

Huskies to defend record

By Jim Rasmussen
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

The Nebraska basketball team's 101-69 blowout of South Dakota Saturday night may not have been that exciting, but Curtis Moore certainly was.

The 6-4 senior rattled the Bob Devaney Sports Center backboards with six slam-dunks, igniting the crowd of 10,724.

"Those dunks really got the crowd fired up," said teammate Dave Hoppen, who scored a game-high 30 points. "And it really fired our team up. It was kind of hard to get up for these guys."

The game was a mismatch from the start. Nebraska moved out to a 17-7 lead when Moore put down his first jam with 14:25 left in the first half. After the Coyotes called time-out, the Huskers picked up where they left off, cruising to a 30-11 lead with 9:22 left.

Moore forced another time-out during the stretch when he broke away for a behind-the-head stuff to make it 28-11. Moore would add four more crowd-pleasing slams on the night and finish with 24 points. Sophomore Bill Jackman added 15 for the Huskers, who led 51-38 at the half. Nebraska is now 2-0.

Moore's dunks overshadowed another fine performance by Hoppen. Time and again, the big center took advantage of his 6-11 height to shoot over the smaller Coyotes. Hoppen said he has been working on keeping the ball up high, instead of bringing it down for fakes. He said assistant coach

Tom Baack has helped him with the technique, designed to give Hoppen a quicker release.

"You just turn around and shoot," Hoppen said. "Wayman Tisdale does the same thing, except he does it a lot better. I think it's made things a lot easier for me."

South Dakota fell prey to the height disadvantage and their own mistakes. The Coyotes' tallest starters at 6-6, Dave Liebreid and Dave Gustafson, couldn't contain Hoppen. The Coyotes also committed 27 turnovers, compared to 17 for Nebraska. 6-2 senior guard Rob Swanhorst provided some punch for South Dakota, scoring 22 points. USD fell to 1-2 on the year.

Hoppen won't have the luxury of playing against smaller players tonight, when Montana State visits for a 7:30 game at the sports center.

A member of the Big Sky conference, Montana State features two big men — starting center Tryg Johnson, a 6-11 senior, and his backup, 7-0 Greg Walters.

"I think Johnson will give Hoppen a good matchup," said Bruce Parker, Montana State sports information director.

Parker said Johnson outplayed Minnesota center John Shasky Saturday night, scoring 17 points and grabbing 13 rebounds. But, Minnesota beat the Bobcats 85-71.

Montana State starts three 6-4 players and 5-10 point guard Tony Hampton in addition to Johnson.

The 6-4 starters include forwards Kral Ferch and Joe Wash-

ington and guard Jeff Epperly. Hampton makes things happen as the Bobcats' point guard. He's averaging 17.5 points and 6 assists in Montana State's first two games. The Bobcats beat Eastern Washington 109-64 in the season opener in Bozeman, Mont.

Moore on Curtis...

Curtis Moore arrived at UNL last year as a heralded, but overweight, junior college star.

But Saturday night, having lost 30 pounds over the summer, Moore made the transition from major college role player to major college star — at least for one glamorous night that saw him slam six dunk shots against South Dakota.

"I'm a little quicker and a little looser than I was last year," Moore said. "I felt pretty good about this game."

