

Locker-room talk

1987-1988
Cornhusker
basketball

Women's basketball gains limelight from media, fans

By Michael Hooper
Senior Editor

During the 1985-86 NU women's basketball season, only 8,367 total fans attended 12 home games. The team placed next to last in the Big Eight.

Last year the team got a new coach, several outstanding players and moved up to third in the Big Eight, with more than 15,000 fans attending the 14 home games.

The team — which includes seven players from Nebraska and eight from out of state — has gained considerable support from fans and the media as well.

Several broadcasters are now interested in covering women's basketball this season, including Lincoln's KLMS radio, the first private broadcaster to sign a contract with Nebraska to cover the home games.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's radio station KRNU will continue to broadcast the home games, including the Husker Classic, on Nov. 27-28, when Nebraska will play Texas A&M, Winnipeg and Oral Roberts universities. Another private broadcaster, Sports Video Productions, plans to produce a bi-monthly television program featuring Nebraska women's basketball coach Angela Beck.

Broadcasters said they are interested in covering women's basketball because there is more interest in the team. They also believe Beck will produce another winning season, they said, which will probably produce more fans.

"Angela Beck has really got the program moving forward," said Dan Livingston, president of Sports Video Productions, based in Omaha. "She's good on camera and knowledgeable of women's sports."

Livingston, who also produces the Tom Osborne Show, said he hopes several television stations will run his show in January, February and March. He said several networks have expressed an interest in the program and that he already has two sponsors. Livingston would not disclose the names of the sponsors.

"The idea is out there, but I don't know who is going to air it," Livingston said. "Most networks have indicated that they would take a look at it."

The focus of the coach's show would be on basketball, Livingston said, but it would also include other topics dealing with women's athletics in general.

KLMS News Director Jerry Renaud said KLMS will broadcast from the floor during the women's home basketball games. If the season goes well, he said, the station will follow the team through the tournaments.

"We really believe Angela will turn things around and move toward a Big Eight Championship," Renaud said.

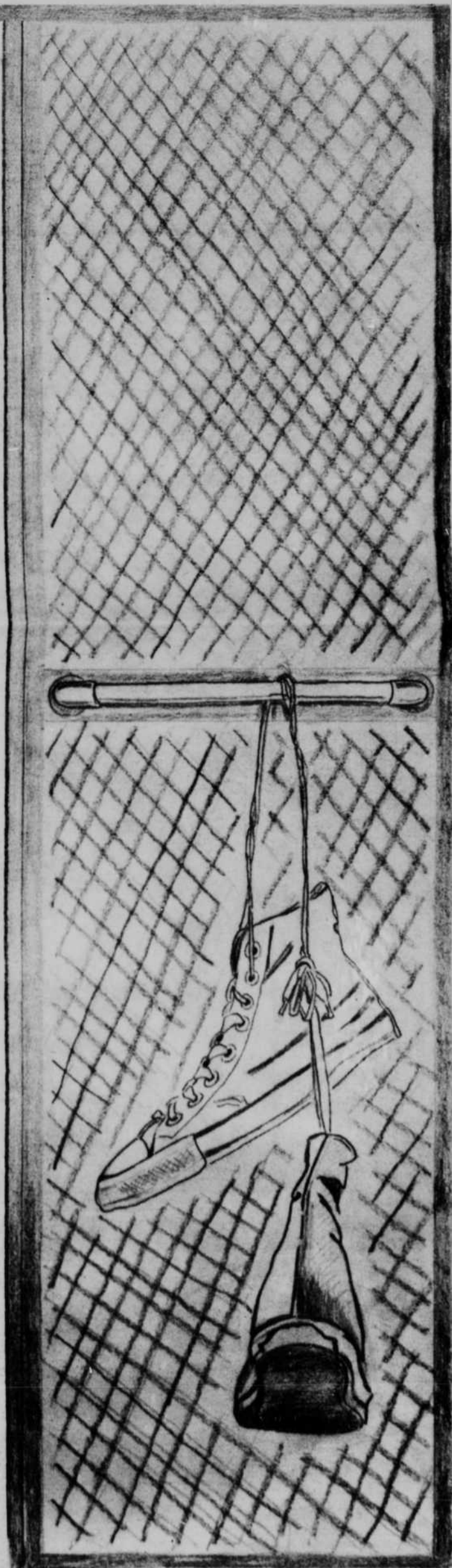
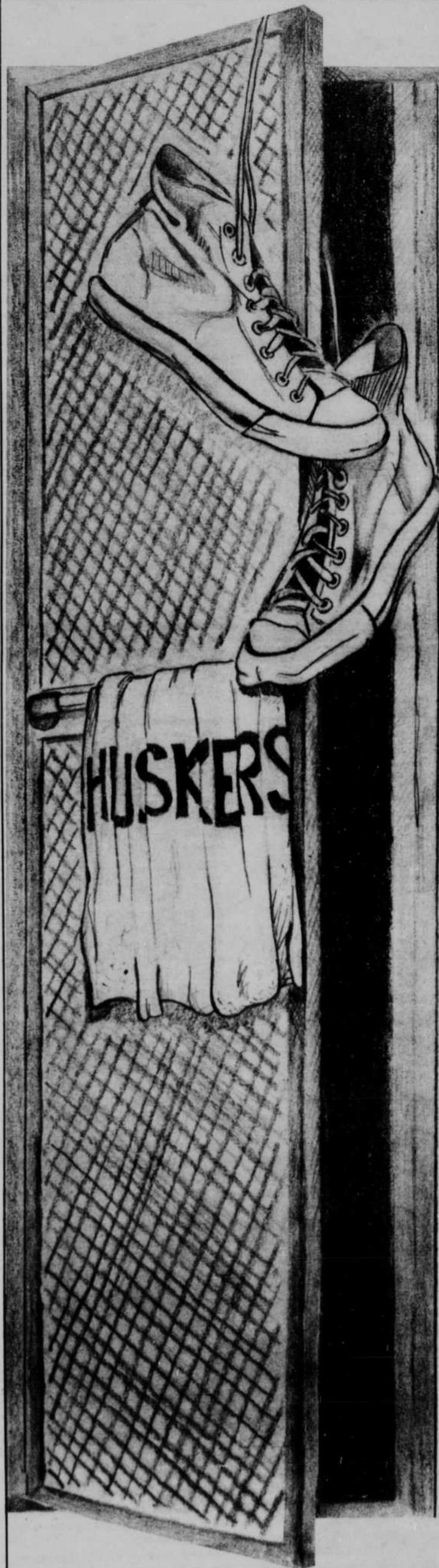
Last year the team fared well, finishing with a 16-13 record and placing third in the conference tournament and fourth in the Big Eight standings. The team set a Cornhusker record with eight conference wins. It was Nebraska's first-ever upper division finish.

Rick Alloway, stations manager for KRNU radio at UNL and teacher of the sports broadcasting class at the College of Journalism, said that if the women's team does as well as it did last year, there will be even more support from fans.

"They (the team members) work harder than you or I do and don't get the recognition," Alloway said.

He said that 10 years ago, there was a small but vocal group which supported women's athletics. Women's programs were not funded as well as men's either, said Alloway.

Since the NCAA mandated that women's basketball have parity with men's, the team has gained support from both fans and the university, he said.



John Bruce

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