

husker galaxy

Confident Gerard expecting victory

By Jim Hunt

Husker all-around gymnast Larry Gerard will have several things going for him at the NCAA Championships in Philadelphia this weekend, and he said one of those things is confidence.

"Confidence is important to have in a meet like this," Gerard said.

"I have about the same outlook for this meet as I did for the Big 8 (Conference) meet," he said. "I'll just try to hit all my routines. I should be able to hit all of them, and if I do, I should do well. I'm going into the meet looking to win."

Husker gymnastics coach Francis Allen said Gerard,

this week's athlete of the week, has a good chance to win in the national meet, but one man he has to beat is senior teammate Gene Mackie. Gerard and Mackie were the top two finishers in the all-around competition at last weekend's Big 8 meet.

Gerard tallied 105.45 points in the all-around at the Boulder, Colo., meet, which UNL won for the first time in 12 years. He was the only individual winner for the Huskers, placing first in the high bar with a score of 18.875. He also finished third in still rings, fifth in vaulting and sixth in parallel bars.

Besides Gerard and Mackie, Allen named Tom Beach of the University of California-Berkeley, Kurt Thomas and

Doug Griffin of Indiana State University, Gene Walin of Pennsylvania State University, Yoshia Tomita of Long Beach State University and Peter Kormman of Southern Connecticut as the favorites in the all-around. Mackie finished fourth in the event in last year's NCAA meet.

Only two mistakes

Gerard said he was pleased with his performance in the Big 8 meet. He said he made only two mistakes—one each on the parallel bars and the pommel horse.

Allen said the sophomore from Lincoln will be looked at more favorably by the judges, since he won the Midwest Open in Chicago earlier in the season.

"The judges are going to look at us and say that we have great individuals and a great team, and that is going to help us," Allen said.

He added that Arthur Gander, a member of the Federation of International Gymnastics and the head judge for the Summer Olympics in Montreal, called Gerard one of the most impressive young gymnasts from any country. Allen said that was "quite a compliment" because Gander is what he called the most influential gymnastics person in the world.

Fit for Olympics

Gerard also received a letter Monday to fit him for Olympic uniforms if he makes the team at an Olympic trial camp later this spring.

"Last year I didn't think I had a chance of making the Olympic team," Gerard said. "I was aiming more for the 1980 Olympics, but it just all fit together this year."

"I've seen a definite amount of improvement in all areas since I got out of high school, especially in the side horse," he said.

Gerard said he thinks he has a good chance of taking individual titles in the high bar and the still rings at the national meet.

Other athlete-of-the-week nominees were baseball pitcher Kirk Eymann, junior from Papillion, basketball guard Darcy Williamson, freshman from Arapahoe, trackster Pam Koontz, freshman from Lincoln, swimmer Bryan Moss, sophomore from Omaha, and softball third baseman Sue Hansen, senior from Omaha.

