

Sports

Huskers, Bluejays fight for state bragging rights

Iba: Team must control boards to beat Bluejays

By Tad Stryker

Nebraska has to concentrate on keeping Creighton off the boards in order to have a good chance of winning Saturday night, Husker Coach Moe Iba said. Game time is 7:35 p.m. at the Omaha Civic Auditorium.

Iba said the Huskers especially will work on preventing CU's front line from scoring on offensive rebounds.

"Montana hurt us on the boards," Iba said of the Huskers' 61-51 loss Monday, "and Creighton's got a big, strong team."

Keeping Creighton under control could be difficult as well, he said. Seven-foot freshman center Benoit Benjamin, 6-7 forward Gregory Brandon and 6-6 forward Richard Bates give the Bluejays rebounding power, Iba said.

"They've got good replacements that are big and strong and will give us problems, too," he said.

Two Husker players said they expect the game to be a tough one.

Claude Renfro said the Jays will be looking for revenge after last year's 86-46 loss to the Huskers at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"Their returning players will have it in their minds," Renfro said. "You don't forget something like that. They know they have something they have to prove."

Stan Cloudy, who will be starting his first game for the Huskers as forward, predicted a tough, fast-paced game.

"They're big, strong and physical," Cloudy said.

Cloudy, a native of Center, Texas, said he thinks a rivalry exists between Creighton and Nebraska.

"It's always good to be the best team in the state, but it's just another game to me," Cloudy said.

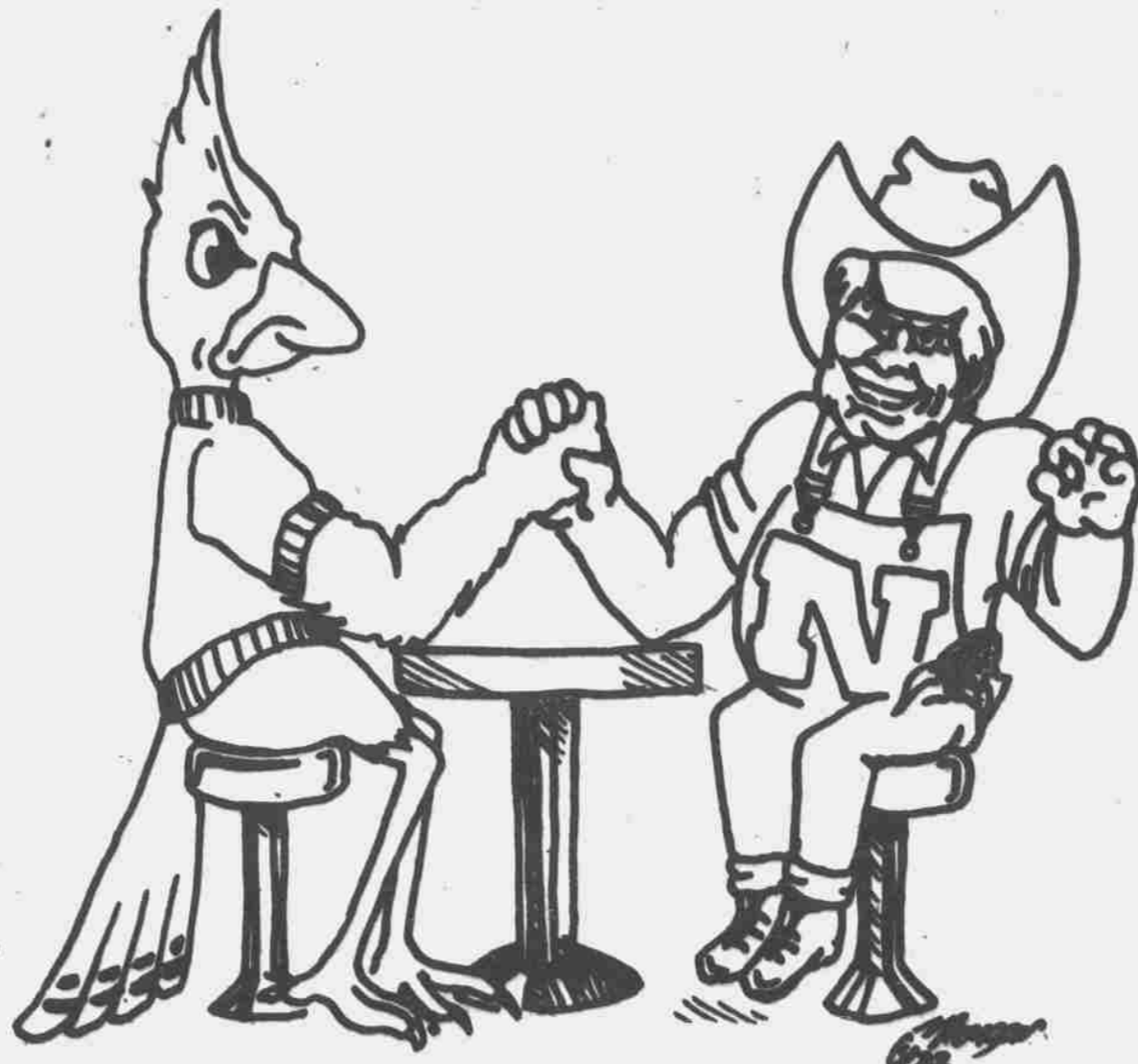
Both the Huskers and the Bluejays are 1-1 and in need of a victory, Iba said.

"It doesn't make or break the season for either team," Iba said, "but it's a big game at this time." It's a "good ballgame" because it creates basketball interests in Nebraska, he said.

