

# Sooners' teamwork, red-hot defense cools Huskers

By Trevor Parks  
Staff Reporter

NORMAN, Okla.—Kelvin Sampson knows how defense wins basketball games.



Sampson

But defense wasn't the only key to the Sooners' 82-72 win over Nebraska Saturday. "To win close games two things have to happen. You have to make free throws and you better not have turnovers," Sampson said. "We did a good job of that (Saturday)."

Oklahoma will face Nebraska again this Sunday in a nationally televised game at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

And Sampson, in his first year at Oklahoma, is hoping the Sooners' defensive intensity will carry over a week.

"The defense was there as a constant to bail us out when we were not making runs," he said. "We're not going to play much better."

Junior guard Dion Barnes, who had 17 points, agreed with Sampson that defense was the key.

"We had to keep playing hard on defense and hope good things came to us," Barnes said. "Fortunately they did."

Sampson said Nebraska deserved credit for not folding when it had the opportunity.

"I don't know if we should focus on what we're not doing, but they started making some shots," he said.

Junior forward Ryan Minor was one reason for the Sooners' unpredictable play.

Minor scored 14 of his game-high 30 points

"I really don't look to score all that much as long as the team is scoring."

RYAN MINOR

Oklahoma forward

in the first 9:14 of the game, and scored one point on a free throw the remainder of the half.

In the second half, Minor heated up, scoring 15 points in the final 14:56 of the game.

Minor said he had experienced a lot of ups and downs in his play this season.

"I have a tendency to do that sometimes whenever everything is going our way," Minor said. "I really don't look to score all that much as long as the team is scoring."

Although Minor was the high scorer, Sampson said John Ontjes' play was just as

important.

Ontjes had a game-high 10 assists. It was the fifth time this year Ontjes had double figures in assists.

"I think if John had played poorly today, no matter what Ryan did, we would not have won."

Overall, Sampson was very happy with his team's performance.

"There was not one thing today that we did that I didn't think we weren't pretty good at."

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**Basketball**  
Continued from Page 7

to dig a hole and crawl back out. We have to identify our roles and have discipline and then just play ball. There's no excuses."

In Nebraska's 82-72 loss to Oklahoma on Saturday, Badgett and Moore combined for 12 points. Senior forward Melvin Brooks, who has started 14 games this season, came off the bench to score nine points and grab six rebounds.

Husker coach Danny Nee said Monday that he hadn't ruled out making a lineup change sometime in the near future.

At 1-3, Strickland said, Nebraska has time to recover. But, he said, the turnaround will have to happen this week when the Huskers play host to Oklahoma State and Oklahoma.

**Pressure**  
Continued from Page 7

have fallen to coaching pressures.

Duke's Mike Krzyzewski will be out the remainder of the season. Krzyzewski is still suffering from having off-season back surgery.

Williams said that for some coaches, it was just hard to stay away from the game.

"It's almost like a passion," Williams said during the Big Eight coaches' teleconference. "You feel that 'I've got to do more,' and it's like a sickness kind of thing."

The other coach is Nevada-Las Vegas first-year coach Tim Grgurich, who has been out since early January, complaining of medical symptoms related to exhaustion.

When Colorado coach Joe Harrington coached at Long Beach State from 1987-1990, his 49ers played against UNLV when Grgurich was an assistant coach.

Harrington said he wasn't surprised with the kind of work effort that Grgurich set for himself. And he also wasn't surprised by the results it brought him.

"Tim has always been extremely dedicated," Harrington said. "If you push too hard, something could happen, but he's always been that way."

To avoid the pressure, Oklahoma coach Kelvin Sampson said he always considered the joy that went along with coaching.

"I've always tried to remember why I got into this business," Sampson said. "I really enjoy coaching basketball. From three to five every afternoon, it's just me and my players in the gym."

But Sampson said pressure always lingered over him.

"Any coach who says, 'there is not a lot of pressure' is talking to you in fiction."

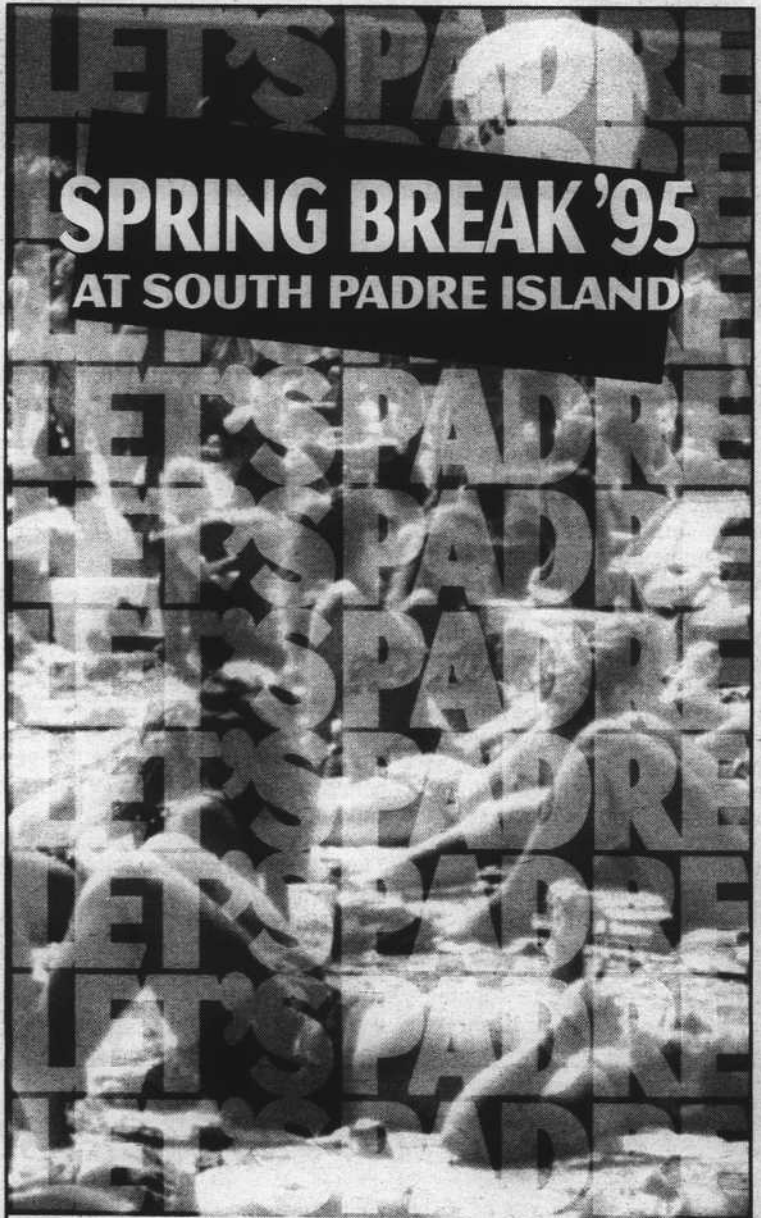
In his four years at Colorado, Harrington has turned the Buffalo program around, compiling a record of 62-69.

In the previous four years, Colorado was 35-79.

But the pressure still remains.

"We lost Saturday, so Sunday I was like a hermit," Harrington said. "You don't sleep well during the season. There is a lot of pressure winning or losing."

"You just don't escape it."



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