

Well-organized Dole team learns from past races

By Steve Kraske
Kansas City Star

Dave Keene wanted to cheer. Bob Dole's veteran political adviser had just offered the Senate majority leader the name of a potentially valuable campaign worker. And instead of saying "Yes, the more the merrier, we'll plug him in somewhere, remind me to tell so-and-so," this time one of Washington's most powerful and self-reliant men responded: "I better check with Reed and Lacy first."

The way organized, disciplined candidates are supposed to respond. "That was the right answer," Keene said about Dole's delegation of the matter to Scott Reed, Dole's campaign manager, and Bill Lacy, his deputy campaign chairman. "It was the most encouraging response from Dole I'd heard in some time."

And another sign, the Dole team insists, that this presidential campaign will be different from the embarrassment of '80 and the disappointment of '88.

"Like night and day," said Tom Synhorst, a key operative who oversaw Dole's victory in the 1988 Iowa caucuses.

This campaign is better organized, they say. A firm decision-making process is cemented in place. Staffers know their jobs. Dole knows his. Backstabbing is out. Unity is in.

One difference this time will be the schedule, said the candidate.

"I do think, not because of age, but because of prior mistakes, if you add on too many events you're going to make a mistake," said the 71-year-old candidate, who just wrapped up a 10-state campaign announcement swing.

"You're going to get short. You're going to get tired. We're going to watch that. You don't need to do nine events in a day. If you've got something to say, you can do it in two or three."

The Kansas Republican's front-runner status this time helps. Major endorsements that George Bush scarfed up in 1988 are going to Dole. The standing gives the entire campaign a more positive ambience. The momentum is his.

The earlier campaigns were political meltdowns by most accounts, marred by staff firings, internal dissension, last-minute schedule changes, a lack of long-term planning and wasted money.

"I think Bob learned very well from '88," said former Sen. Warren Rudman, a New Hampshire Repub-

lican and friend of Dole. "We've laughed about it. We've cried about it."

Asked recently if the third time's a charm, Dole quipped: "Second time's the charm."

That's Dole's way of saying the 1980 race was such a mess that he doesn't even count it.

He went through several teams of staff before even getting to the first primary. In one week in December 1987, his national campaign manager quit after only a month on the job, and eight of his 10 New Hampshire workers quit, complaining of not even being informed when Dole was in their state.

Dole, trying for spin, called the turnover a "sign of progress."

By the time he raised his first \$1 million, Ronald Reagan had \$11 million and Bush \$9 million. It didn't help when Dole got into a legal fight with a Virginia marketing firm over more than \$200,000 in bills it claimed were unpaid.

Finishing an embarrassing last in Iowa with only 1,576 votes out of 106,000 cast, he moved on to New Hampshire. There he took 0.4 percent of the vote and placed behind two members of the House and even the "write-ins" category. He dropped out of the race soon after.

Working in the Senate had cost him crucial time on the trail, he wrote in a later assessment. And then he offered this mantra:

"There are three major ingredients necessary to any successful campaign — management, money and manpower. Once you've got the three M's, the other two — momentum and media — will follow."

Eight years later, with the popular Ronald Reagan back in California, Dole was again running uphill, this time against a vice president who had amassed political IOUs all over the country.

"Last time around we kind of had to take the second string just because Bush had really locked up all the great talent," Synhorst said.

"The fact of the matter is," Lacy said, "we could have run the best campaign ever run and still it would have been very, very difficult to knock George Bush out of the nomination."

But it was not the best campaign. Staffing problems continued, especially after Dole enlisted Bill Brock, Reagan's former labor secretary, as his campaign chairman.

Although Brock's stature lent the campaign respect, his hiring ultimately divided the staff into three camps: long-time Dole backers, Brock's people and a conservative



Associated Press photo

Sen. Bob Dole has made sure that poor campaign management won't hinder his third shot at the presidency.

contingent that included Keene.

Brock's emergence also meant higher overhead and expenses that critics say dragged on the campaign.

Brock could not be reached for comment, but his executive assistant at the time, Fred Asbell, said they came in right before Dole announced in November, "too late to make the kinds of changes (Brock) felt would have to be made."

The lines of authority were definitely fuzzy, he said.

"There seemed to us to be a lot of people who could get ahead of him to talk to him," he said, "in and out of the campaign."

