

Western has been practicing the play, which Coach Harbaugh didn't use in his first two years on the Hill. He's been reluctant to run Jackie's favorite play because he didn't have fleet-footed quarterbacks.

Now he has Eddie Thompson, a 5-foot-8, 170-pound moth on legs, and Western also had trouble scoring from inside its opponents' 20-yard line in 1990, so Jack-Harbaugh is more than glad to try his special assistant coach's play in 1991.

There is a story behind "Jackie's Play," and it's all about son Jim Harbaugh, a former University of Michigan quarterback who now plays the position for the Chicago Bears.

"Jim was at Michigan, and Jim was quarterbacking against Notre Dame," Harbaugh said. "We were on their 10-yard line, and we called it "Notre Dame was on offense, and we opened up the end zone, and it opened up so well that Jim scored easily. Since then, Jackie's always seen the play as, 'Why don't you run the quarterback draw?'"

"Timing of the call is essential to the success of any gadget play like the quarterback draw," and Jackie Harbaugh knows exactly when to call it.

"We were in Soldier Field to see the Bears, and the Bears were on the 8-yard line," Jack Harbaugh said. "It's time for the quarterback draw.

"I'll be damned if they didn't run it, and I'll be damned if Jim didn't score on it.""

If Jack Harbaugh calls the play at Western and it doesn't work, he knows who's to blame.

"If it gets stuffed, Jackie will say we didn't block it right," Jack Harbaugh said.

And if it works, Jackie's ready.

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Column 6, This Section
Former Dragons thrive at KSU; Whitney enrolling at Western

After three years of inactivity in organized football, former Warren Central star Sean Stevenson was a question mark heading into last season with the Dragons.

But the 6-foot-3, 195-pound wide receiver hauled in 30 passes for 717 yards as a senior at Central for an average of 23.9 yards a catch and six touchdowns.

Now, after choosing Kentucky State, Stevenson is tops on the Thoroughbreds' depth chart.

"I knew I needed to do it (play football) to get in college," Stevenson said. "I really didn't expect to start, but when I got here, I saw I had a chance and I just worked hard."

Stevenson is rooming with Hilton Isable, who threw most of the passes Stevenson caught last season for the Dragons.

Isable has moved up from sixth to third on KSU's quarterback depth chart.

"I'm in a little bit better shape than I thought I'd be," said Isable, who passed for 989 yards on 52 completions in 116 attempts. Not bad numbers for a team centered around the running of "Mr. Football" Damon Hood, now a freshman tailback for the University of Kentucky.

KSU gave Isable a full scholarship, and "I felt I had a better chance of playing" for the Thoroughbreds, he said. Isable also considered Western Kentucky University, Cumberland College and Campbellsville, among others.

"They're coming along pretty well," KSU wide receivers coach Donnie Morgan said. "There are two kids ahead of Hilton. Sean will probably start for us. He's going to be a good receiver. We're looking for big things out of him."

"I'm happy for him," Isable said. "Going to the Division II school in Frankfort has "worked out pretty well."

Whitney transferring

After rushing for 875 yards on 141 carries for the Bowling Green Purples last season, running back Sandy Whitney, at 240 pounds, was looking to Tennessee State University in Nashville for his collegiate football career.

But after going through preseason training at the school, Whitney decided to transfer. He planned to enroll at Western Kentucky University today.

"The reason I picked (Tennessee State) is because it was close to home," Whitney said. When he went to visit the school, "all I saw was the gym. I really didn't see the whole campus.

"When I got down there, I saw things I didn't like."

Whitney just missed qualifying academically under Proposition 48 guidelines. He scored a 16 on his American College Test. The NCAA requires an 18.

A powerful runner, Whitney said TSU coaches stress speed and physical conditioning to "wear down opponents."

And not being eligible to play this season, Whitney said he wanted to concentrate on academics, and TSU's coaches were pushing him "like I was going to play this season," he said.

"I had a good chance of playing" next season, Whitney said. "The program was so tight, and I didn't have enough time for my classes."

After preseason conditioning and summer weightlifting, Whitney was down to 230 pounds, "which is probably my natural weight," he said.

Jones at wide receiver

Whitney's partner last season in the Bowling Green offensive backfield, Marlon Jones also is at TSU. He's working out at wide receiver and running the 40-yard dash at around 4.3 to 4.4 seconds.

"Marlon's got a good chance of playing," Whitney said.

Jones ran for 1,010 yards on 127 carries last season for the 11-1 Purples.
Reasons abound for Harbaugh to resume enthusiasm

By JOE MIDLBY
Daily News Sports Editor

It was about November 1990 when Western, Kentucky football coach Bill Harbaugh's facial expressions seemed in agreement with his bittleness he used to explain his loss to the team the day after losing.

It wasn't common to see him disappear into the rec center of his office in L.T. Smith Stadium after a game, his wife, Jackie following to comfort him before the door slammed.

Harbaugh was in his second year, his team floundering through an eight-game losing streak and, quite frankly, giving in to a 2-8 finish. There were discipline problems, or "brush fires breaking out all over the place," as Harbaugh put it, and he couldn't even run the option offense he likes because the personnel wasn't right.

It was the drained third year for Harbaugh's program, and it became more and more clear he'd just have to fight through it.

Well, the sun has since crossed the equator headed northward and delivered its late summer heat, a deep contrast to the bitter, bitter cool of last fall.

The 1991 season opener is three weeks away, and Harbaugh seems willing to slap anyone on the back and bet a dime on, well, just about anything.

The bright enthusiasm Harbaugh showed when he was hired in 1989 is on its way back, a sharp contrast to the glaze, disbelief game looks he threw last fall.

And why shouldn't he be happy?

Harbaugh hosed down his brush fires, convincing some players to leave before their eligibility expired. He won the option in 1991 with a speedy dynamo of a quarterback named Eddie Thompson.

And under a new athletics director, Western is marketing the football program better than ever.

Less than a year after Harbaugh saw Nightmare on Center Street, his bought his bag of pop-corn to watch The Secret of My Success.

"The first week of practice has been so upbeat and positive," Harbaugh said. "There seems to be a trust (the coaches) have in them (the players) and a trust they're gaining. The guys are genuinely been laughing and enjoying themselves ... and we haven't seen that since the beginning of the year."

Now that there's no soap open on the field, there is an opera of sorts trumpeting the football program. Nashville AD JD Lou Mancilani started a bus caravan that will take a pep rally to surrounding communities to promote football. Harbaugh also initiated special season-ticket plans for families and conceived other marketing plans.

Unlike most Division I-AA programs, Harbaugh has tremendous support high in the WKU administration. Indeed, he may be staring in the face his best opportunity as a head coach.

"The things you need to be successful: No. 1, you need support from your administration, and we have fantastic support from our administration," Harbaugh said. "They're trying to give you the opportunity to not just do your job, but to do a good job.

"We have no little bit here. We (the coaches) need to get the job done. If we don't, then we can just kick ourselves."

Harbaugh hopes the Hilltoppers do a lot less kicking this year -- of themselves and the football. In 1990, Western usually kicked both when it drove inside an opponent's 20-yard line, or the infamous "Red Zone."

Western got 176 first downs to the opposition's 164, only to be outscored 234 to 159.

Enter the option.

"The option is the best play to run when you get down close," Harbaugh said. "The defensive assignments aren't as defined. They can play the heavy defense on you or go man-to-man."

Enter Thompson, the junior quarterback from Fort Knox High School. Thompson won the starting job in the spring with his tricky feet and ball handling.

"He's stepped up his leadership, too," Harbaugh said. "The team seems to have really taken to him. The other night, he did some really spectacular plays, and you could hear everybody just go, 'Woo!' This is Eddie's team."

"I'm just full of enthusiasm," Thompson said. "I try to keep everybody up."

Bowling Green High School product Roscoe Ebols has moved from defensive back to tailback, taking the job from senior Herb Davis, the top returning player who disappointed the coaching staff in the spring. Ebols will be the feature ballcarrier along with Dion Bryant and Robert Jackson.

"Roscoe is a very exciting runner," senior tight end Milton Higgins said, "He's going to be fun to watch for people in the stands."

Biggins will be a big reason why. Perhaps the best tight end in I-AA, he'll block for Ebols along with an experienced offensive line.

Harbaugh wants Higgins to do more than block, which he does perfectly well, in 1991.

"Milton's got a shot to be an All-American, and for that to happen we're going to have to get him the ball more," Harbaugh said. "He caught eight passes last year, and we're going to have to get him there."

That'll happen more when senior quarterback Brian Browning spells Thompson. Western will open most games with Thompson running the option, but Browning will bring his passing skills off the bench in give Western a dual system.

And if Western's offense seems faster this year, credit a shorter huddle. Thompson works with a limited-time huddle in practice, and Browning is working with the offense.

"We're going to try to wear teams down with our offense," Thompson said. "We're going to try to keep them from making substitutions."

Defensively, Western will rely on experience in the backfield and youngsters on line.

Larry Harris, Melvin Johnson and Kevin Perry started in the defensive backfield in 1990 and should make Western sturdy there in 1991. David Bednake, Richard Gricke, Richy Roll and Paul Harp are familiar at linebacker, and Bowling Green sophomore Eddie Shaver should provide depth.

On the line, Tony Garner came on strong at the end of 1990, and Brian Canoy is a sophomore who broke his hand during the summer and wears a cast.

"We're going to be a lot like Cotch (Ralph) Willard and the basketball team," Harbaugh said. "We're going to speed up the pace and have what you might call a fast-breaking offense."

"It's going to be exciting."
Nimble Thompson talks and plays a
good game at QB

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Eddie Thompson eludes with his
hands, eyes and feet. He uses his
mouth to allude to all of those
talents.

"Eddie Thompson is a great little
quarterback who can really do some
exciting things for our football pro-
gram," ex-assistant coach Butch
Gilbert told a Glasgow gathering
during Friday's Hilltopper Express
stop. "And if you don't believe me,
just ask Eddie. He'll tell you for
sure."

The 5-foot-8, 170-pound dynamo
of a junior quarterback admits he
will talk himself up a little. But he
holds a justification.

"I never say anything I don't go
out and back up," he said.

And it seems the Hilltoppers
never tire of hearing it.

"This is really becoming Eddie's
team," Western head coach Jack
Harbaugh said. "They respond to
his leadership."

Thompson, who ran the option
offense for Fort Knox High School,
will at last get his chance to run it
for Western during the 1991 season.
After sitting out one year as a Pro-
position 48 casualty and another as a
redshirt, he'll be the feature quarter-
back in a dual-system, option-pass
offense.

But never mind that he can bolt
side-to-side like a frightened squirrel.
Put aside for a moment his
whip-lash passing arm. He just has
the right personality for the job.

"A lot of quarterbacks when they
make a mistake will come back to
the huddle and say somebody didn't
run the play right, or somebody
mumbled when they brought in the
play," Harbaugh said. "Eddie will
point at himself and say, 'My fault.'"

Unless Harbaugh makes the
mistake.

"He's not intimidated by
coaches," Harbaugh said. "A lot of
kids, if you yell at them, they don't
take it well. But not Eddie.

And if I make a mistake,
he'll rag me about it, and he
wouldn't let up. I think the other
kids on the team like to see that."

Thompson
tags pet names on teammates
and talks it up in
team meetings. That's just the way
he is. It's part of the reason he was
redshirted in 1990.

"I kind of wanted a chance to
play last year, but the coaches said
they saw something special in me,"
Thompson said. "I'm just a pos-
tive person. I'm always up. You never
see me when I'm not up, and I try to
get everybody else up, too."

Tacklers have a hard time seeing
Thompson at all. He sells a fake
pitch like Joe Isuzu sells cars, and
the show begins—a juke here, a
sidestep there and frustrated tacklers
in his wake. His height becomes an
edge.

"Defenders have such a hard
time knowing where he is to begin
with," Harbaugh said. "And then he's
out there, and it becomes a game be-
tween him and the safety."

"And what really helps him is
he's such a good decision-maker.
He makes his choice and goes.
Every once in a while, he'll make
the wrong choice. But with a kid
like that, you put up with it. Because
nine times out of 10, he's right."

Veteran Western linebacker
Richard Grice has chased Thomp-
son and knows the futility.

"It's so hard to tackle him
because his eyes are going one way,
and his feet are going another," Grice
said. He also says Thompson is a
leader. "He's a very disciplined
player, and everybody else sees that.
He's good for the team."

Thompson will start most games
and run the option. Senior Brian
Browning will enter in spells and do
what he does best—drop back and
throw. But Harbaugh likes Thomp-
son's arm, and Thompson will throw.

"A lot of people see he's 5-8 and
he runs the option, and they say he
can't throw," Harbaugh said. "But
he's got a very good arm at short
and medium ranges."

If you don't believe Harbaugh,
just ask Thompson.

"I'm like a lighter to a cigarette,"
Thompson said. "The cigarette's
dull until you light it, and
then you smell the smoke."

On target:

Saturday's offense-vs.-defense
scrimmage in L.T. Smith Stadium-
Felix Field left Harbaugh with a
good feeling.

"We're not ready to go out and
beat the best teams in I-AA yet, but,
we can be in a couple of weeks," Harbaugh said. "We've got a real
chemistry on this team. The kids are
laughing and enjoying each other."

Thompson put on a show, and
Bowling Green High School-
product Roscoe Echols scored two
touchdowns from the tailback slot.
Echols slammed in from three yards
out and sprinted for paydirt on a
70-yard play.

Tight end Milton Biggs caught
a short scoring pass, and wide
receiver Brian Sowerby nabbed a
30-yarder from reserve quarterback
Jarius Malcome. Malcome also ran
one in from two yards out.

"I thought both the offense and
defense looked good," Harbaugh
said. "I saw a lot of good things."
Austin Peay ticket plan cashes in on losing

Tim Weiser figures Austin Peay's new season-ticket plan will at least keep disc jockeys from pitching their tents on billboards.

"I haven't heard of anybody volunteering to sit up on billboards," APSU's athletics director said with a chuckle. "We hope this plan is conducive to watching and waiting in the stadium."

APSU football fans are waiting for a win. Western Kentucky University's 6:30 p.m., season-opening opponent in Clarksville, Tenn., on Saturday, has lost 23 straight games. The Governors finished 0-11 in 1990.

This is the catch, if Austin Peay doesn't win a game this season, season-ticket holders will get their money back. Really. Honest.

Does it sound risky? Well, the Govs do play Kentucky State.

Has it worked?

"We were hoping to match what we sold last year, because after a year like that you anticipate a drop-off," Weiser said. "The final count isn't in, but we seem to be at that and maybe a little more."

Weiser said about 750 tickets have been sold, which would make for a fat $26,000 refund.

This would all seem a cruel joke on new head coach Roy Gregory. The poor guy is taking his first collegiate head-coaching job, and he was diagnosed with cancer in the spring.

That's certainly not funny, but Gregory doesn't need more pressure.

"I talked with Roy when we first started thinking about doing this, because I didn't want to add to the pressure on him or the team," Weiser said. "He was really excited about it. He viewed it as another way to motivate the team."

Weiser said he got the idea from the University of New Hampshire, which put on a one-game, money-back promotion during their men's basketball team's home losing streak.

They lost, and perhaps that's why "it didn't click at the time," Weiser said. "But as time went on, we knew we'd have to try an unconventional approach to a conventional problem.

"It was a way for us to show our team and coaches we had confidence in them."

If the Govs don't win in 1991, they may have to offer a refund with interest in '92.

Gregory battling Today, Gregory received a chemotherapy treatment in Nashville. Weiser said Gregory has received eight such treatments since being diagnosed with lymphoma in the spring.

"It was on Mother's Day, and he was driving home when he felt a lump in his stomach," Weiser said. "He thought it was just stress-related, but he found out it was cancer, and they've been treating it accordingly.

"They've said it was a first-level tumor, which means they've caught it early. So everyone's optimistic. It's been tough for him to deal with mentally on top of everything else he has to worry about as a head coach."

Gregory has been an assistant coach since he moved to the collegiate ranks in 1976. He's served at Tennessee-Chattanooga, Memphis State, New Mexico, Vanderbilt, Mississippi State and South Carolina.
Western vs. Austin Peay

Saturday, Sept. 7, 6:30 p.m. // Clarksville, Tenn.

Records: Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" -- 0-0-0 (2-8-0 in 1990)
Austin Peay "Governors" -- 0-0-0 (0-11-0 in 1990)

Schedule/Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WKU (Coach Jack Harbaugh)</th>
<th>APSU (Coach Roy Gregory)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 at Austin Peay</td>
<td>7 Western Kentucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Murray State, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>14 Southern Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Morehead State, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>21 Kentucky State</td>
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<td>28 open date</td>
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<td>19 at Tennessee Tech</td>
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<td>26 Northern Iowa, 7:00 pm</td>
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<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<td>2 at UT-Chattanooga, 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>9 Eastern Illinois, 1:30 pm</td>
<td>9 at UT-Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 at Indiana State, 12:30 pm</td>
<td>16 at Eastern Kentucky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 at Illinois State, 1:30 pm</td>
<td>23 Murray State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Series: WKU 28, APSU 4, 1 tie

In Clarksville: WKU 13, APSU 4
First Game: WKU 20-0, Nov. 16, 1940 in Bowling Green
Last Meeting: WKU 49-0, Sept. 30, 1989 in Bowling Green

Stat Leaders

Rushing: WKU -- Herb Davis 140-657 (73.0/game), 2 TDs
          Terry Brady 32-112 (12.4/game)
          APSU -- Reggie Williams 123-381 (34.6/game), 1 TD
                   Jody Smith 42-138 (15.3/game)
Passing: WKU -- Brian Browning 7-14-3, 61 yards
          APSU -- Reggie Williams 42-92-3, 335 yards, 2 TDs
Receiving: WKU -- Dwayne Haun 31-459, 3 TDs
           APSU -- Samy Hillman 13-97
Punting: WKU -- new punter
          APSU -- Grad Wright 82-37.3
Tackles: WKU -- Joe Lee Johnson 81 tackles (48 unassisted), 2 fum rec
           Kevin Ferry 73 tackles (52 unassisted)
           Richard Grice 57 tackles (37 unassisted)
           APSU -- Bunky Beasley 59 tackles (37 unassisted)
           Randy Murphree 54 tackles (26 unassisted)

From staff and AP reports

Western Kentucky and Austin Peay put streaks on the line that both teams hope to end in their season opener Saturday.

Western Kentucky won its first two games last season and then lost eight in a row. Austin Peay's only "victory" in its last 22 games was a 1-0 forfeit over Morehead State in 1989.

"There's nothing more dangerous that a hungry opponent," said Western Kentucky coach Jack Harbaugh. "That makes Austin Peay very, very dangerous. I guess we’re both hungry, but we’re playing at their place and they have a new coach (Roy Gregory).

"Both of those things, along with our inexperience in some key positions, add some unknowns that really worry us."

Austin Peay, a member of the Ohio Valley Conference, returns 42 lettermen and 16 starters from last year’s 0-11 squad. Among the key players is place-kicker Steve Munnell, who led the Governors in scoring with 30 points.

Western Kentucky will start junior Eddie Thompson at quarterback, and senior Brian Browning will see spot time. Thompson gives the Hilltoppers quickness at the position, while Browning is a strong thrower.

Thompson has practiced all week since twisting his foot last week. He didn’t play in the Hilltoppers’ Red-White scrimmage Sept. 1, but he’s expected to be at full strength Saturday.

Converted defensive back Roscoe Echols, from Bowling Green High School, has edged out veteran Herb Davis at tailback. Davis ran for 657 yards in a reserve last season.

Western will also look to an experienced offensive line that features center David Browning, tackle Guy Earle and guard Harvey Sloniker.

Western Kentucky has won the last four games against Austin Peayn to hold a 28-4-1 series lead.

Hard-luck Govs

Austin Peay’s woes don’t stop with the losing streak. They don’t even stop at Gregory battling cancer.

The Governors will open the 1991 season without fullback Eric Dance, who rushed for 628 yards in 1990 and was the top returning rusher. Dance was lost to grades.

Quarterback Reggie Williams will bring back the most yards from 1990. He carried 123 times for 381 yards. He’ll run an option attack.

Gordon out

Reggie Gordon, a sophomore corner back who was battling for a starting position, will not travel to Clarksville on Saturday.
Toppers, Govs hope to end futility

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Quarterback Reggie Williams will bring back the most yards from 1990. He carried 123 times for 381 yards. He’ll run an option attack.

Gordon out

Reggie Gordon, a sophomore corner back who was battling for a starting position, will not travel to Clarksville on Saturday because of legal problems, Harbaugh said.

Gordon is charged with theft by unlawful taking over $100 in relation to an Aug. 26 arrest at Shoe Sensation in Bowling Green. The alleged offense is a class D felony.

Gordon’s pretrial is set for Sept. 13. If he goes to trial, it’ll occur in Warren Circuit Court.

Gordon practiced with the team this week but will not play on Saturday.

“From what I’m hearing, it’s all a big misunderstanding,” Harbaugh said. “But I told Reggie he put himself in a bad position, so he’s not traveling on Saturday.”

Notes

—After Saturday’s game, Austin Peay will be dropped from Western’s schedule.

Western will make room for seven Gateway Conference opponents starting in 1992, the Hilltoppers’ first season in the I-AA football conference.

—Chris Gable, a junior who transferred from Campbellsville College, has apparently will be Western’s starting punter Saturday. He’s been battling with Bowling Green High product Breck Largen for the position.

—J.J. Jewell, who quarterbacked Warren Central High School for two years, has walked on to Western. He transferred from Middle Tennessee State.

—Family Fan season tickets are on sale through Sept. 10, at Western’s ticket office. Adult tickets are $18, and tickets for children cost $6 and cover Western’s six home games. For more information, call 745-5222.
For Morehead, WKU, Murray, answers start coming tonight

By JIM TERHUNE, Staff Writer

Morehead State hopes it won’t suffer an identity crisis in its first football game without Chris Swartz, who to opponents might have seemed the Eagles’ quarterback for life.

Western Kentucky wonders what will happen when its New Kids in the Backfield take their first snap.

Murray State searches for respect, not revenge.

The final three of Kentucky’s four Division I-AA football teams will open their seasons tonight, each with different degrees of uncertainty.

**Morehead at Samford:** Trying to drag momentum earned from a 27-17 upset of Eastern Kentucky in its 1990 closer into the new season, the Eagles will go to Samford without Swartz, who set 16 records and started for four years.

“We’re kind of saying, ‘What kind of offense are we?’” said second-year coach Cole Proctor. “It’s important we be fundamentally sound, not turn the ball over and get some confidence early. But it’s a wait-and-see thing.”

Jeremy Holbrook had the early inside track as Swartz’s successor, but he injured an Achilles’ tendon during the summer. Jeff King, a redshirt sophomore, grabbed the starting job.

“Jeff’s a survivor, here three years when nobody played much behind Swartz,” Proctor said. “He’s our best combo (run and pass) guy. The big thing is the leadership he’s shown.”

He’s also had to show a lot of inner strength this week. An uncle to whom he was close was killed last weekend when the motorcycle he was riding was struck by a car as he was preparing to turn into his driveway. King went home for the funeral, then returned on Wednesday.

“It’s been a roller-coaster week for him, but he’s very tough,” Proctor said.

Perhaps his hometown is indicative of what lies ahead for King. He comes from Brilliant, Ohio.

Proctor isn’t nearly as unsure of his defense. Eight starters return, with all-Ohio Valley Conference tackle Richard Shadwick moved to end/linebacker.

“We felt we had asked him to do too much and had him thinking and not reacting at tackle,” Proctor said, even though Shadwick had 19 tackles for 77 yards in losses. “We have him in a position where he can isolate on people.”

Inside linebacker Tom Cohan still is recovering from a shoulder injury suffered in a summer bicycle accident and won’t start.

Proctor is especially high on former Doss High School place-kicker Craig Bere, who connected on only 4 of 12 field-goal attempts last year as a freshman but

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Morehead, WKU, Murray get answers tonight

Continued from Page B 1

did hit 21 of 22 extra points. "He's changed more than anybody else," the coach said.

Last season Samford overcame a 14-3 Morehead lead to win 25-22, its second comeback victory at Morehead in three years. But the Eagles won in a driving rain in Birmingham, Ala., in 1989. Samford beat NAIA opponent Harding (Ark.) 34-0 last Saturday.

Western at Austin Peay: Western will begin with a new quarterback (Eddie Thompson of Fort Knox), a new tailback (Roscoe Echols) and a new offensive strategy.

"You like to give the ball to the most experienced guy on that first snap to get the jitters out," coach Jack Harbaugh said. "But we don't have a most experienced guy. The most experienced guy is me, and you will not see me out there."

Harbaugh said he plans to start with Thompson, then use fifth-year senior Brian Browning, a transfer from the University of Louisville, for one to three series in every first half.

"I watched what Howard (Schnellenberger) did with Browning Nagle and Jeff Brohm last year (at U of L) and was kind of fascinated by that. I stole a page from his book."

The playbook for Western will change with the quarterbacks. Thompson is an option quarterback, Browning a pure dropback passer.

Austin Peay will be trying to break a 23-game losing streak, although it was handed a forfeit victory by Morehead in 1989. Harbaugh doesn't care about that; Western lost its last eight of 1990 to end 2-8.

"We've got a streak, too," he said. "We've got to worry about our own. The great thing is the sun comes up on Saturday, football's here again, and we're all reborn. The bad thing is that only half of us will feel that way later on."

Southern Illinois at Murray: Three of the teams that thrashed Murray last year as the Racers went 2-9 and gave up an average of 39 points a game are off the schedule. But not Southern Illinois, which won 45-7.

"I've been preaching playing hard and taking care of business," coach Mike Mahoney said. "It's not re-venge; it's respect. We have something to prove."

