

It's finally here---that 'crucial' game

By George Kaufman
Sports Editor

It's finally happened. After writing all season during this ridiculous Big Eight basketball dogfight of "crucial" games, "must" contests and "do-or-die" situations, the Nebraska Cornhuskers finally face extinction Friday night when Iowa State hits town for a Coliseum clash.

Before this, whenever a front-runner would drop a "crucial" game, every other contender would soon follow suit, and things would be right back where they had been: four teams deadlocked so tight at the top that there was just no room to breathe.

But now, with the Huskers and Cyclones burdened with four losses after the upstart Colorado Buffs knocked off both within five days, neither can afford a fifth. So after tonight, one of the teams will just have to forget about trips to Wichita or New York City.

"Iowa State has been a surprising team since the tourney," says NU coach Joe Cipriano of the visitors.

Cipriano should know. Nebraska was the first team the Cyclones surprised after the Christmas tournament, saddling the hopeful Huskers with their first league loss, 85-70,

at Ames.

But, as K-State coach Tex Winter has observed, Nebraska is a different team in the Coliseum than on the road. A perfect record this year in Lincoln attests to that fact.

But the Huskers also showed there's a good reason for that record. Against both Kansas and Kansas State, they learned their lesson via road losses, then made the right adjustments and toppled them at home.

In several ways, Iowa State present the same sort of basic problem Kansas and K-State did: height.

"They have two big guys (6-10 Don Smith and 6-7 Bill Cain) inside, and they both play post," warns Cipriano.

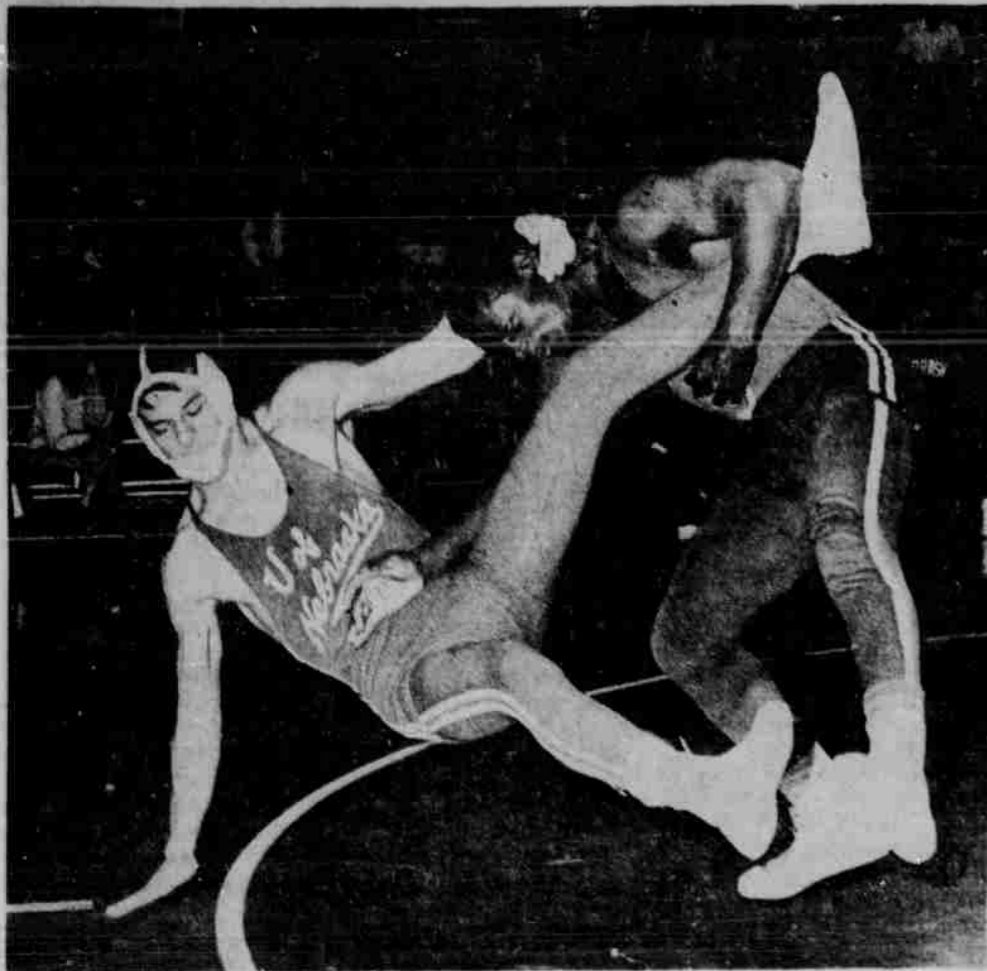
"We'll have to set the tempo," predicts Cip. "We'll have to use our press early—we've hurt them before with it."

On the Big Eight scramble, the Husker coach admits to being just as confused as anyone else.

"It's hard to believe that Kansas State can win all the rest of their games the way Colorado and Iowa State have been playing. But if they do, they certainly deserve to win it."

The Wildcats enjoy the advantage of being the only conference team with just three losses, so seem to have the inside lane at the moment despite being beaten badly, by 24 points at 92-68, by the Huskers in the Coliseum.

