

# —Cowboys don't like 1.6 rule at all— No ratings for Big 8, but Oh, that title race

by George Kaufman  
Sports Editor

Oklahoma State is without a doubt the best seventh-place basketball team the Big Eight has ever seen.

The hapless Cowboys dropped another one-point Monday night, 49-48, as Iowa State's Jim Abrahamson shot in a long jumper with 26 seconds left at Stillwater.

That setback put OSU at 2-8 in the conference. But they own a 7-3 mark outside the league and have lost eight of their 11 games by a total of 13 points.

That's an average of 1.62 points, fans, which is known in the business as a "squeaker".

### Big Eight Slighted

Therefore national sportswriters and raters tend to underestimate Big Eight basketball, especially this year, because it may look as if all the teams are weak, rather than strong, because of the close conference race.

The fact that no team is running away with the crown leaves the conference in a bad light from the outside, but it's the best thing that could happen when you're on the inside.

Almost any team in the conference, with the notable exception of Colorado, could have won the Big Eight championship this year. As it stands now, about four of the eight have an even shot at walking off with the NCAA tourney berth.

### Cowboys Show Why

Oklahoma State provides an excellent example of this. Henry Iba's team is the kind of slow-it-down team which never lets an opponent open up a wide enough lead to relax; they keep the game on such a low-scoring scale that the foe must play Iba's game, not its own.

The Huskers don't have to be told about that: they edged OSU by two, 48-46, in the pre-season tourney, then clipped them by one, 63-62, at Stillwater.

Anytime a team with a 1-5 conference mark (which O-State owned when NU hit Stillwater) can play the 5-2 and leading club (with championship aspirations) that closely, then you know you have a very exciting, extremely close basketball competition which can look much easier from outside when you're just looking at the records.

I don't think anyone can charge Nebraska with being a pushover team, either. They had an easy time with Wyoming, a team the pollsters have since taken to their hearts and placed in the top twenty. And with athletes like Stu Lantz and Tom Baack leading the team, they are one of the best shooting clubs around today.

### Cause For Pride

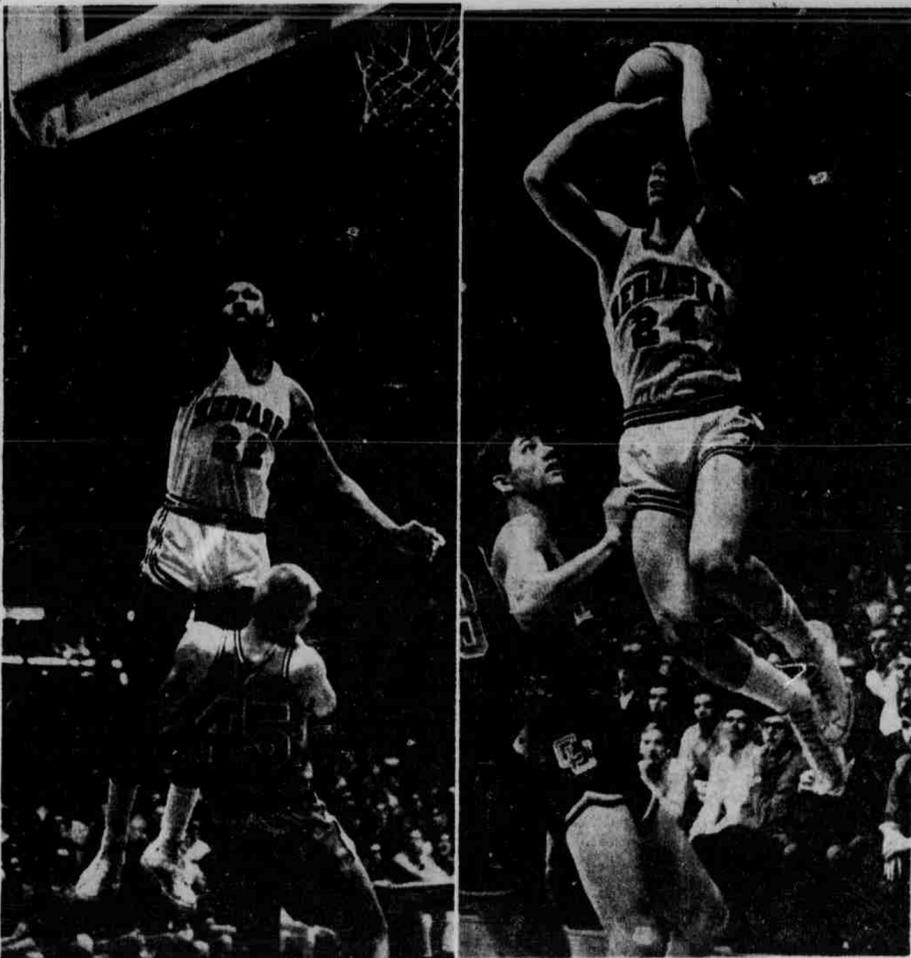
I think Big Eight fans can pride themselves that they have front row seats on some of the finest basketball action in the nation, and easily the most thrilling, wide open title race in the country.

### No Envy

I don't envy UCLA or Houston fans one bit. I can't imagine a more sterile existence for a real sports fan than going every Saturday night to watch another 123-60 rout. Ho-hum.

It is also very hard to envy Houston in another vein. Being an independent saddles a team with a distinct scheduling disadvantage. If you would take a look at Houston's schedule, you would see that UCLA was the only real opponent on the list.

The rest are small Texas schools (Yes, Virginia, some things in Texas are small) which you have never heard of, and never will. And consequently the Cougars also have racked up a list of 50-point runaways.