Last year Murray would have something bad happen initially, then melt away.

"If we could get some success early and get some confidence, that's what we need," Mahoney said. "But the key thing is leadership at quarterback."

Mahoney said he's seen that in practice and expects it in games from transfer Tremaine Lewis, who directed his Texas high school team to three state title contests, winning two.

However, running back Chris Sypho, Murray's top 1990 rusher, just returned to the team after spraining an ankle early in preseason. Backup center Mike Gossett of Bullitt Central is out for the season with torn knee ligaments.

Southern Illinois returned 13 starters, nine on offense, from a club that also went 2-9 and dropped its final eight. But it rallied from a 27-7 deficit to nip new OVC member Southeast Missouri 28-27 last Saturday.
Austin Peay loss shows Toppers

9-9-91

Joe Medley
Daily News
Sports Editor

The scenario seemed logical enough: Western Kentucky University's football team would pound Austin Peay on the road, lay to rest an eight-game losing streak, then come home to 12,000 hype victims in L.T. Smith Stadium for Saturday's home-opener against rival Murray State.

The new option offense was supposed to rack up huge numbers at Austin Peay, and the ills of a 2-8 season in 1990 were to be mended.

What a debacle.

Austin Peay came from behind to win 18-14, ending the Governor's 23-game losing streak. Fans tried to tear down the goal posts. They had a party.

The option offense did post impressive numbers. But it had problems putting them on the scoreboard, reminding us all of 1990. Ouch.

The losing streak is at nine. And somewhere on the Hill, someone is praying fans still come to see the exciting, family good time that is Western football.

It's a good thing promoters at WKU are selling a family good time and not an instant turnaround for the Hilltoppers' football program.

Coach Jack Harbaugh is still rebuilding. He believes he'll have a playoff contender come November.

He might, but let's talk history. It took Dave Roberts three seasons to post a winning record. He went 2-9, 4-7 and 4-6-1 before two straight trips to the Division I-AA playoffs.

Roberts rebuilt with quick-fix junior-college transfers. Harbaugh is determined to do it with four-year players, and his first signees are into their second year. He has 38 sophomores and 22 freshmen by academic qualification; that's 60 underclassmen.

Western looked like an inexperienced team at Austin Peay. The Hilltoppers didn't stop the Governor's with leads of 7-0 and 14-7. A defense that dominated Austin Peay in the first half gave up scoring drives of 80 and 69 yards in the second.

Either somebody's out of shape or somebody's a bit inexperienced.

Offensively, the Hilltoppers compounded 321 yards on the ground. Western came up with no points in two trips to scoring position in the first half, but converted two scores in the second.

Junior quarterback Eddie Thompson lived up to billing, rushing for 118 yards and 5.5 a carry. He showed he's a game-breaker on a 55-yard touchdown sprint.

Junior running back Roscoe Echols led all rushers with 124 yards in his first start as a collegiate tailback.

The dual-system offense experiment didn't take. Senior quarterback Brian Browning went two for 12 for 14 yards passing.

"We didn't do a good job of protecting him sometimes," Harbaugh said. "We feel good about the decision to do this. We've got to correct some things, but we think it will work."

Western showed spurts of what the coaches say it can do this year and shades of what it did last season. But it's a bit early to condemn Western in 1991.

Notes
— Senior offensive tackle Guy Earle tore a knee ligament at Austin Peay and Harbaugh said he's feared lost for the season on Saturday night.

On Sunday, Harbaugh cut that dismal prediction to at least six weeks without Earle. "He's a big, big loss to us. He's a very fine offensive lineman."

— Senior tailback Herb Davis returned four kickoffs for 87 yards, his longest a 32-yarder in the second half. He also carried four times for 21 yards.
Season-ticket sales jump at WKU

By JOE MEDLEY "9-10-91
Daily News Sports Editor

Season ticket sales for Western Kentucky University football are up after a 2-8 season in 1990, and athletics director Lou Marciani is turning his efforts toward tailgating.

Marciani said Monday that Western has sold about 200 more season tickets for its six home games in 1991 than it sold in 1990. About 1,400 tickets have been sold for an 18-percent increase over last season.

Western lost its last eight games last season, and it opened this season with an 18-14 loss at Austin Peay on Saturday. But an increase in season ticket sales shows the enthusiasm is still there, Marciani said.

"We could've been 18 percent down easily," Marciani said. "But I'm very happy with the way the community, faculty and student body has responded to support their Hilltoppers."

He also said Western has sold Family Fan season-ticket plans to about 120 families, mostly in Warren County. The Family Fan plan was a new promotion where families could purchase tickets at $18 per adult and $6 per child. Availability was to end at 5 p.m. today.

"We're very pleased with response to family plan," Marciani said. "It was so successful in football that we hope to carry it over to men's and women's basketball."

Marciani said he hopes to see at least 12,000 fans on hand for Saturday's home opener against Murray State (0-1), a 31-27 loser to Southern Illinois in its opener. This weekend's game is set for 7 p.m. in L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field.

And Marciani hopes fans will come early for tailgating. Marciani is trying to boost tailgating by closing off Center Street from Dogwood Drive to University Boulevard. Center Street will be closed from 4 p.m. Saturday until after the game. Entrance to the Diddle Arena-Smith Stadium parking lot and parking structure will be restricted to the University Boulevard side.

The Center Street area will be open for tailgating for the general public. Most tailgating will take place at the Downing University Center with overflow going to the Diddle parking area and the Tate Page Hall lawn.

Students will have what Marciani calls an "infield" at the Smith Stadium practice field by the tennis courts.

"We wanted to use the tailgating process we have for Homecoming for every game," Marciani said. "We've got one of the best setups for tailgating in the country."

Western will put on promotions for each home game. This week, it'll be a best tailgate dessert contest. For more information, call 745-4295.
Western’s Harbaugh needs a win to keep place at dinner table

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer
C.J. 9-11-71

Chicago Bears 21, Tampa Bay Buccaneers 20.

Jack Harbaugh stopped packing his bags.

Thank you, son No. 2.

"Jim Harbaugh saved the family jewels," the Western Kentucky University football coach said. "We get popped by Austin Peay. John’s over there losing 81-0. Jackie said on Sunday that if the Bears get beat, she’s throwing all three of us out and going off on her own. I feel good. I can stay another week."

The Harbaugh grid clan has had better weekends.

Son John, Cincinnati’s tight-ends coach and recruiting coordinator, watched Penn State dismember the Bearcats 81-0 on Saturday afternoon. That night father Jack watched the Hilltoppers give up a late touchdown, a two-point conversion and a field goal to lose 18-14 at Austin Peay, snapping the Governors’ losing streak at 23 games and extending Western’s to nine.

But Sunday afternoon son Jim threw two touchdown passes for the Bears, and mother Jackie decided the guys could hang around a little longer.

It allows Jack to continue searching for the solution to Western’s inclination to shoot itself in the foot.

Austin Peay went from 70 yards total offense in the first half to 234 in the second, rallied from 7-0 and 14-7 deficits and stunned the Toppers much as Tennessee-Chattanooga (22-21) and Youngstown State (17-14) did a year ago.

Afterward an irate Harbaugh said there would be wholesale changes on defense to get what he wanted "character-wise." Monday a calmer Harbaugh said he didn’t mean his players were softening up.

"It’s not lack of effort," he said.

"That’s never been in my mind. The will to win is there; the emotion is strong. It’s a matter of learning how to play the game, knowing how to play it when it counts. We’re doing the same things that our unsuccessful teams have done over a period of time.

"It’s coaching things, too. They ran a counter-option to the boundary in the second half, ran it and ran it, and we played it and played it without ever adjusting. Plus, you don’t give the lead back twice, you don’t give them the kind of kickoff returns they got and you don’t miss short field goals like we did twice.

"It’s my job, what I get paid for, to see that those things don’t happen. The buck stops here. Didn’t somebody say that once? Well, now I know what that means."

Harbaugh indicated there will be at least four position changes: two on defense, one on offense, one on special teams. He wouldn’t name names and said they might be only temporary.

"We’re still going up and down in spurts," he said. "There will be a little bit of a gut-check on defense."

There’s been a blow on offense, too, Guy Earle, a 275-pound senior tackle, suffered a torn knee ligament and will be out at least six weeks.

"Big loss," Harbaugh said. "He’s an outstanding lineman and leader."

Otherwise, Harbaugh liked the work of Eddie Thompson, making his first start at quarterback, and tailback Roscoe Echols, who moved over from defense.

Thompson ran for 118 yards and hit 5 of 8 passes for 67 more. He scored on option runs of 55 and 16 yards.

"I really liked Eddie," the coach said. "On a fourth-and-one on the first touchdown drive, he checked out of a sneak and ran Roscoe on a sweep for the first down. You usually aren’t able to do that your first time out there. And he stopped and threw a great touch pass on an option near the end of the first half."

Thompson wasn’t overwhelmed with Thompson after the game. Though. "You can’t be satisfied unless you win," he said. "I’ve got to work harder and better."

Echols ran for 124 yards, 81 in the second half, mostly as Thompson’s pitch man on the option.

"He ran it inside strong, something we haven’t had a lot of, and pounded it up the sideline after he turned the corner instead of running out of bounds," Harbaugh said. "That’s what we need."

Will this loss linger like an infection?

"We have a 48-hour rule," Harbaugh said. "You can feel bad for yourself for two days, then it has all be out of your system."

With help from quarterback Jim it’s leaving the Harbaugh household as well.

...
Biggins bangs backers, likes blocking role

By JOE MEDLEY 9-12-91

Daily News Sports Editor

Just for funzies, let's play John Madden and isolate Western Kentucky tight end Milton Biggins on the line of scrimmage. If it helps, draw a mental circle around No. 86.

See there. Boom! Biggins is off the line of scrimmage. And Boom! Down goes the linebacker in a heap. For blocks like Biggins makes, there should be an airbag!

At present momentum, CBS' Madden might describe Biggins in an NFL broadcast. The senior from Chicago who transferred from Miami (as in Hurricanes) is considered the best pro prospect at Western in some time. He says the New York Giants and San Francisco 49ers have been to Bowling Green to watch him play.

Western's coaches are pitching Biggins as a Division I-AA All-American. If they pitch him the ball a little more, it just might happen.

"Milton has to be the best blocking tight end in I-AA in the country," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. "But, unfortunately, not a lot of people know about him because we haven't done a good job of getting him the ball."

Biggins caught six balls for 105 yards and a touchdown and one for a two-point conversion in 1990.

Including two grabs for 17 yards Saturday in this season's opener at Austin Peay, Biggins has just 22 career catches for 295 yards.

It's not like he can't catch. As a senior at Wendell Phillips High School in Chicago, Biggins earned All-State, All-City, All-Area and All-Conference honors with 31 receptions for 997 yards.

At Western, he played behind Robert Coates as a sophomore under former coach Dave Roberts, who liked a pass-happy offense. When Coates left, so did Roberts.

Enter Harbaugh and a run-oriented offense, and balls haven't flown Biggins' way.

Continued On Page 3-B

Column 2, This Section

MILTON BIGGINS catches a pass during practice Wednesday at Western Kentucky University. The senior Division I-AA All-America candidate is one of the best blocking tight ends in the country. The San Fran-

Staff Color Photo by Garrie
In his bangs, Biggins, likes blocking role

**Bley**

Sports Editor 9-12-91

Noises, let's play John Madden and isolate stinky tight end Milton Biggins on the Image. If it helps, draw a mental circle.

Boom! Biggins is off the line of scrimmage. Boom! Down goes the linebacker in a block like Biggins makes, there should be momentum, CBS' Madden might begin in an NFL broadcast. The senior who transferred from Miami (as in '96) is considered the best pro prospect at the time. He says the New York Giants and San Francisco 49ers have been to Bowling Green to size up the Chicago native. He doesn't see many passes, but he likes his reputation as a blocker.

Coaches are pitching Biggins as a Division I-AA All-American. If they pitch him the ball a lot might happen.

"He is the best blocking tight end in the country," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. Unfortunately, not a lot of people know because we haven't done a good job of pitching the ball.

But six balls for 105 yards and a pass for a two-point conversion in two grabs for 17 yards Saturday in this game at Austin Peay, Biggins has just 22 catches for 295 yards.

He can't catch. As a senior at Wendell School in Chicago, Biggins earned City, All-Area and All-Conference honors for 997 yards. He played behind Robert Coates as a senior former coach Dave Roberts, who lobbied for the running game.

MILTON BIGGINS catches a pass during practice Wednesday at Western Kentucky University. The senior Division I-AA All-America candidate is one of the best blocking tight ends in the country. The San Francisco 49ers and New York Giants are among NFL teams that have been to Bowling Green to size up the Chicago native. He doesn't see many passes, but he likes his reputation as a blocker.

Continued on Page 3-B, This Section
No sweat, Biggins says. He relishes in the label "blocking tight end."

"I'll feel good to see our backs get a thousand yards," Biggins said. "Everyone knows I can catch, but you can build an image on this team by blocking, and that's what I do."

And how.

Biggins is a cornerstone of Harbaugh's running attack, and opposing defenses knew it in 1990.

"After the first couple of games, you could tell people had been watching films," Harbaugh said. "It didn't take long for defenses to load up on Milton's side, especially when we got down in the Red Zone.

"This year, we've got a more experienced line, and we hope to mix it up a little better."

Biggins doesn't mind dealing out the hard knocks, because he's had a few.

A Chicago Sun Times Academic All-American in high school and always a solid student, he was bumped at Miami over an academic mix-up.

"Me and Coach (Jimmy) Johnson just didn't see eye-to-eye," he said. "They said I didn't take a final exam, but I did take it."

"My position coach at Miami knew one of the coaches here, and that's how I ended up here."

Biggins has had plenty of nagging injuries, including a knee injury that kept him out of two games in 1990. He missed the Tennessee Tech game, a 33-22 loss that all but took Western out of playoff contention.

"When we lost Milton for those games, it really hurt us because he's so important to our offense," Harbaugh said.

Biggins plays hurt. On several occasions against Austin Peay State last Saturday, one could spot Biggins slowly picking himself up and limping back to the huddle. But he says he has to play hurt.

"All I'm thinking about now is getting this team turned around and having a winning season," he said. "When it hurts, I know I must go on."

That'll get Biggins on the All-Madden Team any day.
Western Kentucky and Murray State are Division I-AA football programs headed in the same direction, and both want to change that when they meet Saturday night at L.T. Smith Stadium/Felix Field.

Coming off a 2-8 season, Western is on a nine-game losing streak. Murray finished 2-9 in 1990, and the Racers have but one win in their last nine contests — a 31-24 besting of Austin Peay in three overtimes in last season's finale.

Both Western and Murray lost their season openers last week. Western lost 18-14 at Austin Peay, and Murray fell 31-27 at home to Southern Illinois.

The Hilltoppers and Racers both gave up leads late. Western yielded 11 points in the final four minutes against Austin Peay, and Murray fell in the game's final minute.

Suffice it to say, there's empathy between coaches.

"I know how (Murray) Coach (Mike) Mahoney feels about last Saturday," said Western Kentucky coach Jack Harbaugh. "It was a tough one for both of us."

The onus will be on Western at 7 p.m. Saturday. The Hilltoppers are playing at home, where Harbaugh feels they must win.

The game is so important that Harbaugh has made personnel changes on a defense that quickly gave up leads of 7-0 and 14-7 at Austin Peay. Western's defense stuffed the Governors in the first half, only to give up 218 total yards in the second.

An offense that ran up 321 rushing yards in Clarksville will have an unexpected, and unwanted personnel change; offensive lineman Guy Earle is down at least six weeks with a knee injury.

"One thing's for sure, we'll have to play with more confidence to control Murray," Harbaugh said. "And, our offense probably have to come up with points this week."

Western had opportunistic defense points at Austin Peay on two first-half tries by Govs' 20-yard line.

The Hilltoppers' offense can drive and it can play. Quarterback Eddie Thompson rushed for scores of 16 and 28 yards on the way to a 118-yard, two-touchdown day in his debut.

Thompson's rushing total is the most ever for a Western
out to turn seasons around

C. Dwayne out to turn seasons around for Saturday's home opener against Murray State. Kickoff is 7:00 p.m. at Bowling Green, Ky.

Records: Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" - 0-1-0 (2-8-0 in 1990)
Murray State "Racers" - 0-1-0 (2-9-0 in 1990)

Schedule/Results:

**Western vs. Murray State**
Saturday, Sept. 14, 7:00 p.m. /// Bowling Green, Ky.

**Records:** Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" - 0-1-0 (2-8-0 in 1990) Murray State "Racers" - 0-1-0 (2-9-0 in 1990)

**Schedule/Results:**

**Western (Coach Jack Harbaugh)**

**September**
- 7 at Austin Peay, L18-14
- 14 Murray State, 7:00 pm
- 21 Morehead State, 7:00 pm
- 28 open date

**October**
- 5 Middle Tennessee, 7:00 pm
- 12 at Eastern Kentucky, 6:00 pm
- 19 Troy State, 5:30 pm (Homecoming)
- 26 Northern Iowa, 7:00 pm

**November**
- 2 at UT-Chattanooga, 6:00 pm
- 9 Eastern Illinois, 1:30 pm
- 16 at Indiana State, 12:30 pm
- 23 at Illinois State, 1:30 pm

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The Series: WKU 26, MSU 22, 7 ties

- In Bowling Green: WKU 13, MSU 8, 6 ties
- First Game: WKU 7-0, Oct. 24, 1931 in Bowling Green
- Last Meeting: MSU 17-14, Sept. 9, 1989 in Murray
- Last Meeting in Bowling Green: WKU 21-17, Sept. 19, 1987

**Statistics**

**Rushing:** WKU -- Roscoe Echols 20-124 (124.0/game)
- Eddie Thompson 19-118 (118.0/game), 2 TDs
- MSU -- Tim Bland 21-79 (79.0/game)

**Passing:** WKU -- Eddie Thompson 5-8-1, 67 yards
- MSU -- Trentaine Lewis 13-31-2, 161 yards

**Receiving:** WKU -- Dwayne Haun 2-38; Milton Biggins 2-17;
- Joey Johnson 2-14
- MSU -- Matt Havill 3-44; Tim Bland 3-36; Dave Cox 3-27

**Punting:** WKU -- Chris Gable 5-34.8
- MSU -- Taylor Colby 1-30.0

There will also be a bus shuttle service starting at 5 p.m. from Kroger on Nashville Road. The service will continue until the start of the game, and there will be return service after the game.
Murray, WKU agree to be football foes through 2000

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

Murray State and Western Kentucky can't seem to get enough of each other. And
they'll get their fill for the next decade.
The two schools, about 105 miles apart,
are not only meeting tonight at 8 EDT in
Bowling Green, but they've also scheduled
a football series through the year 2000. And
beginning next year, the game will end the
regular season for each.

That certainly would be appropriate.
They've played 55 times and since 1936
have ended 43 seasons by playing each other,
most recently in 1985. Western leads the
series 26-22-7. The teams didn't meet last
season.

"It's a series that should be forever," said
Mike Mahoney, who has spent 11 seasons at
Murray, four as head coach.

"The rivalry's big around here," third-year
Western coach Jack Harbaugh said.

"They've got our belt."

At a summer trainers' meeting in 1978,
Murray's Tom Simmons asked Western's
Bill Edwards to loan him a belt, and Ed-
wards offered him a red one — one of the
Hilltoppers' colors.

"I knew that would tick him off," Ed-
wards recalled.

Simmons refused to return it. When the
teams played that season, Simmons brought
the belt out — encased in a wooden plaque
with the scores of all Western-Murray
games on it. It's now the trophy.

"It's a big belt," Edwards said. "My waist
size has shrunk since then, but I still get
ragged by guys on how big it is. I think Tom
added some holes in it."

Both clubs hope to plug holes that led to
opening-game losses a week ago. Austin
Peay stunned Western 18-14 with a touch-
down and two-point conversion in the last
four minutes. Southern Illinois edged the
Colonels, ranked No. 5 in Division 1-AA,
35-28-14 last year.

Murray quarterback Michael
Payton completed 10 of 17 passes
for 242 yards and two touchdowns.

Morehead-Marshall: The Eagles,
hoping to see vast and rapid
improvement from a veteran de-
fense that gave up gobs of passing
yardage in a 52-14 opening loss at
Samford, runs into the Thundering
Herd and its thundering fans.

A crowd of 33,116 elbowed into
the inaugural game in Marshall Sta-
dium, which seats about 28,000, and
watched the Herd (1-1) squeeze past
New Hampshire 24-23 last Satur-
day.

Marshall quarterback Michael
Payton completed 10 of 17 passes
for 242 yards and two touchdowns.

"Payton impresses me as much as
anyone," said Morehead coach Cole
Proctor, whose club lost to Marshall
28-14 last year. "But they've got
great speed overall and play hard
up front."
Shutout victory over MSU boosts Tops, Harbaugh

By JOE MEDLEY 7-15-91
Daily News Sports Editor
Losing had worn so badly on Jack Harbaugh that it began to govern his thinking.

"I was starting to get paranoid," Western Kentucky's third-year coach said. "It got to the point where we were thinking of ways not to lose rather than ways to win; that's how bad it was."

The relief on Harbaugh's face and his water-soaked shirt told the story. Harbaugh can talk about losing in the past tense after Saturday's 14-0 win over Murray State before 12,222 fans in L.T. Smith Stadium.

Western's first win since a 19-9 besting of Illinois State on Sept. 15, 1990, killed the Hilltoppers' losing streak nine.

Western (1-1) doused its coach with water and gave him a shoulder-pad ride as the final seconds ticked down.

A week after Harbaugh watched Western allow 11 points in the final four minutes of an 18-14 loss at Austin Peay, he delighted in a fourth-quarter goal-line stand to preserve a shutout.

Western allowed Murray (0-2) 214 yards and 10 first downs -- two in the first half.

"That's the kind of personality we want to have here," Harbaugh said. "We want to be known as a hard-nosed defensive team."

"If our defense hadn't played so well tonight, 14 points wouldn't have been enough."

The goal-line stand was the centerpiece. On fourth down at Western's 6-yard line, Murray quarterback Tremaine Lewis ran right and turned toward paydirt.

Western strong safety Larry Harris grabbed Lewis from behind, but Lewis fell forward toward the goal line. Free safety Kevin Ferry stood Lewis up and drove him back with 13:36 to play.

"If we had scored there, we felt like we could've won the game," Murray coach Mike Mahoney said. "We had already planned to go for two and get within 14-8, then maybe try an on-side kick."

Ferry, a senior and two-year starter, beamed over the stand.

"There were so many times over the last nine games we would get a lead, only to see the defense give it up," Ferry said. '"But we didn't Continued On Page 12-B Column 2, This Section

WESTERN KENTUCKY strong safety Larry Harris (20) harrasses Murray State quarterback Tremaine Lewis during Saturday night's 14-0 Hilltopper victory in Smith Stadium.
Shutout victory over MSU boosts Tops, Harbaugh

By JOE MEDLEY

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Continued On Page 12-B Column 2, This Section

WESIERN KENTUCKY strong safety Larry Harris (20) harrasses Murray State quarterbacT Tremaine Lewis during Saturday night's 14-0 Hilltopper victory in Smith Stadium.
Continued From Page 1-B

give up tonight. There were 11 guys
who wouldn't give up, and it's just a
great feeling."

Western's defense also stalled
Murray from the Hilltoppers' 34, 44
and 47 in the second half.

While Western's defense held
Murray to two first downs in the
first half, the offense made good on
both of its scoring opportunities.

Dwayne Haun's 11-yard punt
return spotted the Hilltoppers on the
Racers' 37-yard line, and Western
waited five more plays to score in
the first quarter. Quarterback Eddie
Thompson rolled left on an option,
turned in and eluded between two
Murray defenders for a nine-yard
touchdown run.

Steve Donisi's extra-point kick
was blocked, and Western led 6-0 at
5:54.

Davion Sarver's 31-yard run
sparked an eight-play, 69-yard
scoring march in the second quarter.
Haun stretched and caught Thomp­
son's 10-yard touchdown pass while
stumbling out of bounds at 5:26.

Tight end Milton Biggins dove to
catch Thompson's conversion throw
to make it 14-0.

Murray managed just 37 total
yards in the first half. Both first
downs came in the final five
minutes, one on the half's final play,
a 14-yard pass from Lewis to Con­
rad Reynolds.

The Racers' only scoring threat of
the half came after Robert Sillimon
swatted the ball out of Thompson's
hands near midfield, and Greg
Bowie recovered on Western's 31.

The Racers lost one yard in three
plays, and Anthony Cooper blocked
Chris Dill's 49-yard field-goal try.

"We just wouldn't quit on
defense," linebacker Richard Grice
said. "The shutout became really
important to us. Everybody really
came together."

Wayne McGowan led Murray
with 74 yards on nine rushes.

Western got 87 yards rushing
from Roscoe Echols and 86 more
from Sarver, a sophomore from
Bullitt Central High School.

Thompson added 50 yards, and
Western gained 282 yards on the
ground to go with 39 by the pass.

But Harbaugh gave his offense a
luke-warm stamp — "improvement
needed."

"We made a lot of mistakes on
offense, especially with penalties," Harbaugh said. Western committed
eight infractions for 87 yards. "But
our defense came through for us.
The kids showed a lot of character.
"This win will give us something
to build on, and hopefully we can
cut a lot more."

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INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS


Western uses defense to topple Murray 14-0

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A defensive unit whose mistakes had haunted Western Kentucky University football coach Jack Harbaugh a week ago turned into defensive heroes last night as the Hilltoppers blanked rival Murray State 14-0 at L.T. Smith Stadium.

Before a crowd of 12,222, Western made one short and one long first-half drive stand up as it evened its record at 1-1. Murray, a 31-27 loser to Southern Illinois a week ago, dropped to 0-2.

