

## Fake winners get recognized

Picture yourself dolled up in Sunday duds, eating an under-sized, overpriced scrap of beef.

Sound like a banquet? It's the mythical College Football Awards Banquet, featuring recognition for dubious distinction and outstanding achievement.

And the winners are . . .

**Hayden Fry.** The coach of our wretched neighbors to the East wins the "Fit to be Tied" Award.

Three times this year, Fry and the Hawkeyes seized tie from the jaws of victory and defeat.

If tying is like kissin' your sis, then three ties is like puckering up for Phyllis Diller's luscious lips.

Steve  
Thomas



Ties stink — whether they're knit ties, silk ties or ties that cripple a college football game.

Knut Rockne never said, "Tie one for the Gipper." And L.A. Raiders' owner Al Davis never says, "Just tie, baby."

But rest assured, Fry has hushed critics by proving that he can tie the big one.

The "Rags to Riches" Award goes to **Lawrence (some call him Larry) Pete and Willie (some call him Bill) Griffin.**

Both have been targets of name-calling. Pete was first called lazy. And when he temporarily checked in his pads, he was called a quitter.

Griffin has been called overweight, a regular all-you-can-eat for \$4.95 buffet kind of guy.

But against Oklahoma on Nov. 19, the 580-pound duo was simply outstanding, combining for 13 unassisted stops.

It was fitting that Oklahoma's last flicker of hope was doused with a sack by the likable twosome. "The Larry and Bill" show was tops.

The "Grasping the Obvious" Award goes to **Barry Switzer**, coach of the Oklahoma Sooners.

After watching a game played by spitting skies and chilling temps, Switzer said Nebraska would need more than seven points to beat Miami in the Orange Bowl.

No foolin' Barry? Never would I have thunk it. And for what's it worth, the Sooners will need more than three points to beat Clemson in the Florida-Citrus Bowl.

The "Hard Luck" Award goes to the **Colorado Buffaloes.**

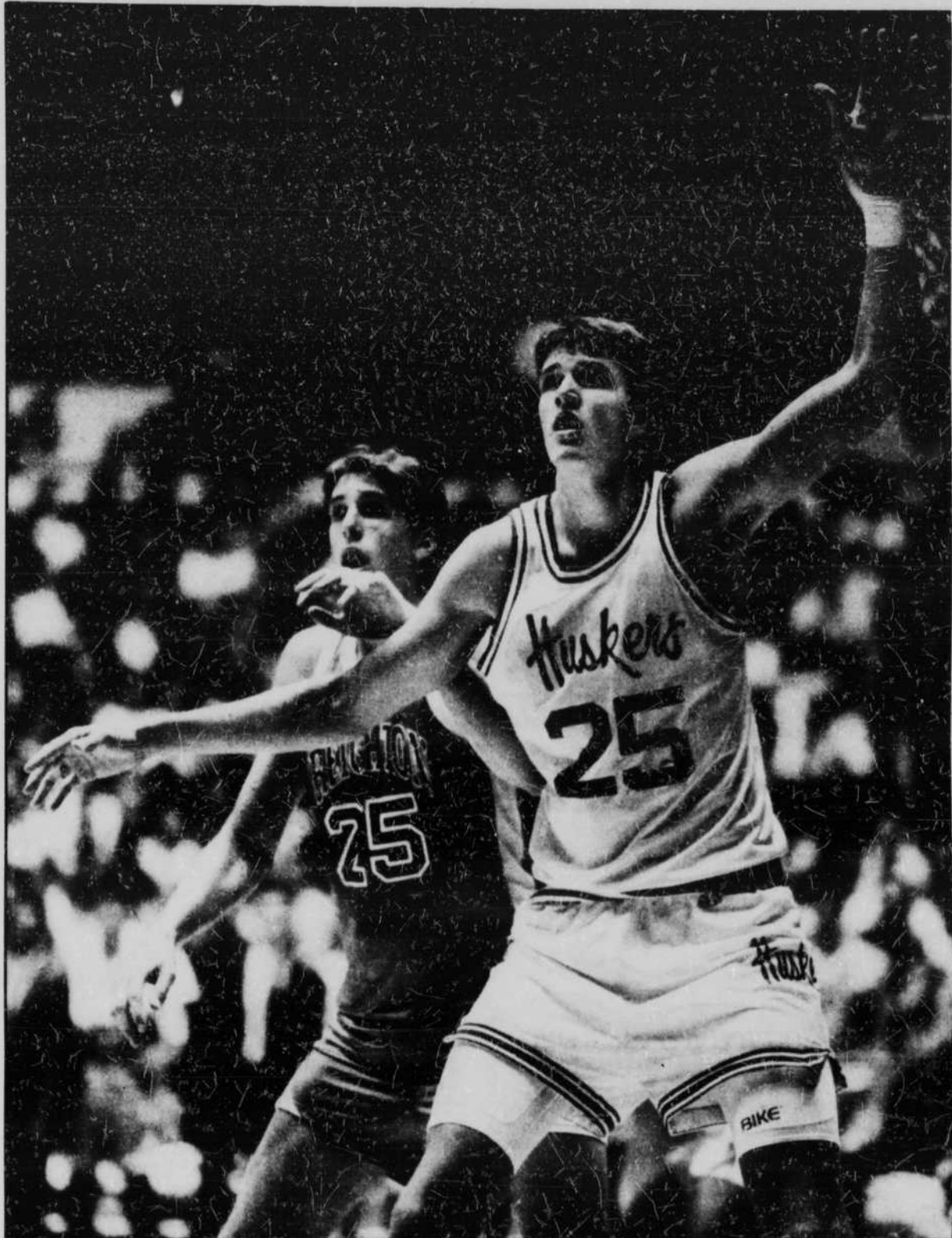
Colorado finished 8-3, but lost two games — to Nebraska and Oklahoma — by a total of 10 points.

