

Reserves work for Moore playing time

By Scott Ahlstrand

Curtis and James Moore share more than just a last name.

The two are forwards on the Nebraska men's basketball team. As reserves, the two spend more time on the bench than on the floor. But each has his own plan and schedule for becoming a starter.

Pre-Husker honors

Curtis, a junior college transfer from Independence, Kan., is in his first year as a Husker. A second team junior college All-American, Moore has had to adjust to being relegated to a reserve role.

"When you come from junior college and you're an All-American and you don't start, you find out it hurts a lit-

tle," Curtis said. "Right now I'm waiting my turn and working on my game."

James, 6-7, freshman from Omaha Burke High School, was a second-team all-state selection his senior year. He is coming off a redshirt season.

"Every year you have a chance to start. It's up to the individual to work his way into a starting role," James said. "My goal right now is to go out and work hard every day and see how much I can learn."

Making adjustments

While James and Curtis would both like to play more, the two place the blame for their lack of playing time on different factors.

Curtis blames the adjustment in playing styles that he has had to make.

"I have confidence in my offense, and I know I can play. But my defense isn't great," Curtis said. Coach (Moe) Iba likes a good defensive player."

James feels that he has to improve his overall game before he'll start.

"I've always been a good offensive player but I also take pride in my defensive abilities," James said. "I think I've become a pretty well-balanced player, but I've still got a lot of work to do on my game."

A common denominator in their plans is work. Both James and Curtis realize the only way to a starting role is through hours in the gym.

Both Curtis and James are important members of the Husker team, Iba said.

"Both of those guys can play, but

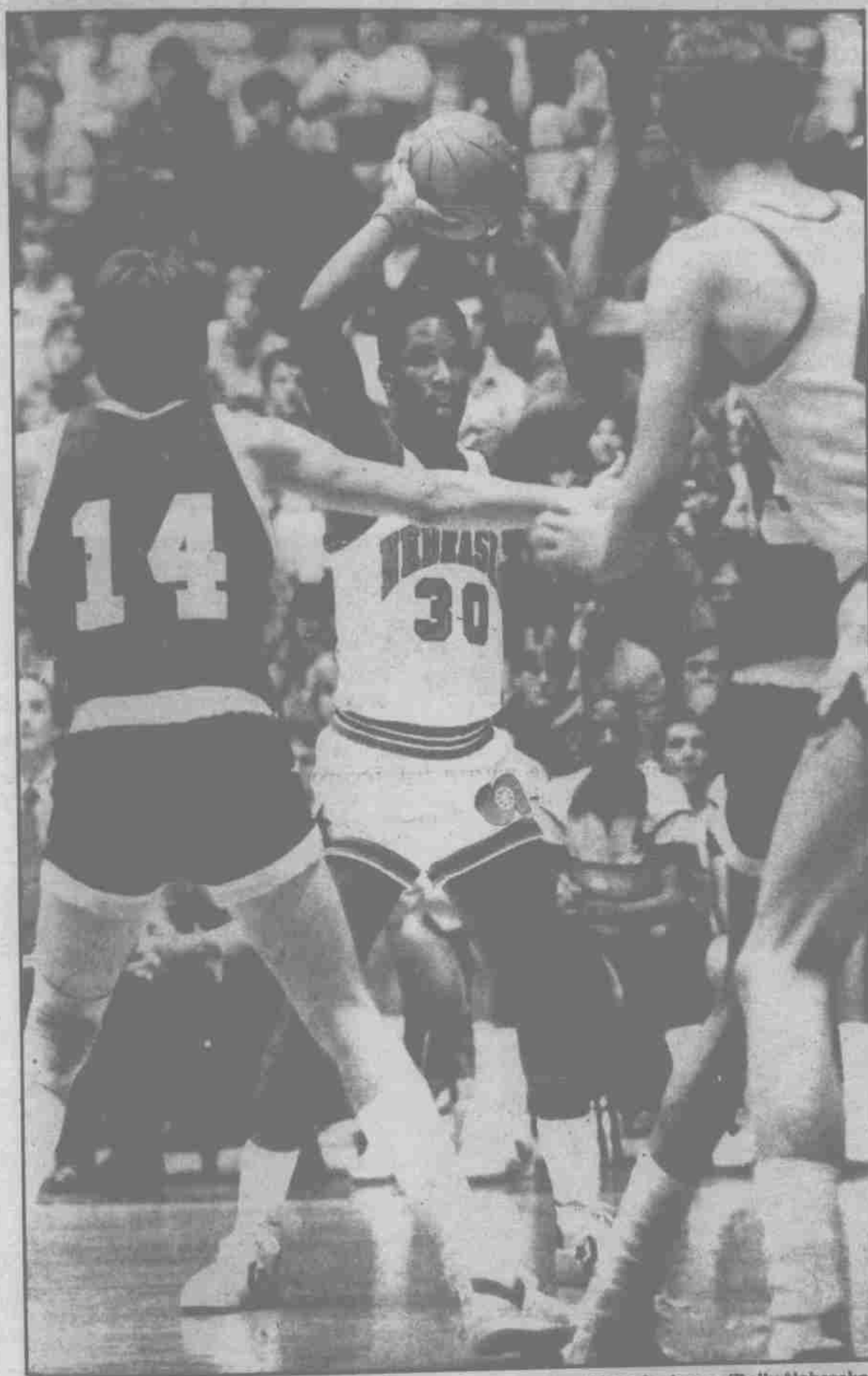
you've got to remember that James is just a freshman and Curtis missed a week of practice," Iba said. "They've both improved their play and they're very valuable to the team."

But despite the hard work and the accolades, the two have resigned themselves to riding the bench a little while longer.

"I'd like to be a starter but right now I just want to give a good effort every time out," James said. "I think that's what counts right now."

For Curtis starting is something into which he refuses to put too much stock.

"I'm just taking things as they come," Curtis said. "If you get your hopes too high and you don't start you really get depressed."



Craig Andressen/Daily Nebraskan

Curtis Moore looks for an opening in the Iowa State defense in Saturday's loss to the Cyclones.

Basketball . . .

Continued from Page 8
Seventeen wins could be the magic number of wins needed for a NIT invite.

Ironically, the uptempo play of the Huskers in the NIT brought epidemic proportions of basketball fever to a football state. Nebraska's usually deliberate offense averaged 71 points in the four NIT games, eight points higher than its Big Eight average.

That increase was the result of the use of the 45-second clock. With it, Nebraska shot 50 percent from the field.

It is unlikely that Iba would change offensive strategy so late in the year, but considering an offensive where players aren't afraid to shoot for fear of being sent to the bench couldn't hurt in the future.

Iba has done a good job in spurring Nebraska's interest in basketball. But in order for Nebraska to make the jump from an above-average to a great team, Iba needs to start recruiting players who can contribute immediately to the program, rather than waiting for marginal players to never develop.

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