Western lifted its lead in the series to 27-22-7, and Harbaugh got a Gatorade bath and a brief ride on the shoulders of his players afterward.

Down 14-0 through 2½ quarters, Murray finally stirred its dormant offense (three first downs to that point).

Either that or Western’s defense was experiencing some of the same problems that enabled Austin Peay to rally from 7-0 and...

See WESTERN
Page 7, col. 1, this section

Western defense does in Murray

Continued from Page C 1

With deficits to upset the Hilltoppers. If it was the latter, Western plugged its gaps in a hurry.

Tim Bland’s 24-yard run got Murray a first down on the Western 28 on its second possession of the second half, but the Hilltoppers shoved the Racers backward six yards and forced a punt.

On its next series, Murray freshman Wayne McGowan cracked inside right end for 12, then for 46. On the latter corner the Melvin Johnson came from across the field to save a touchdown at Western’s 10.

But four times the Hilltoppers stiffened, the last when Murray quarterback Tremain Lewis slipped through the right side on a keeper from the 6, only to be stood up at the one by safeties Larry Harris and Kevin Perry.

Murray moved into Western territory twice more, but each time the Toppers got tough, and by then the Racers were out of time.

Western’s defense put Murray in a vise, not giving up a first down until 4:24 remained in the second quarter, and its offense managed one short drive and one long one to grab a 14-0 halftime lead.

The Racers went three-and-out on its first seven possessions against a Western unit much improved from its opening loss at Austin Peay a week ago.

Not until Lewis completed a desperation third-and-7 pass for 14 yards as he was being sacked on series No. 8 did Murray get a new set of downs. It passed for one other on the last play of the half.

Field position was a memory for the Racers. They started on their own 23, 39, 23, 26, 22 and 21-yard lines. But even when a Western fumble gave Murray the ball on the Hilltoppers’ 30, they ran into walls. They lost a yard in three tries and Chris Dill’s 48-yard field goal attempt was blocked.

Murray rushed for 14 yards in 10 carries and Lewis hit only 3 of 15 passes in the half. The Racers totaled 37 yards to Western’s 207, including 168 on the ground.

Taylor Collby had to punt seven times, averaging 36 yards. One of them, from his 8-yard line, was returned 10 yards to the Murray 38 by Dwayne Haun of Fairdale High School.

Western, often causing its own problems with 67 yards in first-half penalties, punched that one in. It took the Toppers six plays, with option quarterback Eddie Thompson hitting left tackle for a 14-yard run and the final 10. Steve Donisi misfired on the extra point, kicking it into the line, and Western led 6-0 with 5:54 to go in the first period.

But Murray was generally doing a nice job with a young, thin defense. Linebacker Robert Sillimon recovered a fumble, caused another on his sack of Thompson and had a tackle-for-loss.

The Toppers were finally able to uncork a big march on their seventh try, moving 69 yards in eight plays. Davion Sarver, a sophomore from Bullitt Central, triggered it with a 31-yard sprint through left tackle. Haun finished it when he stretched as far as he could to fumble a Thompson pass on a third down play from the Murray 10 in the right corner of the end zone. Thompson’s two-point conversion pass to Biggins made it 14-0.
MSU game illustrates Western's plan works

For those who appreciate granted wishes and the rarity of a plan that worked, Sept. 14, 1991, will go down as an unbelievable night at Western Kentucky University.

For those who thought to drag Western athletics out of the near desperate plight two years ago, Sept. 14, 1991, was a night of victories.

For football coach Jack Harbaugh, a nine-game losing streak is over. The only thing left on his back is his shirt because Western beat Murray State 14-0 Saturday.

Retired athletics director Jimmy Feix was on hand to see that newcomer Lou Marciani is finishing work Feix began. A crowd of 12,222 saw the game, meeting Marciani's magic number of 12,000.

Marciani pained to revive tailgating, and there was lots of partying at Downing University Center and on the L.T. Smith Stadium practice field.

Marciani worked for a homecoming atmosphere and got it. He had time to market such a vision because he has a new associate AD and professionals for facilities management, business affairs and marketing.

OK, now let's go back two years. Feix did well with what he had, but he didn't have all this new help.

Western competed against Sun Belt Conference schools, yet had an Ohio Valley Conference athletics department.

As for the Sun Belt, it began to crumble with defections and loss of prestige. It became more and more evident football would need to find a conference and give up its independent status.

Fan interest sagged, basketball attendance was down, which is a telltale barometer.

The NCAA began talking about legislation that would make it more expensive for mid-major schools to maintain a Division I program, and such legislation later passed.

Western already was in need of more money, and nobody seemed to know where it would come from. Most conceded it wouldn't come from the state. The Hilltopper Athletic Foundation did a lot of head scratching and piggy-bank shaking.

Back to the present.

The HAF recently completed a record fundraising drive, and director Gary West sees a $1 million budget in the near future.

There's hope the 1992 General Assembly will appropriate money for renovations to Diddle Arena.

Basketball fans have begun coming back in droves, and football fans came to see a team on a nine-game losing streak Saturday night.

The basketball conference situation has stabilized with the merger of the Sun Belt and American South.

And football is headed for Gateway in 1992.

There's a new athletic hall of fame, and its first 10 inductees drew their ovation at halftime Saturday. Folks like Feix, E.A. Diddle and John Oldham were honored.

It seems the credibility these inductees gave Western athletics has returned.

After a dark and seemingly hopeless time, Western again can put on a good game, not just talk it.

Marciani was understandably elated as he peered down from the Smith Stadium press box at the crowd Saturday night. "I'm really excited," Marciani said. "We've worked hard to have this, and it's all really coming together."

"It seems even a little hard to believe."

Continued...
Western's Biggins making a hit as blocking tight end

By MIKE EMBRY
Associated Press
C.J. 9-20-91

Western Kentucky's Milton Biggins may not be a big name in college football, but he has put some huge hits on opposing football teams.

While the powerful 6-foot-2, 240-pound senior from Chicago hasn't burned teams with pass receptions, he has more than made up for that by opening holes for running backs to pick up big gains.

"I pride myself as a blocker," Biggins said. "In high school and college I've played on teams that didn't throw the ball that much. ... I'd like to get the ball more because you get more publicity, but if our backs get 1,000 yards, I'm satisfied with that."

Biggins has been described by Western coach Jack Harbaugh as "the best blocking tight end in America. He's the best-kept secret in all of America."

Biggins transferred to Western after one season at Miami, where he was a member of the Hurricanes' 1987 national championship team.

"I left on good terms with the coaching staff," said Biggins, who had a dispute on an academic matter. "I had a chance to go back, but I decided ... to come here. I don't regret any decision I made."

He ended up in Bowling Green because his position coach at Miami knew former Western head coach Dave Roberts and thought "this was the best place for me."

After sitting out a season, he caught 14 passes for 173 yards and one touchdown in 1989. Last year he had six receptions for 105 yards and one score.

In two games this season, Biggins has caught two passes for 17 yards and a two-point conversion.

"The things people in the stands don't see — when he lines up and knocks a guy 10 feet off the ball and pancakes them — we see that on film Sunday after Sunday after Sunday," said Harbaugh.

"What he does for us in blocking is just as important as catching a 40-yard pass."

The Western coach thinks Biggins can play in the National Football League. And Biggins believes his blocking ability gives him an edge.

"It helps when you try out for the NFL to have a lot of passes, but catching comes easy to me," he said. "I think my blocking will put me a step above the others."

If the NFL doesn't work out, Biggins hopes to follow his mother, Marilyn Williams, into the U.S. Postal Service. She is a postal clerk in Chicago, and he would like to become a postal inspector.

Other than keeping defense linemen on their backs, Biggins' goal this year is helping the Hilltoppers improve on last season's 2-9 record. They are 1-1 entering tomorrow's home game against Morehead State.

"I have no personal goals but to get better," he said. "I want to get the program back on a winning tradition. If the team does well, then individual goals will come."
Harbaugh's focus on Eagles' defense, not offense

By JOE MEDLEY  9-20-71

Daily News Sports Editor

Over two weeks, Morehead State's vital signs have gone from 52-over-14 to 70-over-11.

But Western Kentucky coach Jack Harbaugh won't pronounce the Eagles dead despite the scores of their season-opening losses to Marshall and Samford.

"They're a better football team than they've shown in their first two games," Harbaugh said. "They've given up just 34 yards a carry on the rushing defense, and last year they were 11th in the country in rushing defense.

"They've got eight or nine of those kids back."

Since Western (1-1) anchors its offense on the rushing attack, Harbaugh sees plenty of reasons to respect Morehead during Saturday's 7 p.m. contest in L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field.

In losses to Marshall and Samford, Coach Cole Proctor's Eagles have been poached by the pass, giving up over 340 yards game.

"They've run into some real hot quarterbacks," Harbaugh said. "Then there were times when they'd have pressure, only to see the quarterback complete a bomb on them."

"But the teams they've played primarily pass, and we base our offense around the run."

And that rushing attack won't revolve around starting quarterback Eddie Thompson. Thompson will miss the game with a twisted ankle, giving way to sophomore Jairus Malcome. Like Thompson, Malcome is an option quarterback.

"I'm confident he'll go in and play a good game," Harbaugh said. And if Malcome can't get the option to work, senior Brian Browning may see expanded time.

Browning, a drop-back passer who has seen spot time this season, may have his chance to burn Morehead's selfish passing defense.

"We've expanded Brian's offense this week," Harbaugh said. "He'll have much more to work with than he did in the first two games."

Western is coming off a 14-0 win over Murray State to end a nine-game losing streak. The Hilltoppers put up 282 rushing yards against Murray.

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on Eagles' defense, not scores

OE MEDLEY

The tailback tandem of Roscoe Echols and Davion Sarver tagged up for 170 of those yards and will be called on again against Morehead.

"We're going to stick with what we do well," Harbaugh said. "We're a running team."

The Eagles haven't had much choice but to die by the pass. Steven Donato and Jeff King have split time, throwing for 299 yards and two touchdowns between them.

Stats and stuff

- Western's Chris Gable is averaging 36.3 yards a punt. His average includes a 2-yarder at Austin Peay. He's also blasted a 53-yarder.

- Herb Davis gets 22.2 yards a kickoff return, and Dwayne Ham goes for nine yards a punt return.

- Western has outgained its opponents 692 yards to 502 but has twice as many penalties (18) for 149 yards. Western's defense has yet to yield a first-half point.

- Linebacker Richard Grice leads all tacklers with 23 stops. Defensive backs Larry Harris and Kevin Perry each have 18. Linebacker Richy Nail has 16, and linebacker David Bledsoe has 15.
It.

Morehead-Western: After two weeks of watching explosive opposing passers, Morehead State runs into an option team tonight. Is that good?

"I know they're looking for a team like us that doesn't throw the ball," Western Kentucky (1-1) coach Jack Harbaugh said about Morehead, which lost 22-14 to Samford and 70-11 to Marshall.

"I'd like to see a dropback quarterback who's slow and immobile," countered Morehead defensive coordinator Rex Ryan. "Western will be a great challenge."

Most interesting, perhaps, is what Harbaugh calls the "Battle of the Bear." The Eagles use the blitzing, gambling "46" defense made fa-
Malcome, Browning shine as Tops maul Morehead

By JOE MEDLEY  9-22-91
Daily News Sports Editor

Brian Browning passed. Jairus Malcome ran. Western Kentucky scored in bundles and took your time healing, Eddie Thompson.

As Thompson nursed a twisted ankle Saturday night, Western's offense erupted for 27 first-half points on the way to a 48-21 besting of Morehead State before 8,180 fans in L.T. Smith Stadium.

Western's starting quarterback, Thompson injured his ankle in last week's 14-0 win over Murray State. He finished the Murray game, but he didn't practice last week or dress Saturday.

So Malcome and Browning each directed two first-half scoring drives, leading a team that scored 28 points in two games to 27 in one half.

A sophomore option specialist, Malcome rushed for 131 yards, setting a Western single-game record for a quarterback. He broke Thompson's 2-week-old mark of 118 yards in an 18-14 loss at Austin Peay.

Malcome scrambled 70 yards for a touchdown at 6:35 of the third quarter. "I was a little nervous coming in," Malcome said, "but I kept my head up because the starter was out, and the team needed me."

Browning, a senior passer from Brownsville, completed 6 of 10 passes for 109 yards in his customary relief role. His numbers were his best this season.

"I got a handful of completions quick, and I got some confidence," Browning said, "They were playing the kind of defense that allowed me to do that. I saw a lot of man-to-man coverage."

Western coach Jack Harbaugh gave his quarterbacks high marks. "They both came in and did their thing," he said. "Jaimie started out a little nervous, but we got a fast start, he got confident and did a good job of executing the offense."

"Brian got on a roll and made a lot of good checks at the line of scrimmage." The win was Western's second in a row after the loss at Austin Peay. Morehead is 0-3.

Western racked up a season-best 514 yards total offense, the highest total since a 573-yard outburst in a 61-14 thumping of Tennessee Tech on Oct. 21, 1989.

Malcome carried 389 yards rushing Saturday, but the Hilltoppers hardly grinded out their scoring drives.

A 36-yard Roscoe Echols run and Malcome's 26-yarder set up the first score, Malcome's 6-yard option run at 12:21 of the first quarter. The drive went 68 yards on four plays.

Western also got a 46-yard touchdown run from seldom-used tailback Dion Bryant to make it 14-0; Davion Sarver's 23-yard touchdown jaunt in the fourth quarter; and Malcome's 70-yard outburst.

"The line did a heck of a job, and when I got out to the side, it was just me and (senior tight end) Milton Biggins," Malcome said. "Milton made a beautiful block, and that let

WESTERN TIGHT END Milton Biggins (86) tries to elude Morehead State defensive back Jerod Thomas on Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium. WKU won 48-21 for its second win in as many games. The Hilltopps 2-1, shutout Murray State 14-0 last Saturday.
Browning shine at Morehead

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“The line did a heck of a job, and when I got out to the side, it was just me and (senior tight end) Milton Biggins,” Malcome said. “Milton made a beautiful block, and that let me go 70 yards.”

Every Western scoring drive featured a play that gained better than 20 yards.

Senior tailback Herb Davis hit paydirt from 8 and 2 yards out, and Echols got on the board on an 11-yarder.

“They loosened us up early, then (Browning) came in there and did a nice job of finishing the first half,” Morehead coach Cole Proctor said. “We got behind, and then we had guys trying to make plays they shouldn’t try to make.

“Instead of leaking at one spot, we were leaking at five.”

Morehead had 283 yards total offense.

Steve Donato’s 24-yard pass to Anthony White on a third-down and-23 play with 14 seconds left in the first half made it 27-7 at halftime.

The Eagles scored twice in the fourth quarter against mostly second-unit Hilltoppers.

Western’s two-straight wins follow a nine-game losing streak.

“We really needed a game like this,” Harbaugh said.

Said Malcome, “All the bad feelings from the losing streak are in the closet now.”
Toppers cruising after opening Austin Peay loss

Will the real Hilltoppers please stand up?

In three weeks of football, Western Kentucky has gone from a team that couldn't stop lowly Austin Peay in the second half to a team that shutout Murray State.

Then, without injured starting quarterback Eddie Thompson, Western went from a defensive team to a high-scoring machine in Saturday's 48-21 win over Morehead State.

This after scoring a combined 28 points in the previous two games.

The Tops have gone from losers, to big winners in three weeks.

Then there are personnel matters. Thompson shined against Austin Peay and Murray State, but Jairus Malcome set a single-game school rushing record for quarterbacks with 134 yards against Morehead.

And just how many running backs does Coach Jack Harbaugh have?

Roscoe Echols averaged 110 yards in the first two games, but Davion Sarver broke out for 86 against Murray. Then against Morehead, Dion Bryant broke a 46-yard touchdown run, and Herb Davis scored twice.

Eight running backs carried the ball against Morehead.

Western is off to a 2-1 start with the option, but Browning subs in with a pro-set passing attack — saw its best results against Morehead.

Western gained 514 total yards 369 rushing and a season-best 144 passing. Browning hit on 6 of 10 passes for 109 yards.

"It was nice for the offense to get the reward of scoring," Browning said. "But we didn't execute well at times, and there were too many penalties."

Ah, penalties. Now there's a consistency. Western committed 14 infractions for 149 yards against Morehead. The Tops committed 18 penalties against Murray and Austin Peay, and Harbaugh said that was too many.

"We as a coaching staff will have to do something to correct that," Harbaugh said.

The coaches will have two weeks to do it before seventh-ranked Middle Tennessee State comes to town.

"We're getting ready to play Eastern and Middle, and Middle has to come to our house," Harbaugh said. "The exhibition season is over."

As Western heads into its "real season," the Toppers have shown us a lot of different looks.
Tops use several backs, rank fifth in rushing offense

First, we thought Herb Davis was it.
Then, we found out it was Roscoe Echols.
What's this? Davion Sarver can do it.
Then Dion Bryant — who's that? — did his thing.
And just when we were mildly confused, Davis started doing it.
Gees, Western Kentucky sure has a lot of running backs — enough to rank the Hilltoppers' rushing attack fifth in the nation among Division I-AA teams at 314 yards a game.

Coming into spring practice, Western coach Jack Harbaugh thought Davis would be the feature ball carrier in the new option attack. A senior, Davis was the top returning rusher with 657 yards in 1990.
Harbaugh brooded over Davis' work habits and running style, so Echols, a converted defensive back, got the call.

Indeed, Echols is the leading rusher after three games this season. The junior from Bowling Green High School who missed his freshman year under Proposition 48 guidelines has 282 yards.

But then Sarver, a sophomore who walked on out of Bullitt Central, has shown flashes of — well — flash. He has 114 yards and goes a hefty 8.8 a carry.

Then Bryant, who sat out in 1990 as a Prop. 48, broke loose for a 45-yard touchdown early in Saturday's 48-21 win over Morehead State.

And, again, there's Davis, who seems to be responding to Harbaugh's challenge. He scored two touchdowns against Morehead. He's dialing in 21.5 yards a kickoff return.

Among them, Western's tailbacks have five touchdowns.

"What it shows is that we've got a lot of exciting young kids," Harbaugh said.
It also shows how much can change in a year.

Eschols played defense until a Western dean, Dr. Carl Martray, recommended him to Harbaugh as a tailback. Martray had watched Echols run at Bowling Green High.

Sarver came to Western the hard way.

Continued On Page 5
Column 4, This Section

ROSCOE ECHOLS eludes a Morehead State tackler during Saturday's 48-21 Western Kentucky win at L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field. A Bowling Green High School product, Echols leads Western with 282 rushing yards in three games. But several tailbacks have contributed this season, and Western ranks fifth in Division I-AA in rushing offense.
Hilltoppers 0/11
Continued From Page 1-B

"We had recruited him. But when the time came for him to sign, we kind of ran out of scholarship money," Harbaugh said. "So he came here and paid his own way as a freshman.

"We told him if he showed us something as a walk-on, we'd get him some aid. He's done such a good job that he's worked his way up on the depth chart pretty quick.

"Harbaugh's son John, an assistant coach at the University of Cincinnati, told him of Bryant, a Cincinnati native. "John said they couldn't take him and that he'd be a great find for us," Jack Harbaugh said.

Davis is working his way back into the picture. He lost the starting job to Echols because Echols proved the better inside runner.

But Davis has used his new kick-returning role to boost his position on the backfield depth chart. "He really excited us with the way he'd bust it up inside there on the kickoffs," Harbaugh said. "He's really beginning to show us something, and the more he improves, the more reps he'll get."

Echols still holds the starting tailback slot as Western (2-1) prepares for an Oct. 5 home game with Middle Tennessee State. But with the depth Harbaugh has found at the position, Echols will have to fight to keep his spot.

Harbaugh said, "It's really a day-to-day thing."

Help from option quarterbacks Jairus Malcome and Eddie Thompson has boosted Western to its spot in this week's NCAA statistics. Virginia Military Institute leads the way with 405.3 yards a game.

In his first start, Malcome set Western's single-game rushing record for a quarterback with 131 yards against Morehead. He started ahead of the injured Thompson, who held the record for two weeks after a 118-yard outburst at Austin Peay. Thompson averaged 84 yards in Western's first two games.

Notables

— Thompson is still hobbled by the ankle injury he suffered two weeks ago in a 14-0 win over Murray State. "He's still limping around," Harbaugh said. As for Thompson's status for the Middle game, Harbaugh said, "Right now, I'm skeptical."

— Western ranks 18th in the nation in total defense, giving up 261 yards a game and just 3.9 a play. Linebacker Richard Grice leads the way with 29 tackles.

— Chris Gable continues to punt well, hitting for 37.4-yards a kick. For those just tuning in, his average includes a 2-yard shank at Austin Peay. He punted consistently in the 40-yard range against Murray and Morehead.

— Going into fall practice, Harbaugh worried about finding a competent punter. Todd Davis graduated, and signee Ricky Boeckman of Louisville went the way of Proposition 48.

— "Chris has been a pleasant surprise," Harbaugh said about the junior transfer from Campbellsville College. "You can tell he's getting a lot more confidence."
Harbaugh’s message no different: just do it

By JOE MEDLEY 10-1-91
Daily News Sports Editor

It was about this time last year when Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh told his team to just do it, and it just didn’t.

A year later, the message is the same.

Early last season, Western was off to a 2-0 start and about to take up a gauntlet of Division I-AA giants — Middle Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky and Youngstown State in successive weeks.

Harbaugh called for the Hilltoppers to rise to the level of I-AA’s best. Western lost all three and never recaptured its early season form, finishing 2-8.

A year later, Western is 2-1 with Middle and Eastern looming. Harbaugh says the upcoming gutcheck is Just Do It, the sequel.

“The only thing we’re telling them differently is hopefully to do a better job this time,” Harbaugh said.

“You can’t paint it any other way. We’re a program moving to a different level of I-AA. We’re getting to play teams ranked in the top 15 in the country. If we purport to be a I-AA team on that level, we’ve got to beat those teams.

“Last year we talked a good game and didn’t do it. This year, it’s a different team with a different personality, and we’ve got to get it done.”

Harbaugh has a few more factors working in his favor this season.

Western hasn’t played in two weeks. After beating Morehead State 48-21 Sept. 21, the Hilltoppers enjoyed an open date Sept. 28.

Last season, a young Western team had no open date anywhere near its three-week run against I-AA’s best. Harbaugh said the time to prepare for Middle Tennessee has been invaluable to a team that’s still young and learning a new offensive system.

“We’re a team with a new option offense and some new looks on defense, and we’ve gotten to look at it and see what we want to do differently,” Harbaugh said. “And we’ve been getting back to fundamentals. They’ve had a chance to just block and tackle against themselves, and that’s been helpful.

“Had we been an older team that’s been doing the same things for four years, it (the week off) wouldn’t have been so good for us.”

Western will also get to play Middle at home this season. Last season, Western opened its three-week quest to join the best at Middle.

“We’re beginning this run hopefully for the I-AA playoffs, and we’re playing in our own stadium,” Harbaugh said. “They have to come to our house, play before our own crowd and get a little dirty.”

There’s more good news for the Hilltoppers.

Starting quarterback Eddie Thompson is taking reps in practice. He’s wearing a calf-high support for the ankle he twisted in a 14-0 win over Murray State on Sept. 14, but he’s running well.

“He’s healthy,” Harbaugh said. “He practiced Monday and Tuesday, and he’s looking really good.”

But will Thompson start?

WESTERN QUARTERBACK Eddie Thompson (8) has recovered from a twisted ankle and will be available for Saturday’s Middle Tennessee game at L.T. Smith Stadium/Peix Field. Coach Jack Harbaugh, who set school record for 131 rushing yards, said his team is ready to play Middle.

Harbaugh hasn’t decided whether Thompson or Jairus Malcome will play. Western will do line backer Marcus down with a leg injury. Malcome led the team in tackles.

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But will Thompson start?
Medley 10-2-97

LARRY MOORE

Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh told his team to do it, and it just didn't.

Later, the message is the same.

Harbaugh has one more factor in his favor this season.

He hasn't played in two weeks.

Western lost all three and recaptured its early season finishing 2-8.

Later, Western is 2-1 with Eastern looming.

This year, it's different.

The only thing we're telling differently is hopefully to do it this time," Harbaugh said.

"We're a program moving to a higher level of I-AA. We're getting teams ranked in the top 10 for the first time in our history. If we purport to be an I-AA team on that level, we've got to get back there.

Last year we talked a good game and didn't do it. This year, it's different.

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Later, Western is 2-1 with Eastern looming.

"We're a team with a new option offense, and we've gotta look at it and see what we want to do differently," Harbaugh said.

"We're a program moving to a higher level of I-AA. We're getting teams ranked in the top 10 for the first time in our history. If we purport to be an I-AA team on that level, we've got to get back there."

But will Thompson start?

Harbaugh hasn't decided between Thompson and Jairus "Mico" Malcome, who set a single-game school record for quarterbacks with 131 rushing yards against Morehead.

"They have to come to our house, play before our own crowd and get a little dirty."

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"Had we been an older team that's been doing the same things for four years, it (the week off) wouldn't have been so good for us.

Western will also get to play Middle at home this season. Last season, Western opened its three-week quest to join the best at Middle.

"We're beginning this run hopefully for the I-AA playoffs, and we're playing in our own stadium," Harbaugh said.

"They have to come to our house, play before our own crowd and get a little dirty."

"There's more good news for the Hilltoppers."

Starting quarterback Eddie Thompson is taking reps in practice.

"He's healthy," Harbaugh said.

"He practiced Monday and Tuesday, and he's looking really good."

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But will Thompson start?
WKU's Moore has

By JOE MEDLEY /0 - 3 -97 / Daily News Sports Editor

Western Kentucky sports information director Paul Just's heart rate accelerates over players with flashy names. Names with odd or poetic qualities sell well as All-Americans.