That's good football. The Buffs have athletes and a motivator. All they need is a following that will help them lure the bowl bids they deserve.

The "Unsung Heroes" Award is to be divided between **Lorenzo Hicks and Kent Wells.**

Both went into the Oklahoma game without recognition. If they were actors, they could have co-starred in "Nobody's All-Americans."

See THOMAS on 10



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska center Rich King, a 7-foot-2 sophomore from Omaha, posts Creighton's Chad Gallagher during Saturday's 86-77 Cornhusker win against the Bluejays last Saturday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. King scored 10 points and grabbed seven rebounds in the 23 minutes he played.

## King to copy his OU namesake

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Reporter

There are two routes Nebraska center Rich King could take in his quest for the National Basketball Association, but he would sooner take one than the other.

King said he wants to fulfill a short-lived dream and earn a spot on an NBA roster by following in the footsteps of Oklahoma center Stacey King. Stacey King overcame academic problems as a freshman and a mediocre sophomore season to earn pre-season All-America honors.

Rich King said his namesake's story is an inspiration. He said it shows that anyone can accomplish what they want if they work hard.

"It's a good role model," King said. "It shows if you work hard and push yourself, the possibilities are unlimited."

King said the key to Stacey King's improvement was a dedicated work ethic in the off season. He said Stacey King worked hard between his sophomore and junior seasons, when his scoring average jumped from seven to 22.3 points per game.

King said he hopes the work he completed last summer pays off in similar fashion. He said he spent countless hours in the weight room to add bulk to his 7-foot-2, 235-pound frame and also worked on his inside game.

King said his devotion already is paying immediate dividends. He came off the bench Saturday to score 10 points in Nebraska's season-open-

ing, 86-77 victory against Creighton in Lincoln and also averaged 20.3 points and 8.4 rebounds during the Cornhuskers eight-game trip to Australia last spring.

"I've got a lot of confidence now when I step on the floor," King said. "I know I'm a good player."

King said the source of his confidence is his off-season devotion and his freshman season. He said he learned not to be intimidated during his first season at Nebraska, when he made the Big Eight's all-freshman team by averaging 4.7 points and 2.9 rebounds per game.

King said there is no comparison between his attitude as a freshman and his present attitude.

"It's a big difference. All I'm worried about now is stepping out on the floor," he said. "I know all the unknowns."

King said he has trouble evaluating his freshman season because he did not know what to expect of himself. He said he thought he was doing all right while he was in the midst of his first season at Nebraska, but now realizes his freshman year was plagued by inconsistency.

