

Big Eight talking about SWC merger, television deal

From Staff and Wire Reports

The Southeastern Conference's \$85 million, five-year deal with CBS has caused the Big Eight to look into the possibility of a merger with the Southwest Conference and a television deal with ABC.

The SWC and the Big Eight apparently are close to agreeing to a five-year television deal with ABC, which could lead to a merger between the two leagues, the Associated Press reported Sunday.

Nebraska athletic director Bill Byrne declined to comment specifically on the contract Sunday.

"I can't comment on it yet," he said. "I don't know much about it. All I know is what I've read and heard."

"It's something that's been talked about," Byrne said he would receive more information from the Big Eight office Monday about the proposed television deal, which is reportedly between \$57 million and \$60 million.

The SEC broke away from the College Foot-

ball Association to sign a deal with CBS. That contract starts in 1996, when the CFA's \$300 million deal with ABC and ESPN expires.

The SWC athletic directors met Sunday in Dallas. Any deal made must be ratified by presidents of the 16 schools in both conferences.

Byrne said last Thursday that the possible breakup of the CFA would provide more television exposure for the Big Eight.

"There will be more opportunities for Big Eight teams to be on television, because ABC has to be able to make up for the lost inventory,"

he said.

Byrne said contacts had been made with the network about a television package.

But as far as realignment goes, Byrne said, it had not been discussed before the SEC signed its deal.

"We're always going to be able to talk about realignment," he said. "We'll do what's best for the Big Eight Conference."

"And right now we're not ready to talk about it."

Boone, Badgett help end Husker drought

By Tim Pearson
Senior Reporter

The sellout crowd of 14,389 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center saw something Saturday they hadn't seen since Jan. 15.

The crowd watched the Cornhuskers take a lead and win a game.

The Huskers had played 68 minutes without leading at the Bob Devaney Sports Center before Saturday's game against Iowa State.

Nebraska guard Jaron Boone put an end to that drought by hitting a jumper with 16:27 left in the first half to put the Huskers ahead.

The Huskers, who improved to 14-6 overall and 4-4 in the Big Eight, built on that 9-8 lead and went on to a 102-96 win over last-place Iowa State, which fell to 11-9 and 1-7 in the conference.

Husker coach Danny Nee said it was a relief to finally get a home win after home losses to Missouri and Oklahoma.

"It was a good win for us," Nee said. "Our fans finally got a chance to see us have a lead."

But the leads came and went for both the Huskers and the Cyclones. There were 22 ties and 18 lead changes.

The lead change that mattered most was at the end of the game.

Husker forward Eric Piatkowski, who had missed his three previous three-pointers, nailed a three-pointer to put the Huskers ahead 91-88 with 2:36 to go.

After Erick Strickland drew a charge in the lane from Julius Michalik, Boone drilled a three-pointer from the top of the key to put Nebraska up by six with 2:08 left. Boone led the Huskers with a career-high 24 points.

Iowa State coach Johnny Orr said the Michalik charge was a critical play in the game, giving the edge to the Huskers.

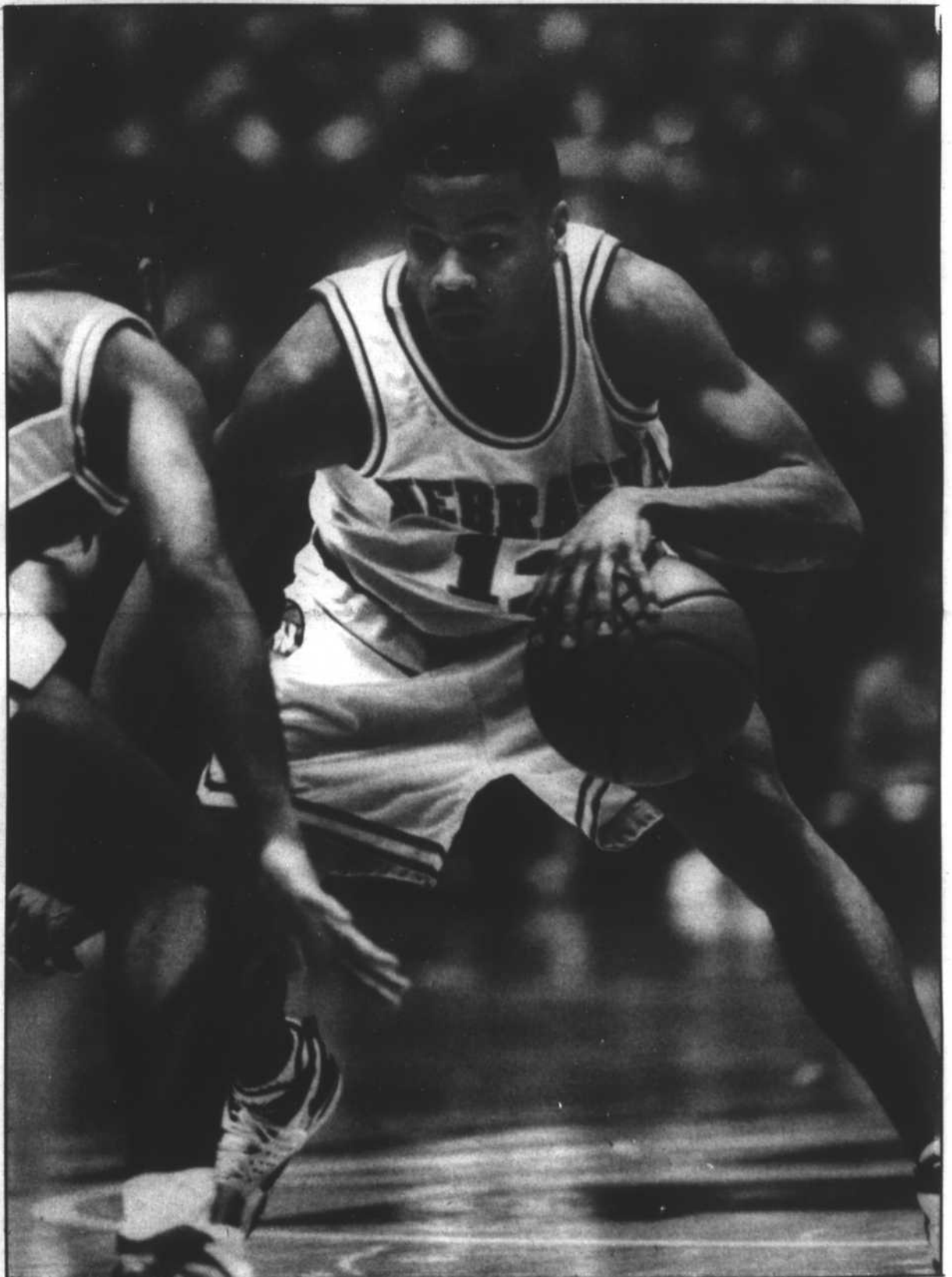
"There were two big plays in the game, but the one that hurt us was the charging call late in the game on Michalik," he said.

