

'New look' is in as basketball squad starts drills

By Jim Kay

The Husker football season reaches the halfway point today. But it's already time to start thinking Husker basketball for Joe Cipriano.

Cipriano, heading into his fifteenth year as head coach at UNL, will send his "new look" team through its first practice of the year today.

Cipriano will have eight new players along with seven returning lettermen. Three of those seven started for UNL last year. Replacements are needed for graduated forward Bob Siegel and guard Allen Holder.

"We've got some kids back, but we need to get help for Brian Banks at guard," Cipriano said. "We recruited four guards, two from junior colleges and two out of high school."

The junior college transfers are 6 ft. 1 in. sophomore David Davis from San

Bruno, Cal., and 6 ft. 3 in. junior Bob Moore from Miami, Okla.

The freshman guards are 6 ft. 2 in. Gerard Myrthil from New York City and 5 ft. 11 in. Mike Naderer from Scottsdale, Ariz.

Banks, a junior, was the second leading scorer last year, averaging 13.3 points per game.

Other guards returning from last year's team are seniors James Caldwell and Eric Coard.

"We need some players who are able to shoot," Cipriano said. "Our defense has been strong the last couple of years, but we're going to try and get more offense and get more points off the fast break."

He said the team has been working with a running and weight program prior to today's opening drills.

"We can get a pretty good indication from that of how ready they are," Cipriano said. "It's not much fun, but they realize it's a way to improve and ready themselves. They'll be in good physical condition by Oct. 15."

He also pointed out the importance of rebounding to his team's success.

"Most of our big men are younger," he said. "We'll have to wait and see how they come along."

Junior Carl McPipe averaged 15.2 points and 8.3 rebounds a game last year to lead the Huskers in both categories.

Help for McPipe at center will come from 6 ft. 8 in. freshman John Ploetz from Shorewood, Wis., and 21-year-old Srebrenko (Sil) Despot.

Despot is a 6 ft. 8 in. freshman from Zagreb, Yugoslavia, who played for the Yugoslavian national team.

At forward the Huskers have three returning lettermen including one of last year's starters, senior Terry Novak. Novak

averaged just over five points a game last year. Also returning at forward are junior Curt Hedberg and sophomore Mark McVicker.

Two freshman recruits will add depth on the frontline for Cipriano. They are 6 ft. 7 in. Eric Eckelman from Muncie, Ind., and 6 ft. 7 in. Andre Smith from Chicago.

Cipriano said he had a few goals he would like to see his team reach early in the season.

