

Gymnasts regain 'sense of pizzazz' in quadrangular

By Patty Pryor

Nebraska Coach Francis Allen says his gymnasts have regained their sense of "pizzazz". Judging from their performance Saturday night, he's right.

Bouncing back from last week's loss, the first at home since 1978, the Huskers outscored the Penn State Nittany Lions 278.85 to 275.15. Ohio State placed third with 274.75 and Louisiana State was fourth with 270.30.

"We thought we'd lost some of that pizzazz, but the formula's working again," Allen said. "They've got a renewed faith in themselves; they performed like national champions again tonight."

In addition to the team title, Nebraska placed two all-arounders in the top three. Senior Jim Mikus won with a 57.65 and sophomore Wes Suter was second with a 57.30, the first time in his career he's scored more than 57. After dipping to a 9.25 in a shaky pommel horse routine, Suter led the competition on high bar with a 9.8.

Penn State's Terry Bartlett placed third at 57.10 and the Huskers' final all-arounder, sophomore Chris Riegel, came in fourth with a 56.85.

Injuries affected outcome

Penn State Coach Karl Schier, while pleased with Bartlett's performance, said the team's overall scoring was hampered by injuries.

"We did not have our best lineup here tonight," he said. "Mario Gonzalez still has his finger in a splint, and he's normally a 2 to 3 point input for us. And just as we started the meet tonight, Ken Viscardi hurt his ankle on warmups. He's probably our second best on both floor and vault."

The Nittany Lions had additional problems on the high bar, as Spider Maxwell missed a release and fell, scoring an 8.8.

Mikus placed in the top three in every event, never scoring below a 9.5. Just under his career best 57.70, he competed Saturday with a bad cold.

"I was real pleased with my score, considering I'm under the weather," he said. "I had a pretty high fever yesterday and I was a little tired, but as soon as the meet started, everything seemed to come back."

Mikus said last week's loss helped fire up the team and prompted them to work a little harder.

"When you've won as many times as we have, you think you're always going to win," he said. "But you can't take other teams for granted. They coached us hard this week and it produced results."

UCLA Invitational upcoming

Both Mikus and Allen were thinking ahead to next weekend's UCLA Invitational.

"UCLA has hit 280 this season, and we haven't," Allen said. "But we're going to be ready, more so than I thought."

"We hope to go 280 next week," Mikus added, "but you can't control what UCLA does."

Swimmers...

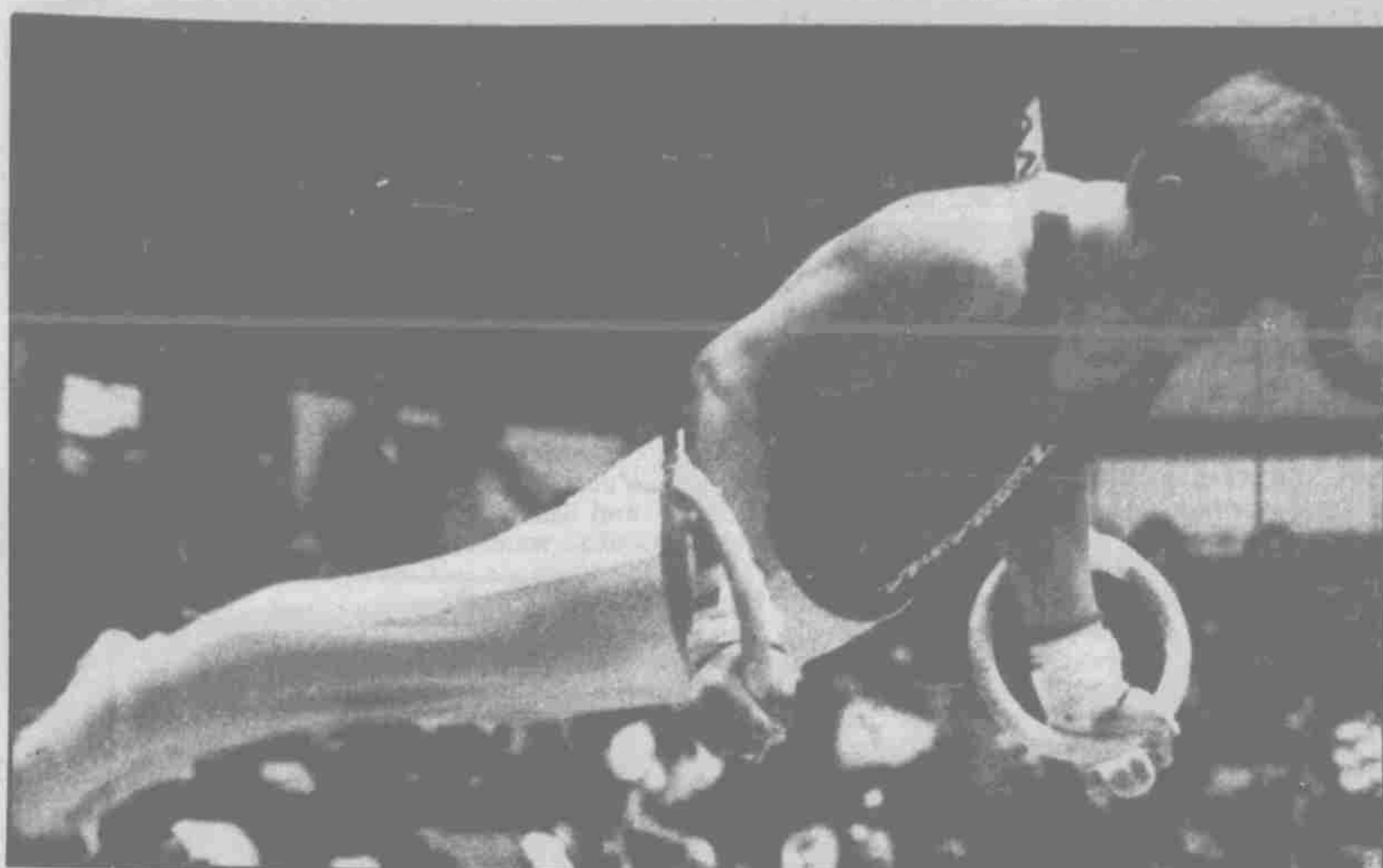
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A month ago, Huppert said he was sure the Oklahoma dual would have been a blowout. But because of improvement that he thought the Oklahoma team had made, he said before the meet that he expected it to be close.