King wants to use the inconsistent play and the subsequent tough times he encountered last season to his advantage.

"I think it helps everyone to be down on their luck once in a while," he said. "The key is using those tough times to your advantage. I want to use my first year to my advantage."

King said he accepts his role this season as a backup to junior center

Richard van Poelgeest. He said he has an advantage coming off the bench because he can see what type of defense and what type of center opposing team's possess.

King and van Poelgeest said the competition between themselves and redshirt freshman Kelly Lively makes Nebraska a better team.

Van Poelgeest said he is ready to face anyone after battling King in practice.

"He's got a big body," van Poelgeest said. "Every time a guy faces someone 7-foot-2, it makes it seem easier when they face someone else."

Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee said van Poelgeest has used his experience to edge King for the starting center job. He said King should not be satisfied with his backup role.

"I don't want him to be," Nee said. "I think everyone should work to be a starter."

King said that not having a starting role will not detract him from fulfilling his dream of playing in the NBA. He said he began dreaming about professional basketball when he was a 6-3 post player in 8th grade. The dream became even greater when he grew from 6-8 to 7-1 between his sophomore and junior seasons at Omaha Burke High School, he said.

King said he has never had a problem with coordination. He said the main obstacle he has encountered throughout his career has been with strength.

"It just takes me longer to gain strength than other people," King said.

## Nee gears up for glamour game

By Mark Derowitsch  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska coach Danny Nee may hope all Cornhusker basketball opponents are successful, but that doesn't mean he'll be cheering for Michigan State Wednesday.

The reason for not wanting Michigan State to do well this week is obvious — the Spartans play Nebraska at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Tip-off for the game is set for 7:35 p.m.

"Games like this are the glamour games on our schedule," Nee said. "And then when you get down to the end of the year, people look at who you played and what the scores were and who you beat."

"I want Creighton (which the Huskers downed 86-77 Saturday at the Sports Center) to win 30 games. After the outcome of Michigan State, you want them to be successful as possible because that pushes up your power rating."



Nee said that's the reason Nebraska plays "name" teams.

"That's the whole idea of booking the game with Michigan State," he said.

Nee said he wants his team to play well whether it wins or not.

"I feel (the Spartans) got a program that's on the upswing," Nee said. "They've done a lot of recruiting. I know they're hurt without (Mike) Peplowski, a big 6-foot-11 kid. We really need to take care of our side of the ball. I can't look at them and pick on something."

Nee said the Huskers, 1-0, must stop two Spartans, guard Steve Smith and center Matt Steigenga, to win the game.

Smith, a 6-6 junior scored 22 points, while Steigenga added 15 as the Spartans crushed Furman 98-68 in their season-opener Monday night in East Lansing, Mich.

"Matt Steigenga is one of the top freshmen in the country," Nee said. "And Smith is really a big-time guard. He'll remind you a little bit of (Los Angeles Lakers guard) Magic Johnson."

Nee said Nebraska must also worry about the Spartans' offense. Michigan State averaged almost 70 points per game last season in posting a 10-18 record.

"They really are offensive-minded," he said. "They get up and down the floor and play multiple defenses. It should be a good game."

"I know (Michigan State coach) Jud Heathcote and coming in from the Big Ten, they're going to be an athletic team with good athletes — very rugged."

But Nee said the Huskers are capable of playing good defense, especially guard Eric Johnson.

Johnson, a 6-2 senior from Brooklyn, N.Y., scored 31 points against Creighton.

"I think he really gets underrated about his defense," Nee said. "I think he's a big-time defensive stopper. I think he gets on people with his long arms."

### NOTES:

- A special four-game ticket package during the semester break is available for the Nebraska men's basketball games. The package, which costs \$22, includes floor seating for games Dec. 23 against Drake, Jan. 5 vs. Sam Houston State, Jan. 9 against Oklahoma and Jan. 12 against Northern Illinois.

- Heathcote, who has a 197-149 record in 12 years as coach of Michigan State, led the Spartans to a national championship in 1978 in a game against Indiana State that first featured the Magic Johnson-Larry Bird matchup.