

Most important ~~item~~ expected 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 will be for hcoming ~~fix~~ 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 ~~hold their~~ be able to restrict the flag chase to a private ~~affair~~ duel by mid-season as they have done the past three seasons. It also is believed that Nebraska, Oklahoma and Missouri will be improved.

The question thus resolves into these points; 1) How much weaker are Kansas and K-State? 2) Can ~~the~~ NU, 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. lifter with Missouri and Iowa State following.

As Phog Allen, ~~Kansas~~ coach of Kansas' defending league champions, pointed out "Apparantly 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 wholesale to the '54 conference race. For in five of the seven previous meets, the tournament champion or runner-up ~~has~~ also has captured the circuit race. The only exceptions were 1946. when SMU edged Kansas in the final, and 1949 when Missouri clipped Oklahoma.