One of Just's favorite names on Western's football team is Moses Moore, a walk-on freshman from Boone County who's well on his way to All-American status.

Moses Moore, 6-foot-1, 155 pounds, has won a starting job in Western's defensive backfield. Western coach Jack Harbaugh compares Moore to some of the best defensive backs he's coached.

"At Michigan, we had Dwight Hicks, who went on to play for the 49ers, and Mike Hardin, who went to the Raiders, and Moses reminds me a lot of them," Harbaugh said. "He's not as big, but he has the same kind of athleticism."

Moore was not recruited out of high school. He didn't play football until his senior year.

"Some friends of mine kept trying to get me to play, and I finally gave in," Moore said. "Moses started for Boone County as a senior, but he had no press clippings. He spent the off-season comparing college tuitions, not athletic scholarships."

"I didn't even know about until John Alford, a kid we recruited out of Boone County, introduced to him when the fresh reported," Harbaugh said. "Moses came out the first four with the freshmen and just knocked out eyes out."

"Then when the varsity came in, he stepped it up a notch. We knew there was something special about him, and he'd have an opportunity to contribute to the program right away." Harbaugh envisions Moore as a free safety.

"He has that ability to break on the ball, reach the highest point of his jump at just the right time and get the interception," Harbaugh said. "You just can't teach that."

And don't be fooled by Moore's size, Harbaugh said. "He doesn't weight much, but he's a tough kid."

Moore broke into the starting lineup in a 14-0 win over Murray State on Sept. 14. Then in a 48-21 win over Morehead State a week later, he returned his first career interception 33 yards before being knocked out of bounds.

Moore's not swept away with his sudden rise as a football player. He says he enjoys playing, but the game serves a purpose.

"I'm not really thinking about going on and becoming a pro player," he said. "I just want to come here, get a scholarship, get my degree and settle down some day."

He'll have no problem getting a scholarship.

"We'll get him one for the spring," Harbaugh said. "Here's a great player who just came to us. We don't have to spend a dime or go out any mileage recruiting him."

Moore isn't the only true freshman to step up. Danny Davis, a defensive lineman from Fort Knox, is battling senior Tony Gamer for playing time. Gamer has 15 tackles, and Davis has 10.

"Danny has exceeded expectations we had for him," Harbaugh said. "He's got a big body, but he's another good athlete. He's vying for a starting position."

All-American name, ability
Harbaugh sees Middle as Toppers' big chance

By JOE MEDLEY

Daily News Sports Editor

It's been a season of breakthroughs for Coach Jack Harbaugh and Western Kentucky University's football program. The Hilltoppers have a chance for a major coup Saturday night.

Western, 2-1, will play host to 12th-ranked Middle Tennessee (2-1) in what Harbaugh feels is Western's best opportunity to return to the list of Division I-AA's best.

So far this season, the Hilltoppers have ended a nine-game losing streak and cranked up their new option offense for 48 points against Morehead State's 21 on Sept. 23. A defense that skipped bending for breaking last season posted a shutout in a 14-0 win over Murray State on Sept. 14.

Now Western can go from a fading program to one of I-AA's best in just three weeks.

"We're playing one of the premier programs in I-AA, and we've got them right here at our house," Harbaugh said, referring to L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field. "If we're going to move up to that next level, we've got to beat teams like Middle Tennessee."

Middle Tennessee, which started Western's losing streak with a 20-6 win in Murfreesboro, Tenn., last season, has lived up to its reputation this season. The Blue Raiders' only loss came by a 17-7 count at second-ranked Eastern Kentucky.

Featuring the rushing of 1990 All-American Joe Campbell and passing of freshman quarterback Kelly Holcomb, MTSU is coming off a 35-3 drubbing of Murray State.

Campbell has riddled Western before, going for 204 yards on 35 carries against the Hilltoppers last season. He has 353 yards this season.

"He's not really big, but he's very, very quick," Harbaugh said. "You look at him on film, and he can stop on a dime."

Holcomb is coming off a 14-for-20, 235-yard passing performance against Murray.

"They're looking to pass a little more than they have in the past with him in there," Harbaugh said. "He's a tall kid (6-foot-3) who has a nice touch, and he's got a lot of poise for a freshman."

MTSU is averaging 415 yards total offense a game while giving up a meager 128 on the ground. Western will test MTSU's defense with the fifth-ranked rushing offense in I-AA. The Hilltoppers run for 314 yards a game.

Western will do it with either junior quarterback Eddie Thompson, who's back from an ankle injury suffered in the Murray game, or sophomore Jairus Malcome.

Though Thompson is healthy, there was some question whether he would start. Sophomore Jairus Malcome broke Western's single-game record for quarterbacks with 131 yards rushing against Morehead.

Harbaugh said early today he hadn't made a decision. "I'm going to meet with Darryl (Drake, the offensive coordinator) today and see what he thinks."

Roscoe Echols leads all Western runners with 282 yards in three starts.

Kickoff for Saturday's game is 7 p.m., and Harbaugh is making promises.

"We are going to come after them," he said. "We're going to attack them on defense and put some pressure on that freshman quarterback, so they'd better be ready.

"This is a big opportunity for us. This is what it's all about."

Stats and stuff

- Western outgains its opponents 402 yards to 262.
- The Hilltoppers have 32 penalties for 298 yards, while their opponents have 20 for 187.
sees Middle big chance

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"It's not really big, but he's very quick," Harbaugh said. "Look at him on film, and he's got a dime." Campbell is coming off a 14-for- 5-yard passing performance against Murray.

They're looking to pass a little more this season than they have in the past with Eddie Thompson back in there," Harbaugh said. "He's a tall kid (6-foot-3) who has a lot of speed, and he's got a lot of passing ability for a freshman." Harbaugh said Thompson is healthy.

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This is a big opportunity for us. This is what it's all about."
Despite his big numbers, Thompson takes blame

By JOE MEDLEY 1 0-6-97
Daily News Sports Editor

Eddie Thompson did everything but beat the 12th-ranked team in America, so he naturally absorbed the blame when Western Kentucky didn't.

"I take all the blame. It's my fault we didn't win this game," Western's junior quarterback said after a 23-21 loss to Middle Tennessee on Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field. "I feel bad for my teammates."

It would seem Thompson didn't deserve such self abuse.

He rambled 29 yards for a touchdown and scored a two-point conversion with 2:07 to play to put the Hilltoppers ahead 21-20, only to see Middle march to Garih Petrilli's game-winning 36-yard field goal with seven seconds left.

Thompson, who replaced sophomore Jairus Malcome in the first quarter when Malcome twisted an ankle, broke Western's single-game record for quarterback with 135 yards rushing.

But in a riveting game decided by a field goal, an emotional player like Thompson found one bad play.

"I threw the interception," he said referring to Andre Boykin's grab of a tipped pass in the third quarter. The play led to Petrilli's 34-yard field goal to give Middle a 20-13 lead. "I blew a big opportunity for us."

Thompson would have a hard

day selling that to 8,068 fans and Coach Jack Harbaugh, who knows what went wrong as Middle (3-1) marched 45 yards for the winning score.

Western could mount no pass rush on freshman quarterback Kelly Holcomb, who completed 6 of 8 passes in the decisive drive. Holcomb hit five straight passes against an array of defenses.

"We started with a zone coverage for the first 25 yards, and he worked well against that," Harbaugh said. "Then we tried to pressure him and couldn't."

"You've got to give the kid a lot of credit. He's a true freshman, and he really pulled it off."

Holcomb handed Western a loss in a game that saw the Hilltoppers (2-2) rally from a seven-point deficit twice.

Middle's Walter Dunson broke free for a 73-yard return of the second-half kickoff, and Petrilli put the Blue Raiders up 14-7.

But Western answered with a 10-play, 74-yard drive leading to fullback Robert Jackson's 3-yard touchdown plunge. Steve Donisi missed the kick to leave Western within 14-13 at 11:02 of the third

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quarter.
Petrilli added a pair of field goals to put MTSU up 20-13, and the Blue Raiders held the Hilltoppers on fourth down and six at Middle's 12-yard line with 4:05 to play.
But Western forced a Blue Raider punt, and Thompson climax'd a two-play, 41-yard drive with his 29-yard run.
With Western's bench kneeling, Thompson ran right on an option play and scored the two-point conversion to put the Hilltoppers up 21-20 at 2:07.
"Their defender guessed the pitch, so I just kept it and ran it in," Thompson said.
"Trying to stop their quarterbacks is like trying to eat jello with chopsticks," MTSU coach Boots Donnelly said. "We knew they'd hurt us with the option, but we didn't think they'd hurt us that bad."
Western gained 410 total yards, with 338 coming on the ground. Roscoe Echols led the Hilltoppers with 142 yards on 18 carries.
Echols' 23-yard run keyed the Hilltoppers' game-opening, 70-yard drive that led to Malcome's 7-yard touchdown pass to Milton Biggins. Donisi made it 7-0.
The Blue Raiders broke even in the second quarter with a 52-yard scoring drive, featuring Vince Parks' dramatic 39-yard pass reception at the 1-yard line. Parks and Western safety Kevin Perry battled for Holcomb's tipped pass, and Parks hauled it in while falling.
Tailback Joe Campbell dived in for the score two plays later, and kicker Joel Alsobrook tied the game at 11:11 of the second quarter.
Campbell led all rushers with 153 yards, and Holcomb completed 16 of 31 passes for 190 of the Blue Raiders' 353 total yards.
"He's a pretty solid kid," Donnelly said. "He won't do anything to beat himself out there."
Harbaugh says Thompson did nothing to shame himself.
"You don't believe a word Eddie says. It's not his fault," Harbaugh said. "He's a quality young man, and he played a great game."
Harbaugh also praised the Hilltoppers.
"We're a young team who got down and responded two or three times," Harbaugh said. "I love these guys. They have a lot of character, and they're going to get nothing but better."
Middle scores in closing

By DAVE KOERNER
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Just when it looked as though Western Kentucky University had another football victory last night, the foot of Middle Tennessee State’s Garth Petrilli got in the way.

With three seconds left, Petrilli kicked a 33-yard field goal to lift Middle to a 23-21 victory before a breathless LT Smith Stadium crowd of 8,068. It was Petrilli’s third field goal in the fourth quarter.

Just moments earlier, with 2:07 remaining, Western quarterback Joe Campbell darted 29 yards around left end to bring the Hilltoppers within 20-19. Then he showed the same move to the right side, sprinting into the end zone for the two-point conversion that gave Western a 21-20 lead.

But Middle (3-1) then drove 55 yards to win the game.

The victory gives Middle a 29-27-1 edge in the series. Western, now 2-2, had a two-game winning streak snapped. The Hilltoppers will visit Eastern Kentucky next Saturday.

Prior to Petrilli and Thompson taking center stage, the hero had been Middle’s Walter Dunson.

As a backup to All-American tailback Joe Campbell, Dunson often turns to the special teams to strut his stuff. Last night was a good example of that as the junior turned in two highlights-film plays.

He blocked a first-quarter punt that Middle failed to capitalize on after gaining possession on the Western 35-yard line. But the apparent back-breaker came when Dunson returned the second-half kickoff 83 yards for a touchdown and Middle’s first lead, 14-7.

Western countered three minutes later with Robert Jackson’s 3-yard touchdown run, but Steve Donisi’s point-after kick was wide right.

Middle tacked on a pair of fourth-quarter field goals by Garth Petrilli, from 36 and 34 yards.

The second field goal was set up when free safety Andre Boykin intercepted quarterback Eddie Thompson’s pass on the Western 46.

Campbell, who ran for 1,327 yards last season, sprinted 19 yards into the end zone, but the touch-

seconds to edge Western 23-21

Falken was nullified by a holding penalty. The Blue Raiders then settled for the field goal with 8:13 remaining.

Western had grabbed a 7-0 lead less than four minutes into the game after tight end Milton Biggins caught a 7-yard touchdown throw from Jairus Malcome.

The big play in the 70-yard drive came when Echols skipped right end for 23 yards to the Western 46. He broke outside as he had tried to run through the center of the line but was momentarily stopped by a Middle defender.

The Blue Raiders then had a chance to gain a tie late in the first quarter when Dunson blocked Chris Gable’s punt, with O. J. Smith recovering on the Western 35. But Middle was held on downs, gaining only 2 yards.

Middle, however, eventually managed the 7-7 tie at 11:11 in the second quarter on Joe Campbell’s anticlimactic 1-yard touchdown dive.

The highlight of the 52-yard drive was a leaping, acrobatic 39-yard catch to the Western 1 by split end Vince Parks, who was well-covered on the play by cornerback Melvin Johnson.

On the previous play, freshman quarterback Kelly Holcomb completed a 15-yard pass to flanker Greg James.

Western threatened again late in the first half, driving to the Middle 34. But the drive died when Blue Raiders guard Randy Houston recovered a fumble on a pitchout.

Middle then moved to the Western 31, but Garth Petrilli was wide left on a 48-yard field-goal attempt as time expired.

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Rough weekend all around for WKU sports

Western Kentucky University's football players weren't the only Hilltoppers to take their lumps this weekend.

The soccer team dropped its second game in a row, 4-1 at Southern Illinois-Edwardsville. Western's only score came on a second-half penalty kick by Mike Henderson. The soccer team (6-5-0) plays next at 3 p.m. Saturday at Smith Stadium against Jacksonville.

The Volley Tops were beaten at Kentucky on Saturday night 15-2, 15-4, 11-15, 15-2. Western slipped to 9-10. The volleyball team's game in Diddle Arena on Tuesday was canceled when Tennessee-Chattanooga team officials said it would not be making the trip because of budget cuts.

Meanwhile, the men's golf team finished 16th out of 18 teams at the Eastern Kentucky University Intercollegiate tournament in Richmond. Bryan Baysinger's 158 was Western's top individual score.
Harbaugh will soon learn how far Tops have come

As Jack Harbaugh shook off one of the most bitterly disappointing losses of his football-coaching career, Jimmy Feix spied his mending words.

"The program's sure come a long way," Feix, the former Western Kentucky University athletics director, told the coach he hired after Saturday's 23-21 loss to 12th-ranked Middle Tennessee State.

Harbaugh's face showed doubt, and Feix found more words.

"Last year the defense wouldn't have stopped them so many times," Feix said.

Western's defense responded several times to Middle's challenges.

When MTSU blocked a punt and got the ball deep in Western's territory in the first half, the Hilltoppers allowed no points.

And with the fourth quarter winding down and Western down 20-13, the defense held again. The Hilltoppers got the ball back, scored and got a two-point conversion to lead 21-20 with 2:17 to play.

But Middle drove for a game-winning field goal, and now Harbaugh's left to wonder how far Western has come since its 2-8 finish in 1990.

What Western did against Middle Tennessee can be called progress. Last season, it wouldn't have come back to take the lead. The defense would have kindly stepped aside and given up.

The Hilltoppers of a year ago gave up after early-season losses to Middle, Eastern Kentucky and Youngstown State and went on to lose five more.

So when Harbaugh evaluates progress, he'll have to see how his team responds to a loss like Saturday's.

When his emotions calmed and his philosophical side kicked in, Harbaugh felt he had many reasons to continue believing in this team.

"We were a young team up against a ranked, senior-oriented team," he said. "Many times a young team will just pack it in in a situation like this. But our kids responded. They fought back and took the lead.

"We showed a lot of character tonight, and we're going to build on this. These kids are going to win their share of games if they continue to show the kind of character they showed tonight."

What's so special?

If Western is to win its share of games, its special teams need to get a little more special.

Middle scored 17 points against Western's special units, including Walter Dunston's 83-yard kickoff return to start the second half.

Western also suffered a blocked punt and missed an extra-point kick, forcing Harbaugh to go for a two-point conversion to take the lead later.

"Special teams have been a problem for us, and it looked like we were getting better," Harbaugh said.

"But tonight we showed we've got some work to do on it again."

Medical report

Milton Biggins and Jarius "Meco" Malcome are OK.

Malcome, a sophomore quarterback, twisted an ankle in the first quarter Saturday and didn't play the rest of the game.

Biggins, a senior All-America candidate at tight end, went down after a third-quarter pass reception and didn't return.

"Meco is fine," Harbaugh said. "He just needs a week to heal. "Milton got speared in the back. But it looks like he'll be OK, too."

MILTON BIGGINS was speared in the back during Saturday's 23-21 loss to Middle Tennessee State at L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field. But Western Kentucky University coach Jack Harbaugh said the senior tight end, an All-American candidate, was not injured seriously.
Western's spy in the sky

Middle Tennessee football coach Boots Donnelly said his team was aware Western Kentucky had extra help during last Saturday's game in Bowling Green but was powerless to stop it. Western coach Jack Harbaugh said it was no big deal.

The extra help was James J. Jewell, a former Middle Tennessee scout-team quarterback who now is a walk-on at Western. Using binoculars from the press box, Jewell was able to steal Middle Tennessee's hand signals on the sidelines and tell Western's coaches whether the Blue Raiders were going to run or pass.

Middle Tennessee, which won 23-21, didn't plan a protest, and officials of the Ohio Valley Conference, of which Middle is a member, said they wouldn't get involved unless Middle asked them to.
EKY-WKU series to be interrupted next season

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

As Eastern Kentucky University football coach Roy Kidd neared the end of a post-game speech filled with tributes about his team's 10-6 victory over Georgia Southern last Saturday, he paused and added, "But don't forget the Hilltoppers are coming in next."

As the word "Hilltoppers" left his mouth, a roar all but drowned out the rest of the sentence. Was it a sign that the mere mention of Western Kentucky automatically gets a player's blood boiling? Not really.

"It doesn't seem right; it doesn't make sense," said Kidd, who quarterbacked Eastern in the 1950s and has been a coach there since 1963.

The Eastern-Western game still carries plenty of voltage, particularly for alumni. "These kinds of games are what college football is all about," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. "It's hard for us to justify our presence if we say we're only here for 100 football players. We're here for 15,000 students, alumni who come back, the townspeople. That's what an Eastern-Western game is for."

"And it means a lot financially," said Jimmy Feix, the former Western athletics director who competed against the Colonels and Kidd both as a coach and player. "I hate to see any lapse. I'm concerned that it doesn't get to be a habit."

It won't become a habit. Eastern and Western quickly penciled in games from 1993 through 2000. OVC expansion plans and Western's move to the Conference next season. From then on, the last eight Saturdays will be filled with OVC games.

Meanwhile, Eastern was conditionally accepted for admission into the Gateway Conference. In an effort to keep the Eastern-Western series going — there's still no deal yet — Eastern will have a home-and-home series with the Hilltoppers going forward.

In fact, four of the eight will be played in the 1993 season.

"We were reluctant to (meet the opener), but it was the only way we could get it done," Harbaugh said. "So we bit the bullet."

Harbaugh said his team hasn't generated its traditional enthusiasm for the Eastern game. "It's just Eastern. We're trying to get it back." "We always emphasize the conference," Kidd explained. "That's how you're sure of getting into the playoffs. But Western is like some one you know real well. If you're competitive, you want to beat them in pingpong or whatever."

NOTES — Western quarterback Jairus Malcome will miss the Eastern game with a twisted ankle. He hurt it on the first play of the second overtime against Middle Tennessee after taking the Hilltoppers to a touchdown on the final Eddie Thompson, who started Western's first two games and replaced Malcome Saturday, will be at the helm.

For Eastern, Saturday's game with two-time defending national champion Georgia Southern ended a two-game series that won't be resumed in the foreseeable future. But EKYU will have a home-and-home set with 10th-ranked Eastern Tennessee in 1992 and 93, and Kidd said he talked yesterday morning with top-ranked Nevada-Reno which wants EKYU (4-1, ranked third) to play there next year.
Donnelly’s headline hunt unfortunate

Warning:
The following 16 column inches are going to be wasted. They’ll be wasted because some football coach has raised some stink about some lot of nothing.

In case you haven’t heard the story of J.J.-Gate, it’s like this: Middle Tennessee coach Boots Donnelly finds out J.J. Jewell, a former Blue Raider quarterback from Warren Central High School who transferred to Western Kentucky, sat in the press box for Saturday’s Western-Middle game in L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field.

Jewell, who spent a year on Middle’s scout team before walking on at Western in the fall, used binoculars to steal signals from Middle’s bench. Thanks to J.J., Western’s coaches knew when Middle’s coaches signalled pass or run.

Perhaps that was an advantage, provided Middle didn’t execute its plays against Western’s “Bear” defense, a fixed alignment the Hilltoppers used most of the game. It probably helped when Middle quarterback Kelly Holcomb didn’t change the play at the line of scrimmage, which Western coach Jack Harbaugh says happened “about 55 percent of the time.”

J.J. didn’t help Western win the game. Middle won 23-21 on a field goal with seven seconds to play.

The Blue Raiders got credit for a tough, road win against a team that had won two straight games at home. Middle came into the game ranked 12th, and a peak at this week’s poll shows Boots’ boys at ninth.

And, psst, don’t tell anyone: there’s no rule against what Western did. Though Jewell is sitting out his transfer year, he can practice, watch Boots through binoculars and even talk to his coaches.

There’s a rule in Middle’s Ohio Valley Conference that keeps one league school from accepting another’s transfer, but Western left the OVC in 1982.

There’s not even a gentlemen’s code among coaches regarding Western’s use of Jewell.

Nope. This doesn’t even warrant a token tsk, tsk.

Once more, Western and Middle aren’t scheduled to play ever again. Ever, ever, ever.

So why has Boo Hoots Donnelly gone on a headline hunt with this?

Yes, Boots, people know you’re a winning coach with one of Division I-AA’s top programs. And perhaps it was rude, maybe even downright blasphemous of Western to take a 21-20 lead with 2:07 to play.

We in the press know you’re a smorgasbord of insightful, giggle-grabbing quotes. The one about trying to stop Western’s quarterbacks being “like eating jello with chopsticks” was a classic.

Thanks.

But no thanks.

“What’s the real shame is that it’s ruined a great effort by two teams,” Harbaugh said.

Donnelly has also smeared Harbaugh, though it won’t stick.

“ ‘The words ‘spying’ and ‘stealing’ have been thrown around in this, but I’ve done nothing wrong,’” Harbaugh said. “ ‘If it were something illegal, immoral or unethical, we wouldn’t have done it.’ ”

Even worse. Donnelly has flashed the floodlight on his former player, Jewell, who was trying to help his team ... maybe even enhance his chances for a scholarship.

Maybe Boo Hoots is just a little steamed he lost Jewell. Maybe Boo Hoots just can’t believe Western challenged his team, or that maybe another coach out-maneuvered him.

Who knows?

What we know is that Western and Middle have apparently ended a great football rivalry on an unfortunate note, and Boots is a long shot for speaking engagements in these parts.
Marciani says no foul, no action

Western Kentucky University considers the rift between football coach Jack Harbaugh and Middle Tennessee counterpart Boots Donnelly a dead issue.

Donnelly grabbed headlines when he complained that Western had a former MTSU player spying from the press box during Saturday's game between the schools in L.T. Smith Stadium/Felix Field.

J.J. Jewell, a scout team quarterback for a year at MTSU before transferring to Western, was stealing play signals through binoculars. But Western athletics director Louis Marciani said no foul, no action.

"We called the head of officials today, and they said there's no rule" against Jewell being in the press box, Marciani said Wednesday. "If there had been such a rule, there would've been a problem. But there's not, so we're not pursuing it further."

Middle won the game 23-21 on a field goal with seven seconds to play.
Harbaugh wants to keep Tops believing

JOE MEDLEY 10-11-91

Western Kentucky’s football team enters a familiar crossroads, and Coach Jack Harbaugh hopes the Hilltoppers’ floor it down a new road.

Disappointing losses to Middle Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky and Youngstown State turned Western’s season to humility in 1990. A young team, Western went on to lose five more and finish 2-8.

The Hilltoppers are still young, and they’re dazed by a 23-21 loss to in-play ranked Middle last week after leading 21-20 with 2:01 to play.

As Saturday’s 6 p.m. battle at Eastern looms, Harbaugh’s throwing up the roadblock on Highway 2-8 and redirecting traffic to Pride Parkway.

“You take away one drive at Austin Peay and one drive at the end of the Middle game, and we’re 4-4,” Harbaugh said. “I still believe in this team. This is a darned good football team.

“We have to make them believe it and keep them playing with the enthusiasm they’ve showed so far.”

Western (2-2) led Austin Peay 14-7 in the fourth quarter, only to see the Governors drive for a score and a two-point conversion. APSU added a late field goal to win 18-14.

Middle marched from its 39-yard line to Western’s 16, and Garth Petrilli booted a 33-yard field goal with seven seconds left to sink the Tops.

Milton Biggins (86) is escorted from Feix Field by Western trainer Bill Edwards (left) and assistant David Brest last weekend. Biggins will miss Saturday’s game at Eastern Kentucky because of back injuries suffered against Middle Tennessee.

“I don’t run the option this year the way they did with Lorenz Fields as their quarterback,” Harbaugh said. “They have Joey Crenshaw, a passing quarterback who transferred from Louisville.”

Crenshaw has completed 58 percent of his passes for 452 yards, but he’s thrown eight interceptions. That stat makes Harbaugh’s competitive bone.

“We need to get a couple of turnovers, and we need to do a much better job on special teams,” he said.

Offensively, Western has done the job. The Hilltoppers gained 229 yards rushing a game to sink their rushing defense among the nation’s best. Roscoe Echols leads with 406 a contest.

All-America candidate tight end Milton Biggins, who didn’t practice this week because of back pains, cut off in Western’s attack because of his blocking. Biggins took a blow in the back while catching a pass against Middle.

Adam Hall will step in with help from Sam Freeman.

