

Capitalizing

On Sports

By **DICK SNIDER**
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KANSAS CITY, MO.—No Big Seven tournament champion ever has repeated, and this sturdy jinx adds to the odds against the defending champion Kansas as the ninth annual pre-season derby opens here tonight.

Kansas isn't favored this time, mainly because its fine outfit of last season has been shredded by graduation, leaving four sophomores in the starting lineup. Phog Allen calls his team this year a "seven-semester team."

"Figure it out," says Phog. "Dobbs (Dallas, the lone returning regular) has played three semesters. The other boys are still working on their first one."

But the sophomores at Kansas are good and they are plentiful. And Phog Allen still is Phog Allen. Thus while Kansas isn't favored, it still is eyed warily by the rest of the field.

Bill Rosenstretter of the United Press perhaps explained the feeling over KU this year best when he said the rest of the field here wasn't falling for the report Kansas has no big man this year.

"Kansas still has its big man," he wrote. "He's Phog Allen."

IT IS CERTAIN that no team will come into this rugged grind so sorely lacking in game experience as Kansas. But KU's four straight victories can't be discounted, and neither can the tireless Phog, who has traveled hand in hand with success . . .

Speaking of fine sophomores, Kansas has no corner on them. In fact, KU's first foe here, Iowa State, will show one of the best in Gary Thompson, a 5-10 product of Roland, Iowa.

An all-stater for three straight years, Thompson earned the tag of the "Roland Rocket" and is living up to it with a fancy 16-point average thru five games.

Iowa State has another soph standout in Chuck Vogt, a 6-4 performer who also is a regular.

Even winless Oklahoma sports a top-flight rookie in Jimmy Peck, a 5-9 scooter who teams with little Lester Lane in the Sooner backline. Peck, like Lane, is a fine outside shooter.

MISSOURI LAST season came up with a sophomore star in Norm Stewart to match KU's Dobbs, and the Tigers have another one this time who is regarded as highly as Stewart.

Sparky Stalcup's newest surprise package is Lionel Smith, a 6-2 sparkler who got his chance when regular Lloyd Elmore had to take time out for an operation. Smith has come thru.

Nebraska has a rookie standout in Rex Ekwall, a 6-4 jumping jack who was a two-time all-stater. He, too, has crashed the starting lineup and promises to remain.

Kansas State has Pachin Vicens as its top soph. The little Puerto Rican is second on the scoring table with a 10-point average, and is a great ball handler and play maker.

Only Colorado is without a shining sophomore, and Colorado has a good reason. It has back 11 lettermen, and all of last year's traveling squad.

KANSAS MAY BE setting some sort of record in starting four sophomores. KU sports publicist Don Pierce can't recall when the Jayhawks ever did it before, and says the last time they came close was in 1949-50 when Clyde Lovellette and his future Olympic pals were first year men.

Lovellette, Bill Hougland, Bill Lienhardt and Bob Kenney all saw extensive action that year, but two of the regulars were veterans Jerry Waugh and Claude Hauchin. That team, despite the sophomoric tinge, tied for the title and was picked for the NCAA playoffs in a move the Big Seven would just as soon forget.

While Pierce can't remember the last time KU opened with four sophs, he is staking tentative claim for a record for one of the KU rookies. He thinks Gene Elsutn's feat of grabbing 19 rebounds against Rice may be a record for a sophomore—perhaps in the history of the conference.

"Lovellette never did it as a sophomore," Pierce says. That alone should establish it as a record.

Phog Allen never won this tournament with four sophomores, but his opponents are quick to point out that he never tried it with four sophs before, either.