

Gymnasts Cap Good Season By Copping All-College Crown

By BOB RAY
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For a man who "only coaches so I can have something to do between five and

six each night," gymnastics coach Jake Geier certainly has a lot to show for it: This year was the eighth time his team has won the All-College Championships in Geier's seventeen seasons at Nebraska. The Husker gymnasts had an 8-2 record for the regular

season. Losing duals for the first time in four seasons, Coach Geier's crew still showed good form in executing difficult stunts against some of the toughest competition in the country.

In the All-College Championship meet the team, unruffled by Dennis Albers' injury, did better than their best and came from behind to clip nemesis Denver to win the meet. They did it by exhibiting the same perfect form that had done them credit in other meets.

Gene Hart, who specializes in the side horse, (entered in eight events this season, he won seven,) is a master at making his pet apparatus look obedient.

Louis Burkel does well on all apparatus, but wins consistently on the high-bar, parallel bars, and still rings with gumchewing nonchalance.

Another boy who makes the difficult look easy is Chuck Williams in free exercise and tumbling.

The amazing thing about Coach Geier's team is not that it has so many two and three year lettermen who excel on a couple of apparatus each, but that he has a sophomore who can win against all competition on all apparatus.

In his first year on the varsity team, all-around competitor Albers, of Hastings, paced the Nebraskans in every meet to claim top individual title with 294.5 regular season points. He amassed more points than any other competitor at the Boulder Invitational Meet, despite an injury, to become undisputed All-College Champion.

