

SPORTS

Monday, March 13, 1995

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Huskers to face Georgia in NIT first round

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Reporter

The NCAA streak is over. Welcome to the NIT.

Thursday at 7:05 p.m., at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, the Nebraska basketball team will play host to Georgia in the first round of the National Invitation Tournament.

The 17-13 Cornhuskers are making their first NIT appearance since 1989. Nebraska has participated in the NCAA Tournament every year since 1991, losing in the first round each time.

The Huskers, who lost to Oklahoma State Friday in the first round of the Big Eight Tournament, have dropped three straight games since beating Missouri 78-75, Feb. 22, in Columbia, Mo.

Nebraska appeared in the NIT eight times between 1967 and 1989, posting an 11-8 record. In 1987, Danny Nee's first season as Husker coach, Nebraska advanced to the NIT Final Four at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Nee said Sunday night that he knew very little about Georgia, which finished 18-9 and the 9-7 in the Southeastern Conference.

"We don't know anything about them," he said. "We have films that we're watching now and trying to get ready as quick as possible. They are a good team from a great conference. It's a name-brand school."

Nebraska is 9-0 in NIT games played at the Devaney Center.

"The history of our record in the NIT," Nee said, "and the fact that we have great fan support were beneficial."

The Bulldogs and Huskers have met once, a

67-63 Georgia win in Lincoln on Dec. 20, 1985. Nee said his team, despite its recent losing ways, would be well prepared for the NIT contest.

"We had a team meeting earlier tonight, and we basically told them the season is over," he said. "Now, the postseason begins. Everybody was real positive. We hope this can turn us around and get some postseason experience."

A quick look at Nebraska's first-round opponent, Nee said, caused him to become concerned with Georgia's inside game. The Bulldogs' offense features Charles Claxton, a 7-foot senior center who averages 12.2 points, 7.9 rebounds and 3.5 blocks per game.

Carlos Strong, a 6-8 junior power-forward averaging 14.7 points and 6.9 rebounds per game, is the Bulldogs' leading scorer.

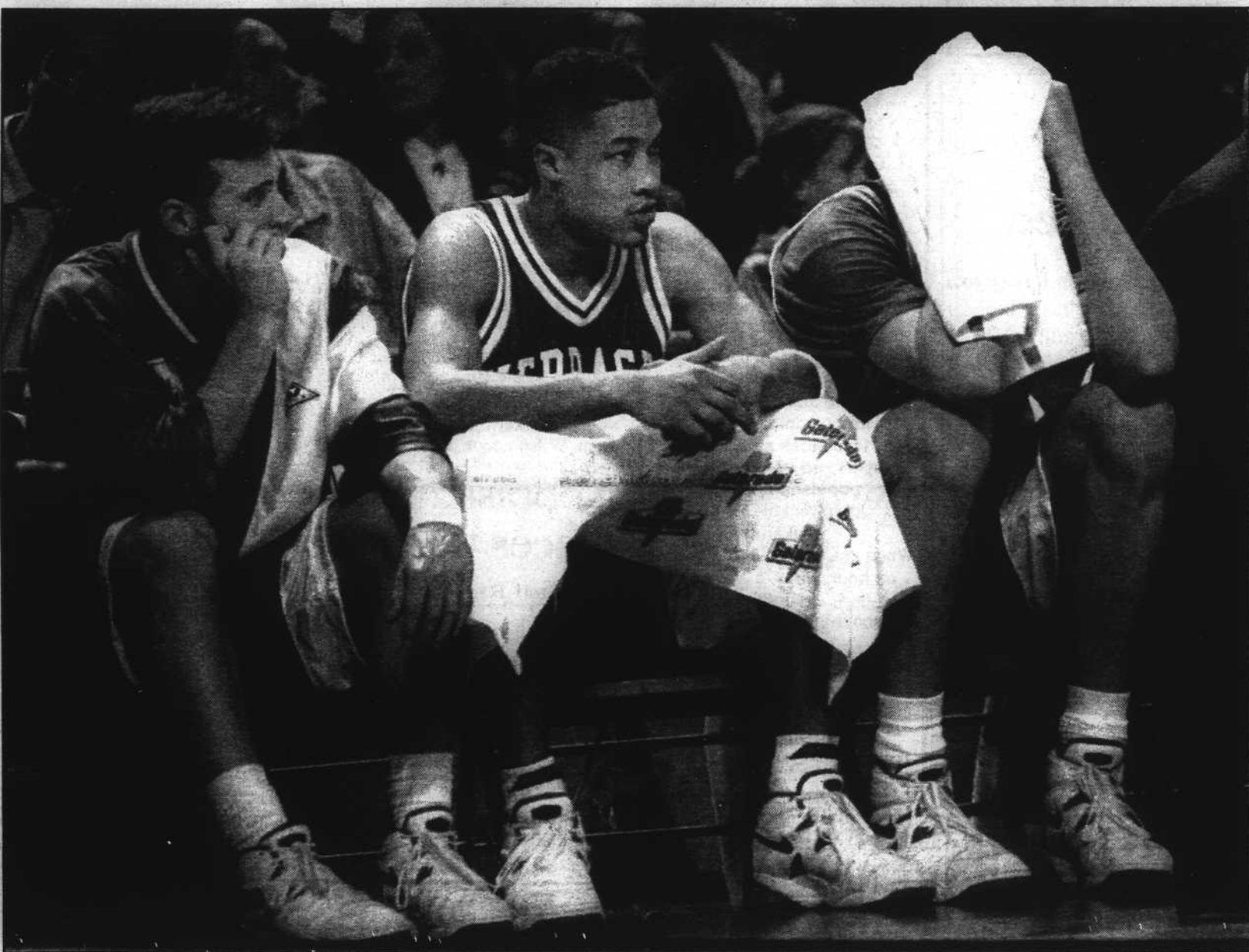
Two other Georgia players average double

figures in scoring: Shandon Anderson, a 6-6 junior forward who averages 13.1 points and 5 rebounds per game and Katu Davis, a 6-2 junior guard who averages 10.8 points and 3.3 rebounds per game.

