

sports

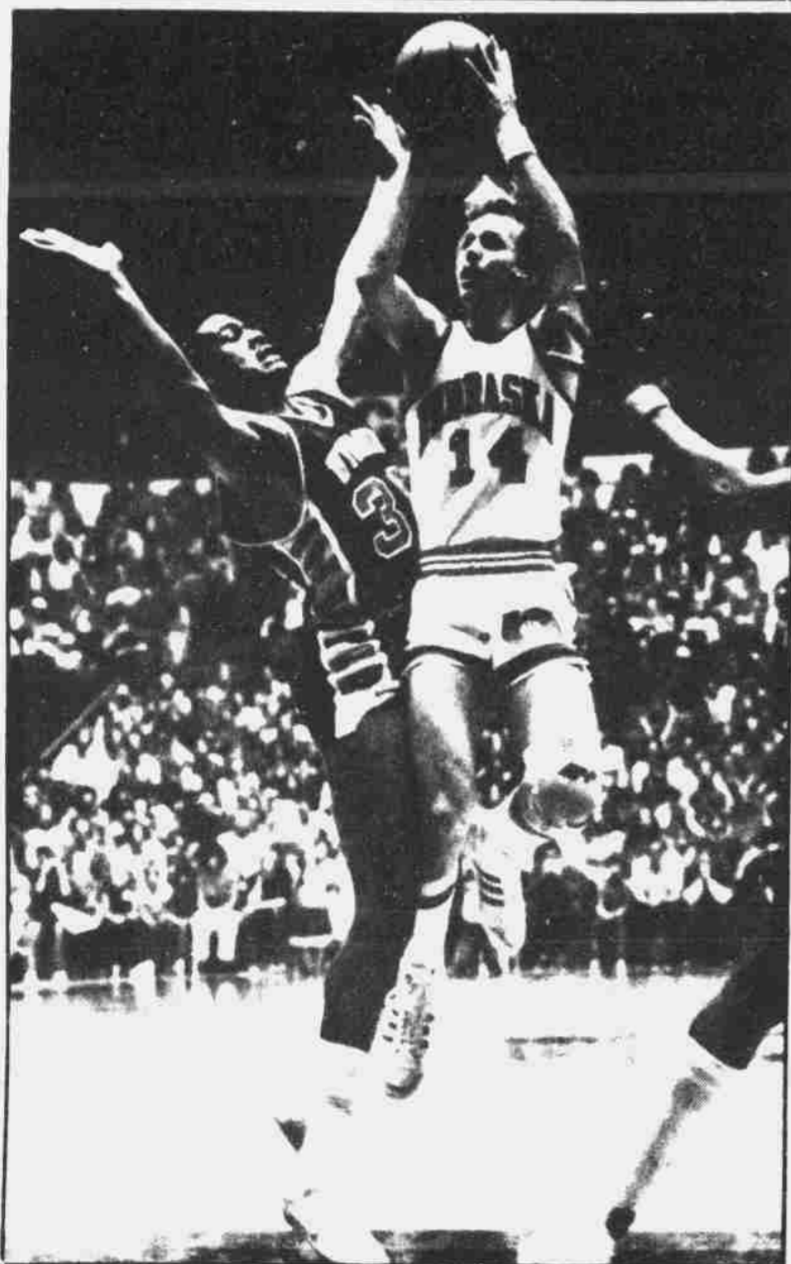


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Nebraska's Jack Moore goes up for a shot in the Huskers' 62-59 overtime loss to Wyoming.

Penn State called 'big, physical'

Huskers' height disadvantage to be bonus for Nittany Lions

By Tad Stryker

Nebraska will be at a height disadvantage again when the undefeated Penn State Nittany Lions come to Lincoln for a 7:35 game tonight at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"They (Penn State) are big, physical and strong," said Tom Baack, Nebraska assistant basketball coach. "They're a good-shooting team, and they'll pose a lot of problems."

The Huskers, 0-3, are definite underdogs going into the game, if *Sports Illustrated* predictions are to be believed. The magazine ranks the Lions among the top 25 teams in the nation.

Penn State was 18-10 last year and led the nation in field-goal-percentage defense, and, like the Huskers, made it to the National Invitational Tournament. The Lions have set higher goals this year, according to the article.

"An NCAA berth would keep us right on schedule," PSU Coach Dick Harter is quoted as saying.