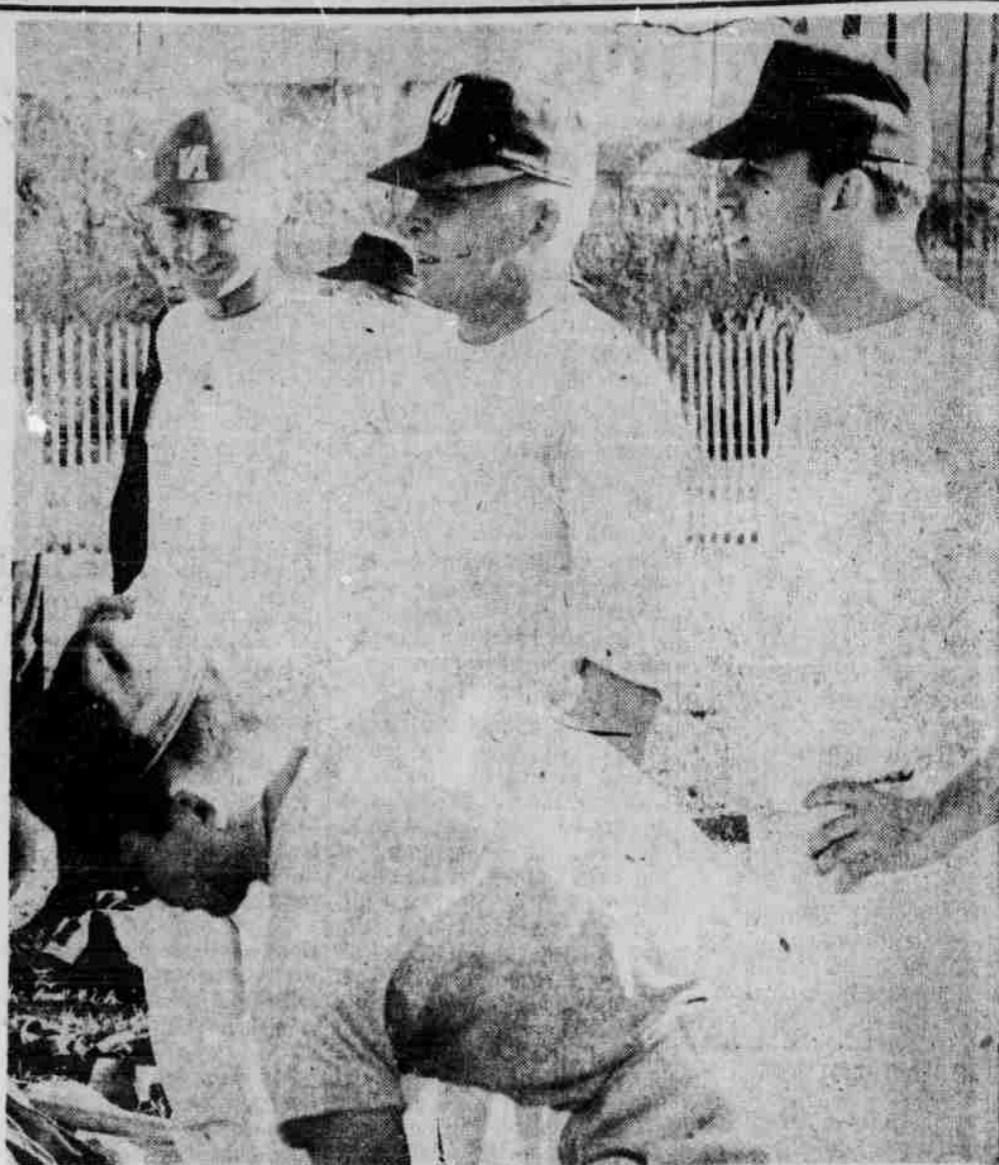
★ ★ ★ Albers Will Go

Gymnastics coach Jake Geier announced that in spite of his back injury, Dennis Albers will participate in the NCAA Gymnastic Meet at Albuquerque, New Mexico, this weekend.

All-around performer Albers hurt his back during the high bar event at the All-College Championships meet. Coach Geier will also take Gene Hart to New Mexico.

McCoy, Burke Elected Captains

Dick McCoy and Louis Burkel were elected co-captains of the gymnastics team for next season by unanimous vote of the gymnasts.



THE ONLOOKERS—Husker baseballers Dick Becher and Don Purcell give the eagle eye to batting practice while Rex Swett watches Bill Redmond stoop to pick up a bat in baseball workouts. (See picture below.)

NU Diamond Men View Batting Practice



BONISTALL HURLS—Pitcher Ernie Bonistall pitches batting practice to an unidentified hitter in Tuesday night's NU diamond practice. The catcher is Dave Myers.

Coach Ready; Shortstop Out

Nebraska baseball coach Tony Sharpe has obtained the doctor's okay to make the trip with the Huskers down to Tulsa this weekend.

Along with the good news of Coach Sharpe being in top form came the word that shortstop Rex Swett is out for this series with a pulled muscle in his throwing arm. Swett is not slated to make the trip, according to Sharpe.

The Huskers will open up with Keith Sieck this weekend in the first game Friday with any relief work coming from Ernie Bonistall. Ed Johnson will pitch the first end of a double header Saturday and Ron Havekost will make his initial debut in the final game. Tom Ernst is slated for relief duty Saturday.

Ron Douglas or John Morris will get the call at shortstop for the injured Swett this weekend. The extent of Swett's injury, which occurred in practice Wednesday, is unknown but Sharpe hopes Rex will round into shape in order to be ready for the Big Eight opener next weekend with Kansas on the Husker diamond.

★ ★ ★ ALL-COLLEGE CHAMPS ★ ★ ★



NEBRASKA GYMNASTS—From left to right (back) Louis Burkel, Steve Swihart, Tom Sitzman, Gene Hart, (front) Chuck Williams, Tom Nystrom, Bob Kuhn, and Dick McCoy, pose with their All-College Championships trophy. (Photo by Bob Ray.)

The Old Pro

Spring fever has hit the campus and with the warm weather and sunshine, the old cry, "Play Ball," is once again heard in the Big Eight baseball campaign. With the current Husker squad as good as it can possibly be, both with the material present and the spirit, the Old Pro will go out on a limb and say the Huskers win their first baseball title in a decade.

The Husker pitching staff is something to marvel at. Led by sophomore Keith Sieck, the moundmen are the best in recent Husker history. Keith had a very impressive 1.26 E.R.A. in the Nebraska Independent League last summer and with an improving curve ball, should easily be the Huskers' best chucker since the days of Dwight Siebler.

Sieck is an unusual pitcher in that it takes him a long time to warm up and usually he starts slow and finishes fast. He struck out 26 in one game last summer against the league winners, North Platte, in posting an eleven inning 3-2 victory. Sieck relies mainly on the fast ball and has one major weakness, changeups. If Keith can come through in the close games with the tough teams in the league, the Huskers should be in Omaha for the N.C.C.A. playoffs in June.

The other chucker that could really have a year is Ed Johnson. Ed posted a 1.28 E.R.A. average in the fast N.I.L. last season and did a very creditable job in a pitcher-laden North Platte entry. Johnson is by far the fastest chucker on the squad but he badly needs breaking stuff. He could form a 1-2 punch with Sieck if his curve and changeup come around. Plagued by injuries last year, Ed came on fast in August in summer league play. Ed's mental attitude may tell the tale.

Bonistall Boosts Experience Ernie Bonistall has a great deal of experience in the New York State League and is one of the proven Husker pitchers back from last year. Ernie has a lot of breaking stuff and control but lacks blazing speed. The change from a Johnson or a Sieck to a Bonistall will confuse hitters a great deal and Ernie may become a big winner on the tag end of double headers.

