

To be . . . or not to be . . . in Omaha?

by **RANDY YORK**
Nebraska Sports Editor

Since Omaha has a big-time sports facility, it should develop a big-time sports attitude to go with it.

It's hard to imagine only 4,000 fans for the Class A state championship game.

But the lethargic Omaha basketball fans accounted for less than half of the crowd for last weekend's state finals between Lincoln Northeast and Omaha Technical.

INDEED, OMAHA has proved itself to be small-time with big-time facilities.

And the near-sighted Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA), when it meets to decide whether to shift the Class A segment back to Lincoln again, would do well to consider Omaha's Class D attitude to an otherwise flourishing Class A sport.

Crowd control . . . where?

It seems as if crowd control is the only criteria upon which the NSAA supports or rejects Omaha as the host site.

But what's amazing is that Omaha has a crowd problem when it doesn't really even get a crowd in its 9,500-seat Civic Auditorium.

A Cozad basketball fan reportedly said, as he was crowding to get into Lincoln's Coliseum for the Class B championship game, "Let's move the game to Omaha. We'd get a couple thousand more seats, and they'd still have enough room for the Class A game."

MAYBE THE Class A site really should be determined on fan support. Surely, the tournament couldn't suffer financially with a move from Omaha.

It should be pointed out, however, that Lincoln is just as capable as Omaha of fan misconduct. A Tech-Northeast state championship match in 1962 produced not only flaring tempers, but also a protest of the game by losing Tech coach Neil Mosser.

Although Omaha mayor Eugene Leahy claimed participating schools had no part in igniting last week's flareups, such was not the case. Disrespectful Boys Town followers, whose team was beaten by one point by Northeast in the last four seconds, threw chairs and fought viciously after the letdown.

Tech, however, conducted itself as the truest of sportsmen. Most of the behavioral problem after its loss was not generated by Tech High students.

TECH COACH Fred Longacre, one of the most knowledgeable and most affable coaches in the state, was, for the most part, responsible for Tech's courtesy.

Maybe Omaha should host the tournament only on the way in which they receive it.

And the truth of the matter is Omaha has never really established itself as a basketball-minded city.

Although support has gained considerably for Creighton University basketball, that support has been inconsistent. For example, Creighton drew a sellout when it played fifth-ranked New Mexico State this year, but couldn't even lure 4,000 for such a powerful foe as Houston this last month.

PUT HOUSTON on the University of Nebraska home schedule in a winning or losing season, and tickets would be in demand. But they could have given tickets away in Omaha.

Class B beats Omaha

The Class B District championship between Cozad and Lexington drew 5,500 in Kearney two weeks ago, and to get a seat for that game, fans had to arrive two hours early.

But then there's Omaha, which lost the State Class A tournament once after potential racial disturbances. Still, previous crowds didn't exceed this year's turnout.

What it all boils down to is Omaha has been given two chances (and four years) at the Class A tournament, and failed miserably.

DESPITE GOOD coverage by the Omaha news media and the ingenious mind of Civic Auditorium manager Charlie Mancuso, the Omaha sports fan obviously could care less about making the tournament a success.

What's poor is the Class A session could probably be just as big a success in Kearney as it is, or rather isn't, in Omaha.

It's almost disgraceful to leave Nebraska's best basketball facility empty for the state tournament.

But the NSAA can hardly be criticized if it took such action in shifting the tournament to Lincoln again.

Rifle meet slated

A demonstration by an Olympic gold medal winner will highlight the 17th annual Big Red Invitational Rifle Meet scheduled Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at the Military and Naval Science Building.

Gary Anderson of Axtell who set a world and Olympic record score of 1,153 points in the 300-meter three-position free rifle event at the 1964 summer Olympics in Tokyo will show slides of his trips as a competitor and give a shooting demonstration at 1 p.m. Saturday.

A TOTAL of 29 teams and 120 shooters are expected for this year's event sponsored by the University of Nebraska Rifle Club. There will be six girl's teams competing.

The defending team champion University of Missouri at Rollo and its individual champion Robert Hill are returning this year. Last year the Missouri at Rollo squad set an NU Invitational scoring record.

Each of the four team members is allowed 60 shots. Each shot is worth 10 points for a total of 600 per individual and 2400 per team.

Schools competing at 1 p.m. Friday are JFK, Creighton, Nebraska and Kansas. Scheduled for Saturday at 7:30 p.m. are Kansas State, Loyola of Chicago, Missouri, Missouri-Rolla, Iowa State, Colorado State, Colorado School of Mines, Wichita State, and Southwest Missouri State. The final session will begin at 8:30 a.m. Sunday with South Dakota, South Dakota State, and North Dakota State competing.

Nebraska's top ten shooters are Bob Boomer, freshman from Naperville, Ill.; Darwin Montgomery, freshman from Omaha; Fred Brooks, junior from Sioux City, Iowa; Tom Menck, senior from Omaha; Royce Dunn, junior from Hastings; Jim McCabe, junior from Lincoln; Kevin Cooksley, sophomore from Broken Bow; Dick Kindt, junior from Pierre, S.D.; Patricia Bremer, freshman from Dunbar; and Terry Medjo, junior from Lincoln.



Bob Boomer . . . NU gunner.

LINCOLN'S FINEST THEATRES

NEW Cooper / LINCOLN TONIGHT AT 7 & 9 P.M.
434-7421
54th & O Street
20th CENTURY-FOX PRESENTS
NOW SHOWING!

**Elizabeth Warren
Taylor Beatty**

in **The
Only Game
In Town**

COLOR BY DE LUXE (GP)

SAT. & SUN. FEATURES AT 1:30, 3:30, 5:35, 7:30 & 9:30

STUART CONTINUOUS DAILY FROM 1 P.M.
432-1465
13th & P Street
NOW SHOWING!
FEATURE AT 1:00, 3:05
5:10, 7:15 & 9:30

**THEY SHOOT
HORSES,
DON'T THEY?**

GP

**NOMINATED
FOR 9
ACADEMY
AWARDS**

INCLUDING
**BEST DIRECTOR
SYDNEY POLLACK**
**BEST ACTRESS
JANE FONDA**
**BEST SUPPORTING
ACTOR GIG YOUNG**
**BEST SUPPORTING
ACTRESS
SUSANNAH YORK**

A SUBSIDIARY OF THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANIES, INC.
DISTRIBUTED BY CINERAMA RELEASING CORPORATION

WIDE WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT

**ELECTROSTATIC
COPIES**

8 1/2 x 11 only 8c/page

**THESES—LAW BRIEFS
TERM PAPERS—THESES
BINDING. \$3.50 and up**

**FAST SERVICE
OPEN DAILY
EVENINGS AND
WEEKENDS**

PRINT - STAT

6231 WALKER AVE.

434-4079