

—How to keep basketball from becoming a 'cage' sport—

The case for three officials: the answer is yes

by Harry Argue
Who's To Blame

Whose fault is it when participants in a fast moving sport such as basketball or hockey seem to spend as much time scuffling with each other as playing the game?

I'll cast my vote for the game's officials. Sure, it's the players who do the fighting, but if the officials, at the first sign of any illegal contact, are quick to mete out the proper penalty, fighting can usually be nipped in the bud. Otherwise, a wave of flying fists and elbows may tell the big story of the game.

Also, in basketball, can two officials still properly handle all the activity on the floor?

Let me say first of all that I am not trying to declare a holiday for slamming officials. I fully realize, and largely agree, that it's the sportsmanlike thing to accept officiating at face value and say nothing. But, I don't believe referees are infallible, and therefore don't think there's anything the matter with being a little objective.

This is probably more of a difficulty in hockey than basketball since the icers are well-known for their not-so-lengthy tempers. I saw an all too good, but unfortunate, example of this in a recent match between the Omaha Knights and Houston Apollos at Ak-Sar-Ben.

Stored Up

With more than half of the first period gone, it struck me that no penalties had been whistled. By the time the players obviously had the idea they could get away with anything, a few players started mixing it up on a tight play and still no penalties were called, even though punches had been thrown.

A few minutes later, Omaha's Joe Johnston and Gary Monahan of Houston ended up in a real rock-sock-em fist fight. The referees split them apart after a few minutes with the aid of both benches, who probably

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would have just as soon turned it into an all-out brawl.

Then, once the men-in-stripes had Johnston and Monahan apart, they let the belligerents slip away and have at each other again. Once they stopped it, officials did assess long misconduct penalties to both players and the game continued in a rugged fashion for the rest of the period. Had the officials not called a loose game from the beginning, Johnston and Monahan may never have gotten to the point of bloodying each other's faces.

The lesson learned, the refs proceeded to call a tight game the last two periods and there was no more fighting. It's a simple lesson, though, which they can't ever forget — if you start to let players get away with things, the game can easily get out of hand and people can start getting hurt.

Cagers Mix It

The same thing can and does happen in basketball, although it has not reached the brawl stage at Nebraska. Coach Joe Cipriano said it hasn't been a real problem, but KLIN sportscaster Tom Hedrick, a basketball official himself for five years, said he is bothered by the inconsistency of some refs "calling petty stuff and letting the clobbering go by."

Hedrick said he thinks it's okay not to call a foul if a player is just brushed, but anything more than that must be whistled.

On the whole, Hedrick said officiating in the Big Eight this year left a little to be desired, but thinks a lot of the problems can be solved by putting three officials on the floor instead of just two.

Two Refs Not Enough

With teams like Oklahoma and Nebraska, who play a constant running and pressing type of game, he said, the two officials simply cannot properly cover the court

and are thus unable to call a good game because of the brand of ball being played these days. With three officials, they won't have to run so much, see so much or make so many judgement calls. He added that seven of the Big Eight basketball coaches favor the extra ref as do most officials, whose job would become easier.

"This would hopefully solve the officiating problem," Hedrick said.

He noted that three officials were used in a couple of consolation games at the Big Eight Tourney in Kansas City this year and that "things worked a little better."

The drawback to three officials is an age-old one of money. Officials are paid \$100 per game and transportation expenses. It's up to the Big Eight faculty representatives to decide if the conference goes to three.

Cip Goes With 3

Coach Cipriano agrees that three refs would be a big help. "If two teams are well-matched," he said, "it's a harder and closer game to call."

The recent Big Eight basketball race indicates there were plenty of close games making this a frequent problem. Cipriano believes the third official is necessary to help on judgement calls, which are increasing with the run-and-shoot type of play. He also said that with three officials, one of them would be likely to have better position to call goal tending. Officials now have to call it at times from 20 feet away and a bad angle.

"The more active play requires the use of a third official," Cipriano said.

Personally, I can't see how three officials would hurt anything. There were many questionable calls this year, and some looked downright unreal, on both ends of the court. I'm not saying this is a matter of anyone's competence — it's just that the game has outgrown the stage where two officials can effectively handle it. Three officials are needed — now.

Promotion program planned for football

Denver, Colo. — The Big Eight Conference and Frontier Airlines today announced plans for an extensive promotional program for Big Eight football to be kicked off next week with a 27-minute, sound, color football highlights film entitled, "Big Eight Football At Its Best."