It wasn't long before some long-time Dole staffers would spot a Brock worker in the hall and mutter "Klingon alert!" referring to the villains in the early "Star Trek" episodes.

Dole won big in Iowa, but then was surprised in New Hampshire. He had more media than he wanted, but the momentum had shifted irreversibly to Bush. And the first three "M's" were problems once more.

As the Super Tuesday primaries loomed, the fault line in the office suddenly opened when Brock got rid of Keene and colleague Don Devine. Not just fired, they were publicly kicked off the campaign plane in Jacksonville, Fla., without their bags.

And money was a problem again. "They find themselves in the situation they are in at the moment — broke — because at least one side of the campaign, the expenditures, were mismanaged," Keene said then.

Asbell said the money was not wasted. "People say that because

they didn't agree with the way it was spent."

By early March, Dole was laying off staff and already had a joke ready about his scheduling.

"We get in the plane and say, 'Go in that direction. See some nice states.'"

The chaos reflected on the candidate. He's a micro-manager, the critics insisted. How could he be an effective president if he didn't delegate?

"That campaign did not collapse because Dole micro-managed, not by any stretch of the imagination," Keene said. "I think he was incredibly badly mismanaged."

"It will be a far different campaign than what I suffered through in 1988," Rudman said. "The organization will be different, the clear

lines of authority will be different and the command structure will be different."

This time, no campaign chairman. Experienced trouble-shooters are in place. The big contributors are lining up; \$3 million came in just this week.

And the campaign had first shot at hiring the party's top political operatives like Reed, who left his post as executive director of the Republican National Committee. He will team with veteran Dole

hands, such as Lacy, Synhorst and Jo-Anne Coe, finance director.

Big changes already are evident in New Hampshire. Dole often boasts of the 25,000 volunteers he's lined up there compared with the 6,000 in place at the end of the '88 campaign.

"They seem to be doing a lot more legwork in New Hampshire so they're not so dependent just on the slingshot effect of Iowa," said Stuart Rothenberg, an independent political analyst.

Dole took 187 private flights

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole has flown 187 times since 1993 aboard private jets, most of them owned by corporations that had interest in congressional business, according to Newsweek.

There is nothing uncommon or illegal about politicians' taking such flights. But the magazine suggested Dole, of Kansas, seeks such flights more than others.

"It allows him to be both Senate majority leader and presidential aspirant, moving quickly from the Capitol to campaign stops," the magazine said. "And as a Senate power and Finance Committee member, he has helped his corporate fliers in a variety of ways."

The most frequent sponsor of Dole's private flights was Archer Daniels Midland Co., an agribusiness owned by Dole ally Dwayne Andreas, Newsweek said in its April 24 edition, on newsstands Monday. The magazine said Dole has sponsored tax breaks to back the company's development of ethanol.

"It is ludicrous to suggest that Senator Dole's position on any of these issues has been influenced by campaign contributions or entirely legal and fully disclosed rides on corporate planes," Dole spokesman Nelson Warfield told the magazine.

ADM ferried Dole on 29 flights, Newsweek said, and Dole's political committee complied with campaign finance law by reimbursing the company the equivalent of first-class airfare. But that was less than 25 percent of what it cost to operate the jet, according to Newsweek.

U.S. Tobacco Inc., which has contributed \$40,000 to Dole campaigns since 1987, flew Dole aboard its planes 26 times, according

to the magazine. Dole has worked to hold down taxes on smokeless tobacco, Newsweek reported.

Dole, a leading candidate for the Republican nomination for president, also flew three times aboard jets owned by American Financial Corp., which is linked to Chiquita Banana, a company that benefited from Dole's urging the administration to attack European banana quotas.

Gramm says Dole's following his lead

New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — The rivalry for conservative voters in the Republican presidential contest escalated Sunday between Sens. Bob Dole of Kansas and Phil Gramm of Texas. Dole vowed to oppose the nomination of Henry Foster as surgeon general, while Gramm accused his opponent of playing catch-up in opposing employment preferences based on race.

The comments by Dole, the Senate majority leader, raised new questions about whether Foster, an obstetrician in Nashville, Tenn., could be confirmed after the Senate holds hearings next month. The choice of Foster has been opposed by many Republicans and anti-abortion groups, and they have attacked him for understating the number of abortions he performed.