“Western will also do without sophomore quarterback Jairus Malcome, who started against Middle. He suffered a sprained ankle on the Tops’ second series. He missed the rest of the game and didn’t practice this week.”

“Disappointing losses to Middle Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky and Youngstown State turned Western’s season around in 1990. A young team, Western went on to lose five more and finish 2-8.

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Western vs. Eastern Kentucky
Saturday, Oct. 12, 6:00 p.m. /// Richmond, Ky.

Records: Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" 2-2-0
Eastern Kentucky "Colonels" 4-1-0

Schedule/Results:

**WKU (Coach Jack Harbaugh)**

*September*
- 7 at Austin Peay .......... L 18-14
- 14 Murray State ......... W 14-0
- 21 Morehead State ....... W 48-21
- 28 open date

*October*
- 5 Middle Tennessee ...... L 22-21
- 12 at Eastern Kentucky , 6:00 pm
- 19 Troy State, 5:30 pm
  (Homecoming)
- 26 Northern Iowa, 7:00 pm
  (Homecoming)

*November*
- 2 at UT-Chattanooga, 6:00 pm
- 9 Eastern Illinois, 1:30 pm
- 16 at Indiana State, 12:30 pm
- 23 at Illinois State, 1:30 pm

**EKU (Coach Ray Kidd)**

*August*
- 31 at Louisville .......... L 24-14

*September*
- 7 open date
- 14 at SE Missouri ...... W 49-7
- 21 Middle Tennessee W 17-7
- 28 at Tennessee Tech , W 19-13

*October*
- 3 Georgia Southern W 10-6

First Game: EKU 35-6, Oct. 23, 1914 (site unknown)
Last Meeting: EKU 35-12, Sept. 29, 1990 in Bowling Green
Last Meeting in Richmond: EKU 24-3, Sept. 23, 1989

**Stat Leaders**

Rushing: WKU -- Roscoe Echols 63-424 (6.56/game)
EKU -- Tim Lester 109-462 (4.24/game)

Eddie Thompson 61-303 (101.0/game)

Passing: WKU -- Eddie Thompson 10-25-2, 125 yds, 1 TD
EKU -- Joey Crenshaw 42-72-8, 452 yds, 1 TD
Western exercising its option, so Eastern's Kidd is fretting

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

Eastern Kentucky University coach Roy Kidd has been looking across the football field at Western Kentucky for 27 years, but he'll see something different when the old rivals meet at 7 EDT tonight in Richmond.

"I can't remember a Western team running the option," said Kidd, whose Colonels (4-1) are ranked third in Division I-AA. "They executed great against Middle (Tennessee), better than when we had (1987-90) quarterback Lorenzo Fields and ran it."

But Jack Harbaugh, who installed the option attack this season, laughed at Kidd's assessment.

"Roy Kidd has seen every offense from the single wing to the Knute Rockne tackle box," he said. "Not that Roy's that old, mind you, but he's got a defense as good as I've seen in I-AA football. The front seven are really good; they all play so well with their hands."

"Middle was so intimidated (against Eastern) they wouldn't even run the ball at them. There'll be no gimmicks, no tricks, no finesse. We'll just attempt to do it as well as we can."

It will be the third straight option offense Eastern has faced, although the Hilltoppers (2-2) run more of a pure option than Tennessee Tech or Georgia Southern. The Colonels beat Tech 19-13 and Georgia Southern 10-6.

Western's attack will be operated solely by Fort Knox junior Eddie Thompson because another gifted quarterback, Jairus Malcome, is sidelined with a sprained ankle.

Thompson is averaging 101 yards rushing in three games, tailback Roscoe Echols 106 in four and Malcome 78 in two. Western's ground game has spun out an average of 319.8 yards a game.

Before the second game, Harbaugh also converted Western to the Chicago Bears' "46" defense — a gambling, blitzing alignment — and its first unit has allowed only two touchdowns.

"We haven't seen anything like that since..."

See WESTERN Page 6, col. 3, this section

Continued from Page B 1

...last season," Kidd said.

Harbaugh isn't enraptured at this point, though. "We brought the house, the refrigerator, the microwave, every blitz known to man against Middle," he said of last Saturday's 23-21 defeat. "We not only couldn't get to the quarterback once, we didn't come close. Very disappointing."

Kidd is disappointed, too, in his line blocking and the six interceptions his team has given up. The Colonels' normally high-velocity ground game is averaging only 101.2 yards, with alternating tailbacks Tim Lester (52.4 yards a game) and Markus Thomas (48.8) well under their previous years' figures.

"I don't care," Harbaugh said. "Those guys are so good Eastern should have to share the wealth around the country. We need a Plan B tailback rule."

Besides Malcome, Western has lost Milton Biggins, whom Harbaugh calls "the best blocking tight end in I-AA," to back spasms suffered against Middle. Eastern's all-OVC defensive end, David Wilkins, has a bruised sternum and will dress but not start.

Harbaugh is hoping to have more to show from today's game than a great effort, which he acknowledges the Hilltoppers gave him in the loss to ninth-ranked Middle on a field goal with three seconds left.

"The effort can't be faulted," he said. "But we still didn't win, and we should have. We've had a lot of games the last two years — Youngstown State, Chattanooga, Austin Peay, Middle — that we've lost in the latter stages of the fourth quarter."

"That bothers me, especially now. I do believe our next game will be more of an indicator, because we're playing on the road against a better football team."

In another OVC game today:

Tennessee-Martin at Murray State Murray State (1-4), trying to break a two-game losing streak, will face a prospective Ohio Valley Conference member that is off to a surprising 4-1 start.

Tennessee-Martin has beaten three OVC clubs (Southeast Missouri, Morehead and Tennessee Tech) and lost only to I-AA power Tennessee-Chattanooga by a TD.

Quarterback Leonard Williams directs a run-and-shoot offense and has thrown for 11 touchdowns and passed for three despite playing in only four games. He has completed 68 of 132 passes for 1,098 yards, with Robert Thomas catching 22 for 288 and two TDs.

"They're hot," Murray coach Mike Mahoney said. "They've got a lot of confidence in their run-and-shoot. We've got to be careful what we're doing on defense because we have to adjust to so many different formations."

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Thomas  
239 yards  
power EKU by Western

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

RICHMOND, Ky.  -- Eastern Kentucky creased the margin of victory in the second half when Western Kentucky ran out of the same ability. EKU rose up and hammered the Hilltoppers into the ground 37-22 last night before 18,500 at Roy Kidd Stadium.

Markus Thomas, averaging only 88.8 rushing yards a game coming in, breezed for 239, and Eastern's attack, mostly through the first five games, was scored for 370 by land.

The 239 was well shy of Thomas' school record of 300 set against Marshall in 1986.

"The offense was just clicking," Thomas said. "It was, 239 yards of quarters, backs, backs, backs."

SCOREBOARD

Florida State 42
Virginia Tech 29
Miami 30, Tulsa 26
Pittsburgh 21, Temple 0
Notre Dame 42, Alabama 7
Rice 33, Baylor 0

Western, coached by Ed Harbaugh, said, "It seemed like every time we got in they had the answer."

"We were still there at 12-9 and thinking. We were still there at 16-15 and thinking. They knew the guy (Thomas) was down here at our 10. From then on, they were a totally physically dominating offense. Thomas had almost 3,000 yards, and it seems like 1,000 of them have come against us."

"We were very pleased with the offense all season. This is the hallmark of our team. We worked on blocking the tackles, hitting to the big guys, Thomas said.

See THOMAS
Thomas’ 239 rushing yards power Eastern by WKU, 37-22

Continued from Page C1

said, “We shouldn’t have to wait to lose to get our offense up.”

“...That wasn’t them do that, it was me,” Kidd said. “We got the whole offense together for meetings because of penalties, interceptions, things like that. Pius if helped to play (Tim) Lester more at fullback. Lester had more rushing yards this season, but Markus had more yards per carry. That meant we needed to get him more snaps.”

Set up at the Eastern 31 a short punt. Western scored in seven plays to cut the Colonels’ lead in half on its second series of the third quarter.

Roscoe Echols slanted in from the 8-yard line, then Eddie Thompson cut inside left tackle on the option to make it 16-8 with 8:45 to go in the period.

Moments later the Hilltoppers threatened to tie it. They went from their 26 to the Eastern 20 on their next possession. But Thompson, with a pass rusher hanging on him, overthrew Dwayne Haun in the end zone on third down, and Steve Donist’s 37-yard field-goal attempt spiraled off to the right.

Eastern responded by locking up its fourth straight victory in the state’s longest series. The first time it has ever beaten Western four in a row.

From his 25, Thomas squirmed through a hole inside left end on a sweep step out of one tackler’s grasp and raced 66 yards to the Western 9. Tim Lester scored from the 1 two plays and a penalty later, and it was 23-8.

On its next series, Thomas had gains of 15, 12 and 8 as the Colonels drove 62 yards, Lester getting the last 15.

Western cut it to 30-14 on Brian Browning’s 13-yard pass to Mike Brumbelow, but Eastern answered that. Kenny McCollum caught a 34-yard pass from Joey Crenshaw and Rick Burkhead punched it in from the 1 on the next play. Todd Duffy’s fifth consecutive extra point gave Eastern a career record with 61 in a row, breaking the mark set in 1977-78 by David Flores.

Dewby Berghalter replaced Joey Crenshaw at quarterback after Crenshaw had thrown an interception, said “Take it, Markus,” and Thomas led Eastern on an 86-yard march that started the Colonels toward a 16-0 halftime lead.

Thomas carried five of the first six plays on the drive, the last a pitch from Berghalter that he spun around the right side into a wide-open field. He ran 44 yards before safety Larry Harris made a touchdown-saving stop at the Western 27.

Three plays later Kenny McCollum whipped around the left side on an end-around and went 10 yards to the 1-yard line. On the first play of the second quarter fullback Rick Burkhead dove in, Duffy kicked, and it was 7-0.

Fewer than five minutes later, Eastern had its other nine points. First it held Western at its 21. Chris Gable fumbled the snap on the punt, picked the ball up, retreated to the end zone then couldn’t get out. The safety 13:34 before intermission made it 9-0.

Western kicked off from its 20, Leon Brown returned it to the Eastern 49 and Berghalter took the Colonels 51 yards in eight. He converted two third-down situations along the way, the last with a 20-yard pass to Vincent Ware, the only player from either team in the right corner of the end zone. It was 16-0 with 9:06 left in the second quarter.

Western threatened once in the half. Triggered by a 41-yard pass from Thompson to Brian Sowerby, the Hilltoppers moved from their 13 to Eastern’s 14. But three Colonels defenders slammed Thompson for no gain on an option keeper on fourth-and-two, and that was that.
39 rushing yards

tern by WKU, 37-22

Yesterday's summary

WESTERN KENTUCKY 0 0 8 14 - 22
ASTERN KENTUCKY 0 16 7 14 - 37

Eastern - Rick Burkhead, 1 run (Todd Duffy kick);
- Safety, Gable tackled by Tim Peyton in end zone; Eastern - Vince Run, 20 pass from
- Western - Harry Burkhart. (Duffy kick); Western - Roscoe
- scooter, 8 run (Duffy Thompson run); Eastern - Tim
- easter, 1 run (Duffy kick); Eastern - Lester, 16, run
- Duffy kick; Western - Mike Brumelow, 12, pass
- from Brian Browning (pass failed); Eastern - Burkh
- head, 1 run (Duffy kick); Western - Brumelow, 6,
- e from Browning (Haul pass from Browning)
- Attendance - 16,000.

First downs - Western 23; Eastern 19

Using yards - 53-103 52-273

- Eastern 7-14; Western 7-14

- Eastern 167- 37-1

- Eastern 10-33 3-3

- Eastern 7-33 5-35

- Eastern 0-0 0-0

- Eastern 5-85 3-64

- Eastern 33-33 26-22

RUSHING: Western - Echols 15-54, Thompson
- 7-50, Davis 4-25, Echols 1-6, Saver 2-8, Gable 1
- to; Eastern - Thompson 15-70, Crenshaw 2-22, Brumelow
- 10, Pierson 2-14, McCollum 1-10, Jones 1-1, Burkh
- head 3-14. Mosley 4

BALANCED: Western - Thompson 7-120 62 yards,
- Western 9-120 124 yards; Eastern - Crenshaw 27-7
- yards; Western 1-19; Eastern 8-120, Donnay 1
- 16.

RECEIVING: Western - Hunt 5-50, Brumelow 4
- 29, Jackson 2-17, Saver 1-5; Eastern - McCol
- 1-14, Wann 1-20, Donnay 1-16.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

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- fourth-and-two, and that was that.
Thomas leaves his mark on old Eastern-Western rivalry

By JEB MELDY 10-13-91
Daily News Sports Editor

RICHMOND, Ky. — As Western Kentucky fans remember the greatest running backs to dash through their annual rivalry with Eastern Kentucky, they'll remember Markus Thomas.

That's Markus with a K — and that's Markus left, up the middle and running away.

Thomas backed up a 161-yard outing against Western in 1990 with 239 in the third-ranked Colonels' 37-22 win Saturday night at Roy Kidd Stadium.

Thomas' longest run, a 65-yard sweep in the third quarter, set up an Eastern score that took Western out of contention.

Thomas is a junior, but Western isn't scheduled to play Eastern in 1992. If the schools don't play, Hilltopper coach Jack Harbaugh will gladly pass on Thomas' senior year.

"They said in an announcement tonight he has over 2,000 yards, but I bet he has 1,000 against us," Harbaugh said about Thomas, who ran for 126 yards against Western as a freshman.

The loss was Western's second in a row. The Hilltoppers fell to 2-3, while the Colonels improved to 5-1.

Western, which came up empty on two scoring threats, was within a touchdown run and a yard from scoring until Ronnie Lester's 15-yard touchdown run and a 1-yarder from Rick Burkhead in the fourth quarter were successful.

"I guess it's just an omen," he said about his success against Western. "Ronnie Lester got hurt before the Western game my freshman year, and I had a good night in my first start. Then I had another good night last year."

Eastern added Lester's 15-yard touchdown run and a 1-yarder from Rick Burkhead in the fourth quarter.

Western quarterback Brian Browning hit Mike Brumbelow for scoring passes of 12 and eight yards in the fourth quarter to round out the scoring.

Eastern gained 440 total yards to Western's 379. The Colonels shredded Western's defense for 370 yards rushing.

"They just kept pitching it outside, and we wouldn't even get a glove on them," Harbaugh said. "They physically just blew our defense away, and I was a little disappointed in that."

Down 16-0 at halftime, Western closed to within 16-8 on Roscoe Echols' 8-yard run plus quarterback Eddie Thompson's two-point conversion run at 8:45 of the third quarter. Western marched 31 yards on seven plays after a short Eastern punt. Thompson converted a fourth-down-and-1 play at the Col-

Continued On Page 9

Column 3, This Section
Western threatened on its final drive of the half thanks to Thompson's 40-yard pass to Brian Sowery. The Hilltoppers went for the first down on fourth and 2 at Eastern's 14, but Thompson gained one yard on a roll out right.

Thompson's fourth-quarter replacement, Browning, was Western's bright spot. He completed 9 of 12 passes for 124 yards while directing two touchdown drives.

"I'm grieving the loss, because it was a tough one for our program," Browning said. "But I was really thrilled to get in there and move the ball."

Kidd was just as thrilled for Eastern's offense, which hadn't scored more than 20 points in three weeks. "I like to see our offense come on like they did," he said.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
PASSING—K. Kentucky, Thompson 7-12-0 82, Browning 8-12-0 124, E. Kentucky, Cranham 2-1-50, Barkhead 1-3-50, etc.
RECEIVING—K. Kentucky, Hahn 8-50, Brumbelow 4-38, Jackson 2-17, Sowers 2-67, Mockby 2-26, E. Kentucky, McCullum 3-34, Ware 1-20, Denny 1-18.
Western football alive, and kicking, writer says

Editor, Daily News: (Aug)

Jack Harbaugh and his team of young, scrappy football players provided all the entertainment a fan could ask for (Oct 6). Winning was just not in the cards against Middle Tennessee. But this Silhuetters showed us they can take on the best and go toe-to-toe with them any day of the week. (Oct 6)

I think Coach Harbaugh has instilled a sense of pride and character that builds from this team, even when the football bounces the wrong way. The first touchdown was a fluke, the second one was not much better, and the three-for-three field goal accuracy just declared it was not Western's night. I have seen lots of teams, and after being stung with accidental touchdowns, but this one stayed in character for four quarters as well, if not better than any team I've seen at Western in the last 10 years. It looks good for us.

If I had been a scout from one of the Gateway Conference teams, I would have gone back home worrying about how to beat the Yeagers. We've got lots of great football in store for us this year and for years to come, and I think we're fortunate to have Coach Harbaugh and his staff behind a class of football players that make us proud of them, regardless of the final tally. Outstanding work fellows.

Chris Derry
Alvaton, Ky. (Oct 6)

Outstanding work fellows.
Midseason report: Hilltoppers haven't reached elite status

RICHMOND, Ky. — It's midseason, and the results of Western Kentucky's test against the best are in.

The Hilltoppers aren't among the elite football programs in the NCAA's Division I-AA. Then again, Western ranks better than mediocre.

Western just turned in losses to ninth-ranked Middle Tennessee and third-ranked Eastern Kentucky. This after convincing wins over Murray State and Morehead State — both unranked.

It doesn't take computer software or light-headed pollsters to spot the 1991 Tops in college football's pecking order.

The differences between Hilltoppers and poll toppers are obvious.

Experience

Many of Jack Harbaugh's players still need a map to find their classes.

A team dominated by freshmen and sophomores:

A. Won't stop Middle Tennessee's two-minute drill.
B. Won't handle Eastern's defense — and offense.

Defense

Harbaugh's "Bear" defense proved a bear for Murray and Morehead and a cub for Middle and Eastern. The Colonels rumbled for 440 total yards.

C. Will average 83 yards in penalties a game.
D. Will give up a lead, and 11 fourth-quarter points to Austin Peay.
E. All of the above.

If you answered E, you must follow Western.

In his third season on the Hill, Harbaugh has committed to building on four-year players. A majority of his charges takes 200-level classes.

Special teams

In name only.

Western's special units — kickoff, kickoff return, punt, punt return and field goal — are a liability.

Continued on Page 9.

Column 4, This Section

In a sport said to be all mental, Western's defense faces a physical reality.

The Hilltoppers were strong enough to stuff Murray and Morehead on the line of scrimmage and not so strong against Middle and Eastern.

Middle's freshman quarterback — Kelly Holcomb — completed 15 of 29 passes on the game-winning drive because Western couldn't get close to him.

Eastern's offensive line manhandled Western to the tune of 370 yards rushing in the Colonels' 37-22 win Saturday.

"They were just beating us physically," Harbaugh said. "When a team just pitches the ball and you don't even get a glove on them, you're getting blown off the ball."

WKU football

Continued from Page 7

Against Middle and Eastern, Western suffered a blocked punt, allowed an 83-yard kickoff return for a score, and fumbled a punt snap en route to a safety.

Western has yet to hit a field goal in three tries.

"We've put the excitement back in extra points," Harbaugh said.

Steve Donisi has missed one extra-point kick and had one blocked.

Western's best bet has been to field its offensive unit and go for the two-point conversion. The Hilltoppers are 4 for 5 going for two. A two-point conversion gave Western a 21-20 lead with 2:07 to play against Middle.

But a dreadful kickoff spotted Holcomb's Heroes on their 39-yard line, and they drove for a game-winning field goal — one of three Blue Raider field goals in Middle's 23-21 win.

Tack on extra points, and Middle's special teams outscored Western's 17-3.

Injuries

Western has done without star offensive lineman Guy Earle for four weeks. All-American candidate Milton Biggins at tight end against Eastern, and could be without key defensive lineman Brian Canoy, fell by a knee injury against Eastern.

The good stuff

Western's offense has gained more than 300 yards in every game. Going into the Eastern contest, the Hilltoppers ranked third nationally in rushing offense at 320 a game.

And there's character, a young team's only hope.

Western put on a key goal-line stand against Murray, came back to lead Middle late, cut Eastern's 16-0 halftime lead to 16-8 in the third quarter, and drove to Eastern's 18 yard line with a chance to tie.
Harbaugh upset over Western's late collapse against EKU

By JIM TERHUNE 15-15-7/1
Staff Writer

Western Kentucky University's football team, marching steadily ahead, stopped and did something coach Jack Harbaugh didn't like Saturday night.

"We took a step back," Harbaugh said yesterday of a defense that softened in the second half of a 37-22 loss at Eastern Kentucky. "We weren't very competitive," and that really bothered me. They tossed the ball and ran around our ends, and we didn't attack the line of scrimmage.

"We were probably worn down -- we had two guys out and were forced to play some young guys. But we still can't have that happen."

It hadn't happened in recent weeks. The previous Saturday Western (2-3) played tough Middle Tennessee to the nub in a 23-21 loss. This time, after closing to 16-8 in the third quarter and challenging with another drive that was turned away, it gave up a 66-yard run and nosedived defensively from there.

"Against Middle we demonstrated we belonged with the top guys," Harbaugh said. "Now we have to fight back. We're not a great team, but if we play hard and with enthusiasm for 60 minutes, we can beat anybody on our schedule."

Next is a homecoming game Saturday against Troy (Ala.) State, and Western will have to go without two defensive linemen, tackle Brian Canoy and end David Bledsoe.

Canoy stretched a ligament in his knee and will be out 2-3 weeks. Bledsoe pulled a hamstring and is out of the Troy State game at least.

Quarterback Jairus Malcome, who started two games but missed the Eastern game because of a twisted ankle, remains doubtful against Troy.
Troy game key to rest of season

By JOE MEDLEY | c - (5 - 9)/
Daily News Sports Editor

Now that Western Kentucky has been forced to accept it's somewhere below elite status in Division I-AA, Coach Jack Harbaugh hopes to avoid another nightmare.

Troy State, a Division II school that has beaten a ranked I-AA team, visits L.T. Smith Stadium for Saturday's 5:30 p.m. homecoming game. It's against Troy State that Harbaugh will find out how Western responds to consecutive losses to Middle Tennessee and Eastern Kentucky.

"This is the one," Harbaugh said. "Last year, we lost to Middle, Eastern and Youngstown and then went to Tennessee Tech and didn't play well at all. It kind of set the tone for the rest of the season."

Western finished 2-8 in 1990, losing its last eight games.

If the Hilltoppers are to plot a course for better things this season, they'll have to do it without some of their top defensive players.

Defensive lineman Brian Canoy, safety Larry Harris and linebacker David Bledsoe went down in last week's 37-22 loss at Eastern. All will be back in a couple of weeks, but they'll miss Saturday's game.

Harbaugh said the injuries shouldn't matter. "Good teams pull together in situations like this," he said. "When one guy does down, somebody else picks it up a notch."

Harbaugh has experienced players to step in.

Danny Davis, a true freshman from Fort Knox, has platooned with Tony Garner on the defensive line all season. Joe Lee Johnson, a starter in 1990, will take Bledsoe's slot, and Harbaugh will shift his defensive backfield to compensate for Harris' loss.

Coached by Larry Blakeney, Troy State (3-3) will test Western (2-3). The Trojans, in a transition period to prepare for a move up to I-AA in 1993, beat Southern Illinois 30-13 last week. Three of their losses have come against ranked I-AA teams. "They hit you hard, and they're ready to take advantage if you're not sharp -- on both offense and defense," Harbaugh said. "We'll have to be prepared to do some things a lot better than we did last week, or we'll be in for a lot of trouble against Troy State."

Tailback Eddie Coleman is Troy State's leading rusher with 493 yards, including a career-high 133 last weekend. Quarterback Brad Stevens has connected on 45 of 101 passes for 634 yards and four touchdowns.

Western's running game is led by quarterhack Eddie Thompson, averaging 88.3 yards, and tailback Roscoe Echols, 97.6. Flanker Dwayne Haun has caught 12 passes for 169 yards.

Harbaugh said the key will be for Western to get off to a good start Saturday. "They're the kind of team that if you let them get up on you, they'll get even more confident and start pouring it on," he said. "So you want to get on them quickly."
# Western vs. Troy State

Saturday, Oct. 19, 5:30 p.m. // Bowling Green, Ky.

Records: Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" -- 2-3-0  
Troy State "Trojans" -- 3-3-0

## Schedule/Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WKU (Coach Jack Harbaugh)</th>
<th>TSU (Coach Larry Blakeney)</th>
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<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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<td>14 Murray State ..........</td>
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<td>12 at Eastern Kentucky ..</td>
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<td>19 Troy State, 5:30 pm</td>
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<td>(Homecoming)</td>
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<td>26 Northern Iowa, 7:00 pm</td>
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<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<td>2 at UT-Chattanooga, 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>9 Eastern Illinois, 1:30 pm</td>
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<td>16 at Indiana State, 12:30 pm</td>
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<td>23 at Illinois State, 1:30 pm</td>
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The Series: WKU 0, TSU 0, 1 tie  
First Game: 10-10, Sept. 11, 1976 in Bowling Green

### Stat Leaders

- **Rushing:**  
  - WKU -- Roscoe Echols 78-488 (97.6/game)  
  - Eddie Thompson 82-353 (88.3/game)  
  - TSU -- Eddie Coleman 113-493 (82.2/game)

- **Passing:**  
  - WKU -- Brian Browning 18-38-2, 271 yds, 2 TDs  
  - TSU -- Brad Stevens 45-101-5, 634 yds, 4 TDs

- **Receiving:**  
  - WKU -- Dwayne Haun 12-169, 1 TD; Milton Biggins 8-89, 1 TD; Mike Brumbelow 6-73, 2 TDs  
  - TSU -- William Covington 19-275, 3 TDs

- **Punting:**  
  - WKU -- Chris Gable 25-35.1  
  - TSU -- Rodney Glass 39-39.8
Troy State fights off Western comeback, 39-23

By JODY DEMLING Special Writer

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Western Kentucky University backup quarterback Brian Browning brought the Hilltoppers from behind time and time again last night.

