



Former Greyhound tailback Carlos Adams shows off his Independence Bowl ring. Adams now plays for the Kansas St. Wildcats in the Big Eight Conference. News photo by Mark E. Derry.

Carlos Adams is still a local celebrity.

One walk through the halls of the high school with the charismatic running back affirms the notion. He can't walk 10 feet without acknowledging someone's greeting. Everywhere he goes people want to stop and chat.

Adams doesn't mind, though. His gregarious nature embraces the notoriety.

Now at Kansas State University on a football scholarship, the former record-setting Greyhound tailback is playing in the Big Eight, perhaps America's premier college football conference.

As a freshman last season, the 5-10, 175-pound speedster learned all about the big time. His most memorable experience: playing against Oklahoma and Nebraska on the road.

"The crowds were huge," said Adams relating the experience, "everywhere you looked there was red." Cornhusker and Sooner faithfuls number untold thousands and playing in front of 80,000 folks dressed in red and screaming their collective heads off is an experience bound to make a lasting impression.

Practically, the crowds can be a problem. "It's

hard to hear the quarter back," said Adams, who played sparingly his freshman season at running and slot back.

In terms of football the biggest adjustment Adams had to make was mental. "The guys are a lot bigger and faster," he said. Nonetheless, the slippery tailback managed to avoid any brutal bashes. Adams said the licks in college, for the most part, weren't any tougher than those he received in high school. But, then, he always has had a way of avoiding those crushing tackles. Partially, his ability to dodge the big bruisers is attributable to the synthetic playing field he plays on at home. "It makes me move quicker," he confirmed.

Academically, Adams is holding his own with a 2.85 average. Although he hasn't declared a major yet, all his classes have been geared to public relations and business. As a PR man, Adams would be brilliant, of course. His jovial attitude and outward friendliness come through upon first introduction.

Come late summer, Adams will return to Manhattan, Kansas for sessions called "three-a-days," better known to athletes at "torture time." In the muggy Kansas heat, the Wildcats will undergo

demanding practices three times a day. Physically, it's the hardest thing Adams has ever done.

At the practice sessions, head coach Jim Dickey watches from above (in the rafters of the stadium) as the athletes go through the workouts. That's a far cry from coach Larry Welsh's technique.

Kansas St. has had some staff changes during the off-season and Adams is looking forward to his sophomore year. "I think I'll get to play more," he confirmed, adding that the running back position is now wide-open due to graduation and injury.

Adams has joined a fraternity on campus and is seeking off-campus housing this year with frat buddies.

Looking ahead, Adams would like to help propel the Wildcats into the top of the Big Eight. "I think we can beat Oklahoma," he says, "Nebraska is going to be tough, though."

In his rookie year the Wildcats received the school's first bowl bid and invitation to the Independence Bowl-in the institution's history. Adams would like nothing more than to be the tailback on a team with a bid to an even more prestigious bowl. "I think we can do it," he said.