

Iba: Team can't afford too many more injuries

By Larry Sparks

Nebraska will face a much tougher Iowa State team tonight than it faced in the Husker's 61-56 win at Ames last month, Husker Coach Moe Iba said at his Monday press luncheon.

The Cyclones were playing without their top two centers, 6-11 Ron Falenschek and 6-6 John Kunnert, in the Jan. 28 Nebraska win. Kunnert is expected to start tonight with Falenschek providing back up services.

"Probably the only reason we beat them the first time was because they were playing with a center who hadn't played before," Iba said.

Nebraska will be the team with injury problems this time. Ray Collins is out for the remainder of the season with a broken left foot and Jack Moore bruised his knee in the Kansas State game. Moore was held out of practice Sunday and Monday but is expected to be back in the line-up tonight.

"We have to do the best we can with what we've got," Iba said, "but I can tell you one thing—we can't afford many more injuries."

Despite having an 8-14 record, Iba said the Cyclones can play good ball. Iowa State had a 15 point lead against Kansas Saturday before losing by two.

"That might hurt them a little, but you never know, it may help their confidence," Iba said.

"Iowa State has good quickness. They can shoot the ball well," he added.

With a televised clash against Missouri coming up on Saturday, Iba said it is important not to overlook Iowa State, which is in last place of the Big Eight.

"Iowa State always plays well in Lincoln," Iba said. The Cyclones have won two of the last three games at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Iba said the battle for the conference championship should be exciting for the fans.

"The last two weeks (of the season) should be very interesting," Iba said.

"You just have to not worry what everybody else is doing and worry about yourself," he added.

Tipoff for tonight's game is set for 7:35 p.m. in the sports center.

big eight

Conference Basketball Standings

Nebraska	7-3
Kansas State	7-3
Kansas	6-4
Oklahoma State	6-4
Missouri	6-4
Colorado	4-6
Oklahoma	3-7
Iowa State	1-9

