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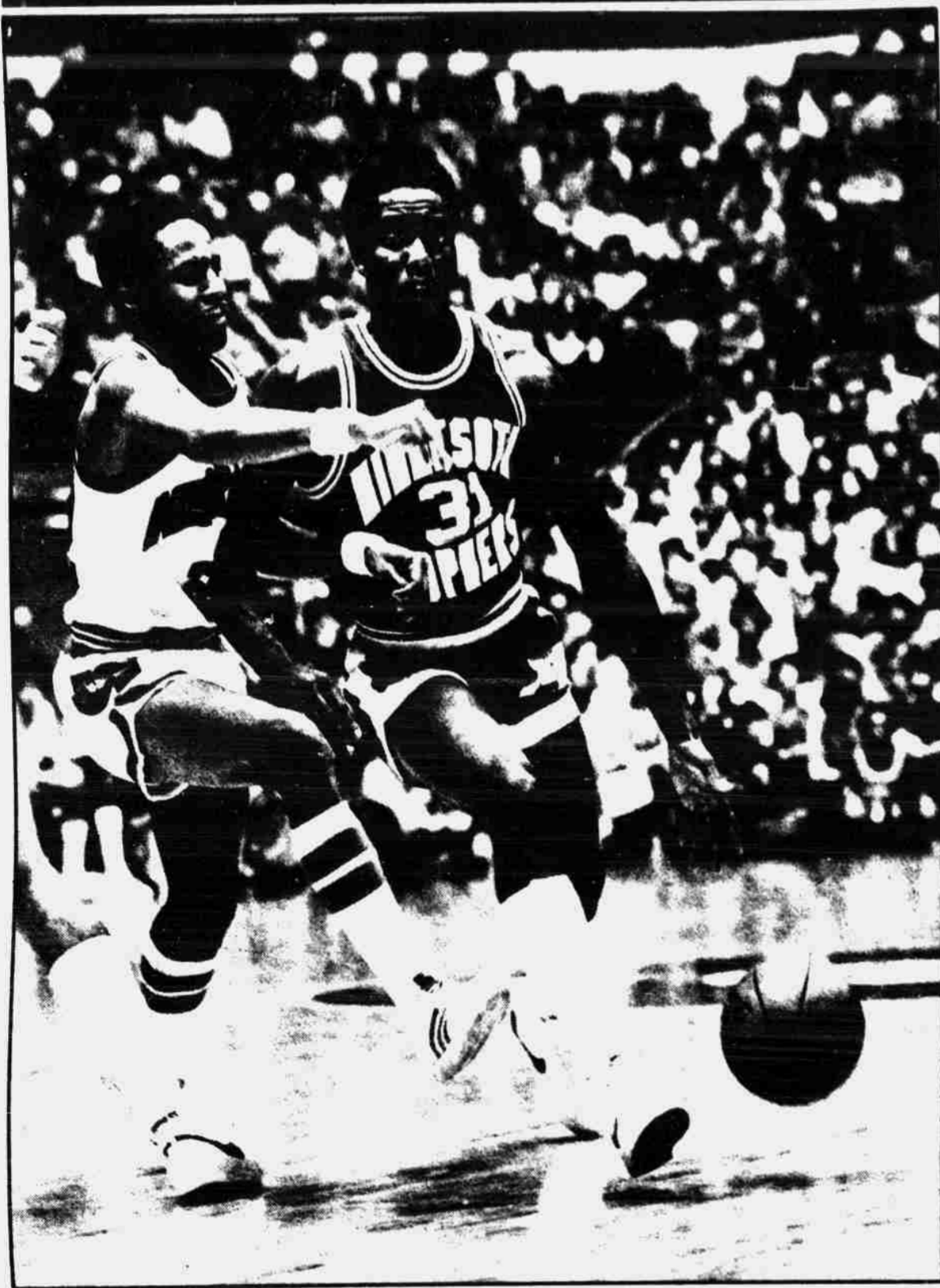


Photo by Ted Kirk

Senior guard Brian Banks harries Minnesota's James Jackson in Nebraska's 58-48 win Tuesday. UNL plays its second straight Big Ten Conference opponent Saturday when Purdue University comes to Lincoln.

Purdue height, star center may give Huskers trouble

By Jim Kay
Sports editor

No one should be accusing UNL head basketball coach Joe Cipriano of scheduling college basketball's wallflowers this year.

When Cipriano's team jumped out to a 10-0 start last season, critics of the team pointed to a schedule which included Missouri Southern State, South Dakota, Nevada-Reno and Montana State. The Huskers beat those four teams by a combined 78 points.