Frontier President Lewis W. Dymond and Big Eight Commissioner Wayne Duke, making the joint announcement Monday in Denver, described the effort as "one designed to emphasize the top-calibre football played by Big Eight institutions, as well as to provide the Conference's countless fans top-flight entertainment reflecting this outstanding competition."

Production of the film, first venture of its type for both Frontier and the Big Eight, was prompted by what Duke labelled the "most thrilling and most successful football season in the 61-year history of the Big Eight."

In doing so, he cited the following factors: The Big Eight recorded the best winning percentage (nearly 67 per cent) of any major athletic conference in 1967, climaxed by Colorado's impressive 31-21 triumph over the University of Miami in the Bluebonnet Bowl and Oklahoma's thrilling 26-24 win over Southeastern Conference champion Tennessee in the Orange Bowl.

Duke also cited the return in 1968 of 113 starting players from last fall's Big Eight teams, including seven of eight quarterbacks, as a factor in producing the film, noting that "the core of players contributing to this outstanding record will be back to play again next season."

The film, depicting highlights of the 1967 season and previews of 1968, will be available for public showing beginning April 4. Premiere showings, featuring the head football coaches of Big Eight institutions, will be held in major cities throughout the six-state conference area as a means of directing attention to the film and the 1968 conference football season.

Lindsey Nelson, nationally known television sportscaster of NCAA football telecasts and post-season bowl games, will serve as narrator for the film, which is being produced by Calvin Productions, Inc., of Kansas City.

Ninety prints of the film will be produced and will be available for distribution through the Frontier Airlines sales offices, athletic department personnel of Big Eight institutions, and Sterling Films Inc., of Chicago, a professional film distributor.

Distribution will be cost-free, and persons desiring a copy of the film for service organizations, educational and church groups, or other organizations should contact a Frontier agent or athletic department representative for a booking assignment.

Spring practice begins for 'greatest season' of Big 8 Football

... 7 of 8 individual champs return

Kansas City, Mo.—The prelude to what could be the greatest season in the 62 years of Big Eight Conference football came Monday with the start of spring football practice at the University of Missouri.

During the following three weeks, the other seven Big Eight teams will take to the field for the allowed 20 practices during a 36-calendar-day period, excluding vacation time.

Teams will be going into this spring's series of practices with unprecedented excitement. The competition for open starting spots will be keen and the competition for the Big Eight title even more spirited.

As one coach puts it: "This race will be the most exciting ever for the Big Eight. Anyone could win it." Another added, "I can't see anyone in the league who won't be better than last year." He also hinted of numerous upsets with, "It's still a long time until September and even longer to the end of November."

Balance key

Balance was the key factor to the exciting conference race last year, a season dur-

ing which the average difference between being a winner and a loser was less than a touchdown a game over the 28-game conference schedule. Upsets were the rule rather than the exception.

Basically, coaches will be working with the same individual leaders who created the crowd-pleasing race situation of last fall. The hard corps of returnees is made up of 113 returning starters, including seven of the eight quarterbacks. These individuals will be scrambling outcomes in just as unpredictable a manner as last year.

It was these leaders who last season gave the Big Eight its greatest hour. The conference was the only one to win two bowl championships — Colorado defeated a fine Miami team, 31-21, in the Bluebonnet Bowl, and Oklahoma took Southeastern Conference champion Tennessee, 26-24, in the Orange Bowl.

The bowl games wrote the climax to the Big Eight's authoring a 16-9-1 record against non-conference foes, the best winning percentage (64 per cent) of any major athletic conference in inter-sectional contests.

Another reason for optimism to reign in the Big Eight comes with a quick look at the final statistics for the league last year. Seven of the eight individual statistical champions return. Included are three sophomores who won four of the titles.

Leader of the underclass movement was Oklahoma's Steve Owens, who won the rushing and scoring championships. Winners, too, were fellow sophomores, Frank Patrick of Nebraska in passing, and Benny Goodwin of Oklahoma State in punt returning.

Sports car club meeting tonight

The University of Nebraska chapter of the Sports Car Association of America is having its second meeting tonight at 9 p.m. in the Shramm Hall lobby.

All persons interested in joining are encouraged to attend.

