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NU lacks seasoned players

By Kevin Warneke

Too many questions need to be answered before Nebraska basketball coach Moe Iba will send out a warning to Big Eight coaches to beware of the Huskers.

The biggest worry, Iba said, is a lack of returning players from last year's squad. Nebraska does return center Dave Hoppen, forward Stan Cloudy and guards David Ponce and Eric Williams, who all have some starting experience.

"John Matzke is the only other player who's been on a major college basketball court," Iba said, "and he was redshirted last year."

Mike Martz and James Moóre were redshirted along with Matzke last year.

Because of the lack of returning players, the Huskers will sport five new faces. Iba said the lack of experience could catch up with the Huskers.

"A year ago, we were worried about finding playing time for the experienced players," Iba said. "Now we're worried about finding players who can play."

Of the five new recruits, guard Brian Carr and forward-center Ronnie Smith could log the most playing time, Iba said.

"Brian Carr will probably play more than some because we don't have as many guards and he's played well in practice," Iba said.

At the end of the 1982-83 season, Iba announced that he was looking for a power forward and backup center. Ronnie Smith is that man.

According to Iba, Smith could rack up a large amount of court action at both positions.

Although the power-forward position isn't locked up, Iba said Matzke has the inside track. Besides Smith, Iba said James Moore will also see action at the position.

"The power-forward position is a situation where we have a number of people who can play," Iba said.

Iba said he will use the upcoming non-conference games to evaluate their performance.

"We might see the starters changing from game to game," he said.

Texas Tech, Creighton, Arkansas and Wyoming will all prove to be staunch non-conference foes, Iba said.

"Our team will have to be ready to play," Iba said. "If we go out and not play to our capabilities, any of them can beat us."

Overall, Iba said the non-conference schedule is much stronger than in past years.

Although Nebraska has been ranked as high as second in Big Eight preseason polls, Iba said the conference race could be a dogfight.

"It scares me that there are so many good teams in the league," he said. "I don't think there's a last place team out there."

If he would have to pick a favorite to win the conference, Iba said he would choose Missouri.

"No one has beat them in four years," Iba said. "They have four returning players plus recruit Malcom Thomas."

"They've been the champions and until someone beats them they should be the favorite, he said.

Iba said that Colorado and Iowa State could surprise opposing teams.

Because Nebraska could be in many down-to-the-buzzer games, Iba said he hoped the fans will be supportive.

Floor seats are now assigned instead of being on a first-come-first served basis.

"I've been told to stay out of the ticket business," Iba said. "But as a coach, I'd like to get the most enthusiastic people on the floor area. The people who would come early to get good seats have usually been the better basketball fans."

As the season progresses, Iba said, Nebraska's fate could be determined by the play of the returning players.

"I'm hoping that they'll come through," Iba said.

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New scheme suits Dreiling

By Jeff Browne

At 7-1, Kansas center Greg Dreiling presents an imposing figure under the basket for the Jayhawks, but can he keep up in coach Larry Brown's new fast-break offense?

Dreiling is confident that he can overcome the image of big and slow that he acquired while he was at Wichita State.

"I've worked a lot on my conditioning and I feel pretty good about my speed now," Dreiling said. "Besides, if I need a rest, I can get it. We've got a lot of good players who can take my spot."

Dreiling, who transferred from Wichita last year but had to sit out because of NCAA transfer rules, said he even feels comfortable in Brown's scheme.

"He (Brown) likes to push it up the floor," Dreiling said, "but not so fast that we're out of control. Last year we were throwing the ball away seven or eight times a game."

Brown is Dreiling's third coach in three years of college basketball, but the sophomore from Wichita isn't too worried.

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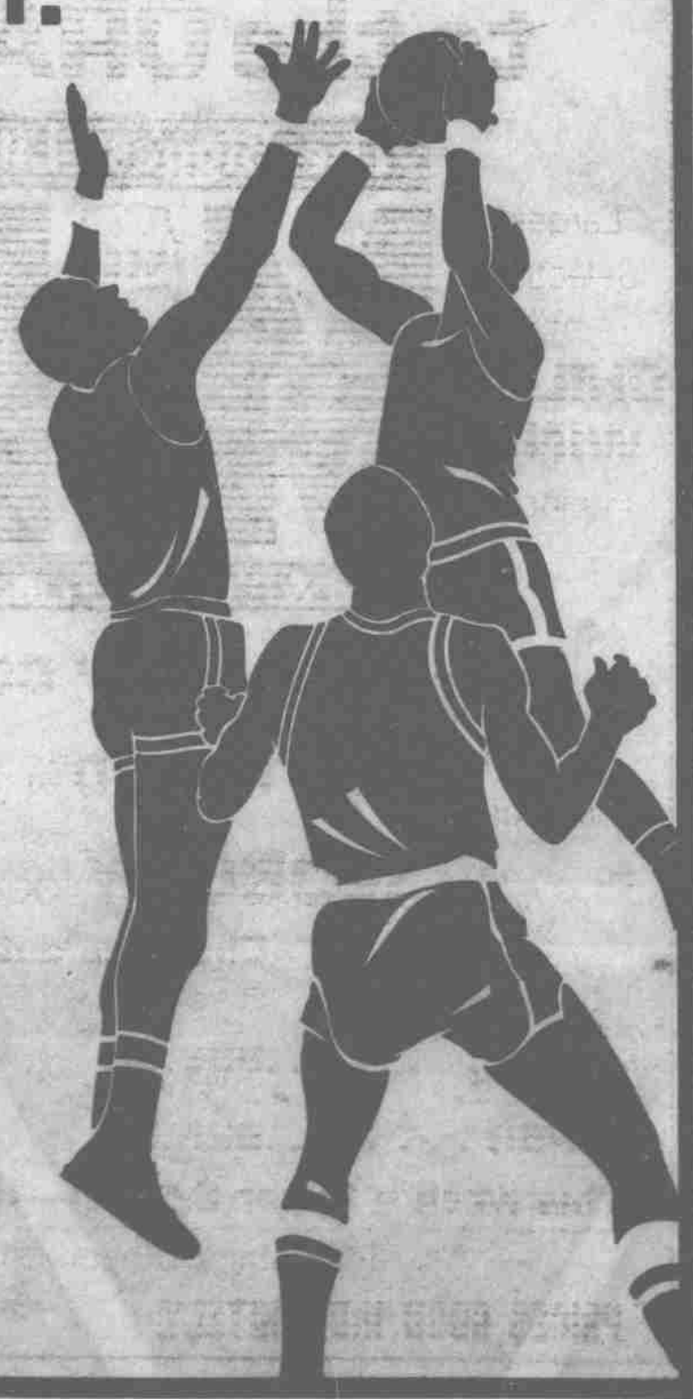

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