But this season's schedule includes in-state rival Creighton again, along with the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and two Big Ten Conference schools in one week. UNL took care of the University of Minnesota Tuesday night with a 58-48 win and Cipriano's team must return to the Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday to take on Purdue University.

Nebraska was worried prior to the Minnesota game about the height advantage the Gophers would have. Purdue will provide Nebraska with a similar concern tomorrow night.

One star

"They have one exceptional player in their big center Carroll from Denver," Cipriano said. "We'll have to worry about our inside play all night."

"Our center, Carl McPipe, will really have his hands full with Carroll, although his quickness usually makes up for what he lacks in height, so it should be a good matchup."

The Boilmakers were paced by 7-foot-1 junior center Joe Barry Carroll in their opening game victory over Southwest Louisiana, 81-72. Carroll had 27 points, 11 rebounds and six blocked shots.

Also starting were freshman forward Mike Searce, 12 points and six rebounds and senior guard Jerry Sichting, 14 points and three steals.

Purdue was dropped by Indiana State, 63-53, in their second game this season and beat Xavier (Ohio) Wednesday night, 66-58, to raise their record to 2-1.

Purdue not only has a young basketball team (two sophomores, two juniors and one senior start) but a first-year head coach as well.

Lee Rose came to Purdue after a three-year tenure at North Carolina-Charlotte. At UNCC, Rose led his team to the National Invitational Tournament final in 1976 and to the NCAA final four in 1977. His 12-year coaching career mark is 254-85.

"We struggled through our first game, which could be characteristic of the season," Rose said. "We're a team of unknowns and we really don't have a set starting lineup yet. We'll play a lot of people."

"In our first game, we had eight players who performed over 10 minutes."

Three top scorers

Nebraska has three players averaging in double figures prior to the Purdue game. Sophomore Andre Smith is the team's leading scorer with 13 points per game, followed by McPipe at 12 points a game, and senior guard Bob Moore with 11.3 points a game.

Curt Hedberg is the leading rebounder for UNL with 16 through the first three games.

Cipriano said he may realize his team's worth in the next few games.

"Playing two fine Big Ten teams in a week is a real challenge for our team," Cipriano said. "This part of the schedule is where we'll find out if we really are worthy of all that preseason press."

"And they don't seem to get any easier. We'll have to play them one at a time. We'll concentrate on Purdue and then get concerned with Creighton."

UNL will have a week off after the Purdue game before taking on Creighton in Omaha on Dec. 9.

Basketball squad hopes recent publicity isn't jinx

Nebraska athletics—men's football and basketball, that is—are receiving big time publicity. In the last two weeks, *Sports Illustrated* magazine has devoted a cover photo, eight pages of copy, nine color photographs and one art illustration to the football and basketball teams.

It is enough to put a smile on Athletic Director Bob Devaney's face even though a national championship slipped away from the football squad. Devaney, Basketball Coach Joe Cipriano and Husker basketball fans may be crossing their fingers now, hoping the basketball squad doesn't react to the publicity the way the football team did.

kevin schnepf

A six-to-seven-page story accompanied with nine photos which told a nationwide reading audience of Nebraska's victory over number one ranked Oklahoma spelled doom for the Huskers. The old *Sports Illustrated* jinx of a cover photo—in this case Rick Berns "shredding" Oklahoma's defense—turning sour the next week proved true. Nebraska lost to Missouri the next week after being exposed nationally as a team sitting in the driver's seat for a trip to the national championship.

In the latest issue of *Sports Illustrated's* college basketball preview, Cipriano's Huskers are rated number 16—only two spots behind Big Eight rival, Kansas. Over a half page of copy describing the celebrated Husker defense and an illustration showing closed-eyes and yawning Nebraska players snoozing on the bench is what is included in the magazine's top twenty list. Like the football players, except perhaps on a smaller scale, the basketball players must live up to the publicity.

Consider these words which assuredly have been read by every member and coach of the basketball team. *Sports Illustrated* compared Kansas and Nebraska matchups: "The renowned Jayhawk fast break against the celebrated Cornhusker defense; big Kansas Center Paul Mokeski against agile Nebraskan Pivotman Carl McPipe; Jayhawk playmaking Guard Darnell Valentine against Cornhusker smoothie Brian Banks."

The "Hammond Hustlers," as Banks and McPipe are so cleverly named because of their Hammond, Ind., hometown, are given quite a bit of attention.

"If he can stop being so aggressive, McPipe should be the best center in the Big Eight," the article reads.

