

Clemson's Dantzler set for Virginia

By Paul Crane
Cavalier Daily (U. Virginia)

(U-WIRE) CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — He stands 5 feet 11 inches and weighs in at 200 pounds. He can run and pass with remarkable ease. He bench-presses more than 400 pounds — eighth highest on his team. Give him a cape and some spandex and he could be college football's Superman.

He is Clemson quarterback Woodrow Dantzler. The multitasking signal-caller for the Tigers has the ability, like many other great quarterbacks before him, to lead an offense with his head, arm and feet.

"Dantzler is one of the most dynamic players in college football this year," Virginia coach Al Groh said. "He has the ability to run and has a willingness to throw the ball."

In high school, Dantzler finished third in the state finals of the 400-meter dash. He has the speed and mobility to dance away from opposing defenders when he puts his head down and tucks the ball under his shoulder.

"We've built our offensive system around him," Clemson coach Tommy Bowden said. "With him having great running skills, we feature him as a quarterback-slash-tailback. He gives us a lot of flexibility."

Always a threat to scamper out of the pocket or around the corner on a bootleg, Dantzler also has the

capability of throwing the ball 70 yards downfield.

"When he does throw the ball, he goes vertical," Groh said. "With the spread formation, it puts a lot of pressure on the defense."

Dantzler is not only blessed with breathtaking physical skills but also intangible leadership qualities.

"He has taken over the leadership role for the offense and for the whole team real well," Bowden said. "He's always been a vocal leader, but as a senior, he has more people looking up to him. He realizes that burden falls on his shoulders and has become a more effective leader."

Dantzler put the package together last year as he led the Tigers to an 8-0 record to open the season, before disaster struck. On pace to become the first player in college football history to run for 1,000 yards and pass for 2,000 yards in a season, Dantzler severely sprained his ankle against North Carolina.

The injury, which later required surgery in the winter, forced Dantzler to spend most of the remaining season on the bench. The Tigers lost three of their last four games, and Dantzler's dream of a Heisman Trophy vanished.

"Before he got injured last year, Dantzler was very deserving to be mentioned for the Heisman," Bowden said. "Statistically, he definitely

merited it."

With his amazing talent, talk of the Heisman has already begun this season, and he's become one of the leading contenders for college football's most prestigious honor.

Dantzler has started this season off quietly against Central Florida and Wofford. He threw for 154 yards and one touchdown, and ran for 46 yards and a score in Clemson's 21-13 win over Central Florida on Sept. 1. Dantzler passed for 207 yards and two touchdowns, and rushed for 55 more yards in the Tigers' 38-14 win over Wofford on Sept. 8.

Dantzler also was quiet last season before facing Virginia. Jumping over Cavaliers in a single bound, Dantzler ran for 220 yards, an Atlantic Coast Conference single game record for a quarterback, and passed for 154 in Clemson's 31-10 defeat of Virginia.

But don't expect the "do-it-all" quarterback, who holds 20 Tiger football records, to enter this year's game overconfident.

"Last year was last year," Dantzler said. "That was in the past. You can't dwell in the past. Last year was the first time they saw me, but I bet they will be ready for me."

Virginia and the rest of college football will be ready for Dantzler this time around. That is if they could only find some kryptonite.

Banged-up Sooners get three weeks off

By Matt Franklin
Oklahoma Daily (U. Oklahoma)

(U-WIRE) NORMAN, Okla. — Ask any major college football coach in America, and he'll tell you that health is an important factor in any team's national title hopes.

Strategy and talent are great assets, but a team can only withstand so many injuries before its weaknesses are exposed.

Last season, health was a key to Oklahoma winning the school's seventh national championship. The Sooners were fortunate to keep the vast majority of their contributors at or near 100 percent.

Much of the credit for the Sooners' sustained health goes to Director of Sports Enhancement Jerry Schmidt. Schmidt arrived in 1999 with Oklahoma football head coach Bob Stoops and immediately implemented a plan designed to prevent injuries.

Despite Schmidt's work, the sport of football lends itself to muscle pulls, soreness, and general discomfort. With Oklahoma having played a preseason game for the first time since 1997, the Sooners experienced one more week of these side effects than most of the rest of the country.

However, the delay of last Saturday's Tulsa game combined with this week's scheduled bye means the Sooners have three weeks before the Sept. 29 Kansas State game to heal.

"The time off has been good," Stoops said. "We were somewhat nicked up but we should be fresh by the time Kansas State comes around."

Sophomore fullback Chris Toney said he had a sore hamstring, and he noted that several other Sooners needed a break, including junior running back Quentin Griffin, the man he blocks for.

"Having three days off helped a lot," Toney said. "I know a lot of guys were banged up, like Quentin with his ankle."