Nebraska men finished first in all 13 events to blast Sooner swimmers right out of the water 97-16 in their dual in Norman Saturday.

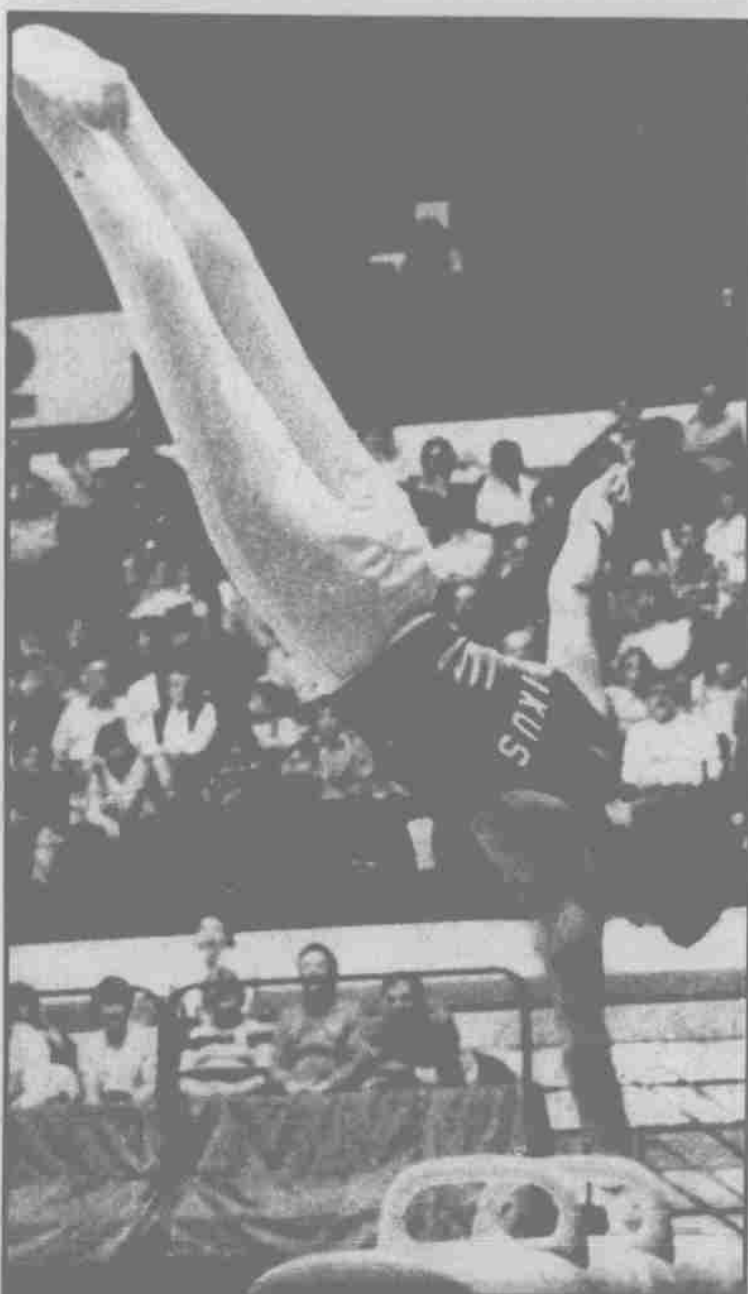
The Huskers had three double winners. David Hecker won the 100 backstroke and 200 freestyle events, Mike Edmondson took first in the 50 freestyle and 100 butterfly. Reynaldo Castro won both diving events.

The UNL men host Kansas Saturday. The women will face Wyoming and UNO at a dual meet here also on Saturday.



Dave Trouba/Daily Nebraskan

Chris Riegel performs on the rings at Saturday's gymnastics meet. Riegel finished fourth in the all-around standings.



Dave Trouba/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Jim Mikus performs a routine on the pommel horse during Saturday's quadrangular at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Mikus won the all-around championship.

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