

Ultimate players let the discs fly in Lincoln skies

By Dionne Searcey
Senior Reporter

Discs soared as high as spirits this weekend when a Kansas City, Mo., team won the biggest ultimate tournament to come to Lincoln.

Kansas City defeated Springfield, Mo., in the championship game Sunday. Both teams will travel to the regional tournament in Lexington, Ky. Nine teams competed in this weekend's sectional tournament.

Local players say they aren't disappointed they won't be traveling to regionals in two weeks. Paul Thygesen said the team was happy simply to be the host of the tournament.

Lincoln's team was defeated in quarterfinal play and finished the tournament with one win and three losses.

Thygesen said players were pleased with the tournament. The weather was ideal; the field, for the most part, was plush; and the players were serious about their games.

The tournament marks the near end of the outdoor disc-playing season for the Midwest. Nebraska winters don't offer the best of playing conditions, Thygesen said.

Patrick Rodysill, tournament director, said though he had played ultimate in snowy, 29-degree weather, nice days such as Saturday were ideal. Saturday's temperature was in the mid-80s.

When temperatures drop, Rodysill said, players will move practices inside the Campus Recreation building. Lincoln's team will modify a few rules to host an indoor tournament this winter, he said.

Tournaments are organized using a set of rules created by the Ultimate Players Association, a governing body for all ultimate teams. Rules must be followed for field size and statistic-keeping.

The players themselves are responsible for adhering to guidelines, Rodysill said, in keeping with the "spirit of the game" rule that eliminates the need for referees.

It's commonplace for players from opposing teams to joke with each other, shake hands during play and keep each other in line throughout the games, he said.

Rodysill said spirit was important to him. "The attitude of the people is why I play," he said. "Plus, I'm good at it."



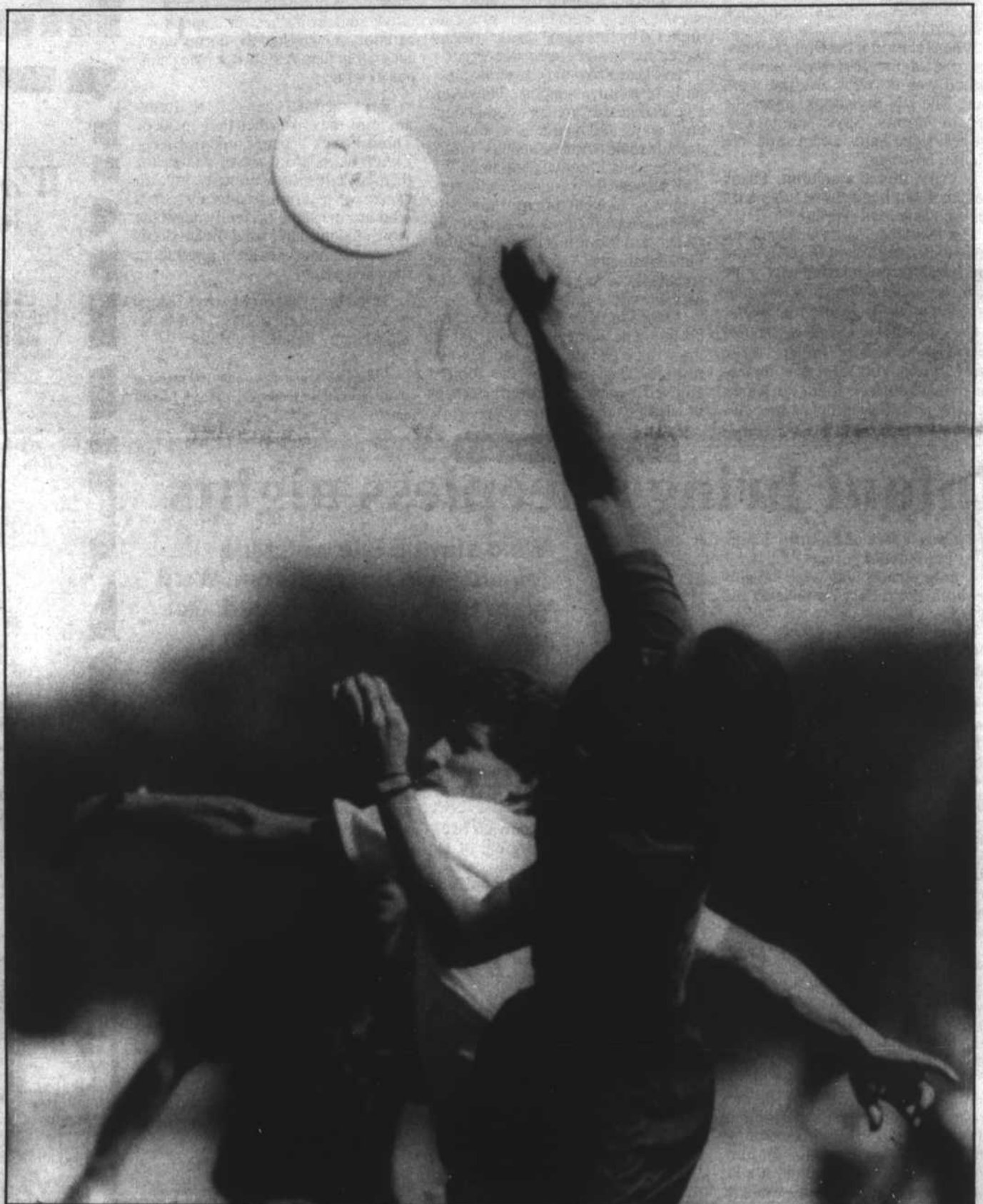
Clockwise from top:

Lincoln team member Shawn Berens seeks a throwing lane through his opponent's defense.

Rick Joos leaps past the opposition for an errant pass.

Where there is ultimate there are dogs. Paul Larsen keeps his and two other retrievers entertained between games.

Amy Lornberg Patt, a massage therapist, gives Patrick Rodysill a rub-down between matches. Patt said she gave about 30 rub-downs to players Saturday.



Photos by William Lauer