But in the end it was Browning's interception that put the last nail in the Hilltoppers' coffin as they dropped a 39-23 college football decision to Troy State.

"I thought Brian did an outstanding job," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. "He doesn't really practice. He might get only one out of four snaps in practice?"

Browning, a senior who plays sparingly, came in for starter Eddie Thompson and led Western to 20 second-half points, but that wasn't enough.

"It is very disappointing," said Browning, who completed 15 of 33 passes for 191 yards and two touchdowns. "I really don't know what to say. We were able to do some things and take advantage of some other things. I am proud of the way we fought back, but it wasn't enough."

Western had taken its first lead of the game at 23-22 with 6:11 remaining on a 1-yard run by tailback Roscoe Echols, who finished with 131 yards on 30 carries.

But Matt Stone's 45-yard field goal with 3:29 left put the Trojans back on top for good.

Browning tried to rally the Hilltoppers again. Western got a first down on a pass-interference penalty with 2:41 left, but linebacker Charles Bush intercepted Browning's pass with 2:22 left and returned it to the Western 11-yard line.

On the next play fullback David McCombs went up the middle for the touchdown.

"When Bush intercepted the ball and ran it back to the 11, I thought we had a chance to win," Troy State coach Larry Blakeney said. "But I felt they would come back and score, then try an onside kick."

Troy State regained the lead with 7:18 left in the half when Eddie Coleman took the pitch from Stevens and went around the left end for a 31-yard touchdown run.

Troy State tight end Reggie Dwight then scored on a 1-yard plunge with 2:27 left in the half.

Western failed to put points on the board twice in the first half when it had the ball inside the 10-yard line.

"We got off to a slow start," Echols said. "We just couldn't punch the ball in when we needed it in the first half."

The first time came when the Hilltoppers faced fourth-and-inches at the 1. Thompson fumbled the ball after taking a blind-side hit from tackle Anjuan Marsh as he rolled out. Echols recovered, but the Trojans took over at the 6.

Then with less than a minute left in the first half, Browning overthrew Milton Biggins in the end zone on fourth-and-seven from the 8.

"Looking back, the only thing I wish I would have done differently was kick a field goal just before half," Harbaugh said.
By JOE MEDLEY

Daily News Sports Editor

Jack Harbaugh's worst memories are becoming his worst fears.

Western Kentucky's football coach watched his Division I-AA team blow a late lead and lose its third straight game Saturday, 39-23 at the hands of Division II Troy State before a homecoming crowd of 10,980 in L.T. Smith Stadium.

Troy State (4-3) scored 17 points in the final 3:29 to erase Western's 23-22 lead, and Western fell to 2-4 on the season.

The loss reminded of a 2-8, 1990 campaign that saw Western lose its last eight games.

The Hilltoppers came up empty on two trips inside Troy State's 10-yard line. Western had trouble converting its scoring opportunities last season.

What's worse, Harbaugh said, is the Hilltoppers have stalled after disappointing losses to Middle Tennessee (23-21) and Eastern Kentucky (37-22) - just like they did last season.

"I'm concerned about our team," Harbaugh said. "We're a young team. You hope to see a young team make progress in certain areas, and we haven't."

Like keeping fourth-quarter leads. The Hilltoppers have lost three times in the final 15 minutes. Western gave up 11 points in the fourth quarter of an 18-14 loss to Austin Peay, and the Hilltoppers yielded Middle's game-winning field goal with seven seconds to play.

Western battled back from a 22-10 deficit to lead Troy State 23-22 on Roscoe Echols' 1-yard run with 6:11 to play. But the Trojans marched 28 yards in five plays to set up Matt Stone's 45-yard field goal for a 25-23 lead.

On Western's next series, Charles Bush intercepted quarterback Brian Browning's pass and returned it 36 yards to the Hilltoppers' 11-yard line. Fullback David McCombs scored on the next play, and Stone made it 32-23.

Then TSU's Steve Leach returned another interception 81 yards for a score to provide the final margin.

It was an horrific ending for Browning, who completed 15 of 33 passes for 191 yards and two touchdowns and seemed to have

WESTERN'S ROSCOE Echols (21) falls under the weight of Troy State defenders Yamiail Collins (40) and Tony Knowles on Saturday in L.T. Smith Stadium. Troy State won 39-23.

County said, "It looked like we were going to win, and everything fell apart."

Harbaugh defended Browning, who tossed three interceptions in the final three minutes and four for the game.

"You can expect that because Brian doesn't get as much practice time," Harbaugh said. Sophomore

tion offense. Passing isn't something we work on as much, and we pretty much got all out of it we could tonight,"

Western set up the wild finish on Browning's 34-yard touchdown pass to tight end Milton Biggins with 12:02 to play. Kicker Steve Donisi cut Troy State's lead to 22-17.

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It was an horrific ending for Browning, who completed 15 of 33 passes for 191 yards and two touchdowns and seemed to have victory in hand after three quarters of work.

"Words can't express how I feel," the senior from Edmonson County said. "It looked like we were going to win, and everything fell apart."

Harbaugh defended Browning, who tossed three interceptions in the final three minutes and four for the game.

"You can expect that because Brian doesn't get as much practice time," Harbaugh said. Sophomore quarterback Eddie (Thompson) gets three of four snaps every day in practice.

"Plus, we practice mostly the option offense. Passing isn't something we work on as much, and we pretty much got all out of it we could tonight."

Western set up the wild finish on Browning's 34-yard touchdown pass to tight end Milton Biggins with 12:02 to play. Kicker Steve Donisi cut Troy State's lead to 22-17.

Western held Troy State to a punt.

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and Dwayne Haun returned it 35 yards to the 'Trojans' 39. Browning directed the eight-play drive to the 1, where Echols plunged in.

But TSU drove for the go-ahead field goal, which came on fourth down and 2 at Western's 28.

"I never thought about going for it on fourth and short," Troy State coach Larry Blackeney said. "I watched Stone hit consistently from 47 yards last week. Every time we drive inside the 40, I start thinking field goal.""

The kick put Western behind for good, ruining a 370-yard effort by its offense. Troy State gained 293 yards.

Echols led all rushers with 127 yards on 30 tries, and quarterback Brad Stevens led the Trojans with 105.

Stevens' 39-yard touchdown run at 14:47 of the fourth quarter left Western in trouble. He rolled right on the option and broke three tackles before racing down the sideline.

Stevens' point-after pass fell incomplete, but the Trojans led 22-10.

Western closed to within 16-10 on senior receiver Matt McIntyre's first collegiate touchdown — a 6-yard Browning pass at 5:47 of the third quarter. Steve Donisi booted the extra point.

Troy State converted several big third-down plays and stymied Western with two goal-line stands on the way to a 16-3 halftime lead.

"They just handled us on the line," Harbaugh said. "We tried to run the option with Eddie, but they stopped it. They were stronger than we were."

The Hilltoppers fumbled an option pitch for a 6-yard loss on fourth down at the Trojans' 1 in the first quarter.

In the second, Browning hit on passes of 31 yards to Brian Sowerby and 18 more to Biggins on the way to a first down at Troy State's 7. But Western lost a yard in three plays, and Browning's fourth-down pass missed badly.

The Hilltoppers' lone score of the half came on Donisi's first field goal of the year — a 46-yarder to tie the game with eight seconds left in the first quarter.

"We saw how Western took Middle Tennessee to the wire, so we beat a good football team tonight," Blackeney said. "To go on the road and beat a team like this proves we belong in a new category of football."

As for what category Western belongs in, "We can't get physically stronger this year, but we can improve in a lot of ways," Harbaugh said. "The thing I come back on is our character. We still have that."
Western’s Browning still a victim of circumstance

Poor Brian Browning. Something good has got to happen to him in a football uniform.

Western Kentucky’s senior quarterback from Edmonson County saw his game explode in his face Saturday as the Hilltoppers lost 39-23 to Troy State.

Browning, who bounced from the University of Louisville to Western only to be circumscribed out of the starting lineup for three years, seems to have the game of his life in hand.

Having taken the field when Western’s option offense coughed and hissed in the second quarter, Browning began to move the ball. With the passing arm that thrilled under the Friday night lights in Brownsville, Browning seemed destined for his big moment.

Browning led Western on three touchdown drives, and he gave the Hilltoppers a 23-22 lead out of a 22-10 fourth-quarter deficit.

Problem was, there was too much time left — 6:11 to be exact.

Western’s hospitable defense allowed its visitor a 45-yard field goal at 3:29. So Browning couldn’t just hand the ball to his running backs in a clock-draining exercise.

Browning had to throw, and Browning he did — three straight interceptions, one of which went 81 yards for a TSU score.

Consider this: Browning completed 15 of 33 passes for 191 yards and two touchdowns. At least three of his passes were dropped. Four were intercepted, and not all were his fault.

“We had a situation where we had to pass, and that’s not something we spend much time practicing,” Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. “A couple of them (the interceptions) were bad throws, but a receiver made a wrong read on one of them.”

Browning is used to having circumstances work against him.

Louisville had too many quarterbacks, including one Browning Nagle.

When Browning transferred to Western, the coach was Dave Roberts, who loved to pass, pass, pass. Roberts promptly resigned and went to Northwestern Louisiana.

Harbaugh likes to run, run, run the option, but he had a two-year supply of Roberts’ quarterbacks and no option types.

After going 7-13 in the first two years of his four-year contract, Harbaugh had to get his program started. He had Eddie Thompson and Jairus Malcome ready, and the option was born. It was a hard decision for Harbaugh, but it was the right one.

Browning’s consolation was a dual-system offense that allowed him to spell Thompson. But Browning’s moments were brief.

He threw well in a 48-21 win over Morehead State, and he directed two fourth-quarter touchdown drives in a 37-22 loss to Eastern Kentucky.

Then came Troy State, and it appeared Browning’s consolation hung in the sky.

“It’s one of those things,” Browning said. “It looked like we had it won. I just threw a couple of bad ones.”

Harbaugh wouldn’t allow Browning to take the blame.

“We only have so many passing plays, and Brian just doesn’t get as many reps in practice,” the coach said. “So it was a miracle he was able to come in and do what he did.

“Brian gave us a fine performance.”

Maybe a fine performance will count for Browning before his senior season closes.

He’s got to start his collegiate scrapbook sometime.
Bad finishes haunt WKU since 1990

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

If you're visited by goblins in a few days, chances are they've been operating out of Bowling Green, Ky.
Western Kentucky University's football team has been running into things that go bump in the night for the past two seasons, and it's getting a bit scary.
Seven times since September 1990 Western has come from ahead to lose in the last quarter. Six times WKU has been overhauled in the last four minutes.
Peculiar? Bizarre? Jack Harbaugh, the third-year coach who also was head man at Western Michigan for five seasons, can't remember ever having endured such a stretch.

"But then some days I can't remember what I had for breakfast," Harbaugh said. "It has been like watching a B movie, though."

Coaches and players met to discuss the state of their 2-4 team on Sunday, a day after Troy State scored 17 points in the last 3:29 to beat Western 59-23. But they didn't talk about hiring an exorcist.

"Kids being kids, their whole thing is that the less you talk about it the better off you are," Harbaugh said. "Don't plant the seed. That's fine. It's easy to sit back and get to feeling sorry for yourself. I choose the other approach.

"My feeling is that each game is a separate entity. If you think you're snakebit, you're in a world of trouble, because
Western has been haunted by bad finishes

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God has better things to do than worry about whether Western Kentucky is going to kick a late field goal to win a football game.

Linebacker Richard Grice, Western’s top tackler, feels no other-worldly creatures lurking about.

“If you drop a game that’s hopeless from the start, that’s one thing,” he said. “We haven’t, so it comes down to being not that far off from being a fine football team. We don’t need to begin over. We need to sharpen our rough edges.”

The edges were like a razor’s only two years ago:

- Sept. 16, 1989: Western defeated Middle Tennessee, a top 10 Division I-AA club, 31-16.
- Oct. 21, 1989: Western blitzed Tennessee Tech, which was ranked for the first time in its I-AA history, 61-14.
- Oct. 28, 1989: Western stunned another top 10 team, Youngstown State, 41-38 on the road as Pat Levis kicked a field goal with 23 seconds left.

But then:
- Nov. 10, 1990: Western scored with 2:02 to play but failed on a two-point conversion try and lost to Indiana State, 29-27.
- Nov. 17, 1990: Tennessee-Chattanooga scored on a pass and two-point conversion run with 21 seconds to go and beat Western 22-21.

- Sept. 7, 1991: Austin Peay scored on a disputed two-point conversion pass with 3:18 left, added a field goal and broke a 23-game losing streak at Western’s expense, 18-14.
- Oct. 5, 1991: Western scored with 2:02 remaining to go ahead of 12th-ranked Middle Tennessee, then lost 23-21 on a field goal at 6:03.

And on Saturday Western took its first lead of the game, 23-22, with 6:11 to play, but Troy State responded with a field goal at 3:29, a TD after a pass interception and a TD on another interception.

“The idea is, don’t do things during the course of the game that make it come down to that,” Harbaugh said. “We had a really good third quarter at Eastern Kentucky, a good fourth quarter against Middle. But we need to play 60 minutes consistently.

“We had short kickoffs against Middle and Troy State after we went ahead, then didn’t cover them very well. They started with good field position, and it gave us a chance to shoot ourselves in the foot again.”

Grice said the Sunday session, in which players were asked for input, “brought out some fine points. Like shifting our mental attitude. Last season probably still dwells in the back of everybody’s mind. You get out there and say, ‘Let’s not let this happen again.’ It’s not good to think that way. We need to change our mental vocabulary and say, ‘Let’s do well.’

The Hilltoppers have more first downs, more yards rushing, more yards passing, more points and more minutes of possession than opponents. But they have come up with only four turnovers while committing 11.

“We create a lot of fumbles (eight); we just haven’t fallen on the ball (recovering two),” Grice said.

“One of these days the ball will bounce our way.”

And there are hidden statistics, Harbaugh said, like kicking off to the 18 instead of to the 5.

“Special teams is one of the biggest things,” the coach said. “Not just the kickers. The punters. Guys who cover. Every phase.”

Western also has only nine seniors on the team.

“A lot of it is maturity,” Harbaugh said. “Don’t have many people to call upon to help us handle this type of thing. You look around at other places and they’ve got 21, 22 seniors.”

What to do?

“Keep working,” Harbaugh said. “And be positive. There’s a good lesson to be learned here. Life doesn’t always go your way. If you think just living life makes you a national champion, you’re wrong. Those who are able to deal with it, to get their heads up next week, well, things will turn out all right eventually.

“So be patient. Hopefully, we’ll have a couple of these games come to us down the line. OK, more than a couple.”
The past, present and future of Western Kentucky football will be spelled out in Saturday's home game with Northern Iowa.

The Panthers, 5-1 and ranked as highly as third in Division I-AA this season, visit L.T. Smith Stadium at 7 p.m. Saturday.

The game promises intrigue for Western fans because of The past
For those who don't remember, Western played UNI in the first round of the Division II playoffs Nov. 29, 1975, in Cedar Falls.

Forever to be known as the "Mud Bowl" to Western faithful, the game saw Western advance 14-12.

Western's offensive coordinator Darryl Drake played wide receiver for the Hilltoppers, and his most vivid memories are of "mud, lots of mud. There were about five inches of it."

"It had rained the whole time we were there, and it rained all game long until the last play, then the sun popped out. I never played in a game where the conditions were so bad, but it was a heck of a game."

Another link to the past will be Saturday's official dedication of Feix Field, named in honor of former football player and coach Jimmy Feix. The 1975 team was among the 16 Feix coached. Ceremonies are set for halftime.

The present
Western (2-4) is mired in another losing streak; this one stands three games long. The Hilltoppers ended a nine-game skid with a 14-0 win over Murray State on Sept. 14, and they won two in a row in a 48-21 thumping of Morehead State.

But Western returned to earth burned by three layers of atmosphere -- Middle Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky and Troy State.

Coach Jack Harbaugh is trying to avoid a mental fog that helped the Hilltoppers lose their last eight games last season.

"This is a different kind of team," he said. "We've got better leadership. There are enough kids to say, 'We know we're better than this, and we're capable of doing good things.'"

The future
Saturday's game against UNI unofficially begins life in the Gateway Conference.

The Hilltoppers don't play for the Gateway title until the 1992 season, but four out of their last five opponents this season are "charter members." The Panthers won the league in 1990.

Western will play Eastern Illinois on Nov. 9, Indiana State on Nov. 16.

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Hilltoppers

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and Illinois State the following week.

"The Gateway" also "features" Southern Illinois, Western Illinois and Southwest Missouri State.

"Playing well against Gateway teams, was one of our primary goals at the beginning of the year," Harbaugh said. "We need to send a message to these people that we're out here and we're a force.""}

Defections

Senior linebackers David Bledsoe and Anthony Cooper are no longer Hilltoppers.

Among Western's top tacklers with 31, Bledsoe was injured in the Eastern game. He was cleared to return to action Tuesday, but "he didn't show up for practice Tuesday, and we haven't heard from him," Harbaugh said.

Cooper, who has been in and out of the program for four years, saw more limited time. He had 10 tackles before quitting the team, Harbaugh said.

Stats and stuff

Despite its record, Western averages almost 400 yards total offense. "The Hilltoppers' gain 393 yards a game, with 270 coming on the ground." 1

Junior halfback Rescoe Elkins, a converted defensive back from Bowling Green High School, is on a pace to gain 1,000 yards. He has 615 for a 103-per-game average. He gets just 18 carries a game for a 5.7 average.

Much has been made over the team's turnover ratio, and Western's is telling of a 2-4 team. The Hilltoppers have 11 giveaways and four takeaways.

Injury report: linebacker Joe Lee Johnson, ankle, doubtful; for Saturday; safety Larry Harris, ankle, questionable; quarterback Jairus Malcom, ankle, doubtful; defensive end Brian Canoy, knee, doubtful.
Northern Iowa now can run

By JOE MEDLEY 10-25-79
Daily News Sports Editor

Jay Johnson's passing was dangerous enough. Then Coach Terry Allen added a running game.

Johnson, the second-rated quarterback in Division I-AA football last season, will lead third-ranked Northern Iowa (5-1) into L.T. Smith Stadium/Feix Field on Saturday for a 7 p.m. game against Western Kentucky (2-4).

Just a junior, Johnson is considered one of the nation's top quarterbacks. As a sophomore, he completed 163 of 250 passes for 2,929 yards and 15 touchdowns.

This season, his numbers are down. After six games, Johnson has a mere 1,060 yards passing — and for good reason.

"We got beat in the playoffs last year because of our inability to run the ball," UNI coach Terry Allen said. "It was a major area of concern for us."

So Allen platoons four running backs, led by Mike Schulte at 51.3 yards a game.

Johnson gladly will take a drop in stats for a running game.

"It makes us better," Johnson said. "The offense is more balanced. It allows us to do more things."

But Johnson is the headliner.

The 6-foot-2, 182-pounder from Lakeville, Minn., can turn a big play. He tossed a 99-yard touchdown pass to Kenny Shedd against Oklahoma State last season.

"It was kind of a dream season," Johnson said. "We had a lot of big plays, and I got to play with some really good players."

Johnson will test Western's defense, which is beset by injuries and defections. Defensive end Brian Canoy is still out with a knee injury suffered against Eastern Kentucky, and safety Larry Harris is questionable with an ankle injury.

Linebackers David Bledsoe and Anthony Cooper quit the team this week. Bledsoe was one of the team's better tacklers with 31 stops.

But the real confrontation will come between Western's rushing offense, ranked sixth in I-AA at 270 yards a game, and the rushing defense of UNI, which gives up 70.

And field conditions will complicate things. It rained most of the week in Bowling Green. Feix Field, to be dedicated at halftime, will be a quagmire. UNI has played all of its games this season on artificial turf.

"We're hoping to get a little advantage out of that," Harbaugh said. "You can tell they've geared their team around fake turf. They've not got great size, but they've got quick guys."

Staff Photo by Tracy Glantz


"We've got to get pressure on him," Harbaugh said. "We've got to use our quickness."

Johnson respects Western's defense.

"I've watched the films, and they've played really well against some good teams," Johnson said. "They're a better club than their record represents. They've got some great athletes."
Northern Iowa rips Western

By JIM TERHUNE
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Western Kentucky University knew it was going to be tough. It didn’t know it was going to be embarrassing.

Blowing holes at will in the Hilltoppers’ defense, Northern Iowa, ranked fourth in Division I-AA, raced to a 42-0 first-half lead and handed coach Jack Harbaugh the third-worst loss of his three-year Western career, 49-21, last night.

Only Division I-A Louisville has beaten a Harbaugh-coached Western team worse, winning 55-7 in 1989 and 41-7 last season. Western’s worst loss ever was 75-6 by Centenary in 1923.

Facing many second-team players in the second half, Western scored three times as tailback Roscoe Echols collected most of his 153 yards rushing.

The Hilltoppers, beaten in the final minutes three times this season, dropped to 2-5 with their fourth straight loss. Northern Iowa, a member of Western’s future league, the Gateway Conference, is 6-1.

For the first five minutes, there were no signs it was going to be as ugly as it was for the Hilltoppers.

Western took the opening kickoff and moved it 51 yards to the Northern Iowa 29. Then, on third-and-three, Echols gained 2 yards and fumbled. Northern’s Duane Petersen recovered, Western’s 12th turnover this season.

From then on, it was all Northern.

The Panthers had five first-half possessions and scored six touchdowns. They outgained the Hilltoppers 102-17 on the ground and 165-6 in the air.

Northern quarterback Jay Johnson completed 9 of 12 passes for all the yards and three TDs. Fullback Mike Schulte, Northern’s top rusher who had caught only nine throws in six games, grabbed four for 53 yards and one of scores.

How bad was it for Western?
Two quarterbacks completed 6 of 8 passes for a net of 6 yards. Four times they were sacked for a minus-14. Eddie Thompson, about to be dragged down for a safety, flipped the ball to Echols, who caught it at the Western 2 for a loss of 8 yards.

Brian Browning, about to be sacked, shoveled the ball to Dion Bryant for a loss of 7.

Johnson hit tight end Chris Nuss on a 29-yard pass to complete a 73-yard opening drive. After a 20-yard Western punt that reached the Hilltoppers’ 22, Northern Iowa scored in two plays on Johnson’s screen to Charles Lister. Johnson then hit Schulte running down the middle on a 25-yard pass, ending a 59-yard drive, and it was 21-0 with 38 seconds left in the first quarter.

The Panthers didn’t even need their offense for the next one. Kenny Shedd tracked down Chris Gable’s bouncing punt at the Northern 34, circled back to his own 20, turned upfield and saw seven blockers to two defenders along the left side. He scored untouched on a return that officially went 66 yards.

Another punt out of the end zone set up Northern at the Western 38 and Tank Corner scored from the 3 on the drive’s third play. Finally, after Johnson ran 43 yards, Johnson sneak in from the 1. Brian Mitchellel converted after each touchdown, giving him 28 of 28 this season.

Northern Iowa pushed the margins to 49-0 when No. 2 quarterback Kurt Warner scrambled out of pass formation up the middle and scored untouched from the 18.

Western finally got on the board with 2:38 left in the third period. Echols’ 3-yard run, then added two more in the fourth as Dwayne Hauld of Fairdale High went 2 yards on an end-around play and Herb Davis of Doss High dove over the top from the 3.

49-21 — and it wasn’t that close
Adversity, Northern Iowa pound Tops

By JOE MEDLEY  
Daily News Sports Editor

And now for the news.

Saturday's $28-million Lotto Kentucky numbers were 6-11-12-17-33-40.

In Game 6 of the World Series, Minnesota's Kirby Puckett blasted a home run in the bottom of the 11th inning for a 4-3 Twins win. Minnesota and Atlanta Braves are tied at three games each.

Turning to Western Kentucky football, well, it's this:

If life in the Gateway Conference is anything like Saturday's 49-21 loss to Northern Iowa, Western Kentucky ought to reconsider independence.

On the night Western dedicated Jimmy Feix Field, Gateway foe Northern Iowa built a 42-0 halftime lead and smothered the Hilltoppers before 3,228 fans.

"I feel bad. I'm hurt. I'm disappointed, I'm apologetic," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. "I feel badly for our kids. I thought they'd respond better to adversity, but they let adversity compound itself."

Western will play for the Gateway title in 1992, but Northern Iowa welcomed the Tops with open receivers, open-field running and open season for quarterback Jay Johnson.

The second-rated passer in the nation last season, Johnson completed nine of 12 passes for 165 yards and three touchdowns — all in the first half. Sub Curt Warner directed the second half, running 18 yard for a score of his own.

Johnson escaped Western's pass rush for a 43-yard run and snuck in for a 1-yard score.

Johnson methodically led the Panthers to touchdowns on their first six drives. UNI didn't punt in the first half.

"I was surprised," UNI coach Terry Allen said. "I knew we could do some things offensively, but I didn't think it would come so easily."

The Panthers, who have won two of their last 15 games, are 2-5.

The Panthers are 2-5 since the loss, also Western's fourth straight since a 48-21 bashing of Morehead State on Sept. 28. The Hilltoppers, who have won two of their last 15 games, are 2-5.

The Panthers rose to 6-1, and they looked like Purple-clad gods while doing it.

Kenny Shedd typified the game with his bizarre 66-yard punt return for a score in the second quarter. Shedd fielded punter Chris Gable's effort at the 34-yard line, bobbed it, chased it back to the 20, covered the width of the field and then covered the length through a gauntlet of blockers.

Kicker Brian Mitchell tacked on the extra point for a 28-0 lead at 12:51 of the second quarter.