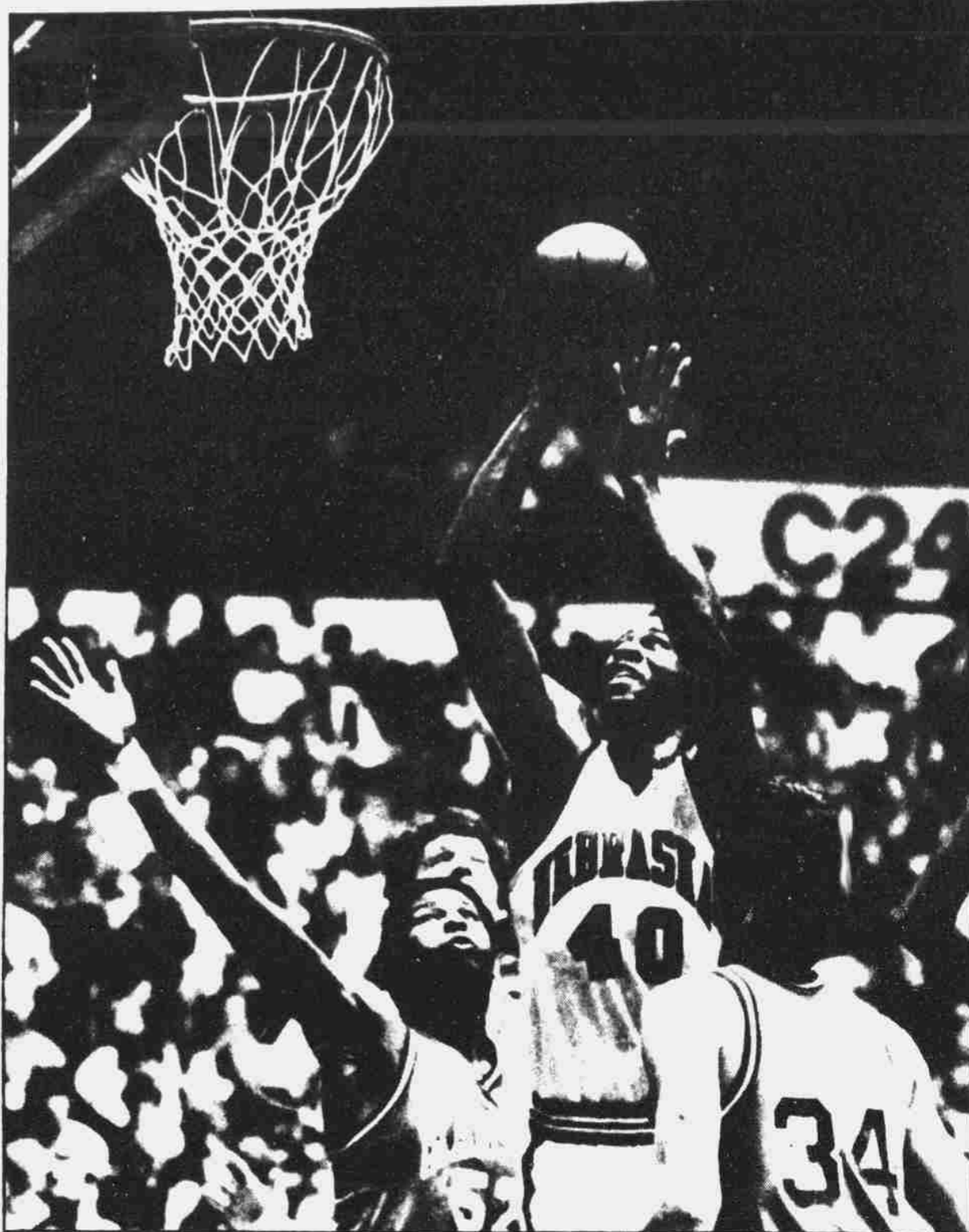


Photo by Jon Natvig
Nebraska's Andre Smith (40) shoots over Randy Reed (52) and Ed Galvao (34) of Kansas State

Basketball recruit looks past surgery to future

By Charles Vaughn

Nebraska's basketball team has tapped a large resource for high school talent in recent years. Indiana has provided the Husker basketball team with a starting guard in Jack Moore, a sixth man in Jerry Shoecraft and next season, a potential center in 6-10 Tom Drake from Yorktown, Ind.

Potential is the key word here. Because of knee injuries Drake feels his full potential has never been utilized.

"I had a bad career in high school," Drake said. In his senior year at Yorktown, Drake averaged 14 points and 11 rebounds a game.

"I feel that playing here will bring out my potential and I will play a lot better ball," he said.

Despite feeling that he had a poor high school career,

Drake said playing in Indiana helped him develop into a better ball player.

"Basketball was always a big thing at my high school. We had an enrollment of about 800 through four grades. We were the smallest in our conference, but Indiana is a single-class basketball state so everyone plays in the same tournament. You got to play against some pretty good ball players. Playing in Indiana was an asset, there's no doubt about that," Drake said.

Academy prospect

Originally, Drake had no interest in Nebraska. His sights were set on one of the three military academies then.

He changed his mind during a visit to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

