

Omahan Hare still remembers tourney

By Chuck Sinclair
Prep Sports Writer

You can erase a man's records, but never his memories.

That's how fabulous Fred Hare, the former Omaha Tech and University of Nebraska standout, looks at this weekend's state basketball tournament.

While Hare cherishes each and every basketball memory as the man who electrified state tournament crowds in 1962-63 and sent Husker fans into ecstasy with his last-second, over the head shot that upset No. 1 ranked Michigan in 1964, he realizes that Omaha North's Mike McGee could erase his name from the prep record books with a flick of his wrist.

"Memories, that's where it's all at," says Hare, who is presently taking 14 hours towards a Spanish major while holding a parttime job as a driver for Omaha's Metro Area Transit bus lines. "I had some great thrills while playing. I think back so many times."

The play of McGee the past two years has generated talk that the 6-4 senior may be the best prep player to ever come out of the state of Nebraska, comments that used to be directed towards Hare.

"Mike is a tremendous player with a tremendous future," says Hare, who has watched McGee and played with him on the playgrounds. "But I'm not so sure he could have gotten away with his kind of style when I was coming up. I think the style of play has changed quite a bit since I was around."

"I can remember many times when I would have had the chance to score in the

50s and 60s, but as soon as I hit my average, that was it," Hare says.

"In a way, I'd like to be playing high school basketball now," Hare adds. "Mike has more of an opportunity to express himself on the court. I think now would probably be about the right time for my style too."

"I look at Mike now and think that high school player he's probably about the same as a Jo Jo White or even a Jerry West," Hare says. "But the difference is where they played. They came from an area where they got great publicity."

Hare thinks of himself in that same category, but as a victim of time and location.

When Hare left the University of Nebraska in his junior year because of personal and family problems, he headed towards Mexico for the European style pro ball.

His travels and desire to play pro basketball led him first to Phoenix, then Los Angeles, to the Harlem Globetrotters and finally to the Harlem Globes before he ended back in Omaha working on his Spanish major.

"I was with Phoenix for six months and then they put me on waivers," Hare says. "I was very discouraged. I averaged 25 points a game and led in assists in rookie camp, but they found out that I had knee surgery three times and that was it."

"Then I went to LA, but they didn't need anybody with the guards they had," Hare says. "But the coach got me lined up with Dallas in the ABA."

Hare never reported to Dallas. He chose a tryout with the Globetrotters instead.

"I wasn't funny enough for the Trotters," Hare says. "I wanted to shoot and play serious basketball. I didn't want to clown around."

Eventually, Hare did clown around with the Harlem Globes, but finally ended up at home, back in Omaha.

"I wanted that degree," Hare says of his return. "It's rather disgusting being an eighth-year senior Spanish student. But if I can't play basketball, I want to work with Spanish speaking people any way I can."

Now, Hare's basketball playing is limited to Omaha city league or pickup games in the summer when the "big time" players are around.

He had to quit the city league when school started because classwork and bus driving consumed too much time.

"I feel I have a bright future," Hare says. "I'd really like to play ball yet. I'm only 32 and still in great shape."

The last time I played with Jo Jo and Silas, Jo Jo didn't remember me from when he was at Kansas," Hare says. "They both said, 'hey man, you're dynamite. Where are you going? Are you being traded?'"

Hare says his biggest sports thrills have come when he didn't know the outcome.

"Like the Michigan game. It was down to the last second and everyone was going crazy," Hare says. "And even when I was a junior in high school. We ended up losing to Lincoln Northeast in the state finals, but it was so exciting."

Maybe that's why Fred Hare looks to the future with excitement. Life is like a sport to Fred Hare.