Western scored on a 29-yard run to cap Echols' 6-yard run, receiver Dwayne Ham's 2-yard reverse and tailback Heb Davis' 3-yard dive, all in the second half.

Echols finished with 153 yards on 23 carries, but even his running couldn't revive the Hilltoppers.

"It's a little letdown because we just came out flat," Echols said. "We can compete with these guys, but we were flat offensively in the first half."

Western took the game's opening drive to UNI's 27-yard line, where defensive back Duane Petersen fell on Echols' fumble.

The Panthers powered 73 yards in nine plays, and Johnson finished it off with a stride-friendly, 29-yard pass to Chris Nuss. Mitchell made it 7-0.

The Panthers then forced Gable to punt from deep in his end zone, and his 19-yard effort left UNI on
Adversity, Northern Iowa pound Tops

ON AN OPTION play, Western quarterback Eddie Thompson sprints away from Northern Iowa's Dan Lane (62). UNI opened a 42-0 halftime lead and coasted to a 49-21 victory Saturday.

The loss was also Western's fourth straight since a 48-21 bashing of Morehead State on Sept. 28. The Hilltoppers, who have won two of their last 15 games, are 2-5.

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The Panthers then forced Gable to punt from deep in his end zone, and his 19-yard effort left UNI on Western's 22.

Two plays later, Johnson made it 13-0 on a 17-yard pass to Charles Lister. Mitchell did the honors for a 14-0 lead.

Johnson tacked on a 25-yarder to tailback Mike Schulte.

"Jay was sharp," Allen said. "I was pleased to see him play so well, especially after" an open date.

Western will have three more cracks at the Gateway this season. The Hilltoppers play Eastern Illinois at home, and they travel to Illinois State and Northern Iowa.

Western's next game is a Nov. 2-road date with Tennessee-Chattanooga.

"It's like everything else," Echols said. "We've just got to go back, find out what we're not doing well and work to get better in the areas we need to improve."
Compilied from staff and wire reports:

"I'll remember the fumble."
- Former Warren Central High School and present University of Kentucky tailback Damon Hood on his fumble near the end of UK's 29-26 loss to Louisiana State.

"I'm concerned about our team. We're a young team. You hope to see a young team make progress in certain areas, and we haven't."
- Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh on his struggling Hilltoppers after a 39-23 loss to Troy State.

"We only have so many passing plays, and Brian just doesn't get as many reps in practice. So it was a miracle he was able to come in and do what he did."
- Harbaugh on senior quarterback Brian Brownling's performance against Troy State. Brownling hit on 35 of 33 passes for 191 yards, two touchdowns and four interceptions.

"Mud, lots of mud. There were about five inches of it."
- "It had rained the whole time we were there, and it rained all game long until the last play; then the sun popped out. I never played in a game where the conditions were so bad, but it was a heck of a game."
- Western offensive coordinator Darryl Drake on the 1975 football game between the Hilltoppers and Northern Iowa. Western won the Division II playoff game 14-12, and Drake was a redshirt freshman wide receiver on Western's 1975 team.

"This is a different kind of team. We've got better leadership. There are enough kids to say, 'We know we're better than this, and we're capable of doing good things.'"
- Harbaugh on the Hilltoppers, who he hopes won't repeat the 2-8 finish of 1990.

"It was kind of a dream season. We had a lot of big plays, and I got to play with a lot of good players."
- Northern Iowa quarterback Jay Johnson on the '90 season, in which he finished as the nation's second-rated passer.

"If they lose to us and then turn around and beat Warren Central, they deserve to go to the playoffs."
- Western East football coach Kevin Wallace on Franklin-Simpson.

"J.D. has done a real good job of running the option. We're talking about some real good throws — the kind you don't see a lot of high school quarterbacks make."
- Wallace on F-S quarterback J.D. Johnson.

"Well, I guess it's going OK."
- Western women's basketball player Paulette Monroe on a draining practice.

"It's hard to progress when you've got so many injuries. Nobody's hurt real bad. But it seems like as soon as we get one healthy, somebody else goes down."
- Lady Topper coach Paul Sanderford on the rash of injuries that has beset his team.

"Oh, I think very much so. We don't play any patsies right off the bat."
- Sanderford on whether early injuries could hurt his team when the season doesn't start until mid-November.

"Then we go up to Morehead, she hits the first field goal of the game, comes down on her ankle wrong and almost breaks it. Jen's just had an awful time. It just seems like it's been one injury after another for her."
- "Where it really hurts us to have Jen out is that she loves to play the game so much. She's got an enthusiasm for the game that's very much like Liesa Lang's intensity. Just like Liesa's intensity rubs off on the rest of the team, so does Jennifer's enthusiasm. It's very important to have that on the team."
- Sanderford on Jennifer Berryman.

"Harold Thompkins is not a good kid; he's a great kid. He has grown in every area of his life."
- Western basketball coach Ralph Willard on his senior captain.

"I mostly talked to the kids and got close to them. It was a great experience, and I look forward to seeing those kids at the games."
- Thompkins on his summer work with the Boys' Club.

"I'll be ready to rock and roll then."
- Western senior forward Jack Jennings on Nov. 18, the day he sheds the cast around his broken foot.
Loss to Northern Iowa sinks Western to its ‘lowest point’

Jack Harbaugh had just seen Northern Iowa rip his Western Kentucky team. The last thing he wanted to see was Jimmy Feix — and Tom Meredith.

As Western’s football coach painted over reporters’ questions Saturday, Feix and Meredith came to console him for the 49-21 loss.

It was the night Western dedicated Feix Field in honor of the former football player, football coach and athletics director who welcomed Harbaugh aboard in 1989.

Then there was Meredith, the Western president who presided over Harbaugh’s hiring ... the president Harbaugh pledges infinite respect for, whether asked or not ... the president faced with public attention focused on his differences with Board of Regents chairman Joe Iracane ... the president who may be leaving Western soon.

“I’m sorry,” Harbaugh said to Feix. “I’d hoped we’d do better on your big night.”

As Feix told of his 49-0 loss to Murray State in 1980, up came Meredith.

Harbaugh stood up. “I’m apologize. I hate this had to happen in front of the home crowd.”

Meredith offered pats on the back and understanding words, then Harbaugh turned back to reporters. He placed the evening in relation to others in his two-plus years at Western.

“This is our lowest point,” Harbaugh said. “We’ve had some lows, too. But this is the lowest.”

The Hilltoppers weren’t competitive with their future Gateway Conference opponent.

Third-ranked Northern Iowa scored six touchdowns in as many possessions in the first half. The Panthers drove as if they were scrimmaging their scout team, building a 42-0 halftime lead.

Harbaugh was beside himself.

This was the same Western team that came Jack to almost beat Middle Tennessee four weeks ago ... the same Western team that entered the fourth quarter competitive in every game this season ... the same Hilltoppers who held fourth-quarter leads in three losses.

It all came down Saturday night.

Western’s offense fumbled away its only first-half drive at UNI’s 27-yard line. The Hilltoppers scored 21 points against a mixture of Panther starters and subs in the second half.

Defensively, Western was no match.

“We’re getting down on numbers,” Harbaugh said. “We’re having to go further into our depth chart, and it’s really hurting us.”

The carrot for Harbaugh was Roscoe Echols, who rushed for 153 yards.

“The positive thing about a loss like this is you get to see who rises up in the face of adversity,” Harbaugh said. “Some fade, and others rise.

“Roscoe really stepped up and distinguished himself.”

Echols is well on his way to 1,000 yards with 768 and four games to play.

But Western is well on its way to repeating the disaster of a year ago, when the Hilltoppers lost their last eight games.

As for Harbaugh, one has to wonder how many more low points he can take.

Grumblings

When his team is losing, a coach suddenly becomes an elected official.

Western has lost 13 of its last 15 games, and some fans are hinting at a referendum on Harbaugh’s job status.

Harbaugh has history on his side. Dave Roberts went 2-9, 4-7 and 4-6-1 before posting a winning record at Western. Then he took the Hilltoppers to the playoffs two straight years before jumping to Northeast Louisiana.

Roberts had his share of blowouts; 47-7 to Southwest Missouri and 42-7 to Akron come to mind.

But Roberts may not be a fair comparison.

Roberts built his program on the quick fix — junior college transfers with two years’ eligibility. He had what has been described as a “revolving-door program.”

In his third season at Western, Harbaugh has committed to four-year players. His recruits are in their second year. The average rebuilding process takes four years.

May the electorate rest.
Harbaugh saying 'we can' as bread of slate arrives

By JOE MEDLEY

If Western Kentucky is to end its four-game football losing streak this weekend, it'll have to do it:

A. On the road against a team that hasn't lost at home.
B. Over a team Western has traditionally struggled with.
C. Over a team that just loves to stuff running teams like Western.

Tennessee-Chattanooga (4-3) is 4-0 at home this season coming off a 38-31 besting of sixth-ranked Marshall.

Western is 3-7 over the years against the Moccasins, and Western coach Jack Harbaugh is 0-2. The Moccasins scored a touchdown and a 2-point conversion with 21 seconds left to beat Western 22-21 last season.

But the message Harbaugh is sending the Hilltoppers is we can, we can, we can as the Hilltoppers pass the meat of the schedule and reach the bread.

"We're entering a part of our schedule against teams we can beat," Harbaugh said.

None of the remaining four opponents — UT-Chattanooga, Eastern Illinois, Indiana State and Illinois State — are ranked.

Western (2-5) is coming off the toughest part of its schedule, which saw the Hilltoppers lose three games to ranked teams, including last week's 49-21 shellacking by fourth-ranked Northern Iowa.

"We had a long night against Northern Iowa, that's for sure," Harbaugh said. "But, we've got to concentrate on what's ahead of us and shake off the effects of the last few games."

Coached by Buddy Nix, UT-Chattanooga features a balanced attack, averaging 200 yards rushing and 166 passing. Quarterback Keonyn Earl has completed 52 percent of his passes this year at 18.4 yards a pop and nine touchdowns.

James Roberts rushes for 76 yards a game, and Muhammed Shamsid-Deen goes for 69.

The running game, led by tailback Roscoe Echols, keys Western's attack. Echols rushed for 153 yards against Northern Iowa and is well on his way to becoming the fourth Hilltopper to rush for 1,000 yards in one season. Echols has 768 yards and needs only 58 a game to reach 1,000.

But UT-Chattanooga's defense has been tough on the run, giving up just 75 yards a game in the Mocs' first six outings.

Kickoff for Saturday's game is 6 p.m. at Chamberlain Field.

Injury report

Defensive lineman Danny Davis, bruised kidney, out; offensive lineman Chris Andrews, sprained knee, out.

Defensive lineman Brian Canoy will return Saturday after missing two games with a knee injury.
Chattanooga TD at 1:37 tips Western 26-22

Following Shamsid-Deen's game-winning touchdown with 1:37 left, Western drove to Chattanooga's 30-yard line before four straight incomplete passes ended the drive.

Shamsid-Deen gained 131 yards on 21 carries, and James Roberts added 109 on 15 carries to lead Chattanooga (5-3).

Quarterback Eddie Thompson of Western (2-5), a junior from Fort Knox High School, rushed for 138 yards on 20 carries.

**RUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**At Orlando, Fla.**


Women's team scores: Western Kentucky 39, South Alabama 49, Texas-Pan American 73, Arkansas State 89, Louisiana Tech 119, Jacksonville 170, Arkansas State 240, Central Florida 210, SW Louisiana 220, New Orleans 242, Lamar 239.


**Men's soccer C-3**

UNC-Ashville 1 (Greg Kudzowski), Western Kentucky 0.

**Soccer C-3**

Kentucky 2 (Greg Kudzauer, Greg Dyl), Xavier 1 (Gareth Combs), Western Kentucky 1 (Chris Hutchinson), Evansville 1 (Ian Eggleston), OT.
Yet another win eludes Western as UTC scores late

By JOB MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — If the NCAA called for shorter football games to go with shorter, 20-hour work weeks for players, Western Kentucky would say thank you, thank you, thank you.

In fact, Coach Jack Harbaugh might draw up the legislation.

Tennese Chattanooga's Muhammed Shamsid-Deen scored on a 5-yard run with 1:13 to play, and the Moccasins (5-3) staved off Western's last-gasp drive for a 22-19 win Saturday at Chamberlain Field.

The loss was the fifth straight for Western (2-6). Moreover, the Hilltoppers have led in the final four minutes of four losses this season.

Harbaugh refused to blame mystical forces.

"We're not snake-bit," Harbaugh said. "We just continue not to do the things that need to be done to win."

Western can blame itself for a first-quarter fumble at UTC's 5-yard line, costly penalties and other turnovers.

Then there's a defense moved over in four late game-winning drives this season.

"We've lost a lot of depth with injuries and a couple who've quit," Harbaugh said. "We've got young kids out there late in the game who are tired, but they can't come out."

In spite of it all, Western threatened to beat the Mocs.

With 0:11 to play, quarterback Brian Browning came off the bench and drove Western from its 11-yard line to the Moccasins' 30.

Browning fired incomplete to Mike Brumbelow on first down. On second down, Browning found senior Dwayne Haun over the middle at the 10, but Haun dropped the pass.

Brumbelow made a leaping catch at the 2 on third down but touched earth out of bounds.

On fourth down, Browning scrambled out of pressure and floated a prayer to the goal line, where UTC defender Jackie Washington deflected it.

"It's just the same old me," Browning said. "I come in with high expectations and start to make things happen, then I can't finish it. It's just one of those things; I don't know."

UTC coach Buddy Nix lauded his defense.

"We sure do know how to make it exciting," he said. "I was proud of our defense at the end."

The loss wasted a 420-yard effort by Western's offense. Sophomore quarterback Eddie Thompson rushed 136 yards, setting a school record for quarterbacks.

Thompson also claimed the Western mark for rushing yards in a season by a quarterback with 525, besting Sharon Miller's 1963 output of 428.

Thompson led the Hilltoppers back from a 19-7 third-quarter deficit. His 1-yard sneak and Steve Donisi's kick cut it to 19-14 at 2:06 of the third quarter.

Thompson quarterbacked a 34-yard drive leading to tailback Davion Sarver's 3-yard score with 5:20 to play to make it 20-19. Browning threw to Brumbelow to make it 22-19.

But UTC took over on its 34 and went the distance in 12 plays. The key play came on third and 12 at Western's 41. UTC quarterback Kenyon Earl slithered out of Western's pass rush for a 3-yard gain, and the Hilltoppers gave him five more on a facemask penalty.

That made it third and four, and Deen burst for 14 yards.

Western sacked UTC quarterbacks eight times, but Earl's third-down run burned Western.

"We hadn't been getting pressure on the quarterback all year," Harbaugh said. "We did tonight, but he still got a couple of big runs."

The Moccasins seemingly took command on their first drive of the third quarter. Fullback James Roberts' 29-yard run keyed the 12-play, 89-yard march. Deen finished it off on an 8-yard option run for a 19-7 lead.

Deen finished with 131 yards, and Roberts added 109 as UTC gained 383.

The Moccasins used reserve quarterback Erik Hutchins' school-record 94-yard touchdown pass to Shaun Habersham on third down.

And 22 to build a 13-7 halftime lead.
One mistake spoils WKU receiver's career night

Another week, another heartache for someone wearing a Western Kentucky football uniform.

Call it the formes of a 2-6 season, but yet another Hilltopper played a career-best game, only to make one mistake that cost Western in the end.

This is the tale of Dwayne Haun, a senior wide receiver from Fairdale High School. He's been arguably the most exciting Hilltopper of the dreary last two seasons, during which Western is 4-14.

He has delighted with kick returns, excited with pass receptions and electrified on his play — the reverse.

Haun ran from right end to left, grabbed quarterback Eddie Thompson's option pitch and wrestled his way over the goal line for a 2-yard touchdown in Saturday's 26-22 loss to Tennessee-Chattanooga.

Haun also made a 15-yard, fourth-down reception on Western's last-gasp drive, which started at the Toppers' 11-yard line and died on the Moccasins' 30.

As the final seconds ran, Haun tossed his helmet around on the sidelines. He wanted no consoling words. "Just go away; leave me alone," he instructed a team manager.

Haun sat outside Western's locker room for several minutes. He couldn't face his teammates.

The only play Haun could remember was his dropped pass on the final drive. On second down at the 30, he broke open over the middle and dropped Brian Browning's number-splitting throw at the 10.

Haun might have scored on the play. Then again, he might not have. If he didn't get in, surely Western would have.

Such was Haun's torment.

On a night when youthful Hilltoppers seemed to overcome goofs that have haunted them through a five-game losing streak, a senior fell from grace.

Haun had played such a great game, Western coach Jack Harbaugh bristled at questions about the drop.

"After a game like that, and all we can think about is the one bad play," Harbaugh barked. "I want to tell you something — Dwayne Haun is a battler. He's a tough kid. You may knock him down, but he's going to get up. If you want to keep him down, you'd better bury him in about 5 feet of mud."

"Dwayne is one of the leaders of this team, and I love him. He's made big plays for us before, and I'm sure he'll keep on making big plays for us."

Notables

— Western's defense had 10 quarterback sacks going into Saturday's game. The Hilltoppers pounded UTC's Kenyon Earl and Eric Huchins' eight times.

The Moccasins got off two first half passes, one to Western linebacker Richard Grice and one to UTC receiver Shoun Habersham for a devastating, 94-yard touchdown pass.

According to a sports writer from UTC's student newspaper, Clint Lawson Tudors got his nickname at birth.

— For those who lostsleep guessing UTC punter Pump Tudors' real name, it's Clint Lawson Tudors.
Once too small, Grice big success

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

The high school scouting report on Richard Grice was — in a word — blunt.

“They said I was too small and too slow,” the Fort Campbell product said. “I guess 175 pounds for a linebacker is not too inviting.”

But don’t ask Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh to be surprised that Grice walked on and became one of the best inside linebackers in Division I-AA.

A junior, Grice is Western’s leading tackler going into Saturday’s 1:30 p.m. home finale against Eastern Illinois. He has 68 stops.

Grice is still small for a linebacker at 205 pounds. But his success comes from substance, not mass, Harbaugh said.

“He’s one of these kids who, if you tell him he can’t do something, look out,” Harbaugh said. “They told him he’d never play Division I-AA college ball, and here he is.

“He’s a biology major, and I bet he’d look up some day to see him, as a member of the Gateway Conference, EIU (3-5) is much like Western (2-6). Both teams have lost close games this season. The Panthers have four one-point defeats and one interception.

“Our team has never had him in my office unless it was something positive to talk about,” Harbaugh said. “He and I practiced every day with a smile on his face, and he always did his job.”

His job Saturday will be to stop EIU tailback Jamie Jones, who averages 124.3 yards a game.

A member of the Gateway Conference, EIU (3-5) is much like Western (2-6). Both teams have lost close games this season. The Panthers have four one-point defeats — two by a 16-15 count.

Western, which will play for the Gateway title in 1992, is trying to end a five-game losing streak. The Hilltoppers have led with four minutes to play in four losses.

“Obviously, there’s a lot of frustration going around,” Grice said. “But we’re keeping a positive attitude.

“We’re going to finish against three Gateway teams (EIU, Indiana State and Illinois State), and we want to enter on a positive note.”

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Western vs. Eastern Illinois
Saturday, Nov. 9, 1:30 p.m. /// Bowling Green, Ky.

Records: Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" -- 2-6-0
Eastern Illinois "Panthers" -- 3-5-0

Schedule/Results:

EIU (Coach Bob Spoo)

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<th>September</th>
<th>WKU (Coach Jack Harbaugh)</th>
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<td>7 at Austin Peay</td>
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<td>12 at Eastern Kentucky</td>
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The Series: EIU 7, WKU 1
In Bowling Green: EIU 3, WKU 1
First Game: EIU 34-14, Nov. 12, 1983 in Bowling Green

Stat Leaders

Rushing: WKU -- Roscoe Echols 150-815 (101.9/game), 4 TDs
Eddie Thompson 120-525 (75.0/game), 5 TDs
EIU -- Jamie Jones 170-994 (124.3/game), 2 TDs

Passing: WKU -- Brian Browning 39-86-6, 510 yds, 4 TDs
EIU -- Jeff Thorne 115-171-5, 1480 yds, 16 TDs

Receiving: WKU -- Dwayne Haan 22-294, 1 TD; Milton Biggins 14-173, 2 TDs; Mike Brumbelow 10-125, 2 TDs
EIU -- Mike Rummell 22-320, 2 TDs; Jamie Jones 19-182, 3 TDs

Punting: WKU -- Chris Gable 37-34.5
EIU -- Brian Pindar 32-38.6

Tackles: WKU -- LB Richard Grice 68; FS Kevin Ferry 64; LB Richy Nail 49; SS Larry Harris 47; DE Chris Brooks 39
EIU -- FS Jeff Miles 67; LB Mike Settles 65; DT Kent MacIntyre 62; DT Dan Dee 56; DE Joe Renka 47
**Blocked field-goal try saves Western, 28-26**

From AP and Special Dispatches

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Western Kentucky University’s Mike Brumbelow blocked Eastern Illinois’ Darrell Rennels’ 14-yard field-goal attempt at the final horn yesterday as the Hilltoppers triumphed 28-26 in a college football game.

The block capped a big goal-line stand by Western (3-6). Eastern Illinois (3-6) had a first-and-goal from the 3-yard line, but Edson Castillo failed to score on three straight runs. Western’s Kevin Ferry was in on all three tackles.

The Hilltoppers have lost four games in the final four minutes this season, and coach Jack Harbaugh envisioned another tough loss as Eastern Illinois lined up for the field-goal attempt.

Eastern Illinois’ Darrell Rennels blocked Western Kentucky’s 14-yard field-goal attempt at the final horn yesterday as the Hilltoppers triumphed 28-26 in a college football game.

**What’s going through my mind is that I’m a pretty good guy. I go to church and the players work hard and do what they’re supposed to do,” he said. “You have to think, ‘Why me?’ But today everything worked out for us. We called time out to make them think about the kick, and it worked for us this time.”

Eastern Illinois now has lost five games by a total of six points.

“IT (the field-goal attempt) just didn’t look like it got airborne,” coach Bob Spoo said. “Our kids still have their heads up, but these (close losses) get tougher to take each week.”

The Hilltoppers rushed for 398 yards, including 139 by Eddie Thompson.

A 21-yard pass from Thompson to Brumbelow with 4:31 left to go in the first quarter gave Western the lead for good at 14-7.

With 2:42 left in the first half, Thompson’s 2-yard scamper capped a 59-yard, 13-play drive and gave the Hilltoppers a 21-7 advantage.

Eastern Illinois scored on a 1-yard run by Castillo with 1:19 left in the third quarter. Castillo’s 2-yard run with 10:29 left in the fourth pulled the Panthers within 21-20.

Eastern Illinois closed within 28-26 on Jeff Thorne’s 61-yard pass to Jason Cook with 6:43 left, but the two-point conversion attempt failed.
Toppers block kick, kick habit

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Finally, a break.

Western Kentucky's Mike Brumbelow blocked Eastern Illinois kicker Darrell Rennels' 18-yard field goal try with three seconds left, and Western won 28-26 Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium.

The win ended a five-game futility streak for Western (3-6) and kept the Hilltoppers from losing yet another fourth-quarter lead.

Brumbelow, a 6-foot-4 sophomore wide receiver from Lilburn, Ga., hadn't been a part of Western's field-goal defense until 6-foot-6 Anthony Cooper quit the team two weeks ago.

"I was kind of surprised about that (replacing Cooper) because I don't really think I'm that good a leaper," Brumbelow said. "But I'm glad to be on that team, because I like doing it."

Brumbelow said he was one of several to touch Rennels' kick.

"To tell you the truth, I'm not sure who blocked it," he said. "I got a piece of it."

For Western coach Jack Harbaugh, who iced Rennels with a timeout before the kick, there was elation and relief. Four times Western had lost leads this season with less than four minutes to play.

"I was thinking — and I'm sure a lot of people were — why me? Why us?" Harbaugh said. "Here we go again; the kids worked hard, and it's going to happen again."

Western forced EIU (3-6) to kick when a host of Hilltoppers wrestled the ball line on second down.

"I just turned him in so I could get help from the rest of the guys," said safety Larry Harris, who made the initial hit. "All we were thinking was, 'There's no way we're letting them in the end zone.'"

"What was amazing was that we were out of linebackers," Harbaugh said. "Chris Butler got hurt early in the game, and Richy Nail went down on the last drive."

"We were asking for volunteers on the sidelines, but the kids dug down and found a way to stop them."

Panther coach Bob Spoo called timeout to stop the clock at 0:03, and Harbaugh added another. Spoo said Rennels' kick was low.

"It didn't look like there was penetration," he said. "It looked like the ball just didn't get airborne."

EIU went airborne to come within 28-26. Quarterback Jeff Thorne scrambled from sideline to sideline and hit wide-open Jason Cook for a 69-yard touchdown pass to make it 28-26 with 6:43 to play.

But Thorne's conversion pass missed. It was one of EIU's two failed 2-point tries. The other came at 21-20, when a scrambling Thorne threw out of fullback Jamie Pilson's reach.

"Those 2-point conversion plays were big plays in this game," Harbaugh said.

A Panther turnover set Western up for a 28-20 lead. EIU's Martin Ellens couldn't scoop up Chris Gable's punt, and senior Joe Lee Johnson recovered at the Panthers' 18-yard line.

Three plays later, Davion Sarver ran in from the 4, and kicker Chris Pino made it 28-20 with 7:05 to play.

Down 21-7 at halftime, EIU pulled.
Continued From Page 1-B

Ed to within 21-20 on Castillo's 2-yard plunge with 10:24 to play. Don Wegryzn's recovery of quarterback Eddie Thompson's fumble and Castillo's 29-yard, Statue-of-Liberty run helped bring the Panthers within 21-14. EIU drove 38 yards, and Castillo dove in from the 2-yard line on fourth down. Rennels delivered the extra point at 1:19 of the third quarter.