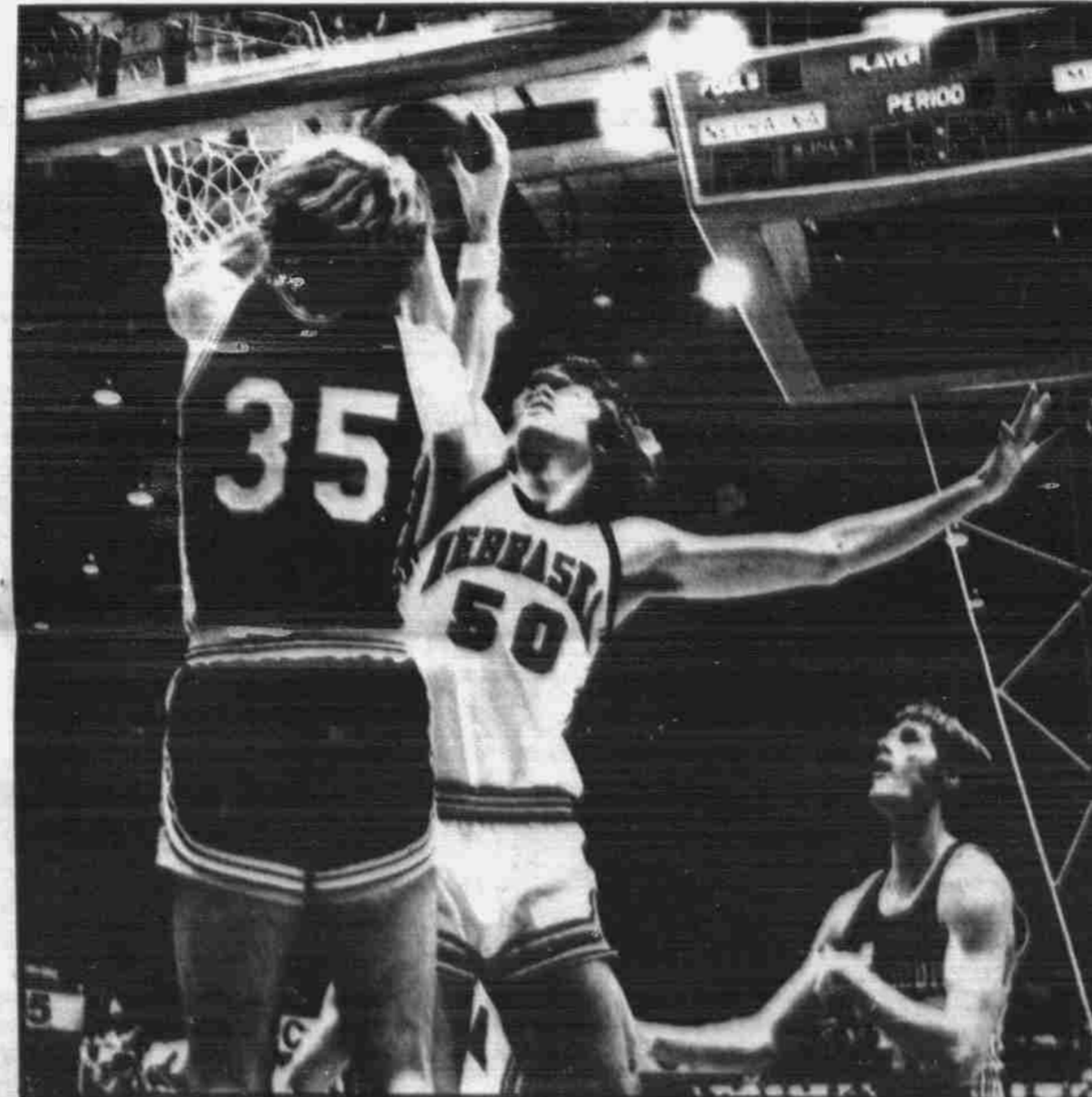
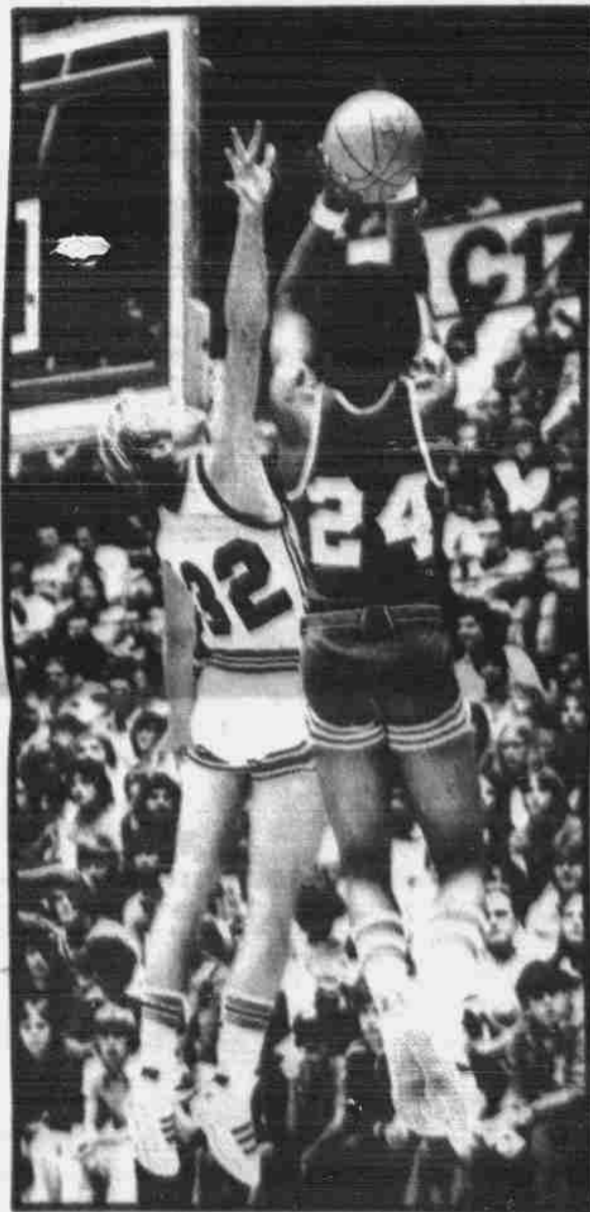
"We'd like to improve the pace of the game and score a few more points," he said. "We won't be a run-and-gun type team, but we do plan to get more baskets off the fast break. Our goal now is to get the team to play together."

He added that UNL's schedule will be an advantage for his team.

"This is the best December schedule in the school's history, or at least since I've been here," Cipriano said. "Fourteen home games in one season is a big advantage."

The Huskers' first game is at home Dec. 2 against Missouri Southern State, followed by another home contest Dec. 9 against in-state rival Creighton. It will be the first meeting between the two schools since 1932.

Other December home games are against South Dakota (Dec. 10), Nevada at Reno (Dec. 12), Mississippi (Dec. 17), Western Illinois (Dec. 21) and Montana State (Dec. 23).



Forwards Terry Novak (32) and Curt Hedberg (50) return to bolster the Husker frontline. In high school they were rivals, playing for Lincoln Northeast and Lincoln East, respectively.

FIRST DOWN

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