So it comes to the place where the last-place team may have the biggest say in who the champion will finally turn out to be. Lowly Colorado, 2-9, knocked both Nebraska and Iowa State down to four losses, and now can do one of them a real favor by doing the same thing to Kansas State.



Coach Orval Borgianni's NU wrestlers make their final home appearance Saturday night at 7:30 as they take on nationally third-ranked Oklahoma at the Coliseum. Above, Jerry Munson is taken down by a Missouri wrestler in an earlier quadrangular.

Current Movies

Times Furnished by Theater. Times: a.m. light face; p.m. bold face.

LINCOLN
Cooper/Lincoln: 'Bonnie and Clyde', 7:00 and 9:00.
Varsity: 'Billion Dollar Brain', 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20.
Stuart: 'The Penthouse', 1:15, 3:20, 5:20, 7:25, 9:25.
State: 'A Woman', 1:00, 2:41, 4:22, 6:03, 7:44, 9:25.
Joyce: 'Pinochlio, In Outer Space', 7:00, 9:55. 'Nobody's Perfect', 8:15.
Nebraska: 'Lord Of The Flies', 1:00, 4:15, 7:25. 'David And Lisa', 2:35, 5:45, 9:00.
Starview: 'Slender Thread', 7:30. 'Patch of Blue', 9:18. 'Lilies Of The Field', 11:08.
84th & O: 'The War Wagon', 7:30. 'The Professionals', 9:15. 'The Killers', 11:15.

OMAHA
Indian Hills: 'Gone With The Wind', 8:00.
Dundee: 'Far From The Madding Crowd', 8:00.
Cooper 70: 'Camelot', 8:00.

the N crowd by George Kaufman

A lot has been written and said recently about the supposedly shocking accusations made by the Michigan University Daily student newspaper and subsequent investigation of the school's recruiting practices.

For the uninformed, the paper's sports editor wrote a copyrighted expose, in the best tradition of those 1940 movies about newspapers you see on the late show, of how the athletes were being pampered and given special privileges. Shock.

My only explanations are that either the sports editor is a pitifully naive fellow, in which case he shouldn't be sports editor, or he wanted a headline in a real newspaper very badly.

he is given an office, funds and a newspaper with which to practice his trade and perhaps impress a newspaper which will, as a consequence of his work, hire him upon graduation. No one objects. All this is probably on top of several School of Journalism scholarships, by the way.

So why all the fuss when a young man makes a deal with a college to sell his talents of getting the team in the national ratings and filling a 65,000-seat stadium for several Saturdays, or a coliseum more often?

Amateur sports in its pure sense means that an athlete chooses the college best fit for his choice of subjects, then participates in the schools' team sports because he likes the sports. Anyone who thinks American colleges have amateur athletics step down off your carriage and speak up.

This, of course, is not true. Universities and colleges today have sports on the level of professionals, and should admit it and even be proud of it.

Forget Dear Old U.

And fans should admit they are no longer going out to cheer for their teammates who are defending the honor of Dear Old Fool U. against another school.

This is not to mean they should stop cheering. It is a great thing to get behind a team and follow them all the way, win or lose. The Husker basketball and football teams of this year provided a very exciting year for NU fans. But they were not out there giving their all for their 18,000 classmates, most of whom they do not know on a personal basis or want to.

rounding "amateurism" in college sports. It's quite ironic that it should come from a school which has appreciated substantial success in football on a national scale until a disappointing year this past season.

Open your eyes

For the fact is that amateur sports, in the true sense of the words, does not exist among major universities today, and very rarely in any colleges which take their teams' won-loss record seriously.

The fact that this story was immediately picked up by the wire services and the Big Ten and NCAA jumped right in with both feet sounding quite indignant at the suggestion, only illustrates the amazing degree of hypocrisy concerning the subject of amateurism in America.

Calling the spades

Professional sports means an athlete picks out the team with the best offer to his interests after bargaining with them with his talent and ability to draw crowds. Anyone who still thinks American colleges are engaged in amateur sports put down your bow and arrow and speak up.

The only thing wrong with professional sports in college is the ridiculous hypocrisy and defensive attitude practiced by the ruling bodies of college sports, especially conference groups. The Nebraska "scandal" of this fall provides a beautiful example of this.

Study proves it

A study done a few years back by now sports editor of the Lincoln Star Hal Brown showed that a school's success in any given sport is in almost direct proportion to the amount of scholarship aid appointed the sport.

So, whatever else the MSU sports editor set out to do, he has only succeeded in bringing to light the witch-hunt type atmosphere suspended from recruiting for a year.

Degree, not principle

All this is quite "legal" according to the NCAA and all the conference rules books. So it seems that the infringement is to the degree of pay given the athlete, not the principle of amateurism.

Personally, I can see nothing wrong with giving the athlete anything he can be offered to get him to the school and to get him to perform his best.

If a young man who can sing and play a guitar can work his way through college performing at a local bar, no one objects. If he is good in journalism and becomes editor of the school newspaper,

recruiting for a year.

The conference was trying to say to the press and the public, "See, we are clean, we don't violate the rules of amateurism. We're just a bunch of colleges which happen to like sports."

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