Ron Havekost, one of the star pitching sensations in northeast Nebraska, also is a proven Husker chucker. Also lacking blazing speed, his breaking stuff is something to behold. If the Huskers choose to put Ron in the bullpen, he could become the ace reliever in the league. Havekost also should have a big year this season and his ability to hold on to tight leads in the close ones also could be a big difference in the Big Eight title race.

Tom Ernst, another Husker chucker, has a great deal of speed and staying power but he is too valuable to the squad as a hitter to be wasted in this capacity. If Ernst is called on to pitch however, he could be a big winner. Ernst pitched and hit well in the N.I.L. and was selected as an outfield choice on the All-N.I.L. All-Star team.

George Landgren, an unproven pitcher in the Big Eight, will probably be the Huskers' spot pitcher this season. Landgren is going to have a tough time this season in cracking the squad with so much talent along the pitching lines, but he should pick up valuable experience for the seasons to come.

Purcell Big Help Don Purcell, the present choice for the catching spot, is definitely a big asset to this season's squad. Don has an extremely strong arm and is an experienced man with the pud. Purcell's bat may give the Husker's much needed power but he won't prove to be a big average hitter.

Dick Becher, also an N.I.L. graduate, could be the other long ball hitter the Huskers' need to win the big ones. Becher is an adequate fielder although he is prone to commit errors occasionally. Another power hitter, his average wouldn't be in the top five, but in R.B.I.'s he could be among the leaders.

Ernst will have to take up the rest of the slack as a power hitter. Ernie belted ten home runs last year in the N.I.L. and gets on base when a runner is needed. Ernst has a tremendous arm for the outfield and more than adequate speed for the right field position.

Steve Smith, another N.I.L. graduate, shows both some power and speed to aid the Husker cause. Smith could again lead the Huskers in batting average since he has tremendous wrists and timing. In the home run department, he'll pick up an occasional blast, but is more of an extra base hitter in the doubles and triples category. His speed in the outfield is exceptional and his arm is almost as strong as Ernst's.

Schindel in Center Don Schindel also hit well last year and rounds out the Husker starting outfield. Playing center field, Don has the speed necessary for the position. Don could have a good season with the bat if the ball drops in for him but don't look for any power hitting here.

Also on the Husker bench in the line of fly catchers are Dave McClatchey and Pat Salerno. Dave has power and, if needed, can produce the long ball. Salerno is more of a line drive hitter and could aid the outfielders if someone lets down with the bat or fielding. McClatchey also had a fine season as a

hitter last summer with Grant, banging a .340 average for the season.

The Huskers big weakness this season will be the infield. With Rex Swett currently out of the lineup due to a pulled back muscle, the burden of the shortstop duties falls on Denny Puelz. Puelz is a good infielder but still isn't proven in competition. His hitting will have to improve in order for the Huskers to score a lot. Ron Douglas is the other possible replacement and his strong forte is hitting. His major problem is just the opposite of Denny's, he isn't a great fielder. They may be able to get together and aid the Huskers with their specialized talents.

At second base will be Bill Redmond, slick fielding but only average sticker. Bill is a good double play man but will have to pick up a better average than in the past in order to be great. Some say Redmond has the quickest hands in Husker baseball history. Bill's fielding may give the Huskers a tight defense and stopper up the hole over the pitcher's mound, a favorite target last season for opposing hitters.

The third base situation will be handled by Dale Anderson. Dale is a good fielder but has trouble making the bunt play easily. His batting average could be good, depending on what type of start he gets this year. Anderson will have to be the leader on the infield and show aggressive play in order to really put the Huskers in contention this season.

Myers Adds Depth The backup catcher will be Dave Myers, a starter on last year's Husker team. Dave can relieve Purcell in double headers and also come in as a pinch hitter. Dave has trouble making the play at second but with last year's experience, could prove very valuable to the team.

The infield will have John Morris, Bruce Pearson, and Dave May backing up the starters. All have not been proven in Big Eight competition and will be basically picking up experience this year.

Overall, the Huskers have a strong pitching staff, are strong in the outfield, and are above average in the catching department. The only weakness that is evident is the hitting and fielding in the infield. Defensively, they are about average; offensively, they have adequate power and enough hitters to pull them through with their pitching staff holding up. During the season, they'll play a lot of one run games but should hold up under the pressure. The two key series are with Oklahoma in three weeks and Oklahoma State the first weekend in May, both on the road. If they win these two series, they will easily win the Big Eight crown.

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