"Then there is Banks, a ball hawk, playmaker and shooter extraordinaire."

Both players have lived up to their *Sports Illustrated* descriptions so far, as the

pair led the Huskers to a 58-48 victory over a young and talented Minnesota team last Tuesday night. McPipe, with a fingerless golf glove protecting the five-stitched cut on his shooting hand, scored 14 points and snared eight rebounds. Banks led the Huskers in scoring with 15 points, had five steals, and drew his usual charging foul by falling to the floor.

After beating Alabama-Birmingham with a case of the opening season jitters, the team flew back 1,200 miles the same day they edged unknown Arkansas Tech. Against Minnesota, the Huskers appeared to play like *Sports Illustrated* said they should.

The Huskers held the Gophers to 48 points, consistent with their eighth-ranked defense of last year, and substitutes played an important role. *SI* quoted Cipriano as saying the Huskers won't wear down like last year because players like Banks and Bob Moore will get rest when Mike Naderer, Gerard Myrthil and freshman Jack Moore check in.

But as *SI* points out, Kansas is a favorite over Nebraska because of the Huskers' tendency to fold. Last year, Nebraska had a 19-3 record and ended up with a 22-8 mark. When ranked in the Top 20 on three occasions, they lost their next game each time.

This year, it is a strong possibility that Nebraska will be undefeated again entering the Big Eight Preseason Tournament—the tournament's last hoorah. Strong challenges will come from Big Ten Conference power, Purdue, the Huskers' Saturday night opponent at the Bob Devaney Sports Center; the rematch with Creighton played in Omaha this year; and high scoring University of Nevada-Las Vegas if both Nebraska and UNLV win their first round games in UNLV's holiday tournament.

And in the Big Eight, Kansas and Iowa State will be rigid tests for the Huskers—especially when they play each other twice. Iowa State returns the nation's third leading rebounder, Dean Uthoff, and Big Eight scoring champion Andrew Parker.

The defense-oriented style of play Nebraska coaches have preached the past decade has received its share of fan criticism. Fans who want a more exciting brand of basketball may be in for another disappointment. Against Minnesota, Nebraska proved that defense prevails, and if it can do the same trick against UNLV, the Husker's deliberate attack may gain a few praises instead of criticisms. What a difference a winning record has on not only the players, but the fans as well.

Perhaps the *SI* illustration of sleepy Nebraska players indicates that their deliberate attack is boring. But, more importantly, the illustration may indicate Nebraska has the sleeper team other teams may not be prepared for this year.

Upsets could change bowl bids

Predictions by Rick Huls

There are enough "ifs" going into the final week of the college football season to keep some bowl representatives biting their nails until the final play.

If Auburn beats Alabama, the Sugar Bowl will no longer have a matchup for the national championship between Penn State and Alabama. Georgia, not even in this week's top ten would win the Southeastern conference championship and the Sugar Bowl bid. And the Bulldogs, 8-1-1, must face rival Georgia Tech Saturday in the season finale.

If Texas Tech beats Arkansas and Rice upsets Houston, the talked-about Cotton Bowl matchup of Notre Dame and Houston will not happen. Texas Tech, Texas and Houston would finish in a tie for the Southwest conference title and Texas Tech would get the bid because they haven't been to the Cotton Bowl as recently as the other two.

Here's how the "ifs" are expected to come out:

Auburn at Alabama Bear Bryant isn't about to pass up a shot at the national title

and the Crimson Tide has had three weeks to prepare for this one. . .Alabama 31, Auburn 14.

Georgia Tech at Georgia—The Bulldogs get caught in between. Either they're still upset over the 22-22 tie with Auburn (which would have given them at least a tie for the conference title and the Sugar Bowl bid) or they're too busy rooting for 'Bama to get beat. . .Georgia Tech 24, Georgia 20.

Texas Tech at Arkansas—Tech's six-game winning streak finally halts against the Hogs. . .Arkansas 24, Texas Tech 14.

Rice at Houston—The pressure is on Houston to win the conference title and Cotton Bowl berth. But there's no pressure in playing Rice to end the season. . .Houston 48, Rice 22.

In other games: Navy 23, Army 14; Florida 27, Miami, Fla. 17; Tennessee 34, Vanderbilt 14; LSU 41, Wyoming 7; Texas 24, Texas A & M 17; Southern Cal 49, Hawaii 7; Brigham Young 35, Nevada Las Vegas 25; San Diego State 21, Utah 17.

Last week's poor percentage of .615 dropped the season's mark to 357-123-8 for 740 percent accuracy.