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THE TOPEKA CAPITAL JOURNAL Monday, April 10, 1995

Dole makes bid official today

Thousands are expected to hear the Kansas senator announce his run for the White House; the weather refuses to cooperate, so the rally has been moved to the Expocentre from the Statehouse.

By KRISTEN L. HAYS
The Capital-Journal

Instead of officially launching his bid for the White House in 1996 shrouded in sunshine and flanked by a crowd of thousands spread across the south Statehouse lawn, Bob Dole this morning will move the party indoors.

On the campaign trail of



Bob DOLE

Dole's schedule

- 7 a.m., community prayer breakfast sponsored by the state GOP, Ramada Inn Downtown.
- 8:05 a.m., Elizabeth Dole gives remarks.
- 8:45 a.m., announcement rally begins at Kansas Expocentre's Landon Arena.
- 9:34 a.m., Dole makes remarks.
- 10:15 a.m., the Doles depart the Expocentre en route to Forbes Field.
- 10:25 a.m., the Doles board "The Leader's Ship," Dole's campaign airplane.
- 10:55 a.m., Dole plane departs Topeka en route to Exeter, N.H., and New York City.

Weather forecasts that predicted an 80 percent to 90 percent chance for rain in addition to chilly high winds prompted Dole's campaign staff Sunday night to move the U.S. Senate majority leader's candidacy announcement rally to Landon Arena in the Kansas Expocentre this morning.

Everything else is the same. Dole's wife, American Red Cross president Elizabeth Dole, will speak today at a 7 a.m. community prayer breakfast sponsored by the Kansas Republican Party. The announcement rally will start about 8:45 a.m., with Dole taking the podium shortly after 9:30 a.m.

Dole noted shortly after he arrived in Topeka Sunday afternoon he wasn't worried about the weather, which turned cold and gray after Saturday's warmth under a blue sky. Weather is one thing this Washington power broker can't control.

A massive blue banner with gold letters boasting "Dole '96" that hung from the south Statehouse entrance Sunday has been moved to the Expocentre, as well as the huge platform constructed to hold the 45-strong national press corps that followed Dole from Washington to Topeka.

Aside from the last-minute change, Sunday went as planned. It was likely the last time Dole could steal a semi-calm evening this week.

The front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination, Dole arrived at Forbes Field from Washington Sunday afternoon



Sen. Bob Dole and his wife, Elizabeth Hanford Dole, waved as they left the plane at Topeka's Forbes Field Sunday afternoon. Dole is in Topeka to announce his candidacy for the presidency.

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Location changed

Sen. Dole's announcement will be moved to the Expocentre instead of the Statehouse. Times remain the same: 8:45 a.m. rally and 9:34 a.m. announcement

What others say about Dole run

The Capital-Journal

Sen. Bob Dole officially embarks today on his third and possibly final run for the presidency. His candidacy has inspired much media comment about his status as the perceived front-runner, his strengths and liabilities, and his long political career.

Here is a sampling of what reporters around the nation have been saying:

■ Ronald Brownstein, Los Angeles Times:

Dole heads toward the formal announcement of his candidacy on April 10 as the man on the tightrope: He stands far above everyone else, but must walk an exceedingly narrow line.

Dole's lofty standing in the polls, support from a wide array of leading party officials and virtually unlimited capacity to raise money all give him reason for optimism. But looming over his candidacy is a question as heavy as the dust clouds of his Kansas youth: Even with Dole's determined effort to tack right, will a party hungrier for revolution accept as its nominee a veteran of more than three decades in Washington, a man whose political career has been defined by compromise, conciliation and the search for 51 votes?

■ Dan Balz, Washington Post:

Dole is putting together a classic front-runner's campaign for president and is hoping the only similarity between his failed campaign of 1988 and his 1996 bid will be the sign on

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without cheering crowds or fanfare. Dole and his wife attended a private \$1,000 per couple fund-raising reception at his law school alma mater, Washburn University.

After granting a quick interview with CNN's Bernard Shaw shortly after 6 p.m., the Doles, as a campaign staffer put it, were to "pack it in for the night."

No such peace today. His joking admission on "Late Show with David Letterman" in February that he would seek the presidency in 1996 becomes official this morning.