"They are a very big, strong physical team," Nee said. "That is something we have had problems with, so we'll spend some time working on their inside game."

The Huskers were one of two Big Eight teams selected to participate in the NIT. Colorado, which ended the season 15-12 after losing to Oklahoma Friday in the conference tournament, will play at New Mexico State.

NIT tickets will be sold Monday and Tuesday at the Devaney Center ticket office and the South Stadium ticket office from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Chris Sallee, right, covers his head with a towel as Jaron Boone, center, and Tom Wald watch Nebraska's 68-48 loss to Oklahoma State in the first round of the Big Eight Tournament Friday in Kansas City, Mo.

Gerik Parmele/DN

OSU spurt helps defeat Huskers

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — For the first 13 minutes of Nebraska's first-round game against Oklahoma State Friday, the Cornhuskers looked like they were picking up where they left off at last season's Big Eight Tournament.

But the differences between last season — when the Huskers won the conference tournament — and this season became obvious when the Cowboys went on a 22-0 run on their way to a 68-48 victory over the Huskers at Kemper Arena.

Junior guard Erick Strickland scored eight points in the first four minutes as Nebraska jumped out to a 17-6 lead and led 24-17 on Strickland's 12th point with 7:21 remaining in the first half.

But Oklahoma State scored the next 22 points, without a Nebraska timeout, to take a commanding 39-24 lead.

The only break during the Cowboy run was a media timeout after Oklahoma State had already scored 20 unanswered points.

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said he thought the media timeout would come earlier than it did.

"I was told that a media timeout was coming and it didn't come," Nee said. "It felt like an eternity, but I think that run was broken up by a media timeout. I don't think they got all 18 points straight in a row."

"But if they did, I'll take full responsibility for it."

See **BIG EIGHT** on 10

Devaney doing well, undergoing therapy

By Jeff Griesch
Senior Reporter

Bob Devaney is doing much better than he was one week ago, former Nebraska running back Johnny Rodgers said Sunday night.

Devaney was admitted into the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln Thursday to begin therapy for a stroke he suffered Saturday, March 4.

The former coach of the Nebraska football team and athletic director emeritus began therapy Friday in the hospital's acute rehabilitation unit.

The average stay in the unit is 25 days but can vary widely depending on the severity of the injury.

Devaney, 79, was admitted into Bryan Memorial Hospital on March 4 for what was reported to be a sudden elevation in blood pressure.

His blood pressure was brought under control, but doctors and

Devaney's family have confirmed that the Hall of Fame coach suffered a slight stroke.

Rodgers visited Devaney Saturday. "He has made tremendous strides," Rodgers said. "He was walking and getting around by himself. He couldn't get around on his own at all initially, so he is doing much better. His speech was slurred a little bit but that is getting better too. I guess he couldn't talk at all when he first entered the hospital."

Devaney led the Huskers to back-to-back national championships in 1970 and 1971 before retiring to become Nebraska's full-time athletic director after the 1972 season.

Cards and letters may be sent to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5401 South St., Lincoln, Neb., 68506 or Bob Devaney, c/o University of Nebraska, south Stadium 103, Lincoln, Neb., 68588.

Kansas gets a top NCAA seed

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — UCLA, which last won the national championship 20 years ago in Coach John Wooden's last game, was made a No. 1 seed Sunday in the NCAA college basketball tournament along with Kentucky, Wake Forest and Kansas.

The Bruins go into the tournament as the top team in The Associated Press poll, and it's the first time they've gone in ranked No. 1 since winning the title in 1975.

The final AP poll will be released Monday afternoon. UCLA got 65 of the 66 first-place votes in the current poll and won all its games this week.

Kansas got the lone remaining first-place vote.

The Bruins (25-2), the Pac 10 champion and the No. 1 seed in the West Regional, play their first game Friday against Florida International, winners of the Trans America Ath-

letic Conference with an 11-18 record.

Kentucky (25-4) was made the No. 1 seed in the Southeast after defeating defending national champion Arkansas 95-93 in overtime to win the SEC championship. Kansas (23-5) was the top seed in the Midwest despite losing in the Big Eight conference tournament. Wake Forest (24-5), which beat North Carolina 82-80 in overtime to win its first ACC title since 1962, headed the East region.

Kentucky plays Mount St. Mary's of Maryland (17-12), while Kansas takes on Colgate (17-12) and Wake Forest plays North Carolina A&T (15-14), all on Thursday.

Three of the four No. 1 seeds went to schools with long histories of success in the NCAA Tournament. UCLA has a record 10 national titles, while Kentucky's five titles are tied for second-best with

Indiana. Kansas has won the NCAA championship twice.

Wake Forest is the only one of the four No. 1 seeds without a national championship.

The No. 2 seed in the East went to Atlantic 10 champion Massachusetts (26-4). The second seed in the Southeast was North Carolina (24-5), while Arkansas (27-6) got the No. 2 seed in the Midwest. Connecticut (26-4), which lost the Big East title game to Villanova, will travel to the West Regional as the No. 2 seed.

The Big Ten led the way among conferences with six teams making the tournament. The SEC, Big Eight and Pac 10 each had five tournament teams while the ACC and Big East got four bids.

Among the teams missing the field were Georgia Tech (18-12) of the ACC, Iowa (19-11) of the Big Ten and Georgia (18-9) of the SEC.