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Nebraska needs win

By Mark Derowitsch
Senior Reporter

Nebraska guard Eric Johnson hopes the Cornhusker men's basketball team can hold a breaking-out party Saturday.

Johnson, a 6-foot-2 senior, said he's confident the Huskers can break out of their three-game conference losing streak against No. 5 Missouri Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"We're looking at the rest of our conference games now," Johnson said. "We're 0-3, but I think we can come out of it. It all depends on how badly we want it."

Tip-off for the game is scheduled for 1:07 p.m. The game will be televised by Raycom (Channels 3 and 10-11).

Johnson said the Huskers want and need a win badly right now.

"As the season has gone on, we're becoming a better team," he said. "We're just starting to understand that we need to do everything we can to win."

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said the Huskers can't afford to make any mistakes against Missouri.

"For Nebraska to be successful against them, we have to do everything right and do it for 40 minutes," Nee said. Nee said the Tigers, 17-3, are one of the best all-around teams in the country.

The Tigers are led by Byron Irvin, a 6-6 guard from Chicago. Irvin, a senior, averages 21.1 points and 4.5 rebounds per game for Missouri.

"That Irvin kid is just on fire," Nee said. "He's playing the best basketball of his career. He's going to try to go out in a blaze of glory."

Missouri coach Norm Stewart said Irvin gives the Tigers a needed spark.

"Byron's a good competitor," Stewart said. "He's aggressive -- a good competitor. When he's not on his ball game, he's going to find something that he can do and get it going most of the time. And I think he looks for that."

But Nee said the two key players for the Tigers are forward Mike Sandbothe and reserve center Greg Church. Sandbothe averages 5.7 points and 5.5 rebounds per game, while Church has a 6.7 points-per-game average.

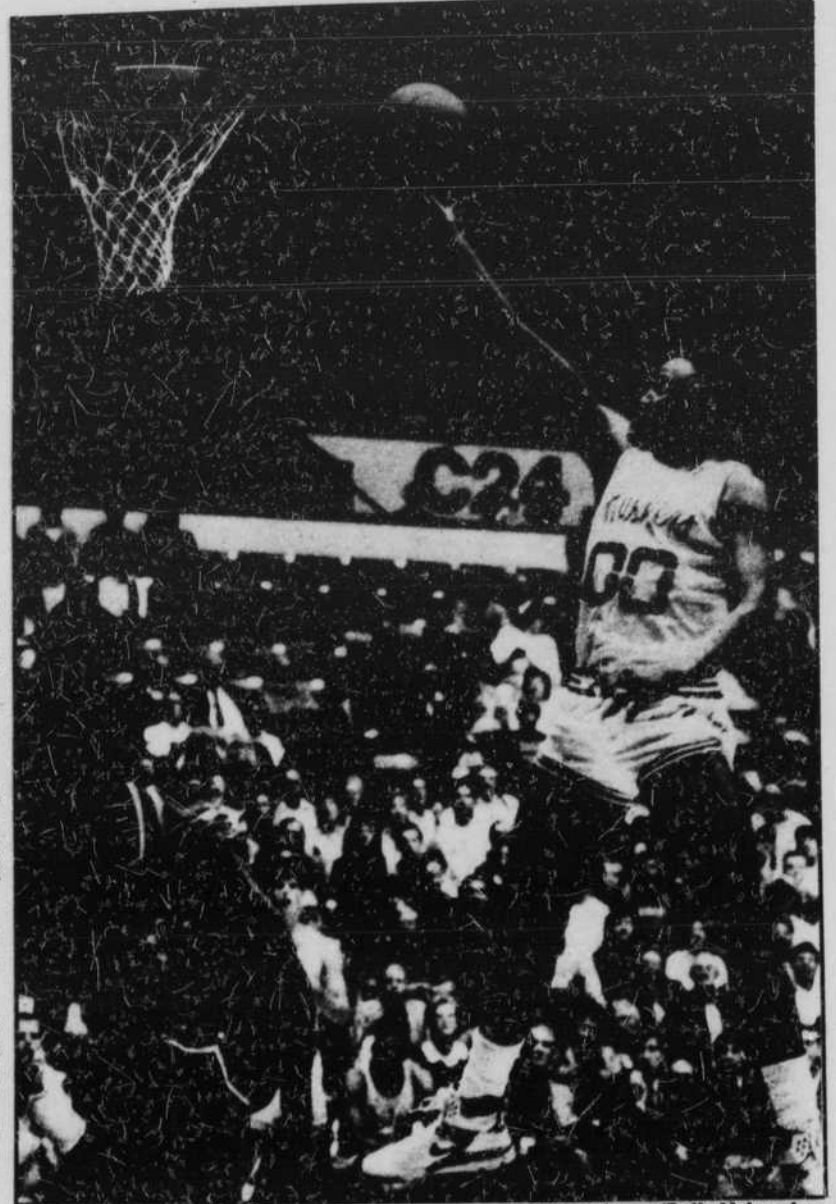
"Two players who I feel don't get any respect is Greg Church and Sandbothe," Nee said. "They're premiere role players. They do whatever it takes to win."

Nee said the Missouri program and Coach Norm Stewart are underrated.

"They're just really solid," he said. "Norm just never gets the credit he deserves. Year in and out, he puts a good basketball team on the floor."

But Nee isn't ready to concede to the Tigers.

"We look at it as a great opportunity," he said. "I think they'll come in as a big favorite but I think they'll come in ready to play. I just want us to play up to our potential."



William Lauer/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska forward Dapreis Owens is airborne while completing a finger roll.

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Women's basketball team to play Missouri

The Nebraska women's basketball team will try to rebound from its 68-65 loss to Oklahoma Wednesday when it faces Missouri on Sunday.

The game begins at 1:30 p.m. at the Hearnes Center in Columbia, Mo. Nebraska, which is now 11-7

overall and 2-3 in the Big Eight, has never defeated Missouri at Columbia. Last season, the Tigers defeated Nebraska 78-74 at home.

The Huskers, though, defeated Missouri 84-79 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Missouri, 11-5 and 3-

1, holds a 15-8 advantage in the teams' 12-year series.

Against the Sooners, Nebraska gave up a 12-point lead. Sabrina Brooks' basket with 12:11 left in the game gave the Huskers a 52-40. But the Sooners went on a 20-7 run to go ahead with 6:41 left.

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