Castillo led EIU's 430-yard attack with 91 yards rushing. Thorne passed for 233 more and two scores. Western amassed 398 rushing yards, led by Thompson's 130 on 25 runs. He also completed a season-best 9 of 16 passes for 80 yards and a score, helping Western to 467 total yards.

"We really did a nice job blocking and moving the ball, especially in the first half," Harbaugh said.

Big plays and Thompson's 117 yards rushing pushed Western in the first half. Thompson's 3-yard option run plus Pino's kick with 2:42 left in the half made it 21-7.

Thompson also struck through the air. Brumelow's leaping grab of Thompson's pass completed a 21-yard scoring play, and Pino made it 14-7 late in the first quarter. Receiver Dwayne Haun's 49-yard run on a double reverse keyed the drive leading to Brumelow's catch.

"Eddie called the play at the line of scrimmage because he saw my man playing me to the inside," Brumelow said. "The pass was right there."

Just 54 seconds before Brumelow's catch, the Panthers tied the game 7-7 on Thorne's 18-yard fade pass to Cook at 4:01 of the first quarter. The play completed a 72-yard, nine-play drive.

Hilltopper cornerback Melvin Johnson's interception thwarted EIU's first drive at Western's 16, and Western marched 84 yards on 11 plays to take a 7-0 lead.

Thompson broke loose on runs of 10, 14 and 21 yards during the drive. He jumped and pitched over a Panther defender to running back Herb Davis, who ran 8 yards untouched for the score.

Davis was one of many seniors to make big plays in their final home game. Safety Kevin Ferry had three tackles and an assist inside the 10-yard line on EIU's last drive. Tight end Milton Biggins caught a season-best five passes for 43 yards.

"I'm just happy for all the kids," Harbaugh said. "They come to practice, work hard and give us the wide-eye all of the time, and then things go wrong.

"But they stayed in there and didn't quit, and that's why they had a chance to win the game."
Lingering image from season will be victory

The blast heard Saturday bouncing off the fast-food joints and hotels crammed into our fine city was not a sonic boom from a residential street.

It wasn't L.T. Smith Stadium's cannon. The cannon fired after Western Kentucky's football game; it's doubtful anyone noticed.

Ears popped as Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh's psyche cleared the tower and soared to orbit.

In one moment, the Hilltoppers went from the verge of their sixth straight loss to rushing Feix Field after one of their most dramatic wins.

Western stopped Eastern Illinois four times inside the 10-yard line. On the game's final play, Mike Brumbelow blocked an 18-yard field goal to save a 28-26 win.

The image Western fans will hold from the 1991 season was victory in the final home game.

The blocked kick gave Athletics Director Louis Marciani highlights film to peddle tickets with. "What a great game for marketing," he beamed in the locker room.

But Harbaugh cornered the emotions market. His wide grin held up his wind-whipped, reddened cheeks ... a contrast to previous weeks, when his flushed cheeks held up a sunken face.

Four times this season, he watched a fatigued, outmuscled defense give up fourth-quarter leads. While Western's men's basketball team has been dubbed the "Thrill on the Hill," football was becoming the Chill on the Hill.

With three seconds left Saturday, EIU kicker Darrell Kennels stood as the ambassador of chill, and chilling thoughts moon-walked across Harbaugh's mind.

"As I stood on the sidelines," Harbaugh said, "I began to think, 'Gosh, I'm a good person. I go to church most Sundays. I've raised my kids right. Why does this keep happening to me? Why does it keep happening to our kids who work so hard and keep trying, and trying?'

But Brumbelow and a host of Toppers took Kennels' low kick in the belly, touching off one of Harbaugh's trademark hug hunts.

It gets better.

Brumbelow, a 6-foot-4 sophomore wide receiver, joined the field-goal defense two weeks ago when 6-foot-6 defensive end Anthony Cooper quit the team.

And remember the 23-21 loss to Middle Tennessee at the front end of the losing streak? The Blue Raiders kicked a field goal with (gulp) three seconds to play.

Woooooo!

Oh, about Middle Tennessee: Coach Bjox Dophel - Harbaugh's "favorite person" - lost to Cincinnati on Saturday. Harbaugh's son John is an assistant coach at Cincy.

What a day for Jack Harbaugh.

"I guess there is a fate to all of this," he said.

After the game, Harbaugh saw the Feix Field scoreboard had been turned off. He told a radio audience, "What, did someone forget to pay the electric bill? I want them to put that score back on the scoreboard and leave it there for a few weeks."

Alas, some overdue basking for an emotional coach who has been through an emotional sausage grinder this season.

Eye-openers

- Western's defense owns a dubious third-down reputation. The Toppers have given up a 94-yard touchdown pass on third-and-22 this season. But on Saturday, Western stopped the Panthers on seven of 12 third-down attempts.

- The Hilltoppers dominated offensively, gaining 467 yards to 430, holding better than a 16-minute edge in time of possession and running 90 plays to EIU's 59.

- Sophomore tailback Derrick Eason saw his first extended playing time, gaining 69 yards on 12 carries.
Tops' defenses down for Indiana State

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Injuries have chipped away at Western Kentucky's defense all season, but the latest batch is devastating.

Linebacker Richy Nairl suffered a torn cruciate ligament in his knee in last week's 28-26 win over Eastern Illinois. He's out for the season and probably spring practice.

Linebacker Chris Butler will miss Saturday's 12:30 p.m. game at Indiana State (4-6) with a hip pointer.

One of Western's leading tacklers, strong safety Larry Harris, will miss the Indiana State game with back spasms.

Linebacker Marcus Burns has been out for two weeks with a shoulder. He was supposed to return this week, but he developed bronchitis.

Consider, too, that linebacker David Bledsoe left the team three weeks ago, along with defensive end Anthony Cooper.

Western coach Jack Harbaugh's depth chart looks more like a tic-tac-toe game. He's moving defensive lineman Danny Davis, a true freshman, to linebacker. He'll also start Bowling Green High product Eddie Sharer, a sophomore, at linebacker.

"In a way, I'm kind of anxious to see Danny Davis play at linebacker," Harbaugh said. "He played there in high school, and he's gotten the one-week crash course here.

"This will give us a chance to make a determination on where to put him in the future."

There's more bad news from the infirmary. Starting quarterback Eddie Thompson has a sprained ankle and bruised shoulder, and he'll miss Saturday's game. Thompson holds a single-season, school record for quarterbacks with 655 yards rushing despite missing two games with an ankle injury earlier this season. But he'll give way to sophomore Jairus McElroy on Saturday.

"The injuries are a problem for us," Harbaugh said. "But the other side of the coin is that get to evaluate some young players."

For what it's worth, offensive lineman David Browning will return after missing two games with a knee injury.

The abbreviated Hilltoppers (3-6) will need him against Indiana State, a team much like Western.

"They feature the tailback, and run a lot of option like we do," Harbaugh said.

The featured back is Derrick Franklin, who averages 130.3 yards a game. He's the No. 2 running back in Division I-AA.

A native of Crestline, Ohio, Harbaugh knows all about Franklin.

"He comes from Mansfield, about 13 miles away from my hometown," Harbaugh said. "He's a dandy. The only reason he's not a Division I-A back is his size (5-foot-9, 186 pounds)."

The Sycamores are coming off a 49-21 loss to Northern Iowa. If the score sounds familiar, it's because Northern Iowa used it against Western on Oct. 26.

Western and Indiana State would appear evenly matched, and the game would seem to afford the best chance for the Hilltoppers' first road win of the season. Western is 0-3 away from L.T. Smith Stadium/Felix Field.

But injuries have forced Harbaugh to ease his expectations.

"I'm not so worried about getting a road win as much as I am just seeing continued improvement in the later stages of this season," Harbaugh said. "I want to see us playing the best football we can play."

Stats and stuff

Western junior tailback Roscoe Echols has 834 yards rushing on 155 carries, and he goes for 92.7 yards a game. He has two games to reach 1,000 yards. Only Dickie Moore, Joe Arnold and Donald Smith have rushed for 1,000 yards in one season in a Western uniform. Moore did it twice.

Sophomore wide receiver Mike Bumbelow is coming into his own as a wide receiver. Seldom used until the late stages of this season, he has 12 catches for 155 yards and three touchdowns. He's also caught a 2-point conversion pass, and he was credited with the blocked field goal that saved the win over Eastern Illinois.

Western is close to surpassing 4,000 yards total offense this season. The Hilltoppers have 3,519 yards for an average of 391 per game. Rushing has accounted for 2,542 yards for a 282.4-per-game average.
Sycamores turn back Western

From AP and Special Dispatches

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. — Derrick Franklin ran for touchdowns of 1 yard and 17 yards yesterday as Indiana State converted a big third quarter into a 31-14 victory over Western Kentucky in a non-conference football clash.

Franklin, whose 35 carries for 207 yards led all rushers, played the key role in the Sycamores' 17-point third quarter.

"We allowed them to stay in the game in the first half," Indiana State coach Dennis Raetz said, "but we controlled the game for the most part."

After a 7-7 halftime tie, Indiana State (5-6) broke the deadlock at 7:40 into the third quarter when Steve Kriger converted a 29-yard field goal. Franklin's first scoring run, a 17-yarder, came with 6 minutes left in the period. His 1-yard plunge with 1:21 to go concluded a six-play, 86-yard drive by the Sycamores.

"We just didn't execute in the second half," said coach Jack Harbaugh of Western (3-7). "We gave them a couple of scores off turnovers, and then they picked up the momentum."

Yesterday's summary

| WESTERN KENTUCKY | 0 7 0 7 — 14 |
| INDIANA STATE | 7 0 17 7 — 31 |

Indiana State — Charles Swann, 32, pass from Kip Hennessy (Steve Kriger kick); Western Kentucky — Herb Davis, 18, run (Steve Donisi kick); Indiana State — Kriger, 23, FG; Indiana State — Derrick Franklin, 17, run (Krieger kick); Indiana State — Franklin, 1, run (Krieger kick); Western Kentucky — Davis, 5, run (Donisi kick); Indiana State — Demetrius Dowler, 13, pass from Hennessy (Krieger kick).

Western Indiana State

| First downs | 17 | 20 |
| Rushing yards | 43-147 | 61-257 |
| Passing yards | 137 | 218 |
| Penalties | 16-24-0 | 11-190 |
| Punts | 6-38.8 | 3-41.7 |
| Fumbles-lost | 3/2 | 0/0 |
| Penalties-yards | 435 | 8-109 |
| Time possession | 26:21 | 33:39 |
ISU goes 52 yards for first down, wins

By JOE MEDLEY 11-17-91
Daily News Sports Editor

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. — It was a drive that meant little, but it graphically typified a hard season for Western Kentucky.

Already leading Western 24-14, Indiana State got a first down after facing second down and 52. The Sycamores then added a touchdown with 20 seconds left to hammer home a 31-14 win Saturday before 2,701 fans in Memorial Stadium.

Derrick Franklin's 36-yard run moved the Sycamores to Western's 29-yard line, but two holding penalties and a clip brought them back to their own 29.

Receiver Charles Swann ran 27 yards on a reverse, and quarterback Kip Hennelly passed to Bernard Redmond for 28 more to convert the third down.

Two plays later, Hennelly tossed to a wide-open Demetrius Dowler for a 13-yard touchdown, asserting the domination ISU enjoyed all day.

WKU's defensive collapse was not unlike other fourth-quarter surrenders this season. Busted by injuries to four starters and lacking depth, the Hilltoppers were vulnerable.

"You could see it," Coach Jack Harbaugh said. "We were just grabbing. We weren't tackling anybody."

Western (3-7) had trouble gridding Franklin. The second-leading rusher in Division I-AA last season, Franklin darted for 207 yards and two touchdowns in his final game at ISU.

Hennelly passed for 216 yards and two touchdowns — 32 yards to Swann and 13 to Dowler — as ISU (5-6) compiled 503 total yards.

Those aren't unusual stats for Western's defense, but what happened to the offense?

Averaging 282 yards rushing a game, the Hilltoppers got 165 Saturday.

"Their linebackers just played a heck of a game," said senior tailback Herb Davis, who led Western with 64 yards and touchdown runs of 18 and five yards. "They did about all you can ask. There weren't many places to go."

It didn't help that starting option quarterback Eddie Thompson missed the game with an ankle injury.

Sophomore Jairus Malcolm started but struggled early. Senior Brian Browning came off the bench to complete 15 of 23 for 135 yards and no interceptions. Browning led both of Western's scoring drives.

Browning completed third-down passes to Dwayne Haun, Matt McIntyre and Mike Brumbelow to set up Davis' first score. Kicker Steve Donisi added the extra point to make it 7-7 at 10:07 of the second quarter.

"We tried a few runs to set it up, and then we were able to get some people open on third down," Browning said. "I was really happy to move the ball and score on my first drive."

ISU botched two field goal attempts to preserve the 7-7 deadlock for halftime, but Coach Dennis Raetz wasn't concerned.

Continued On Page 7

Column 1, This Section

Toppers fall 17-7 to their rivals

"We had over 300 yards of total offense. We were controlling the game, and I know we had a heck of a game," Harbaugh said. "But more than any other thing, we needed our defense to pick us up and help our offense because of all the injuries. We had a couple of scores that we had to come out in, and second half we had a couple of scores that we could have used."

When the offenses couldn't produce, the defenses did just that.

"The Hilltoppers hurt us," Harbaugh said. "But more than anything else, we had a heck of a defensive effort. We held them to 135 yards. They didn't have a touchdown in, and when the defenses couldn't produce, the defenses did just that."

"It was a heck of a game," Harbaugh said. "But more than anything else, we had a heck of a defensive effort. We held them to 135 yards. They didn't have a touchdown in, and when the defenses couldn't produce, the defenses did just that."
QB Thompson back for season finale

Western Kentucky football coach Jack Harbaugh hopes quarterback Eddie Thompson's return will pay off against a strong Illinois State defense in Saturday's season finale.

Thompson missed last week's 31-14 loss to Indiana State with an ankle injury, but Western's second-leading rusher will go to work at 1:30 p.m. at Normal, Ill.

Harbaugh says Western (3-7) will need Thompson.

"Illinois State has a really good defense," Harbaugh said. "They've got nine of 11 guys who played against us two years ago up there."

Illinois State (4-6), held Northern Iowa's high-powered offense to 17 points in a 17-14 loss. The Redbirds made Southwestern Missouri State a 6-3 victim.

But like Western, Illinois State is out for a positive ending to a disappointing season. The Redbirds are on a five-game losing streak, their last win coming against Southwestern Missouri.

Western has one win in its last seven games.

"What I hope we do is go up there and compete like it's a championship game," Harbaugh said. "We need to end with a good stand."

Illinois State boasts tailback Toby Davis, who has 1,169 yards rushing this season.

Western is led by junior Roscoe Echols' 864 yards.

Phone service set up for Tops, Lady Tops

Western Kentucky basketball fans this season can listen to radio broadcasts of the men's and women's teams this season from anywhere in the United States and Canada.

By dialing 1-800-225-6460, fans can hook up with game broadcasts for prices ranging from 20-50 cents a minute. The cost for listening to an entire game lasting two hours is $32.95.

The coverage will begin with the pre-game shows through the post-game shows.

Pre-game shows for men's games begin 1 hour and 15 minutes before tip-off and 35 minutes before gametime for Lady Toppers broadcasts.

The service must be paid for with a credit card. However, there is no charge for the phone call.
Misprinted SAT caused WKU frosh to sit out

By JOE MEDLEY
Daily News Sports Editor

Daryl Houston might have played as a freshman quarterback at Western Kentucky University if he hadn't been declared a Proposition 48 casualty.

Then again, Houston might not have even come to Western had his Scholastic Aptitude Test results been over 700, the NCAA minimum for freshman eligibility.

"I probably would've gone to South Carolina just because it's closer to home, and I have family there," said Houston, a Boca Raton, Fla., native. "A lot of schools were recruiting me, but at the last minute they backed off when they heard the score."

Because his SAT and about 8,300 others around the country were missing a page in the math section, causing his test score to fall below 700, Houston has paid out thousands to attend Western and try to earn an athletic scholarship in the classroom.

Three weeks ago, Houston's mother, Rubena, received a letter from the College Board in Princeton, N.J., saying his test score had been "adjusted" to a 720, a 30-point improvement.

In accordance with NCAA Proposition 48 guidelines, Houston sat out of football during his freshman season. He had to earn 24 credit hours and at least a 2.0 grade-point average during his first full year to play as a sophomore.

Proposition 48 athletes are given four years to play three. Athletes who meet NCAA minimum test scores and grade averages in core curriculum get five to play four.

Western football coach Jack Harbaugh and Associate Director of Athletics Pam Herriford are petitioning the NCAA to get Houston full eligibility.

As for the $4,400 Houston has paid, some of which was covered by a $2,625 loan, "I'm hoping to get it back from the university," he said. "If I can't, then I'll get a lawyer to send letters to the SAT people."

Out of Spanish River High School, Houston said he had been recruited by South Carolina, Minnesota, Youngstown State and Western, to name a few. Once the incorrect score narrowed the field to Minnesota and Western, Houston took the choice closer to home.

He said he attempted to take the SAT twice.

"The first time I took it, I noticed there were five questions missing in one section," Houston said. "The test proctor said I'd have to take it over."

Houston made his second try in June. An information officer from the College Board confirmed that June tests in random states had misprints and missing pages.

The results of the second try were painful, Houston said. "To find out I didn't pass was an emotional setback."

Once his mother received the letter saying his score had been adjusted, Houston went to Western's admissions office to get his records adjusted. But the admissions office needed an official letter from the College Board, and Houston obtained one.

Herriford has begun work on retrieving full eligibility for Houston.

"He has four to play four; that's an institutional thing," Herriford said today. "We'd like to get him his redshirt year in case he needs it."

Herriford said the NCAA has little legislation dealing with eligibility beyond the five-year clause.

"There's a clause that deals with injuries like in a car wreck or anything that prevented the student from going to school," she said. "But there's no mechanism for our situation."

Herriford said Western must wait for a rule interpretation from the NCAA to clear Houston's refund of fees.

"Right now, there's nothing that allows us to give retroactive aid (meaning aid for a semester that has passed)," Herriford said.

If Houston retains full eligibility, he says he'll stay at Western.

"A lot of the guys have been asking me if I'll transfer," he said. "I have no plans to leave. I like it here."
Redbirds won't hum positive note for Western

A Daily News report

NORMAL, Ill. — The 1991 football season is mercifully over for Western Kentucky, but the Hilltoppers endured an unmerciful ending.

Illinois State sent Western reeling from a 31-6 rout Saturday at Hancock Stadium.

A season that saw Western open 2-1 and nearly beat ninth-ranked Middle Tennessee ends on a negative note at 3-8. Illinois State finished 5-6.

The Redbirds frustrated Western's offense, holding the Hilltoppers to 195 total yards and three first downs. Meanwhile, Illinois State put together three long touchdown drives and used a Western fumble to build a 24-0, third-quarter lead.

The lone highlight for Western was Brian Browning's 10-yard, fourth-down touchdown pass to Dwayne Haun in the fourth quarter. Browning threw to Mike Brumbelow for the 2-point conversion.

Tailback Roscoe Echols' 42-yard first-quarter run helped Western to a first and goal at ISU's 7-yard line and a chance for a 7-6 lead. A fumble backed the Hilltoppers up to the 19, and Steve Donisi's 37-yard field goal fell way short.

Western coach Jack Harbaugh was disappointed Western didn't compete better.

"It was a long, cold and frustrating afternoon," he said.

The Redbirds took a 6-0 lead in the first quarter on Ritchie Thompson's 1-yard plunge. The score completed an 81-yard, six-play drive featuring Donnell Foster's runs of 25 and 30 yards.

Holder Brian Brown bobbed the point-after snap and threw incomplete in the end zone.

In the second quarter, the Redbirds drove 61 yards on 12 plays for their second score, a 2-yard Thompson run. Wilson threw for the 2-point conversion to make it 14-0.

Then ISU opened the third quarter with a keep-away special: 73 yards, 16 plays and eight minutes, 31 seconds. Foster lunged in from the 2-yard line for the score, and kicker Cameron Bair made it 21-0.

On the ensuing possession, Western tailback Roscoe Echols fumbled, setting up Bair's 23-yard field goal.

Illinois State added Foster's 3-yard score in the fourth quarter.

Foster led all rushers with 142 yards, and the Redbirds chewed up 377 in total offense.

"We only ran about two plays in the third quarter," Harbaugh said. "Our offense didn't do a good job of taking some pressure off our defense, and our defense didn't do a good job of getting off the field."

For Western, Echols finished with 99 yards, giving the Bowling Green High product a team-best 963 for the season.

Harbaugh said the Hilltoppers were better than their record indicated this season.

"You give us the Austin Peay game (an 18-14 loss) and Middle Tennessee (23-21), we open 4-0, and we're playing for a winning season today," Harbaugh said. "But things just didn't go our way, and we got some injuries that really depleted our defense."
Foster boosts Illinois State past Western

Associated Press

NORMAL, Ill. — Donell Foster ran for 142 yards and two touchdowns yesterday as Illinois State beat Western Kentucky 31-8 in the final college football game of the season for both teams.

Ritchie Thompson also added two touchdowns for the Redbirds (5-6) as temperatures fell to 26 degrees.

"Western has a better football team than they showed us today," Illinois State coach Jim Heacock said. "We were happy with the play of Foster and Thompson. . . . Their effort was encouraging."

Foster's touchdowns came on a 1-yard run in the third quarter and a 3-yard run in the fourth quarter. Thompson gave Illinois State to a 14-0 halftime lead with touchdown runs of 1 and 2 yards.

Western Kentucky (3-8) scored in the fourth quarter on a 6-yard pass from Brian Browning to Dwayne Hahn. Browning hit Mike Brumelow for a two-point conversion.

"We didn't play well, obviously," Western coach Jack Harbaugh said. "It was just a long, cold, frustrating afternoon. . . . We couldn't move the ball consistently on offense, and we couldn't stop them on defense. That's a bad combination."

--

WES TERN KENTUCKY .............. 0 0 0 0 8-6
ILLINOIS STATE ................ 6 6 4 0 7-31

Illinois State — Foster 1 run (kick failed);
Illinois State — Foster 3 run (Wilson pass to Brown); Illinois State — Foster 1 run (Kick); Illinois State — FG Bair 20; Western Kentucky — Hahn 6 pass from Browning (Brumelow pass from Browning); Illinois State — Foster 3 run (Kick).
A—7,154.

First downs ................. 9 21
Rushes-yards .............. 37-171 64-291
Passing yards .......... 24 66
Return yards .......... 0 10
Passes .................. 3-14-2 7-11-0
Punts ................. 4-42 3-34
Fumble-recovery ......... 2-1 2-0
Penalty-yards .......... 4-14 2-10
Time of Possession ....... 22:53 27:07

Western Ill. State
Another disappointing football season is over. The gestation begins.

Western Kentucky coach Jack Harbaugh has nine months to build a measurably improved team.

He has nine months to piece together a defense that can stop Gateway Conference offenses ... a defense with players not yet on campus.

After compiling an 11-21 record in three seasons at Western, Harbaugh knows Western fans want to see improvement in 1992, or they might start howling.

The grumblings are faint, but they've begun. A letter to the editor in last Tuesday's College Heights Herald called for Western to replace Harbaugh, saying he either can't coach or can't recruit and that his coaching style is boring. The letter was signed by 11 students.

The letter comes at the end of a 3-8 season that saw Western lose fourth-quarter leads four times in five straight games at one point.

Strapped with catastrophic injuries to an already thin defense, Western couldn't compete with Gateway cellar-dwellers Indiana State and Illinois State, losing 31-14 and 31-8 in the season's final two weeks.

It's hard to say Harbaugh can't coach, because coaching can't make an undersized, wounded, and outmanned defense stop anyone.

If you want to talk coaching, let's talk Harbaugh's option offense. It's not as exciting as a pass-oriented offense, but it was very productive this season. Western's offense kept the Hilltoppers in most games, and it was ranked among the nation's best rushing units most of the season.

It's hard to say Harbaugh can't recruit. Most of his recruits are freshmen, sophomores and red-shirts.

But these are things that mean little to fans, who see the world as divided between two kinds of people — winners and losers.

Harbaugh knows he's got work to do in the next nine months, starting with the defense.

"We're going to have to go to the junior-college ranks to get some big defensive linemen who can help us immediately," he said. "We've got a lot of good athletes in the program, but not a lot of big kids on the line. We got pushed around pretty good this year."

Offensively, Western returns most of its key people. Tailback Roscoe Echols will bring back 963 yards and quarterback Eddie Thompson returns after setting a single-season school rushing record at his position.

But Harbaugh has hinted Thompson will have a fight to keep his job.

"It's not a reflection on what he's done this season, but the position will be open in the spring," Harbaugh said. "We've got Markell Rice and Daryl Houston, who have been sitting out this year and are very good."

Harbaugh hasn't waited until the end of this season to prepare for next season. He started several younger players this year to get them experience. He started Echols over senior Herb Davis, and he started Thompson over senior Brian Browning.

"At every position where we had a senior and a younger player who were about equal, we went with the younger player," Harbaugh said.

Harbaugh's also optimistic Western will compete well in the Gateway Conference next season.

"I'm confident that if we get the help we need on the defense, especially on the line, and get these kids physically stronger and tougher, we'll compete in the Gateway," he said.

If not, Harbaugh has been in the coaching business long enough to know grumblings might escalate. It would be a shame for Harbaugh, who has said he'd like to retire at Western.

"I really like it here," he said. "I like the school, and I love the community."

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