Current Movies

LINCOLN
Cooper/Lincoln: 'Bonnie and Clyde', 7:00 and 9:00.
Varsity: 'In Cold Blood', 1:00, 3:45, 6:25, 9:00.
State: 'The Graduate', 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00.
Spartan: 'The Anniversary', 1:20, 3:15, 5:15, 7:10, 9:10.
Joy: 'Namu the Killer Whale', 7:25, 'Billie', 8:50.
Nebraska: Foreign Film Society, 7:00 and 9:00.
84th & O: 'Weekend Warriors', 7:20. 'Hell Angels On Wheels', 8:10. Last complete show, 8:30.
OMAHA
Indian Hills: 'Gone With The Wind', 2:00 and 8:00.
Dundee: 'Far From The Madding Crowd', 2:00 and 8:00.
Cooper 70: 'Carnelot', 2:00 and 8:00.

Phi Deltas win crown paddleball

Phi Delta Theta won the all-university paddleball championship sponsored by the intramurals department.

Mark Sipple of Law School won a medal in singles champion while Tom Lewis and Dick Baldwin on the championship team picked up the doubles medal.

Phi Gamma Delta got second in the tournament and Law School got third with Beta Theta Pi fourth and Wee-Six fifth. A total of 19 teams participated in the competition of 140 matches involving the 114 participants.

Rodeo Club goes to first competition

NU's Rodeo Club will be participating in its first rodeo of the season at North Dakota State in Fargo March 30-31.

Team members making the trip will be captain A. B. Cox of Valentine, John Ferrett of Mason City, Larry Radent of Madison, Chip Whitaker of Chambers, John Kitt of Wauwata and Linda Edwards of Ainsworth.

Both individual and team points will count toward the national finals of the Intercollegiate Rodeo Association in Sacramento in July.

Junior champions were Kansas' Bob Douglass in total offense and Kansas State's Dave Jones, receiving, and Bob Coble, punting.

Still a closer examination will show that nine of the leading 13 rushers, the top seven passers, 11 of the best 14 in total offense, seven of the leading 10 receivers, and 13 of the top 15 scorers return.

Never before has such a group of individual leaders come from the sophomore and junior ranks in the Big Eight.

Quarterbacks shine

The pivotal point for checking future prospects is quarterback, the glamour spot everywhere. That is where the Big Eight will glitter this fall. Best indication of the position's power comes from the passing figures, where quarterbacks are set apart for comparison.

Patrick, Douglass, Kansas State's Bill Nossek, Oklahoma's Bob Warmack, Iowa State's John Warder, Colorado's Bob Anderson, and Oklahoma's State Ronnie Johnson combined this year to throw the ball for an average of over 1,000 yards each. That amounts to almost 85 per cent of the passing offense generated by Big Eight teams during a record passing year.

Still these quarterbacks could run the option, too, as they accounted for almost 9,000 total yards as records

fell to them like the rain of passes they fired. Capping the big year for the signal-callers were Anderson and Warmack. Anderson, just a sophomore, was voted the most outstanding player in the Bluebonnet Bowl, and Warmack was named to a similar honor for his work in the Orange Bowl.

Add to the quarterbacks the 106 other starters returning and the optimistic picture for the Big Eight comes into focus. This figures out to be 65 per cent of the front-line men back. A team rundown shows Oklahoma State with 17, Kansas and Missouri with 16 each, Iowa State has 15, Kansas State and Oklahoma 14 each, Nebraska 12, and Colorado 9.

Attendance up

Attendance is also expected to reap a side benefit from the return of so many quality performers. Add to this the outstanding schedules faced by all eight teams, and virtually every Big Eight record is in jeopardy as the total count edges closer to the two million mark each year.

Kansas, for example, plays three bowl teams at home—Indiana (Rose), Colorado (Bluebonnet), and Oklahoma (Orange). Home openers for Nebraska and Oklahoma are also against bowl participants, Nebraska catching Wyoming (Sugar), and Oklahoma taking on North Carolina open the year against national nemesis Notre Dame

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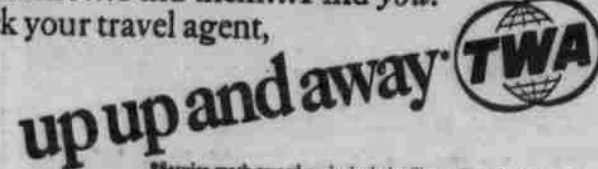


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