

## Unexpected the Rule

# Big Seven Meet Zany

BY DON PIERCE  
Special Correspondent

HOW many ambushes await favorites in the eighth annual Big Seven basketball tournament which gets out of the starting gate Saturday in Kansas City's municipal auditorium? What odd outcroppings of team performance and bizarre player incidents will mark the affair?

Those are the magnets that again will draw sellout houses in the 10,000-capacity round-ball palace at least three of the four playing nights and continue to project the affair as one of the nation's finest, despite its comparatively youthful existence.

This is the meet that already has produced two high-scoring overtime matches without precedent in regular league play, Kansas' 90-88 win over Kansas State in the 1951 semifinals and Stanford's 103-102 edging of Iowa State in the first consolation round of the same meet.

This is a tournament in which Iowa State, a team that hasn't won a league cage flag since 1945 and has dropped 13 consecutive conference decisions to Kansas State, is the only club which holds an edge over the Wildcats in tourney play. It is only 1-0, the Cyclones having captured the only match between the two. But State is 0-7 against a combination of Missouri and Kansas while State holds a bulge over all other comers.

The meet also has seen a stellar performer like Missouri's win Wilfong blanked from the field for a full game. And it once produced an all-tournament team, the 1949 five, that did not include a single member of Missouri's championship five.

Also consider this rare backdrop: Only post-men ever have won a meet individual scoring championship. Yet none holds

the single-game point record. Three men, Oklahoma's Sherman Norton, the record-holder with 39; Minnesota's Maynard Johnson and Kansas State's Dick Knostman, with 38 each, have nailed more points in a

### Tourney Bracket

FIRST ROUND PAIRINGS  
8 p. m. Saturday: Kansas vs. Colorado.  
9:45 p. m. Saturday: Iowa State vs. Missouri.  
8 p. m. Monday: Kansas State vs. Nebraska.  
9:45 p. m. Monday: Oklahoma vs. Washington.

single tournament game than KU's Clyde Lovellette, greatest pointsmith in conference annals.

Two teams, Colorado in 1949, and Stanford in 1951, have come into the meet with undefeated records, but never even reached the finals. Nebraska once outscored Iowa State, 19-1, in the overtime period to notch an 86-67 consolation triumph in 1948.

Jim Stange, who still is co-holder of the school record for most points and most free throws in a single game, potted a goal for Nebraska in this one, wheeling into the wrong goal after snaring a jump ball.

The last two finals have ended in tears, boos and rhu-barbs.

SMU set a pattern for the unexpected in the inaugural meet by winning the championship as one of the two guest teams. The Mustangs did so by clipping Kansas, 49-46, in the finals. No other invited five . . . Washington is completing the eight-team bracket this year . . . ever has won the crown.

Kansas State added impetus to what has become an annual surprise motif in the same meet by ambushing Oklahoma's eventual NCAA runners-up, 59-55, in the opening round of the meet despite a 24-point salute by Sooner pivot, Gerald Tucker.

The Wildcats since have become the tourney's most dominate team, winning three championships . . . no other club has won more than one . . . and clearing the first round in every meet.

Yet that blank against the Cyclones persists. It was accomplished chiefly by a pair of midget guards, 5-9 Bob Petersen and 5-8 Don Ferguson, who rollicked for an aggregate of 23 points as the Iowans scored a 56-53 upset in the 1948 third-place playoff.

Missouri won the '49 title by edging Oklahoma, 44-42, in the finals, after disposing of Colorado, 62-51, and Michigan, 47-46. Yet none of the Bengals'

starting five of Bill Stauffer, Don Stroot, Jerry Fowler, Bob Wachter and George Lafferty earned a first-team all-meet berth.

Wilfong, since lifted by the armed forces, drew his handcuff in last year's meet from Kansas guard Dean Kelley who restricted him to four points from the free throw line. Had the versatile Tiger sentinel merely notched his season's average of 11.1 KU could not have scored that 66-62 semi-final upset.

Norton cut his record in the opening round of 1951 as Oklahoma upset Stanford, 77-71. The lean 6-4 Redshirt harvested 13 baskets, nine of them lay-ups out of Bruce Drake's patented "Shuffle" with which the Sooners hoodwinked the Pacific Coasters all evening. Norton canned every one of his 13 free throw tries which also is a meet mark.

Stanford had come into the tourney with a string of eight consecutive early-season victories.

Colorado met a similar fate in '49 won it lugged a ribbon of seven straight triumphs into the hall, only to suffer that 51-62 sacking at the hands of Missouri, the champs' widest winning spread of the meet, in the semifinals.

That record Stanford-Iowa State match was chiefly the product of a rules experiment which 1) Forced the offended team to shoot all free throws and 2) Gave the offended team ball possession after every successful free throw.

THE KU-KS heart-stopper, played just one game later, must go down as the tourney's greatest bout to date. This saw the Wildcats wipe out two 19-point leads to tie at 72-72 6:40 from the finish. It also saw Lovellette score only five points thru the first half and nail 22 of his 27 while carrying four fouls. State forward Hoot Gibson, sent the game into overtime with a long tip-in 9 seconds before the finish to forge an 80-80 deadlock. Then the two bitter intra-state foes whirled thru 18 points in the overtime.

Ranking on the same plane was Missouri's 1949 win over OU which saw Guard George Lafferty score his team's last seven points to pull the Tigers from behind.

With the conference expected to be considerably tighter from top to bottom this winter, the intense firing in Kansas City should be even more acrid.