Links hope road smoother to end

Starting lineups

Grand Is. (20-1)	Pos	Lincoln HI (11-10)
Trieschman (6-4)	F	Heckman (6-5)
Lyons (6-4)	F	Albers (6-2)
Finn (6-5)	C	Woods (6-4)
Bartlett (6-2)	G	McWilliams (5-10)
Puffman (5-8)	G	Carstens (6-2)

Tipoff: 7 p.m., NU Sports Center
Telecasts: Cable 9, Lincoln
Broadcasts: KFOR, KRGH, KHASBy Chuck Sinclair
Prep Sports Writer

Lincoln High's drive to the state basketball tournament has not followed the smoothest of roads.

Few miles have been traveled over four-lane expressways.

Most have come via the back country roads, several of which ended with dead-end signs after a seemingly successful trip.

But at this moment, coach Alden Johnson, a veteran of 27 years in the business, wouldn't have it any other way.

Each of the milestones the Links have, or have not conquered is an important part of that drive to Thursday's 7 p.m. first round state tournament opener at the Nebraska Sports Center against No. 1 rated Grand Island.

The rocky road started early. In the first three games of the season, Lincoln High's team had been called the best Omaha Westside coach Tom Hall had ever seen at the school after beating Westside in Omaha. Yet the Links were 1-2, losing to Hastings and McCook by two points apiece.

Then again, the Links turned on, this time demolishing Beatrice, 80-52, a team holding the only blemish on Grand Island's record just a week earlier.

But typical of the season, the next outing was disaster.

Johnson looked at it as the most embarrassing of his career, from a coaching standpoint.

A misunderstanding on rules set down for the I-80 Holiday tournament at Ralston left the Links without uniforms to play Lincoln East in the opening round.

Starting the game with five technical fouls for improper uniforms (Ralston practice jerseys), the Links were saddled with two more because of substitutions.

But while making up for that initial setback, the Links still came back and led the game before losing.

In the tournament consolation game, Lincoln High came back and defeated Millard, a team which held a win over top rated Omaha North a week earlier.

The rest of the season was about as typical. Although there were some wins

Jeff Finn
... G1 centerPaul Trieschman
... G1 forward

along the road, there were a lot of heart-breaking losses, one-pointers to Omaha Central and Papillion.

The Links had the Central game won but the ball was stolen in the last second under the Central basket and converted into the winning basket.

"I think the ups and downs of the past season should have made us a better ball club," Johnson said. "One of the toughest things to do was to continue to try and convince the kids of what I obviously knew, that they were good enough to beat those teams."

"After something happens," he adds, "You can't lean on it like a crutch."

Johnson dispels the thought that Lincoln High's state tournament appearance is a result of a fast finish.

"It wasn't a matter of us just coming on at the end of the season," Johnson says. "We're the same team we've always been."

"But you can't pass the buck," Johnson adds. "It just comes down to the fact that you have to get the kids to play above what takes place during a game."

McGee eyeing scoring marks

By Randy York
Prep Sports Editor

State basketball tournament fans at the NU Sports Center Thursday are likely to reach for their nearest pencil and use their programs as scorecards.

State Class A basketball history is expected to be made if Omaha North's Mike McGee scores 21 points against Omaha Burke in those two teams' 2 p.m. first-round matchup, he will become Class A's leading career scorer.

McGee has 1,568 career points, 20 behind the 1,588 posted by Omaha Tech's Fred Hare from 1960-63. Considering McGee's season-low total in 23 games has been 30 points, the 6-4 senior is expected to surpass the record.

In North's 104-79 win over Burke in mid-February, McGee scored 48 points.

He scored 889 points this season — a 38.6 per-game average.

McGee also scored 619 as a junior and 60 as a sophomore and now owns or shares every Metro Conference single-season and career record except the 31 rebounds collected by Omaha Central's Dwaine Dillard in 1968.

"I would have to rank Mike McGee the number one high school player of all time in Nebraska," North coach Bob Murray said Wednesday. "He holds every record in the book. I don't know what more you can ask."

McGee broke the single-game Metro record with a 54-point performance against Omaha Groes in mid-January. He still is three points shy, however, of the Class A single-game scoring record held by Lincoln Northeast's Jerry Motz

in 1964.