This year's game is important to the Huskers because the coaches are still searching for the right spots for each player, Iba said.

"The thing that bothers us is that we haven't gotten a lot of consistency out of the players coming off the bench," Iba said.

Cloudy and Renfro are expected to start at forward for the Huskers Saturday night. Dave Hoppen will start at center, with Handy Johnson and either Greg Downing or Eric Williams at guard. Williams injured an ankle in practice Wednesday and his status is uncertain, Iba said.



Reed downplays battle between teams' big men

By Jack Denker

There are two reasons why fan interest in the Nebraska-Creighton basketball rivalry has sky-rocketed recently — Benoit Benjamin and Dave Hoppen.

Both centers were highly-recruited out of high school last season, and when the 7-0 Benjamin signed with Creighton and the 6-11 Hoppen chose Nebraska, state-wide basketball fans became obsessed with the idea of watching the two recruits oppose one another on the same court.

That will become reality Saturday when the Huskers and Bluejays tip off at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium in Omaha.

Creighton Coach Willis Reed said even though there has been a lot of hype centered on the two freshmen, he still keeps their battle in the proper perspective.

"It's all part of the excitement of the game," Reed said. "Dave is a big name here in the state and he was highly recruited. But for us it will be a good situation to evaluate Ben."

Reed insists that the Bluejays are not a one-man team this season, despite the fact that Benjamin leads the 1-1 Jays in both scoring and rebounding with an average of 16 points and nine rebounds.

Instead, Reed feels all his players have performed well so far, stressing the fact that in the Jays' 98-54 season opening victory against Wisconsin-Platteville every member on the team played and scored.

Joining Benjamin in Creighton's starting lineup will be Mark Jones and Michael Jaco at guards, while Gregory Brandon and Richard Bates will play forward. Jones and Bates are returning starters off last year's 7-20 team that lost to NU, 86-46.

In order for Creighton to enjoy any kind of success against the Husker's stingy man-to-man defense, Reed said, his players must be patient on offense and take only the shots they can make, which was something they didn't do Monday in CU's 74-64 loss at Oral Roberts.

Reed said the Bluejays haven't prepared any differently for Nebraska because they believe it is just another game they hope to win.

"I think every game you play is important to win, because we want to be able to come out and win a bigger share of all of them," Reed said. "As for the fans, I think they are more into it than the two teams."

In the five meetings between the two schools since the renewal of the series in 1977, the home team has won every game with NU holding the edge 3-2. Reed downplayed the importance of the statistic.

"I don't think past records have anything to do with future games," he said. "Nebraska is very well coached and plays excellent defense."



Staff Photo by Dave Bentz
Husker guard David Ponce looks for an open man in the Huskers' 94-51 exhibition win against Windsor Nov. 20 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Cornhuskers take on intrastate rival Creighton Saturday at 7:35 p.m. at the Omaha Civic Auditorium.

Huskers to find 37-3 victory over the Rainbows

Turn out the lights, the party's over. It's time to call it a night. Or a season. This marks the last football weekend of the regular season. And a good season it's been, too. One only can hope that CBS coverage of college football gets better.

Nebraska at Hawaii. What a place to end your season. The Huskers deserve a vacation after their hard-won victory



Jeff Goodwin

against the Sooners. And they'll get one, up to a point. But the days are gone when you can just show up on the field, say "Boo" and expect the Rainbow Warriors to fall over.

Hawaii actually has a pretty good team,

especially on offense. Of course, the Huskers still have a huge edge in talent on both the offensive and defensive lines. And that's where the game is decided.

Nebraska is in the frustrating position of having to stand by and watch Georgia and Penn State fight it out for the national championship. But wins in Hawaii and Miami will go a long way toward easing that frustration: Nebraska 37, Hawaii 3.

Army vs. Navy. I don't agree with President Reagan on much, but when you look at these two teams play football, you've got to think he's got a point about our military forces. If they are as inept at defending the Free World as they are on the gridiron, we're in a lot of trouble.

You may think this an absurd analogy (and you may be right) but, as Casey Stengel used to say: You can look it up.

Back in the mid-'40s when Army was rolling over opponents in Yankee

Stadium and the Polo Grounds, the other Army (the one in Europe) also was rolling over the opposition. And they were playing on the road. Army was ranked No. 1 in the world in those days, folks.

And Navy wasn't doing such a bad job, either. Except for that outside kick the Japanese pulled in the first game, they acquitted themselves well.

But that was then. This is now. The old gray line, it ain't what it used to be. The Midshipmen torpedoed Army's hopes: Navy 21, Army 14.

Arkansas at Texas. Faithful readers of this column (if indeed there are any) may recall that I failed to predict a score for last year's Arkansas-Texas game, which the Hogs won, 42-11. It was the greatest upset I never predicted. Ah, well.

You can bet the Longhorns won't forget last year's rout. At the time, they were the top-ranked team in the country, having attained that position just the week

before. It was a short reign.

If it weren't for a terrible pass interference call against them in the Southern Methodist game, the Hogs might be playing this game for the Cotton Bowl. As it is, it's only for pride.

The Longhorns get their revenge and Charles Whitman Memorial Tower glows orange: Texas 28, Arkansas 21.

Florida vs. Florida State. Florida was Beano Cook's pre-season choice for No. 1, and it was ranked in the top five at one point in the season. Since then its hopes have been dashed by the cruel fortunes of college football. But Florida can get a little satisfaction by beating the Seminoles in this one.

For Bobby Bowden's 'Noles, it's been a good year. Not too many people figured they'd even be in a bowl game, let alone one as good as the Gator Bowl. Florida State caps its season with a win against the Gators: Florida State 34, Florida 27.