Other GOP candidates are Sens. Phil Gramm of Texas, Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and Richard Lugar of Indiana, California Gov. Pete Wilson, former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander, Rep. Bob Dornan of California, television broadcaster Pat Buchanan and California radio talk show host Alan Keyes.

Dole had planned to make his announcement on the same spot the late Alf Landon stood when he accepted the GOP nomination in 1936. Landon, who ran against Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, carried only Maine and Vermont, losing his home state in one of the biggest landslides in history.

Staffers said they expect no difference in the crowd — estimated to be in the thousands — because of the move to the Expocentre. Busloads of GOP supporters from Kansas City and Wichita are expected, as are Kansans from throughout the state who want to share in what promises to be one of the state's biggest political blowouts in its history.

Nancy Landon Kassebaum, R-Kan., will be on hand with other dignitaries to help push

Dole out of the chute. She accompanied him to Topeka on Sunday and will join him on the first full day of his weeklong announcement tour that will sweep 11 cities in 10 states.

That tour has a breakneck schedule right down to each minute. At 7:45 a.m. today, Dole and his daughter, Robin Dole, will arrive at a community prayer breakfast at the Ramada Inn Downtown. At 8:05 a.m. Elizabeth Dole is scheduled to speak, and shortly after 9 a.m. the Doles will depart the hotel and head for the Expocentre.

The schedule says after introductions, Dole will speak for 15 minutes — from 9:34-9:49 a.m. Shortly after 10 a.m. the Doles will board a motorcade for Forbes, where at 10:55 a.m. the airplane — dubbed "The Leader's Ship" — heads northeast to Exeter, N.H., and lands for the night in New York City.

Kassebaum will depart from the crew in New York. The Doles will alternate between air and land throughout the week until they arrive in his hometown of Russell on Thursday night for a Friday morning "Welcome Home" pancake breakfast at the town's Veterans of Foreign Wars lodge.

"The Leader's Ship" is a 727 "packed full" of campaign staff and national press, said Steve Gumplo, a member of Dole's campaign staff in Washington. Between 35 and 55 reporters and photographers following a high-profile presidential candidate is about par, he noted, although counting heads on the press planes can get a little competitive among candidates.

"I think they're pretty pleased with that," he said of the press turnout for Dole. "That's a little more than Gramm."

What others say about Dole run

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the headquarters door.

From his standing in the polls and his stature in the party to the staff he is building and the strategy he is pursuing, Dole is assembling a campaign that has far more in common with George Bush's 1988 effort than his. As one veteran of the Bush campaign put it, "They've taken our playbook."

■ Scott Shepard, Cox News Service

Dole begins his final quest for the presidency today battling doubts within his own party about how deeply he holds his political convictions.

It is the ultimate irony that Dole faces such doubts after nearly half a century of public service, after 34 years in Congress, after running once on the national GOP ticket and after two previous campaigns for president.

... Most observers agree that Dole must address his skeptics as he pursues the GOP presidential nomination for the last time.

Moreover, he cannot afford to repeat the mistake he made during the 1988 New Hampshire primary when a George Bush ad speared him as "Senator Straddle" — a monk that haunts him still.

■ R.W. Apple Jr., N.Y. Times

Bob Dole, Senate majority leader, is a confirmed deficit hawk, a believer in the old-

fashioned conservative proposition that you do not cut taxes when the federal deficit is barely under control.

Bob Dole, presidential hopeful, needs a different approach.

As the 71-year-old Kansan prepared last week to launch his presidential campaign today, he was caught in another of the squeezes that have plagued him this winter. The House of Representatives — the young, kinetic, populist House of Representatives — passed a \$189 billion tax cut.

Nothing of that magnitude seems possible in the Senate — the old, sluggish, elitist Senate — yet Dole needs to come up with something. But what?

■ John King, Associated Press

Dole nods at the suggestion the 1996 Republican presidential nomination is his to lose. "Unless I blow it," he says calmly.

Plenty of Republicans predict he will. He's too old, they say, too moderate, too willing to deal, too involved in too many tax increases. Too much a legislator and not enough a visionary. Too much a product of the World War II generation to please the younger, more confrontational Republican activists.

"We'll see," the 71-year-old Senate majority leader says evenly. "But I don't think so."