

The Duggity Chiefs Report  
Preseason 4 – 2004

Chiefs at Cowgirlz – The Big Donut (did they run out of money on the roof?), Big D, TX.

***This week from the old, comfy sofa in front of the big TV in the rec-room. As always, you can find the Duggity Reports from this and previous years at [www.georgeblowfish.com](http://www.georgeblowfish.com)! And visit "Radio Blowfish"- the music the Republicans warned you about. If you know others so desperate for reading material that they may want this report in the 'junk' folder of their e-mail inbox – send me their addresses so we can add them to the worldwide fan base of the Duggity Report each week. Remember our privacy policy - "We don't sell our lists to anyone claiming Applebee's is giving away free food."***

Overview – Oy, oy, oy. Someone remind me why we play four preseason games – I mean, other than the obvious – greed. Second-round-pick, rookie phenom Kris Wilson catches a routine pass in the fourth quarter of a meaningless game and snaps his left fibula. He's gone for a minimum of 8 weeks and likely the season. This on the heels of losing the most productive receiver of the pre-season, Marc Boerigter with a blown knee last week. Bo is on IR, and Wilson might be. A team struggling at the receiver position did not need that. The battle of Dallas – pitting the Cowboys against the Texans – was a dud. Both teams off short weeks, neither wanting to be there, gave only cursory effort. The theme was player evaluation and so we'll focus on that, too.

Offense – The offense looked very good at times and really stupid at others. Against the league's best D last year, the offense generally moved the ball well. The only drives they couldn't finish were self-inflicted. Inopportune penalties and a Blaylock fumble killed three first half chances. The passing game was very good, overall. Rookie free agent Richard Smith looks like he's been in the league five years. He is poised, he runs good routes and he catches everything thrown at him. His moves remind me of a bigger Dante Hall. He played at an SEC school – Arkansas – so it's not like nobody saw him. How did this guy slide by everyone on draft day? Chris Horn, in the last game of the pre-season, finally stepped up to the plate. The former Arena League and NFL Europe star gave a taste of his skills at long last in the red and gold suit. Dante Hall and Eddie Kennison had good grabs, as did Tony G. The ground game was un-impressive except for one drive where Derrick Blaylock showed again why he's #2 instead of the under-achieving first-rounder, Larry Johnson. In fact the tandem of Johnson and Omar Easy last night did everything possible to perpetuate the legend of Penn State backs. The top two QB's – Green and Collins were nearly perfect. Collins was, and Green would have been except for a couple of drops. As long as they are behind the #1 line, they are unbeatable. O-line looks great with John Welbourn replacing John Tait at RT. He pulled on a pitch out to Priest where he took out two guys to let Holmes have the corner. An interesting footnote is that Welbourn has a degree in rhetoric from UC Berkeley – just like Duggity faithful, Algal! The backups at O-line are a real concern. SMNW and K-State rookie Ryan Lilja might make this squad – he started nearly the entire game in place of Brian Waters and lined up against La'Roi Glover – no small feat. The kid held his own. Jordan Black is the only other guy who looks ready to play. Other backups, including Sampson, Alford, Barnett, Williams, Stuber, Bober – are interchangeable – they're all speed bumps. The only other question mark remains the receiver position. I still say a play for a free agent is in the works.

Defense – The big-play demon bit the KC D again. A couple of the problems will be corrected Sunday when Cliff Crosby and Bennie Sapp are sent home. The Eddie George stroll in to the endzone was an obvious blown assignment by LB Freddie Jones. Jones is not a starter and was only playing the "Mike" position due to injuries to Maz and Kawika. So that was somewhat forgivable. Less so was veteran Shawn Barber failing to seal the outside on a very vanilla sweep. Barber looked like when you clean up your six-year-old for pictures – he was at the game, but you could tell he didn't want to be there. The biggest shocker was the performance of Crispy Bartee. He looked like an actual NFL corner on a few plays! No, really! The D line did not get consistent pressure on the QB, but did a decent job of disrupting the running game. The Cowboys posted 124 net yards on the ground, but half of it came on two runs. Monte Beisel, starting the middle linebacker spot looked pretty solid. He was fooled on a couple of plays, but certainly didn't

embarrass himself. The big decision on Sunday will be who goes – R-Kal Truluck, Jimmy Wilkerson or Jared Allen. I'm betting on Truluck, which is a shame. He has had a good camp and a good pre-season. He's a solid player in pass-rush, but he's one-dimensional. Wilkerson and particularly Allen had another good night and both are equally effective on running downs.

