

Truscott breaks out in tight NU win

By Joshua Camenzind
Staff writer

"I have a lot of confidence. I think that when I am out there, I can't be stopped."

Nobody will mistake it for a masterpiece, but after opening the Big 12 conference season 0-3, the Nebraska basketball team will take a win in any form or fashion.

What it got was a 70-67 win over fellow Big 12-cellar dweller Texas Tech in front of 7,624 fans at the Bob Devaney Center on Wednesday night.

"It is a step forward for one reason - we won," NU Coach Danny Nee said. "I don't think we played any better or worse last week when we lost by one to Iowa State. These type of games are not going to be pretty."

And pretty it wasn't.

Despite having a 56-32 rebounding advantage and holding Tech's two leading scorers to eight of 26 shooting, the game came down to a last-second desperation 3-pointer by Rayford Young that rimmed out.

The Huskers struggled despite having three players reach the double-double plateau in points and rebounds in Kimani Ffriend, Steffon Bradford and Louis Truscott.

"When did you ever see three Nebraska players have double-doubles?" Nee asked reporters afterwards.

Bradford led the three with 16 rebounds, but the night belonged to Truscott.

He blocked a potential game-tying 3-pointer by Tech's James Ware with 14 seconds left.

"It was my fault from the start," Truscott said. "I was suppose to hedge, so I knew I was going to hear it if I didn't block the shot."

The sophomore had career highs in four categories: points (18), rebounds (11), assists (four) and blocks (three).

"Everyday at practice we beat up on Louis," Bradford said. "(Just) to let him know that he is better than anyone on the floor."

Truscott has shown improvement as of late and been looking for his own shots on a consistent basis.

"Louis is a tremendous player," said Ffriend, who had 13 points and 12 rebounds of his own. "Louis can get to the rack when he wants to. His problem is that I think he has low self-esteem."

"When he gets on a roll it is hard to stop him, but when he gets that one setback, everything just crumbles."

Louis Truscott
NU forward

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But it is Truscott's confidence that has earned him increased playing time and a bigger role in the Husker offense.

"I have a lot of confidence," Truscott said. "I think that when I am out there, I can't be stopped."

While the three Nebraska post players were lighting up the scoreboard, NU's senior leader, Larry Florence, struggled. Florence shot two of 16 from the field before fouling out with 2:25 left to play. Florence has struggled to find his shot throughout the Big 12 season, shooting 14 of 58 (24 percent) in four Big 12 games.

Nee said it will be important for the captain to step up his play in the coming games.

"I know he can play better," Nee said. "If he plays at all (tonight), we have this game in control from beginning to end. We have to get him playing well."



Josh Wolfe/DN
LOUIS TRUSCOTT battles with Texas Tech for a rebound in the first half. Truscott led all scorers with 18 points in a 70-67 victory.



Josh Wolfe/DN
ASSISTANT BASKETBALL COACH Larry Gay looks across the court during competition with Texas Tech. Gay resigned in 1996 from the University of Louisville in Louisville, Ken., amid questions about recruiting violations and was hired by NU in the summer of 1999.

Past doesn't burden NU assistant

"It's behind me. The bottom line is, we all make mistakes. I made min, and it's not a big burden on me anymore. I don't look back anymore."

Larry Gay
NU assistant men's basketball coach

By Matthew Hansen
Staff writer

When the past is brought up, Nebraska Basketball Assistant Coach Larry Gay doesn't flinch.

He knows you will want to talk about the violations, the NCAA investigation, the dark period of his coaching career. The two successful decades he spent in college basketball before it all came crashing down are secondary.

At the end of the interview, after rehashing an hour of a past he can't possibly enjoy, he shows no signs of irritation. And he is still looking you straight in the eye.

Larry Gay's candor is one of the attributes that makes him a master of the living room, one of those middle-aged men whose primary job is to convince high school stars that the university they represent is the one.

Gay did it well enough at Florida State, Georgia and Louisville that Sports Illustrated listed him as one of the top 10 recruiters in the country in 1992.

And it was this recruiting ability that also got him into trouble, and, four years later, leaves him far from his Southern roots and the basketball tradition of Louisville trying to resurrect a once-promising career.

Larry Gay shrugs. His unblinking stare and the words he speaks next agree: The past doesn't haunt him.

"It's behind me," he said. "The bottom line is, we all make mistakes. I made mine, and it's not a big burden on me anymore. I don't look back."

The past, for Gay, is a happy marriage with basketball that began with the discovery of the

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Opening tests for football go well at Cook

By John Gaskins
Staff writer

For some Nebraska football wannabes, it was a chance to rub shoulders and see how their athleticism rated with the big boys.

For others, it was the first step in slipping through the recruiting cracks and shooting for their dream of becoming a Cornhusker.

And for the players already safely on the roster, it was their first step toward the winter and spring football seasons and a chance to see how well they stayed in shape since the Fiesta Bowl win 17 days ago.

Winter conditioning kicked off at Cook Pavilion on Wednesday with initial testing. The session was open to anyone enrolled at the University of Nebraska, regardless of their desire or capability to become a football player.

NU strength and conditioning coordinator Boyd Eppley said between 80 and 100 athletes tested in four main athletic stations - the pro-agility run, vertical jump, 40-yard sprint and 10-yard sprint. The number of people who will be asked back to try out will be determined by the coaches, Eppley said.

The results of the testing will be released today at noon. "Sometimes it's just a dream," Eppley said. "Other times the coaches have encouraged them to come at this time of the year. They see in the recruiting process at the time that they're not quite good enough at the time, but with a little work in the first semester on their own, they can improve their speed or size or whatever they're lacking and be ready at this time."

Eppley pointed to early 1980s fullback Mark Schelein and Jay Sims, a running back from 1995-97, as two players who were picked up during this time.

Those who prove to be the fittest in initial testing will then go through a performance program beginning Friday at 3:00 p.m., and those who will find the program to be too rigorous will be weeded out and given suggestions for other campus fitness programs to enter, Eppley said.

One female, NU sprinter KaLena Brown, tested.

"For a lot of guys this is the starting point...that's where you try to turn heads."

Loran Kaiser
NU defensive lineman

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