Junior defensive back Terrance Sims has sustained a more serious injury. Stoops said Sims was set to undergo full reconstructive knee surgery Tuesday.

The head coach had better news to deliver about junior defensive tackle Juan Prishker. Prishker hasn't played all year, but Stoops said he'll be cleared to practice soon.

With the preseason game, Oklahoma's schedule has been packed since summer two-a-days. Freshman guard Wes Sims said he appreciated the much-needed break.

Nonconference schedule critical to national title aspirations

By Leif Griffin
The Daily Cardinal (U. Wisconsin)

(U-WIRE) MADISON, Wis. — More than ever, nonconference play has become critical for a team's national success. Given the insanely complicated Bowl Championship Series ratings, teams can no longer take chances by playing "soft" schools.

Now, BCS-hopeful teams find themselves playing their most important games before all of the rust has come off.

However, major conference teams seem to have different strategies when it comes to nonconference scheduling.

Strong teams in weaker conferences hate to see their national title hopes dashed before they even begin conference play. Just ask the Miami Hurricanes, who lost to the Washington Huskies last year and narrowly missed playing for the national championship.

On the other hand, teams that play in strong conferences like to

schedule easier competition, but the BCS rewards quality opponents, so these teams must search for big time programs.

There is no question that Miami scheduled tough nonconference opponents this year, but having already played Penn State and a future schedule that sees games against Washington and Florida, there is a concern that the top-ranked team scheduled too tough of a nonconference season.

The key for every team is striking the right balance in scheduling nonconference opponents.

However, teams from smaller and lesser-known conferences sometimes must forget about balance and go for the glory.

Enter Fresno State, this year's example of extreme scheduling. Head coach Pat Hill recognized that his team wouldn't be detectable on the BCS radar simply by playing in the Western Athletic Conference, so he scheduled

arguably the toughest nonconference schedule in the nation.

It worked out this year for the Bulldogs, as they beat Colorado, Oregon State and Wisconsin, but it can also backfire. Last year, Fresno State went 1-2 in nonconference games against UCLA, California and Ohio State.

Teams from smaller conferences often stand to gain exposure and money by scheduling nonconference games against major programs.

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 21). This year you're blessed with a good sense of humor and a cheerful attitude. You think you can do anything. You have less tolerance for people or jobs that are a waste of your valuable time. You'd rather be reading or practicing. You've always set high standards for yourself. Keep pushing. You'll achieve them.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) - Today is a 6 - Slow and easy does it. Do the job, get the pay, put it in the bank. Pay the rest of the bills, save a few bucks for yourself. Tuck those into your pocket for the expedition you've planned. Buy provisions tonight so that you can get an early start Saturday morning.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) - Today is an 8 - One person hasn't been convinced, but that's only a minor problem. If everybody thought you could make this happen, there'd be no challenge. You're getting luckier, by the way. Your partner's getting luckier, too. Together you're awesome!

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) - Today is a 7 - Stay late and work hard. Offer the extra effort for overtime wages. You have a financial goal to meet. You can do it, too, but not if you spend all day reading the comics page.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) - Today is a 7 - Your plans should be almost complete by now. Once you and your collaborator agree on just a few more points, you'll be ready to start working on your next project. Tomorrow.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Today is a 6 - Once you've figured out exactly what you want, finding it should be easy. Keep shopping until it happens. You'll know it when you see it. Better make sure there are checks in the checkbook and money in the account.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Today is an 8 -

You'll soon notice that you're feeling more secure. You have a growing sense of inner calm, and it looks good on you. Continue to study and advance.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Today is a 7 - Don't listen to a person who thinks you can't carry out your plan, especially if you love this person very much. Just because he or she couldn't do it doesn't mean you can't. Your talents and resources are unique. Press on.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Today is a 7 - First, do the planning and figure out how much you think it'll cost. There are variables, of course, but you can make estimates. Conditions are good for making money tomorrow and Sunday. Maybe you should clean out the closets and have a yard sale.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Today is a 5 - Don't make any suppositions, take anything for granted or believe everything you hear. Rumors are rinning wild, but not all of the facts are in. You're not even sure the "facts" you've been hearing haven't been given a good spin. Do your own investigation - quietly.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Today is an 8 - You've been good all week. That's long enough. Tonight, join friends for an outing. You need a change of scenery. Don't get into too much trouble, though, or you'll hate yourself in the morning.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Today is a 6 - You hold the minority opinion. That doesn't mean you're wrong; you just have some educating to do. You'll recognize the opportunity when an older person starts expounding erroneous beliefs. Provide a few facts. Nicely.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) - Today is a 9 - Love and marriage, love and marriage, go together like a horse and carriage. If your horse bolted or the carriage lost a wheel, this would be a good time to get everything back on track.

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