Last month, McGee broke the Class A single-season scoring record of 644 points by the late Mike Heck of Papillion in 1972.

McGee has hit 47 per cent of his field goal attempts and 75 per cent of his free throw tries this season while averaging 15 rebounds. He also has been credited with 120 assists.

Murray said McGee will not think about his college basketball future until the state tournament is over.

"He doesn't even have any idea which six schools he'll visit," Murray said. "The line (of college recruiters) has been so long that at times it frustrated him. He's ruled out some colleges, but I'm sure he's not leaning to anyone right now."

York, Gill earn honors

Salsbury, N.C. — Randy York, prep sports editor for the Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star, and Don Gill, sports director for Lincoln's KLIN, have been named 1976 Nebraska Sportswriter and Sportscaster of the Year, respectively.

The announcement was made by the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Assn., headquartered here. The two, elected by a vote of their peers, will be honored at the group's annual convention here April 3-5.

York, whose ratings also appear in the North Platte Telegraph and the Scotts Bluff Star-Herald, has won the award the past three years. Gill, sports director for the Nebraska Football Network, has earned the honor three times in the past four years.

Assistant Mahlman boosts Jeff's hopes

By Dean Terrell
Southeast Nebraska Bureau

Fairbury — "Charlie's Angels," they're called in the state tourney window displays around town. A year or so back they were Don's li'l demons.

For all of 14 years, Don Mahlman has been the man behind Fairbury's high-flying basketball program. The assistant has maintained a low profile through the regimes of four head coaches.

But in a town that's taking its fourth team to the state in eight years, Fairbury fandom seems in full agreement with top mentor Charlie (Chuck) Moore: "A guy just couldn't find a better assistant than Don."

Mahlman actually has the combined assignment of varsity assistant, and reserve coach as well as being junior high counselor and math teacher. An overall reserve record of 145-44, including three undefeated seasons in the past six, adds to his credentials.

"Chuck and I happened to reach Fairbury milestones the same night this year," said Mahlman, 40. "Our games against Auburn brought his 100th win and my 100th since we've been together. We celebrated with more basketball, taking our wives up to watch the Huskers."

Moore, in his eighth season of leading the Jeffs, lays one of the state's best career records on the line against Ord Thursday afternoon. He has amassed a 150-27 showing since moving here from Beatrice. That includes Class B titles in 1971 and 1973.

Though some of the current Jeffs have

played at state before, the coaching duo figure their own previous trips should be beneficial. And at least one of the regulars — Moore's sharpshooter son, Rick — has seen "each and every game that his dad has."

Sporting a 12-point average from his guard position, Rick is four behind Mike Fallow for the team's top. The other three starters are also double-digiters at 10. Mike Haskell, Larry Morehead and Jim Rice. Tom Oswald stands at eight.

