

# Close Big Seven Tourney, Conference Race Expected

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**M**OST important question expected to be answered in the eighth annual Big Seven tournament, opening Saturday night in Kansas City, is a forecast of how much tightening is forthcoming from top to bottom in the 1954 conference race.

It already is being conceded that the twin Sunflower powers, Kansas and Kansas State, will not be able to restrict the flag chase to a private duel by mid-season as they have done the past three winters. It also is believed Nebraska, Oklahoma and Missouri will be improved.

The question thus resolves into these points (1) How much

## Tourney Standings

	T	W	L	Pct.	Titles
SMU .....	1	3	0	1.000	1
Kansas State ...	7	16	5	.761	3
Kansas .....	7	14	7	.667	1
Oklahoma A&M. 1	2	1	.667	0	
Michigan .....	1	2	1	.667	0
Minnesota .....	1	2	1	.667	0
Stanford .....	1	2	1	.667	0
Oklahoma .....	7	12	9	.571	1
Missouri .....	7	12	9	.571	1
Arkansas .....	1	1	2	.333	0
Yale .....	1	1	2	.333	0
Iowa State .....	7	6	15	.285	0
Nebraska .....	7	6	15	.285	0
Colorado .....	6	5	13	.278	0
Harvard .....	1	0	3	.000	0

weaker are Kansas and K-State? (2) Can UN, OU, and MU improve enough to overhaul them? First test in this department will be provided by Kansas State and Nebraska, which lead off Monday's first-round set at 8 p. m. Oklahoma

is matched against this year's guest five, Washington, at 9:45 the same evening.

Kansas meets Colorado in Saturday's 8 p. m. lid-lifter with Missouri and Iowa State following.

As Phog Allen, coach of Kansas' defending league champions, pointed out: "Apparently there is no outstanding team in our conference at present. This means a tougher tournament in Kansas City. It could be the best we've ever had."

This thought can be transferred to the '54 conference race. For in five of the seven previous meets, the tournament champion or runner-up also has captured the circuit race. The only exceptions were 1946, when SMU edged Kansas in the final, and 1949 when Missouri clipped Oklahoma.

Not a single team will come into the meet unbeaten. As a matter of fact, only Kansas State at 4-1, and Iowa State at 2-1, owned winning records thru games of December 19.

Opponents are hoping for a Kansas defensive sag this year, after one and a half seasons of being subjected to the most vicious picketing the conference ever has seen. In losing to Tulane and LSU, and beating Tulsa, Jayhawker restriction has shown slight resemblance to the dread Porcupine Patrol of last season.