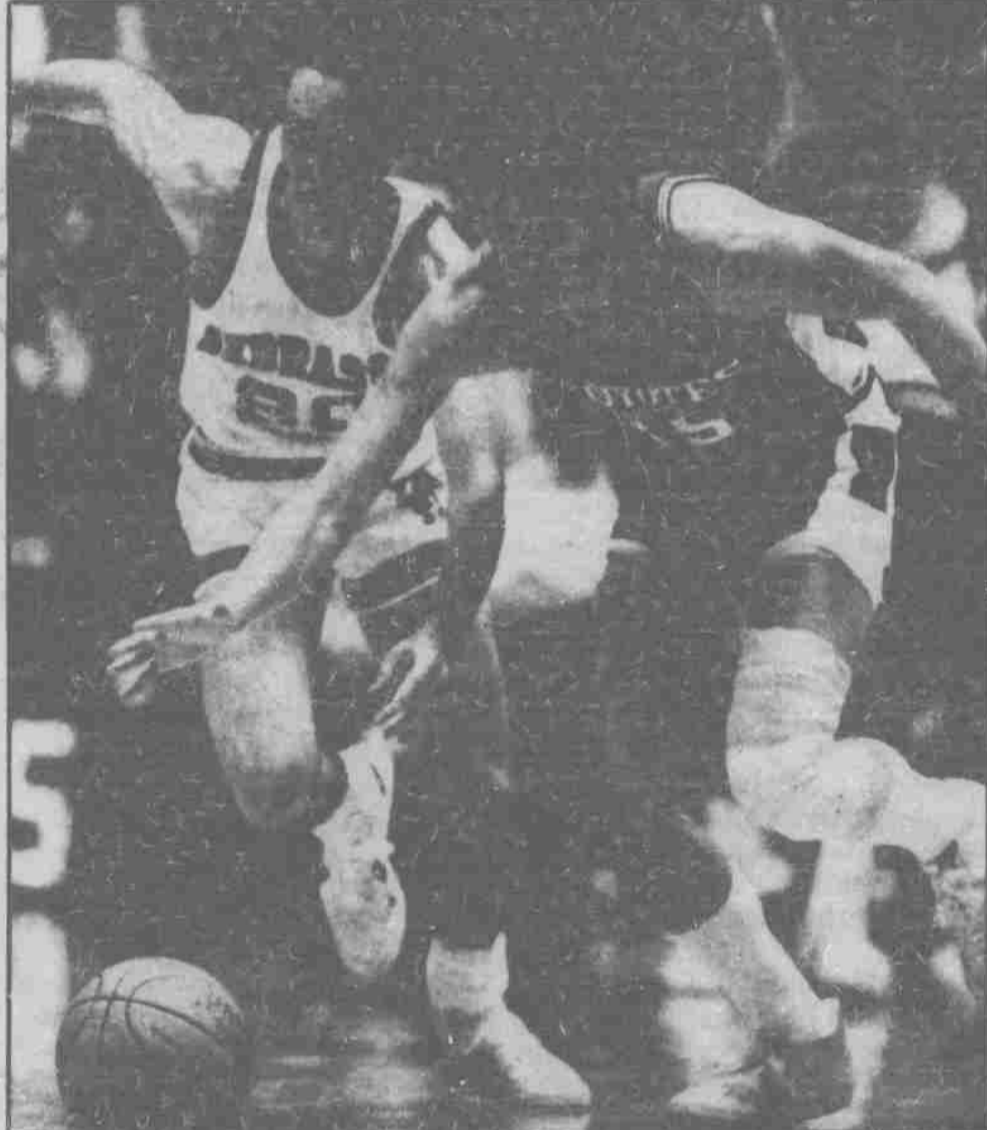
"He's got confidence now," coach Moe Iba said. "He's proud of himself after losing all that weight. He's a basketball player again."

Moore said the South Dakota mismatch was his best game at Nebraska, although he has slammed at other games. He once had eight in a game while playing for New York City's Mount Vernon High, even though Rodney McCray was the team's star.

"They didn't even need me to slam the ball then," he said. "We had all those big guys in the middle for that. I was out on the wing all the time."

While he said he doesn't try to be a crowd-pleaser — too much "ugly ego" — he does enjoy getting the crowd up with a dunk opportunity. And, while the dunks varied from a double-pump reverse to a running one-hander, Moore said they "weren't anything special."

"I don't have any names or anything like that for them," he said. "They're all just ordinary dunk shots I learned at the playground."



David Creamer/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska guard Brian Carr races south Dakota's Steve Gapp for a loose ball.

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