**High-Flying Huskers** . . . although Nebraska sometimes lists no starter at over 6-4, defenders are more often looking up at them than not. Here NU's identified flying object Stu Lantz and soph Sharpshooter Tom Scantlebury leave their earth-bound foes flat-footed and helpless. Though the Huskers haven't gotten as high in the national ratings as they have in the air, it's probably a good thing for their fans. Why? See story at left.

So while I might have to admit that either of those two teams could probably beat any Big Eight team in a series, I also am very glad I don't have to be a fan of either team.

### They Can Have 'em

They may have the ratings, and the attention of the national press, but they don't have the excitement of Big Eight basketball.

And it wouldn't be all that hard to find an All-American basketball team right here in the conference, as-

suming you aren't one of the fools that thinks he can pick just five men worthy of the honor.

Try this line-up: Stuart Lantz, Tom Baack, Don Sidle, Jo Jo White and Steve Honeycutt. Throw in Bill Cain and Don Smith and Roger Bohnenstiel as reserves and I don't know about you, but I would take that team against any in the country, Yes, even one boasting the Big Two.

At any rate, sports people, I will merely add: Always Be Prepared To Go To The Rail.

# Wrestler surprised at being OU matman . . . but he's happy

Norman, Okla. — Mike Grant's biggest surprise in wrestling was making the Oklahoma team.

"Prep wrestling is bigger back in Oregon," says Oklahoma's sophomore 145-pounder. "More boys get to wrestle in Oregon. We had 100 report for wrestling at my high school at Grants Pass. Every dual meet is a double affair matching not only the rival varsities (first teams) but also the junior varsities (second teams), often on adjoining mats."

### OU for Grant

But college wrestling is another story and when Grant got his scholarship offer from Oklahoma, he quickly forgot those he'd received from three West Coast universities. "I'd heard all about the Sooners, how their teams were tough, aggressive, went for falls and were the best-conditioned in the country. I jumped at the chance."

The chance came in a telephone call to Tommy Evans, Oklahoma coach, from Bill Ryder, Grant's coach, who formerly tutored at Capitol Hill.

"We've had such good luck with Oklahoma boys that I usually don't take an out-of-stater," confesses Evans, "but I'm glad I listened to Ryder and took Grant."

### Fierce competitor

"He's tough, a fierce competitor. You don't find many of those around. There's a lot of difference between a competitor and a fierce competitor. If Mike was a pinner, he'd have everything I like in

a wrestler. He needs to learn pinning techniques."

Grant agrees. He pinned most of his opponents on his way to an Oregon prep championship at 141. "Seems like I can't get a hold tight enough here," he says. "I get a few guys on their backs but I can't pin them. It's lots tougher to pin in college."

But is record going into the Northwestern dual here Friday is 12-1. And he has beaten some good boys

### Just pushes

"I'm not good at take-downs, escapes, riding, anything," he analyzes his own style. "I just keep pushing the guy. I usually tire them out. When I start wearing them down, my holds work better."

The size and frenzy of Oklahoma wrestling crowds amaze Grant. "The fans here know lots more about wrestling and become much more involved in each bout."

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# NU grass greener, but cyclones prefer own field

By Harry Argue  
Sports Columnist

Husker football fans still clutching the crying towel from last season's 6-4 mark can take heart in the fact that the grass is still plenty green here on the west side of the Mighty Mo.

I'm referring to our Big Eight neighbors across the river, the Iowa State Cyclones. Football fortunes, both on the

field and at the box office, have been on the skids in Ames for several years. I think their hapless plight was best pointed out by the recent effort to move the 1968 Husker-Cyclone clash from Ames to Lincoln.

Memorial Stadium is more than twice the size of Iowa State's home ground and a virtually certain crowd of 60,000 plus here would have been financially far more benefi-

## ARGUEments

cial to both schools than if the game were played at tiny Clyde Williams Field in Ames. A capacity crowd would even be doubtful. While Coach Bob Devaney and ISU Athletic Director Clay Stapleton discussed the possibility of a switch, the final say was up to the athletic board at Iowa State and they decided the game would stay at Ames.

That now leaves us with five home and five road games for 1968. Looking ahead, it's an interesting schedule in that four of the first five contests are at home. I might add that the ticket office reported last week that it has stopped taking 1968 season ticket orders from the general public. They say they have more orders than they can fill. Single game tickets will be available later.

### Bad stretch run

Then four of the last five skirmishes are on enemy soil, including the final two games on successive weekends at

Colorado and Oklahoma Fun!

The season will open here against Wyoming, the only undefeated and untied major college team last year. While the Cowboys barely dropped the Sugar Bowl to Louisiana State, I'm sure they will be invading from the West like gangbusters.

This will be their chance to try to prove what they've been saying for years—that Wyoming, and not Nebraska, is the top football state in the Midlands. The Cowboys will also be playing against their former head coach, Bob Devaney.

### Gophers again

After dueling Utah here a week later, the Huskers will head for the Northland to play the Big Ten Co-Champ, Minnesota. We also play at Minneapolis in 1969 and 1970 and have a contest scheduled with the Gophers every year through 1974. It looks like the next few years will establish another fierce Nebraska-Minnesota rivalry.

If you think the opening games of 1968 look difficult, wait until 1969. Opening day entertainment will be provided by this year's Rose Bowl and National Champion University of Southern California Trojans. Nebraska then opens against the Trojans at Los Angeles in 1970.

**Remember the Alamo**  
In 1966 and 1967, Southern Cal opened against Texas with both teams highly touted for national honors. USC won both years by small margins

and went on to greater heights while Texas was never able to regain its bearings and stumbled through the rest of its schedule both years.

I wouldn't get too worried about the upcoming schedules though. Rest assured the slate also includes Iowa State on a home-and-home basis every year through at least 1976.

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