

Play Some Rugged Foes.

The point is that the defending tourney champions, are only a few rimmers away from an unblemished slate against the second-stiffest slate being played by any league team. Only Colorado can show a more rigid early card against the likes of Iowa, defending Big Ten champion; Oregon State defending P. C. C. King, and B. Y. U., 8th-ranked in the latest A. P. poll. Five of six pre-tourney starts are on the road.

With conference members, plus this year's guest team, Cornell, scheduled for thirteen more games before Tuesday, this picture could change. But the Tigers, with Guard Norm Stewart leading pre-tourney scorers on a 25.5 average and Chuck Denny playing better than expected at center, command the most respect at this writing.

If they maintain that edge another week they will be facing not only what is taking shape as the best-balanced field in meet history, but a high precedent hurdle as well. No defending champion ever has repeated. Fact is, only one repeat-seeker has reached the finals the year following its title haul. Kansas lost an 87-93 verdict to Kansas State in 1952, following a conquest in '51 by its N. C. A. A. champions.

Missouri whaled Kansas State, 89-71, in last year's championship round to bag its first crown since 1949. It rolled over Nebraska, 75-58, in the opening round, and throttled Oklahoma's Nimble Nubbins, 95-87, in the semifinal. The Stalcups came into last year's auditorium fixture with a 4-2 log, which included wins over Iowa, Indiana, and Wisconsin. They were favored for the title and played smoothly to that pattern all the way. Two regulars, Center Bob Reiter and Forward Med Park are gone from that club.

Play the Huskers First.

M. U. again has drawn Nebraska as a first round foe, leading off the second night of play at 7:30 Wednesday. Kansas and Cornell play the nightcap.

B. Y. U. tore considerable gloss off Colorado, the league's early surprise, with a fearsome double flogging, at Provo, 70-53, and 84-53, over the week end. The defending conference cham-