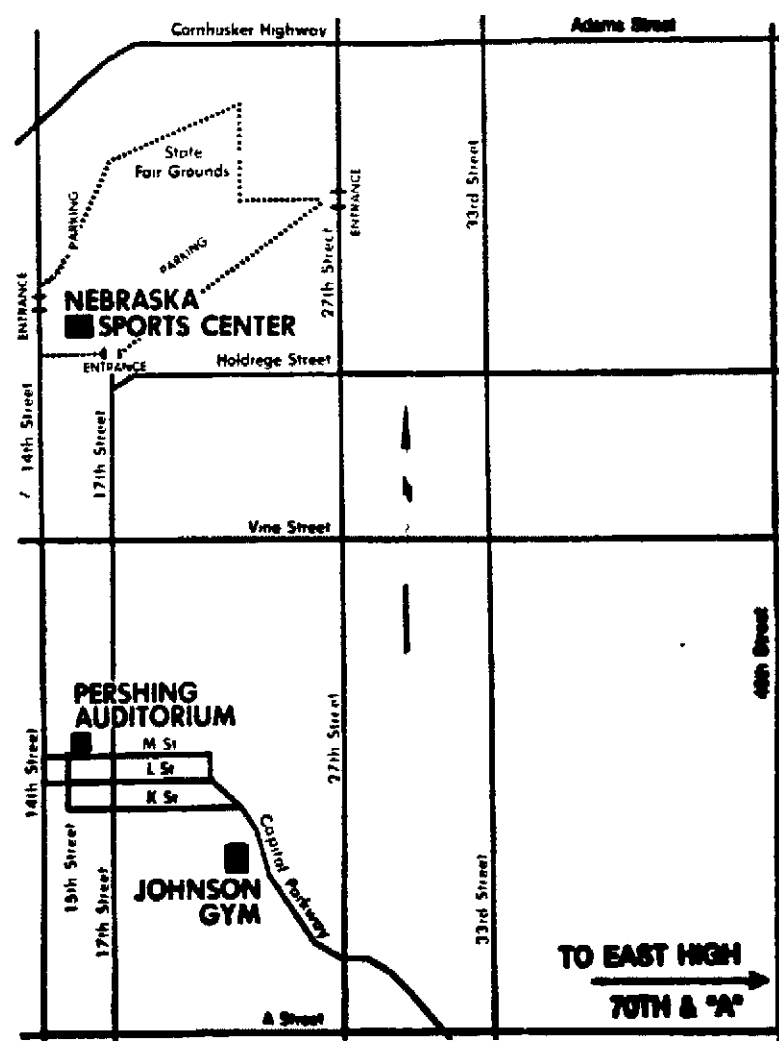
Of this year's cagers, 6-6 junior Fallow is the only player to bypass Mahlman's reserve tutelage enroute to the varsity. Only a handful of previous standouts, among them Nebraska stalwart Bob Siegel, have missed reserve seasoning.

"For our reserves there is little individualism, just team, team, team all the way," said Mahlman. "I really play them, usually by five-man units and alternating quarters, so every kid gets a chance to develop."

Though downplaying his own role, Mahlman admits special satisfaction in the progress of Haskell, Morehead, Paul Judd and Ron Klass. Improvement also is evident this year alone in substitutes Dave Beutley, Terry Pingel, Lee Stegemann and Darrell Elke.

Seventeen years in the Fairbury system, Mahlman was approached several years ago on the possibility of taking over the varsity. No way.

"There are plenty of thrills in my job as it is, just teaching these kids and watching them grow," said the personable Crawford native.



Sites for the 1977 Boys State tournament.

York picks Grand Island, Seward, Grant, Hildreth

By Randy York
Prep Sports Editor

Logic has been the prep writer's downfall long enough. It's time to join the gals in the library. They always used the office pool with rather absurd state tournament picks.

Warning the pool, it has been discovered, requires going against the grain.

With that in mind, it is time to announce that Seward and Grant are going to win the Classes B and C state championships this weekend.

While most are trying to figure who will win between Omaha Ryan and Lexington in a projected power-packed Class A semifinal, Seward looks primed for an ambush in the finals.

Lex may have the best shooters and Ryan may have the best defense, but Seward plays the best defense and that's ultra-important in state tournament competition.

competition.

In Class C, Grant may rank as low as seventh or eighth on many office pool sheets. Logic would tell you either Tekamah-Herman or Hordville would be the state champion.

So to enhance the absurdity, the prep writer says neither will reach the finals. Instead, Grant and Omaha Holy Name are in the forefront.

One, however, must maintain some sanity. So look for Grand Island to win Class A and Hildreth to win Class D, even though everyone and his sister are making those choices.

Here's the way a prep writer sees this week:
Class A — Grand Island over Omaha Central in one semifinal and Omaha North over Papillion in the other with the Islanders the overall selection.

Class B — Seward over Fairbury in one semifinal and Lexington to upset Ryan in

the other semifinal with Seward the title choice.