The Lions have the height to be a nationally-contending team. According to Baack, their starting five measure 6-10, 6-10, 6-8, 6-7 and 6-2½.

"Penn State will be the best team we've played so far this year," Baack said. He said the Lions are a better team than the Creighton Bluejays.

"I think they have more talent (than Creighton)," he said.

The Lions are not expected to be a quick team, but are "hard-nosed and aggressive," Baack said.

"They're very well coached and disciplined," he said. Defensively, the Huskers will be trying to pressure Penn State into mistakes, Baack said. Like Creighton, the Lions are a "patterned" team, and ball-handling is not their strong suit.

"We've got to put a lot of pressure on them defensively," Baack said. "We'll have to make them turn the ball over."

In the Creighton game, the Huskers forced 18 turnovers, but committed 12 themselves, Baack said. Nebraska will "have to play better under pressure" if they are to win tonight.

Penn State is 3-0, having defeated Ursinus, Indiana State and Southern Methodist.

Husker Andre Smith is not having any further problems with his ankle, Baack said. Smith was expected to play for only short periods against Creighton, but he missed only 19 seconds of the game.

"Andre said his ankle is still sore, but it's doing just fine," Baack said.

Basketball player sports baseball background

By Scott Ahlstrand

If Ray Collins' plans had gone the way he had originally intended, he'd be playing baseball for the Huskers now, not basketball. The 6-3 junior from Chicago, Ill., had felt that he had more promise as a baseball player.

"I was always better at baseball," Collins said. "It always came more naturally to me, and I thought it would be my sport."

Although Collins continued playing baseball, he entered organized basketball in the sixth grade. Collins quickly blossomed at the sport, and started for the Mendel Catholic High School team both his junior and senior year. In his senior season, Collins led the Chicago Catholic League in scoring with a 22-point average, and also managed to pull down 10 rebounds a game.

Upon completing his senior season, Collins played in the prestigious Chicago Prep All-Star game and prepared himself for college basketball.

Collins was recruited by five or six major colleges, but when it came time for him to make his choice, he went with Nebraska.

"I really thought Nebraska had a good program," Collins said. "Their facilities were great, but what really impressed me was the general atmosphere of the people around here. Everyone's really nice and that's important."

Changed role

Although Collins was used mainly as Nebraska's defensive stopper last year, usually playing against the opposition's top scoring guard, he feels that his role has changed on this year's squad.

"I saw myself as fitting into the role of the stopper last year," Collins said. "But this year I think the team needs more of an all-around contribution from me. We lost 11.5 points per game when Tim West left the team, and I think the coaches are looking to me to pick up some of the scoring load."

After two games this season, Collins is tied with guard Jack Moore for the team's top scoring average, with 13 points per game. But it is not just Collins' improving average that pleases Coach Moe Iba.

"Ray is just a super player for us," Iba said. "He's a fine shooter, he can handle the ball well, and he's probably our best defensive player. He's a great kid, he's dedicated, he works hard and you never hear him complain."

Collins believes that much of his progress can be attributed to the off-season work he did to prepare himself for the season. Besides lifting weights all summer, Collins took late-night runs around Whittier Junior High School.

"I try to do the best I possibly can," Collins said. "When I was younger I was encouraged by both my father and my brother to give it all I've got, and I guess I've kind of kept that philosophy."

Exuberant on court

When Collins manages to find some free time in his busy schedule, he likes to relax, listen to music, play backgammon and take it easy. But Collins on-court behavior is much more exuberant.

"I try to help lead the team both verbally and through examples," Collins said. "I'm always talking and trying to help the other guys out."

After practice, Collins spends much of his time hitting the books. An accounting major, Collins, unlike many student athletes, doesn't believe that there is that great a strain between scholastics and athletics.

"I don't think it's that big of a problem to play on a team and find time to study," Collins said. "If you plan your time right and don't goof off, you do OK."

A natural guard, Collins has found himself shifted between guard and forward several times, but seems to favor the latter.

"When I'm playing guard, I have to watch out for those real quick guys," Collins said. "But when I'm at forward, I can make up for my lack of height with some quickness of

my own."

Despite setbacks in the team's first three games, Collins feels that the Huskers will rebound and come up with a fine season.

"We're a pretty close group and we all have one thing in common," Collins said. "We all like to win, and we'll do anything we have to do to win."