"I'd say the nomination is in extremis," Dole said on the NBC program "Meet the Press," which was taped Saturday and broadcast Sunday. "It's not very viable right now."

Dole said, "Things dribbled out about about Foster's past record that has nothing to do with abortion — in fact, he didn't tell the truth." The senator's remarks had the air

of presidential politics. Last month, Gramm, one of Dole's chief rivals, asserted that he would filibuster Foster's nomination in the Senate.

But Sunday, Gramm had moved on to another issue on which he said Dole followed his rightward lead. "Three weeks after I came out and said if I became president that by executive order I would end quotas and set-asides in America," Gramm said on the CBS program "Face the Nation," "Senator Dole came out and took the same position."

Indeed, on issue after issue, Dole and Gramm have sounded more like-minded in recent days. On their dueling appearances Sunday, both said they did not think there were enough votes in Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion.

Dole acknowledged the politics behind his decision last week to sign a pledge vowing not to raise taxes, a promise that was similar to one he refused to agree to in 1988. "I'm known to be fairly candid," he said. "I think there's a bit of politics involved here."

But Dole refused to sign on to Gramm's pledge that he would not

seek re-election if he could not balance the budget by the end of his first term.

Certain questions likely to keep popping up

Dole has been asked before about his age and his temper, and he's being asked again

By LEW FERGUSON
Associated Press

TOPEKA — Bob Dole already has heard the questions frequently, and he's likely to hear them many more times in the 16 months between now and the 1996 Republican National Convention.

They are what reporters — and voters — inevitably ask when discussing Dole's candidacy for the GOP presidential nomination. Is he too old to endure the grind of a campaign?

Can he reconcile positions he has taken in the Senate with the rhetoric it will take to win



Dole

the core conservative base of the Republican Party? Is he too short-fused to keep his cool when a rival distorts his record or a reporter asks something he feels he's answered enough times?

Those questions came at him all last week as he formally declared his candidacy, and they were emphasized on Saturday as NBC's Meet the Press taped its weekly segment in his home town.

Meet the Press host Tim Russert led off by asking Dole why he wants to be president and whether he is too old to try when he will be 73 in 1996.

"You know I'm in good health. I've got a lot of stamina, a lot of energy, like most people

out in this part of the country," Dole said.

He said he's willing to release all his records — "psychological, mental, financial, physical" — and he won't take a pledge to serve only one term because, "You might be a lame duck from Day One if you did that."

Besides, Dole quipped, "I don't have any mental problem."

Panelist David Broder asked Dole if he was taking more conservative stands now to appease to the GOP's core conservative base, pointedly asking Dole if he was pandering to the National Rifle Association with his recent pledge to work to repeal the ban on assault weapons.

"Well, that's not the case," Dole said. "The assault weapon thing sounds good. But in reality it doesn't work." He said what is needed — and what he has advocated — is an "instant check" system under which gun merchants could quickly check computer records to see if

a person had a record that would preclude selling him or her a weapon.

Dole also rejected the notion he has flipflopped on the issue of raising taxes. He declined to take a "no new taxes" pledge in New Hampshire in 1988, and lost that state's first-in-the-nation primary to George Bush. This time, Dole is making the pledge.

"Circumstances have changed," Dole said. "You had a Democratic Congress at that time, and you knew that if you were going to get any spending cuts out of Democrats you've got to give them some tax increases."

On abortion, too, Dole said he has been consistent.

"My record is pro-life, has been and will continue to be," he said. He believes, he added, in a constitutional amendment to ban abortions, but doesn't think it is possible to get adopted, and the issue is too divisive to make it a central campaign issue.

"We're not looking for wedge issues; we're looking for the reverse," he said. "I'm not one that tries to split our party. I want to make our party grow."

Dole said he has made mistakes in popping off during the heat of political battles, citing his claim in 1976 that Democrats have caused wars involving the United States, Bush "lied" about his record in 1988, and most recently that President Clinton isn't a "real president."

"I think I've recently become the voice of reason, and smile more and all of those things," he said. "I'm not extreme in any way, I don't believe."

"I've got a flawless Civil Rights record. I've done a lot over the years on nutrition programs, programs for the handicapped. I'm not going to stop all of those programs."

As for the short fuse, Dole said, "Oh, yeah, I'm cool."