Class C — Grant over Tekamah-Herman in one semifinal and Holy Name over Hordville in the other with Grant the projected champion.

Class D — Hildreth over Adams in one semifinal and Cambridge over Dalton in the other. Hildreth will have a tougher time defeating Adams in the semis than beating Cambridge in the finals.

Here's how the first round matchups look:

Class A
at NU Sports Center
Hastings (12-7) vs. Papillion (16-4), noon — The Tigers lost five of their last eight regular season games before surviving the western most district. Papillion isn't tall, but the Hornets are solid. Papilio the choice.

Omaha North (18-1) vs. Omaha Burke (14-6), 2 p.m. — When North is on, the Vikings are as good as unbeatable. They played Omaha, 56-39, on Feb. 10. It won't be over the rematch this time.

Lincoln High (11-10) vs. Grand Island (20-1),

2 p.m. — Both teams' motivation cuts are high. The Links, absent from the tourney for 14 years, are eager to show how deceiving records can be. But the Islanders, 29 years without a state championship, are equally eager to give Coach Bill Kripp an appropriate retirement present — his first state title.

Class B
at Pershing Auditorium
Greeley (15-5) vs. Seward (19-2), noon — Seward might have a tendency to look best in its opening-round assignment to a Fairbury semifinal. That would be a mistake. First things first is a sound state tourney philosophy.

Ord (17-5) vs. Fairbury (19-3), 2 p.m. — The Jeffs could suffer from the same problem as Seward. They're still trying to average a 72-59 road loss to the Bluejays Feb. 12. Who was it that said first things first?

Omaha Ryan (17-9) vs. Kimball (10-4), 2 p.m. — Kimball isn't exactly a surprise weak competition, beating Sidney and Gering in district. But that competition does not measure up to

the Creighton Prep and Benson Ryan has beaten.

West Point CC (12-10) vs. Lexington (20-1), 9 p.m. — The Minutemen proved they were human, needing an overtime against Imperial in district final. It should eliminate any superiority complex.

Class C
at Lincoln High
Tekamah-Herman (19-4) vs. Norfolk Catholic (10-5), noon — The pressure is on Tekamah. Not only has the school's football and wrestling teams won state championships this school year. The Tigers also have never qualified for the state tournament.

Grant (10-5) vs. Pleasanton (17-3), 2 p.m. — Pleasanton was the Sunday Journal and Star's preseason No. 1-rated team in Class C. The Bulldogs are proven winners. But Grant isn't exactly a team coming in from the cold.

Hordville (22-2) vs. Centennial (15-5), 7 p.m. — With 26 wins in 28 post-season games, the last five years, who would dare tell Hordville it isn't going to win the state championship? At least wait until the semifinals before breaking the news.

Omaha Holy Name (19-4) vs. Sandy Creek (14-1), 9 p.m. — Playing in the Centennial Conference, Holy Name is no stranger to state

competition. The school with one of Nebraska's richest basketball traditions is seen advancing all the way to the finals.

Class D
at Beat High
Hildreth (27-1) vs. Hordville (10-1), noon — Hordville rode the fame of an early January win over Class C Hordville a great distance in the ratings. Hildreth's consistency is much more impressive.

Adams (10-2) vs. Polk (10-4), 2 p.m. — Polk maintained a month ago it would stick Hampton if the two played a third game. The Calls were prophetic, but it will take more than that to whip Adams, a state tourney fixture 7 of the last 10 years.

Maxwell (20-3) vs. Cambridge (19-2), 9 p.m. — Larry Gilson deserves a new car for giving Maxwell its first berth ever in the state tournament. Cambridge, however, is seen the opening-round winner.

Dalton (19-0) vs. Clearwater (10-0), 9 p.m. — Dalton has a double dose of momentum. First, the Tigers are the only undefeated team left of 20. Having the best win last December. Secondly, no western Nebraska has not won a Class D state championship since Mitchell beat Dalton in 1971.