



## Dean of Big Eight coaches loses cancer battle

Nebraska Basketball Coach Joe Cipriano lost his year-long battle with cancer Tuesday morning in Lincoln Bryan Memorial Hospital. "Cip" was 49.

Cipriano, entering what would have been his 18th season at the Husker helm, was the dean of Big Eight coaches. His 254-196 record made him the winningest coach in Nebraska basketball history.

Cip often was accused of being too conservative, but he took the Huskers to three National Invitational Tournaments and turned around a program that hadn't had a winning season in 13 years.

He will be remembered most for his antics on the court helping to increase interest in the Nebraska program which sometimes led to his ejection from games by the officials. Once at Oklahoma, he finally got the attention of his players to call a time out by walking to the scorers' table and firing the officials' gun.

He also was noted for waving his coat in the air to fire up the crowd and for his many encounters with the officials.

"I have to chuckle when I think of all the refs that are under Cip's eyes now instead of just the two or three working the Nebraska game," Indiana Coach Bobby Knight told the Lincoln Star.

Cipriano was married to the former Marva Hicks. His son Randy is the head coach at Ogallala High School. Cipriano also had two daughters. Tamsen Bigej lives in San Bernadino, Calif., and Janice attends school at Idaho, where Cipriano coached from 1960-63.