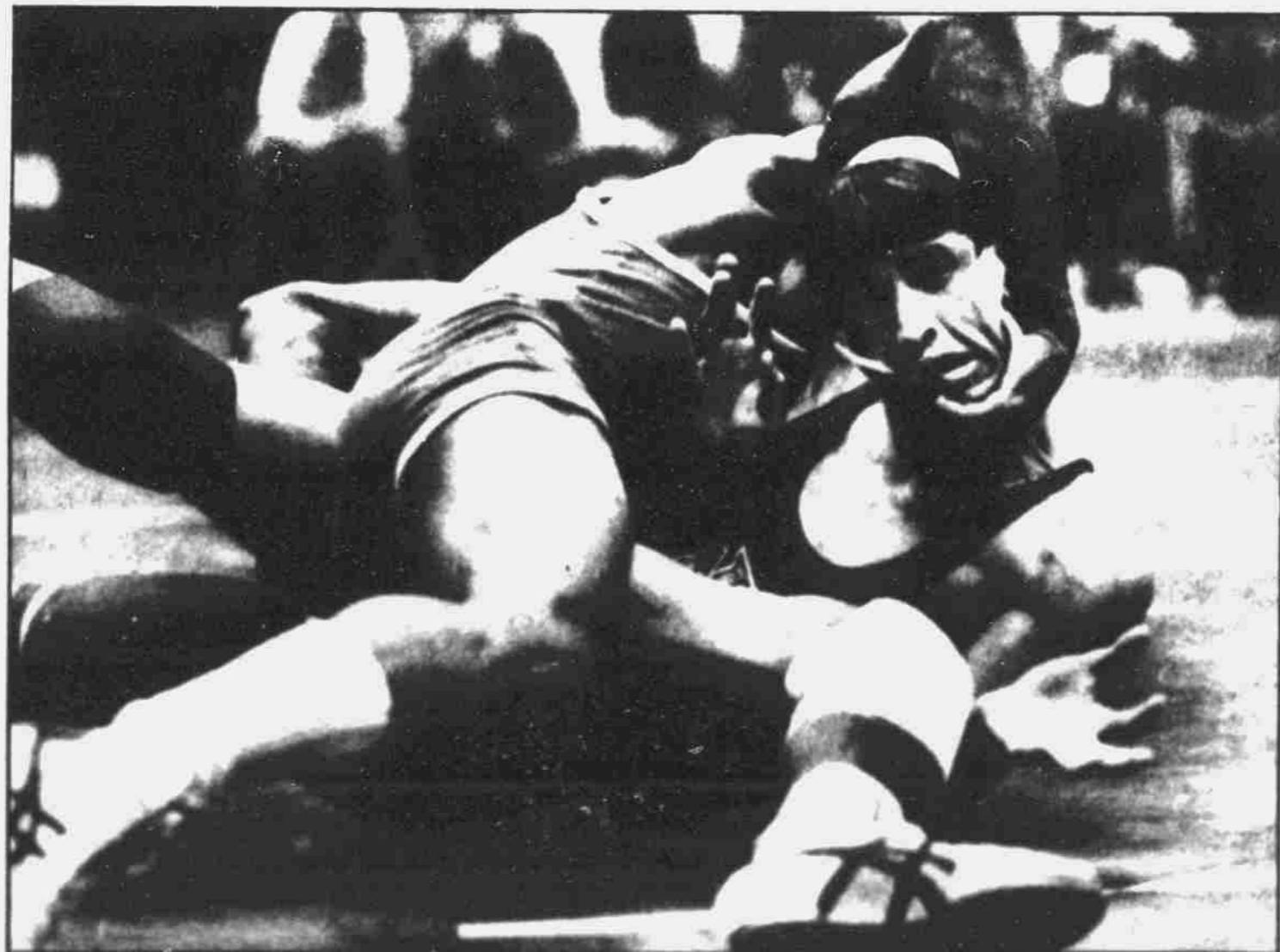


Photo by Jon Natvig
Nebraska wrestler Johnnie Selmon grapples Rick Morkel of Northern Iowa. The 20-th rated Huskers upset 12th ranked Northern Iowa in the dual meet Monday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Huskers will host Utah State Friday.

While on his way there, Drake ran into Bill Herald, Moore and Shoecraft's former high school coach. Herald asked Drake to consider Nebraska if he was not satisfied with the academies. Drake took Herald's advice. Soon, he was invited to visit the Nebraska campus.

"I was very pleased with the facilities, coaching staff, people and the school itself. Things then developed from there," Drake said.

Right now Drake is concentrating on recovering from his second knee operation.

"Everything is going pretty good at the moment. I think since I've had my first operation in high school, my knee is probably better than it's ever been. It's still healing up and getting stronger all the time. I've been working out a lot," he said.

Drake had surgery Nov. 20, just before the season started. He said that despite the seriousness of a knee operation, it may have been a blessing in disguise.

"At the first of the season I had an infection and that put me three or four weeks behind. I wasn't even practicing at that time, so it was rather difficult trying to learn the system we run. I think it worked out for the best. Not that it's a good thing to have happen, but this way I will get a fresh start next season and will still have my freshman eligibility," Drake said.

Possible replacement

Coach Moe Iba said Drake is one of the possible replacements for senior center Andre Smith next year.

"Our biggest concern for Tom Drake right now is his recovery from surgery," Iba said. "We have no idea if he will be able to contribute next season. He did have good mobility when his knee was all right. If his leg is all right next year, he will be a possible replacement."

Drake said he is confident that his knee will be all right next year and he will be among the top contenders for replacing Smith.

"I feel optimistic about it. The spot (center) will be open with Andre leaving and I think I have as good a chance as anyone out there to fill the position," he said.

"After Andre is gone he will leave some pretty big shoes to fill. I think I can step in the position. I may not fill his shoes exactly, but I will work at it," he added.

Drake said he realizes he has his work cut out for him.

"I'm going to have to learn an awful lot; that's all there is to it," Drake admitted. "The program is not easy to pick up. You have to work outside of practice. It's something you have to go home and work out on paper to get clear in your mind what everybody does."

"I'm going to have to work real hard to learn the system the best I can, do whatever the coach says and give it my best shot."