Special Teams – Well, the specials will look different this year. The most recent pick-up, Steve Cheek, acquired this week in a trade with the other Texans, will be the punter. Jason Baker has been living in Dick's doghouse for a year and will go home before Sunday. Cheek blasted three punts – for a gross average of 46 yards and net of 42. His hang time was great as well, averaging 4.4 seconds. The Cowboys only averaged 5.7 yards per punt return. Lawrence Tynes looks like he may have old Morten Anderson's job. Tynes drove the kickoffs inside the 5 on each attempt, and made all his kicks, including field goals from 27 and 46 yards. The best special teams play came on a punt where long-snapper rookie Jared Allen hiked the ball and then shot down the field and blew up the returner just as he caught the ball. Amazing. Chris Horn, spelling Dante at punt returns broke one for 62 yards. Not a bad effort for the unit as a whole.

As promised, the Doggity AFC West predictions:

- 1) Kansas City Chiefs – nasty schedule pits KC against both of last year's Super Bowl teams, plus at Baltimore and at Tennessee on Monday Night Football. You will see a lot of red on ABC this year. KC also hosts the defending champs New England, on MNF. With the wideouts up in the air, the D a work in progress and no depth at line, KC could be a juggernaut or barely mediocre, depending upon who steps up to play. Still, in this sorry division, and playing five of their six division games after Thanksgiving, I like their chances.
- 2) Denver Donkeys – They play an easier schedule than KC and play better defense, which will help at the end of the year. They would have been my pick for number one, until Mike Anderson went down. What were they thinking trading Clinton Portis for Champ Bailey? If the point is to build your team to your division, would someone tell me where the great receivers are in the AFC West? They're all in Denver! But the West has notoriously porous run defenses. Stupid trade. Jake Plummer still makes too many dumb mistakes. He reminds me of Elvis Grbac. Loads of talent and physical skill – but lacks the ability to make good decisions in the clutch.
- 3) East Bay Convicts – Norv Turner? Again? Isn't he like 10-games under .500 for his career? Older, slower and not particularly better coached – and still a bunch of whiney prima donnas – don't expect much out of the Bay this year.
- 4) San Diego Bolts – Stick a fork in Marty, he's done. This is not a very good football team. They have one of the best backs in the league, but nothing around him. They have no O-line, a poor excuse for a quarterback and a D that is less talented than Kansas City's.

Throw Him A Bone Award –

I gotta give the bone to Chris Horn. He was a badly needed big contributor to the passing game and nearly busted a punt return for a score.

The Doggity Dog –

The good news for Cliff Crosby is – he will only be in the doghouse for three days before he gets cut.

Cuts come on Sunday. There will be some veterans let go. Expect both of last year's kickers – Jason Baker and Morten Anderson to be gone. Unfortunate cuts may include Kendall Gammon and R-Kal Truluck. Johnnie Morton probably caught a break with Bo and Wilson going down. John Booth, Ronnie Cruz, Brett Williams, Darnell Alford, Benny Sapp, Cliff Crosby will all be

gone. Likely so will Willie Ford and Omar Easy. Easy has been pretty good in the lead back role, but refused to muss his hair in the blocking schemes. Not so good for a guy wanting to be a full back –and there is no place for him as a lead back on this team.

Next week –

No more rehearsing and ‘nursing our parts’. We know every part by heart – On with the show, this is it! Denver Donkeys in the ‘Sanitized for Your Protection’ Anonymous Corporate Sponsor Field at Mile High.

Expect the full playbook Doggity Report to resume next week.

Your faithful scribe,  
Mr. Doggity