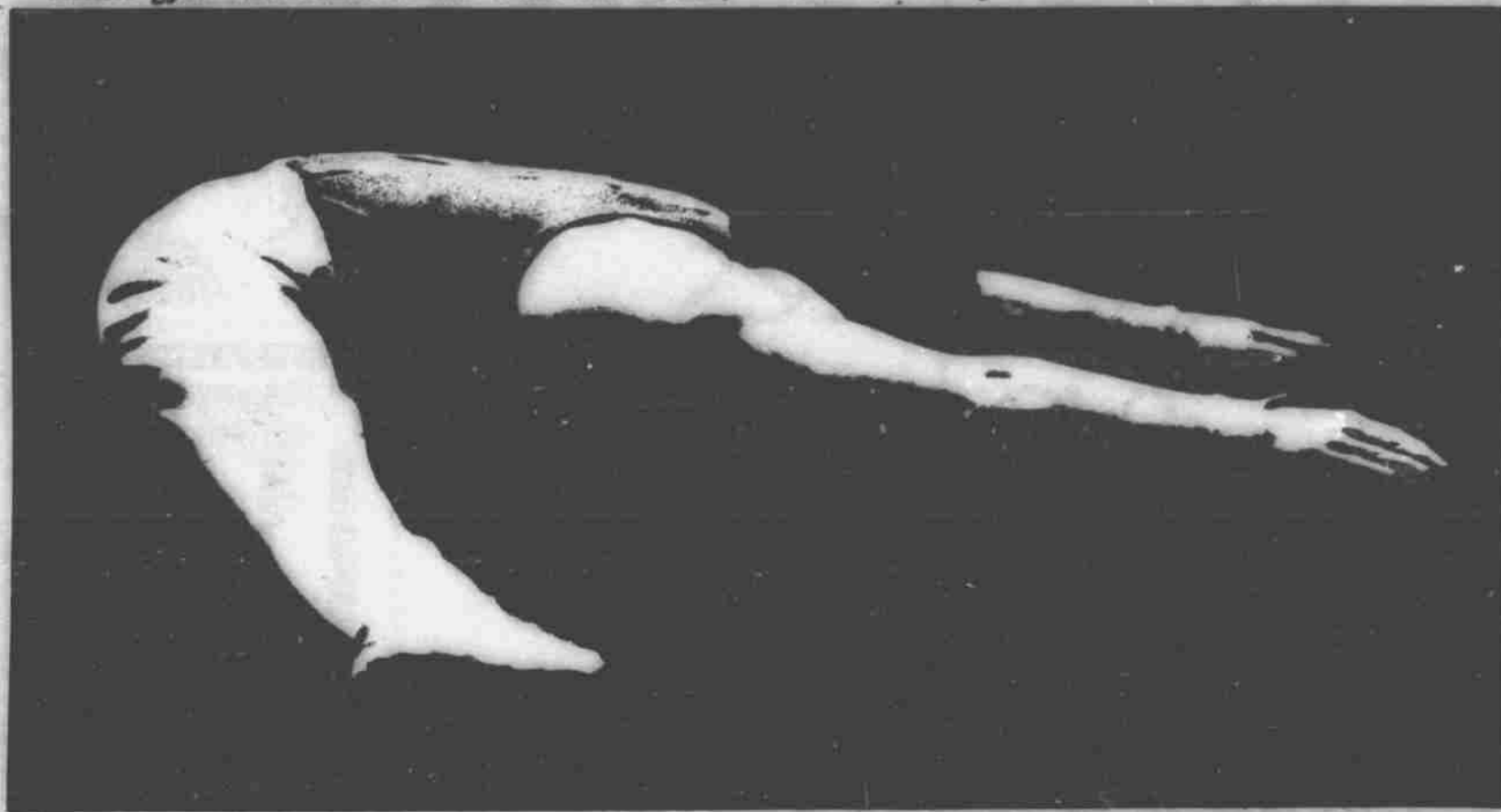


Photo courtesy of Scott Steen

Sophomore gymnast Larry Gerard competing in the floor exercise at last week's Big 8 Conference meet.

nebraskan sports

Top-notch tennis team to test talents

By Scott Jones

UNL's women's tennis team, which coach Gail Whitaker called her best team ever, will play at Concordia Teachers College at Seward today and William Jewell College and Stephen's College Saturday at Liberty, Mo.

Whitaker, in her fourth year at UNL, said her teams are "getting stronger every year, there's no question about it."

"Every year we have to cut somebody who was on the team the year before."

Whitaker will get no argument for her "best ever" claim from Doane College. UNL, which was 5-3 in dual meets last year, shut out Doane, 9-0, in its season opener March 18, even though Kathy Hawkins, last year's No. 1 player, didn't compete.

Hawkins was a starting guard on the Husker women's basketball team and began practicing with the team Monday.

Whitaker said Hawkins, a junior, and sophomore Joyce McVicker should be UNL's top two players with sophomore Vickie Maseman filling the No. 3 singles position.

"Hawkins and McVicker have both been state cham-

pions and have had a lot of tournament experience," Whitaker said. "They're head and shoulders above everybody else."

Senior Helen Glover will be the team's No. 4 singles player, Whitaker said, with three players—senior Barb Scribner, junior Sue Rapp and sophomore Meg Shaneyfelt—still competing for the final two singles positions.

At Doane, freshman Julie Porter won her singles match and sophomore Chris Marcum joined freshman Sharon Rase for a doubles win. Whitaker said the trio might see action against weaker opponents.