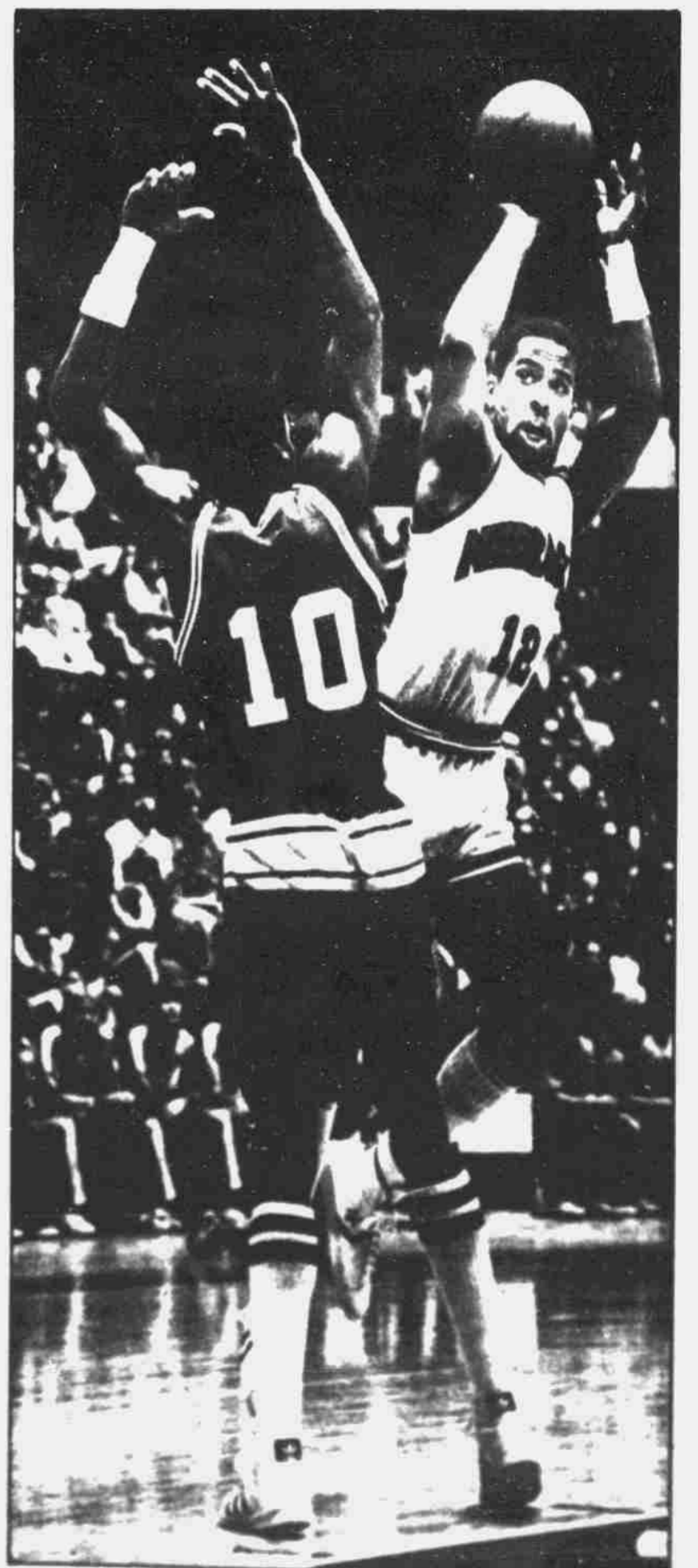


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Ray Collins

sports shorts

Nebraska's Randy Schleusener was named to the Associated Press and United Press International All-American teams announced last week. Jarvis Redwine was named to the UPI team. Second-team honors were awarded to Derrie Nelson by both wire services.

The UNL women's basketball team will host Kansas State in the first game of a double-header tonight. The 5:15 women's game will be followed by the men's game, with the Huskers facing Penn State.

The Husker gymnastics team will try to rebound this

weekend from Sunday's loss to the Japan National team. Nebraska will participate in Saturday's Husky Classic in Houston, Texas.

The Nebraska wrestling team will host Indiana State this Saturday. The meet will be in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Student tickets for the Sun Bowl game are on sale at the South Stadium ticket office through Wednesday. The tickets are \$12 each and students must present a valid I.D. when purchasing the ticket.