

5 Big 8 teams make NCAA tourney

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Big Eight basketball coaches have said all season the league was as strong as it had ever been and could match up with any conference in America.

Now the proof is in the pairings. Five Big Eight teams were selected Sunday to participate in the 64-team NCAA Tournament, and one of those — fourth-ranked Oklahoma — is the top seed in the Southeast Regional. Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State and Iowa State were also selected.

Only the Big East, with six teams selected, had more squads chosen for the tournament.

"I think that's another good situation because there was some questions there for a while," said Oklahoma coach Billy Tubbs, whose 30-3 Sooners will face Tennessee-Chattanooga in the first round Thursday in Atlanta. "That shows a lot of respect

nationally for our league.

Kansas coach Larry Brown agreed.

"I thought we deserved five teams, but you always have to wait to see what other teams were automatic qualifiers," Brown said. "I'm just thrilled we made it. It's always an honor."

Kansas, 21-11, is seeded sixth in the Midwest and will face Xavier in the tournament's opening round Friday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Kansas State, which is seeded fourth in the Midwest with a 22-8 record, meets La Salle Thursday in South Bend, Ind.

Missouri, which is seeded sixth in the East Regional, faces 11th-seeded Rhode Island Thursday in Chapel Hill, N.C. The Big Eight's final team in the tournament, Iowa State, meets Georgia Tech Friday in Hartford, Conn.

All five teams are hoping to return to Kemper Arena in Kansas City,

Mo., which is the site of this year's Final Four and the arena where Oklahoma captured the Big Eight Tournament's championship crown with an 88-83 victory against Kansas State Sunday.

The Sooners won in front of a partisan Kansas State crowd that prompted Tubbs to say, "The way the fans responded today, with tender loving care, I'm sure they'll come out to support us."

Tubbs said he hopes to see another Big Eight team in the Final Four.

"I think we have some teams that have a real shot to be back here," Tubbs said.

The best bet appears to be Oklahoma. The Sooners opened their season with 14 consecutive victories, lost two straight and then won a dozen more in succession before losing to Missouri in the penultimate game of the regular season.

They have since won four games in a row.

"If we get back here, we'll win it," Tubbs said.

Asked what he thought about Kentucky being the second seed in the Southeast, Tubbs said, "I hope we get to play 'em, because that means we'll be in the regional finals."

Oklahoma guard Ricky Grace agreed.

"If we play that way we can, we can beat anybody," he said. "We've got to try to be up for everybody and try to play the six best games we can."

Kansas State coach Lon Kruger, whose squad ended Nebraska's season with a disappointing 13-17 mark by handing the Cornhuskers a 75-70 loss in the Big Eight Tournament's opening round, said the NCAA bid was "just a reward for our players."

"Now we've got the fourth seed and that's a nice honor for our players," Kruger said. "But like I say, it doesn't mean anything because now we've got to play the game."

Brown was relieved to see that

Kansas doesn't play until Friday, which gives Jayhawk guard Kevin Pritchard more time to rest the knee he hurt in the opening round of the conference tournament.

"I was hoping we could get a Friday draw to help our kid," Brown said. "Going to Lincoln helps us because of our travel plans and it allows for our fans to follow us."

Iowa State coach Johnny Orr, whose squad dropped seven straight conference games at one point this season, said the NCAA gave strong consideration to the Cyclones' schedule when making its selections. Iowa State defeated Iowa, Purdue and New Mexico this season.

"We must have been in there pretty early because we're in the top 48 teams," said Orr, whose Cyclones are seeded 12th in the East. "But you're always nervous because you never know what they'll do or how it will go."

McDermott's fears dispelled by 6-3 Cornhusker win

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

A scary situation turned into a pleasant experience for the Nebraska men's tennis team during its 6-3 victory Saturday against Southwest Missouri State in Springfield, Mo.

Nebraska coach Kerry McDermott said he was worried throughout the match because the Cornhuskers didn't play as well as he wanted them to. He said the match's score wasn't indicative of the type of competition the two teams engaged in.

"It was a close match and a lot closer than the score indicated,"

McDermott said.

McDermott said the Huskers gained confidence in the match by defeating the Bears 2-1 in doubles competition. The Huskers' No. 1 doubles team of Steve and Stuart Jung defeated the Bears 7-5, 5-7, 6-1, but the No. 2 team lost 7-5, 7-5.

Nebraska's No. 3 doubles team of Ken Feuer and Brad Scheidegger then defeated the Bears 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

McDermott said Nebraska was fortunate to escape the doubles matches with the lead.

"Their doubles teams were really strong and all three were really solid," McDermott said. "After the

doubles match, we knew we had a lot of hard work to do in singles competition."

McDermott said the first singles match didn't go well because Steve Jung dropped a 6-4, 6-2 decision to Southwest Missouri State's Hakan Svensson. He said Jung, who was also defeated by Svensson during last fall's Husker Invite, lost this season because the junior from Hacienda Heights, Calif., didn't play his game.

"Steve went out scared and without much confidence," McDermott said. "He was trying to hit winners and going for shots he wouldn't nor-

mally go for. He wasn't very patient and wasn't very confident."

Nebraska went on to win its next three matches and then overcame a 6-4, 6-4 loss by Scheidegger to the Bears' Rod Zerni by using a 5-7, 6-3, 7-6 victory by H.C. Taylor to wrap up the 6-3 victory.

McDermott said he thought the Huskers could have played better

singles matches.

"I was expecting to win five out of six singles, but I will settle for four out of the six," McDermott said. "We were able to handle the pressure situations and win the pressure matches. It was a good victory for us, and it shows that we're right in the thick of things for a conference championship."

Manning, Richmond top all-Big Eight team

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Kansas' Danny Manning, Iowa State's Jeff Grayer and Kansas State's Mitch Richmond, the core of what many believe is the finest senior class in the nation, were all unanimous choices to the Associated Press all-Big Eight team for 1987-88.

Joining them are two seniors who were almost unanimous picks by a panel of media observers — Missouri's Derrick Chievous and Oklahoma's Harvey Grant.

The second team consisted of Oklahoma's Stacey King, Mookie Blaylock and Ricky Grace, Colorado's Scott Wilke and Iowa State's Lafester Rhodes.

Nebraska's Henry T. Buchanan, Missouri's Lee Coward and Doug Smith, Kansas State's Steve Henson, Oklahoma State's Richard Dumas and John Starks, and Kansas' Milt Newton earned honorable-mention honors.

The five seniors on the first team

include three of the Big Eight's top four career scoring leaders — Manning, Chievous and Grayer — and many experts believe all five could go in the first round of this season's National Basketball Association draft.

Manning has become the Big Eight's all-time leading scorer and No. 2 rebounder during his four-year career at Kansas.

Grayer is Iowa State's career and single-season scoring champion.

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