

Senior gymnasts aiming for 'ultimate' goal—Big 8 title

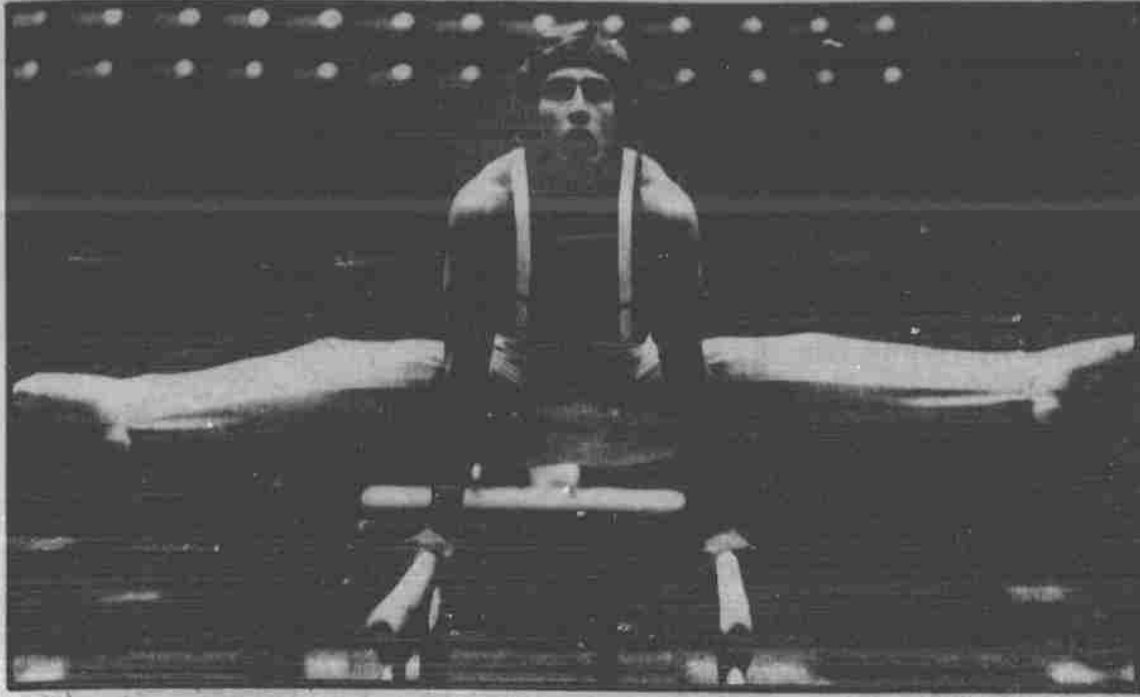


Photo by Ted Kirk

Husker Duane West, performing on the parallel bars, is one of three seniors on the UNL gymnastics team.

By Jim Kay

Three seniors will finish four years of gymnastics competition at UNL March 18 and 19 at the Big 8 Conference Gymnastics Championship in Lawrence, Kan.

Lincolnit Duane West and Gary Jeurink and Omahan Kurt Mackie all are three-year lettermen under gymnastics coach Francis Allen.

All three expressed optimism about the Huskers' chances of defending the Big 8 crown, and West, an all-around performer, said the chances are good.

"I think that the Big 8 is the toughest conference in the country in gymnastics and we are potentially the best team in the conference," West said. "My feeling is that the team that wins the Big 8 will win the national title as well."

West said he has personal goals of finishing high in the floor exercise and high bar events in the Big 8 meet.

"I'd like to win the floor exercises. I finished second last year and I'm shooting for first this year. There are three or four guys I'll have to beat, but I've beaten them before so I know I'm capable," he said.

Still rings specialist Mackie also said he has a few personal goals left this season.

Team victory important

"I'd really like to win rings this year, but a team victory would be just as important to me. We've worked the whole year for Big 8 and nationals."

Mackie said the 1976 Big 8 championship for UNL was his biggest thrill in gymnastics.

"We work to a peak for the Big 8 meet," he said, "and this long layoff between meets is helping us."