Nebraska shot 60.3 percent from the field and had six players in double figures. The Huskers were 8-16 from the three-point line, but Boone said Nebraska didn't rely as much on three-pointers as it had in past games.

"The extra pass was always there for the open three," he said. "People just stepped up and knocked it down."

The Huskers rose to the occasion at the end of the game, Nee said, just as

See HUSKERS on 8



Shaun Sartin/DN

Nebraska's Jamar Johnson looks to drive past an Iowa State defender during Nebraska's 102-96 win Saturday. Johnson and the Huskers will play Oklahoma in Norman, Okla., tonight at 8:30 on ESPN.

Huskers seek revenge on Oklahoma turf today

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

Home sweet home.

At least that's what it's supposed to be.

After two straight losses at home, the Nebraska basketball team redeemed itself on the Bob Devaney Sports Center floor Saturday afternoon by beating Iowa State 102-96.

Now the Cornhuskers, who have won four of their last six road games, have to leave the friendly confines of home and make two visits to the state of Oklahoma this week.

Tonight, the Huskers' first leg of the swing through the Sooner state takes them to Norman, a place where they have won only once in the last 12 years.

But the Huskers have added incentive to win this time, players said. Their 8:30 p.m. matchup with Oklahoma will be televised on ESPN.

— 66 —
Every game (the Oklahoma Sooners) beat you, they rub it in. That's just the arrogance of the coaching staff and the players.

— Johnson
NU men's basketball guard

99 —
Oklahoma beat the Huskers 79-76 in Lincoln on Jan. 29, and the players are thinking revenge.

"We want to go down there and beat them like they beat us," guard Jamar Johnson said. "Let me tell you something about Oklahoma. Every game they beat you, they rub it in."

See SOONERS on 8

Nebraska women split games in weekend trip to Kansas

From Staff Reports

Angela Aycock's 27 points were enough for Kansas to turn back Nebraska's upset-hopes, as the Jayhawks beat the



Beck

Cornhuskers 64-56 Sunday in Lawrence, Kan., to remain on top of the Big Eight women's standings.

Nebraska, which lost 78-57 in its previous meeting with Kansas, took the 10th-ranked Jayhawks to the

final buzzer in a game that saw 11 lead changes.

Nebraska led 31-30 at half and led by as many as six — 48-42 — in the second half but could not hold off Kansas.

Coach Angela Beck said Nebraska would benefit from playing the Big Eight leaders close.

"I felt the intensity we put on the floor is something we can build on in the future," she said. "We took some good shots, but they didn't connect."

Nafeesah Brown led Nebraska, which fell to 14-11 overall and 5-6 in the conference, with 18 points and 11 rebounds. She became the 14th player

in Nebraska women's basketball history to reach 1,000 points. She now has 1,003 career points.

Pyra Aarden added 12 points for the Huskers, while Meggan Yedsena played more than 39 minutes of the game without a turnover.

Nebraska earned a much-needed win Friday night at Kansas State, as it used a big first half to capture a 76-67 victory.

Yedsena led the way with 19 points, four assists and five steals to give her 282 career steals and break Amy Stephen's record of 280.

Nebraska made nine of its first 10 shots to jump to a 26-12 lead and hold

a 35-23 advantage at the halftime.

The Wildcats scored the first 10 points of the second half and eventually tied the game at 37 with 15 minutes remaining.

After Kansas State took its first lead at 48-47 with 11:20 left, Nebraska's Kate Galligan scored, and the Huskers never trailed again.

Beck said Nebraska came up big in a must-win situation to keep its hopes of qualifying for the NCAA alive.

"I think Kansas State is a very good team," she said. "Obviously, this was

a big win. Meggan Yedsena had her best game of the year as far as leadership goes.

"A lot of good things happened, and we got several people involved. We came out a little flat in the second half, but I was really proud of the way we kept our composure."

Brown scored 18 and Galligan scored 13, while Emily Thompson added 10 for the Huskers.

Nebraska will play host to Missouri Wednesday at 7 p.m.