UNL is "hoping to do well again" against Concordia today, she said, but could have a tougher time in the triangular Saturday.

UNL beat William Jewell two years ago but lost last year's dual match.

"We're expecting them to be super," Whitaker said. "It was close last year, and with McVicker back this year, it will be a close match."

McVicker, whose brother Mark was an all-state basketball player at Hastings this year, sat out two years before rejoining the team again this year, Whitaker said.

one at a time | Baseball 'slaves' reluctant to refuse \$20,000 chains

By Jim Zalewski

Professional baseball spring training games have begun, but this does not mean the players-owners controversy over the reserve clause has been settled. Far from it. Commissioner Bowie Kuhn ordered the camps opened to players so season opening games in April wouldn't be delayed.

Some say owners coerced Kuhn into making the order. Baseball already is losing ground to football in national popularity. The management needed those exhibition game results and photos to send to snow-packed northern cities and fan the flames of interest that always die over the winter. They could ill afford to further alienate a dwindling corps of fan support.

At the heart of the issue is the reserve clause, which binds a player for life to the team that signs him to a contract, unless traded. A recent court ruling declared Andy Messersmith and Dave McNally free agents since they played a year without signing contracts, in effect voiding the reserve clause. The owners are up in arms, claiming the decision will destroy baseball.

They're not dumb

But baseball team owners are not dumb. Apparently they have banded together and secretly agreed not to offer Fort Knox to Messersmith for his signature. It is rare for owners to remark they can't afford 20 wins a year from one of the game's premier hurlers. Someone eventually will sign Messersmith, but you can bet it won't be for what he originally was asking. As for McNally, not too many teams are taking a stab at a guy who once hiccupped for 39 consecutive days.

The owners are making offers, some foolish, some very

viable. Charlie Finley, Oakland Athletics owner and one of the game's innovators, produced an interesting suggestion. Let everyone be eligible to jump teams once, but after that a player is bound to his team for life. Sounds feasible to me.

But the players don't want any part of it. They want freedom from the "oppressive" reserve clause to end their "slave status." Who are they trying to fool? Any guy making \$20,000 a year or better playing baseball is far from what most Americans would consider a slave.

Joe Morgan of the Cincinnati Reds recently signed for \$200,000 a year. That doesn't include commercial endorsements, speaking engagements or other subsidiary income. Shake off those heavy chains they placed on you, Joe.

Saturation point

Everything has a saturation point, including contract wars. It looks like owners have decided not to get into a bidding game over free agents who won't play by their rules. And as salaries escalate, the fans suffer because they invariably end up paying for their heroes' five Cadillacs.

I personally don't back the players all the way this time. It seems each professional sport has a strike threat every three or four years; the end result being increased salaries. Players are overpaid now and it must stop somewhere.

As George Blanda put it, you know what is in a contract when you sign it. If you don't like it, don't sign. But players do, because they know it is a great way to earn a living. Besides that, too many other potential slaves out there in society would like to make 20 grand a year playing baseball.

sports shorts

Student football tickets for the 1976 season are on sale through Friday at the South Stadium ticket office. The ticket office is open from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 4 p.m.

The \$20 season ticket includes admission to six home games next fall. Only full-time students may buy tickets this spring. Seat location will be determined through a lottery.

Persons wishing to sit as a group should send a representative with student identification cards and \$20 for each person in the block.

Three Husker coaches reportedly are under consideration for head coaching positions at other universities. Head basketball coach Joe Cipriano is reportedly one of six candidates remaining for the head job at Michigan State University. Football defensive coordinator Monte Kiffin has expressed interest in the head football job at the same school. Basketball assistant Lonnie Porter is among 123 applicants for the vacant University of Colorado head job.

Entries for several intramural events are due this week at the Recreation Office, 1740 Vine St. Horseshoe doubles entries are due at 5 p.m. today. In tennis doubles, co-recreational entries are due at 5 p.m. today with women's entries due at 5 p.m. Thursday. Scotch foursome golf doubles entries are due 5 p.m. Friday. For more information, call Gale Wiedow, 472-3467.