Mackie is the only senior among the three giving up gymnastics after graduation.

"I'm hanging it up. I'm going on to dental school, hopefully. After eight years, I'll probably miss it."

Jeurink, whose previous best finishes have been a first in high bar and a second in vault at the pre-Big 8 meet, said he just wants "to do my part for the team."

"We've got the potential to go one-two-three on the high bar," Jeurink said. "With everyone helping everybody else, we've got a good chance to win."

"This is the toughest conference in the nation. We've had no easy meets this year. No sluff meets at all except maybe Kansas."

College coach

He would like to stay in gymnastics as a coach on the college level if the opportunity opens, Jeurink said.

Allen said a great asset is each gymnast's ability to score.

"When you get down to brass tacks in clutch situations, I had no worries about these guys," Allen said. "They show real leadership in a gymnastics sense. They are going to be hard to replace."

West, a physical education major, said he would compete unattached for two more years after graduation.

"I'll compete at the AAU nationals in June," he said. "When you go four years on this level it's kind of hard to quit."

He added that the team is looking forward to defending its Big 8 championship title against Iowa State University and the University of Oklahoma.

"Our practices really started picking up after Christmas," West said. "We worked on things we really needed to work on."

"Iowa State may have beaten us a couple of times during the season but we'll be ready at the Big 8 meet. We'll just get our heads together and go after it. Winning the Big 8 is the ultimate."

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crossword puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 English stables
 - 5 Thwacked
 - 9 Downcast
 - 13 Pour (intensify)
 - 14 P.D.Q.
 - 15 Lanyard
 - 16 Minor taboo
 - 17 City of France
 - 18 Numerical prefix
 - 19 Functioning
 - 22 Old German coin
 - 23 "Present!" in Soho
 - 24 Calendar abbr.
 - 27 Calendar abbr.
 - 28 Cartilage
 - 32 Best-man's prop
 - 34 Walter — Mare
 - 36 Ink squirter
 - 37 Pizarro's victims
 - 39 Electrical unit
 - 40 Safaris
 - 41 Eligible voter
 - 42 Gather no moss

- 44 Colleen's land
 - 45 Church rite
 - 47 Times of day: abbr.
 - 49 Orch. offering
 - 50 "O Sole —"
 - 51 Family member
 - 53 Tidy
 - 60 Accompanying
 - 61 Preserved in a way
 - 62 Like bottoms of skis
 - 63 Land unit
 - 64 German article
 - 65 Nastase
 - 66 Auto mishap
 - 67 Scan
 - 68 A.B.A. team
- DOWN**
- 1 Short skirt
 - 2 Harrow's rival
 - 3 Anna May —
 - 4 High-hat
 - 5 Wintergreen
 - 6 Hoopie or Boves
 - 7 Object of

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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TAXI	CAUSE	IDEA
ALPS	OUTOFORDER	
PARTNERS	ENE	
ERODE	TRUSTS	
SONS	CURS	ONA
PASSE	BORE	WAG
ILL	STRANDS	AKE
POT	RUTS	HAWED
SUN	LENS	GALA
DECENT	FORTY	
ENC	TRAPEZES	
HEALTH	FOOD	ROBS
EVIL	EARN	ENOW
WARS	STET	DEN

- worship
- 8 Impressionable
- 9 Like gargoyles
- 10 Places
- 11 Capable of
- 12 Spiteful
- 14 Daft
- 20 Bumpkin
- 21 Whisky or coffee
- 24 Scopes's ordeal
- 25 Language of India
- 26 Like some gems
- 28 Stimulated sharply
- 29 African capital
- 30 Metric measure
- 31 Ford
- 33 Bounded clumsily
- 35 Durocher
- 38 Divest
- 43 Head-table people
- 46 Nicklaus or Boros
- 48 Traffic sign
- 51 Once — time
- 52 Stu of movies
- 53 "As — saying..."
- 54 Shaving mishap
- 55 Bell town of Italy
- 56 Great Lake
- 57 Hill's counterpart
- 58 Way out
- 59 Bread and whisky

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