

sports

Cornhusker football squad tackled hard by graduation

Analysis by Rick Huls

It may seem a little early, but football was on the minds of more than 140 hopeful players at UNL as spring practice began Monday.

Head coach Tom Osborne has 13 starting players returning from last year's team that finished 9-3. But some positions may receive special attention from the coaching staff this spring.

The Huskers return only five starters from an offense that was eighth in the nation in rushing and 12th in total offense. UNL averaged more than 300 yards a game rushing last year.

Graduation hit the offensive line and fullback positions, but most of the explosive offensive backfield returns.

Senior Tom Sorley returns to head the quarterback corps, and junior I.M. Hipp returns at I-back. Senior Richard Berns, who backed-up Hipp at I-back after an early season injury, returns to add depth.

Much talk has been centered around Hipp and Berns working in the same backfield. Osborne and his offensive coaches have said that UNL will experiment with different formations in the backfield, including the veer formation, this spring.

The loss of UNL's top two fullbacks, Dodie Donnell and Monte Anthony, may be one of the reasons for a formation change.

Returning starters in the line are seniors Kelvin Clark at offensive tackle and Steve Lindquist at offensive guard. Junior Tim Smith returns at split end.

Defensively, UNL returns eight starters as graduation took its toll in the defensive backfield.

Returning starters will be seniors Barney Cotton and Randy Poeschl at defensive tackle, George Andrews at defensive end, Lee Kunz at linebacker, Tim Fischer at cornerback and Jim Pillen at monsterback. Juniors Kerry Weinmaster at middle guard and Tom Vering at linebacker also are back.

The Huskers will be practicing every Monday, Wednesday and Friday until the Intrasquad game April 29.



Photo by Bob Pearson

Defensive tackle Bill Barnett wraps up quarterback Tom Sorley during Monday's opening drills for spring football at UNL. 140 players showed up for the practices, which will end on April 29 with the annual Intrasquad Red-White game.

Sooners capture Big 8 gymnastics crown

By Mary Ryan

For the second year, the Oklahoma Sooners edged out the Iowa State Cyclones for the Big Eight gymnastics championship.

The Sooners won the meet in Lincoln March 24-25 with a score of 434.90. Iowa State scored 434.65 and UNL was third with 415.35. Last year the Sooners won by .65 over the Cyclones.

The Sooners were led by All-Americans Bart Conner and Mike Wilson who placed first and second in the all-around competition.

Oklahoma coach Paul Ziert said it was "amazing" that the Sooners had won the meet after trailing by 2.15 points after the first day of competition. They made all of the points up and more on the first event of the day when they outscored ISU by three points on the pommel horse.

"We had to be awesome on the pommel horse," he said. "We had to scare ISU to do well and we had to take chances and hope they would just try and hold onto their lead. That is what they did."

Conner, who qualified for the finals in all six events, said the Sooners were a good come-from-behind team. Connors qualified for the national meet in the pommel horse, parallel bars, rings and high bar after dropping out of the vaulting and floor exercise competitions.

"I scratched from those two because there were four events I really wanted to qualify for," he said. "Last year I competed in all six and did not make nationals in some I wanted to. By dropping out, I gave myself a better shot at the others."

A team must win its conference to go to the national meet. Individuals have to place in the top three places in each event or in the all-around to qualify for nationals.

The Sooners qualified for the meet in Eugene, Ore., April 6 through 8, the Cyclones qualified four men and the Huskers two. The Sooners and Cyclones each are represented in all six events and the all-around.

The Husker qualifiers were sophomore Mark Williams and junior Kirk Fridrich. Williams took first in the high bar with 18.975 points, Fridrich tied for third with 18.775 points.

Williams said, "It was a great experience to finish off as well as we did."

Fridrich said, "I am dissapointed that the whole team is not going because it is a great experience, but individually, I am happy."

Fridrich went to the nationals two years

ago when the Huskers won the conference title.

UNL coach Francis Allen said, "I would have liked to have done better. It would have been nice to have done better and been closer to ISU and OU."

Allen said he was not sure why the Husker performances fell behind in the compulsories.

Williams said, "We thought we had a chance to slip in if they (OU and ISU) fouled up. I think we were putting a little

undue pressure on ourselves."

He said after the compulsories Allen held a team meeting and told them that they "didn't look impressive." He encouraged them to "come out and look like a respectable Nebraska team (in the finals)."

"ISU blew up at the beginning because of the pressure. It made us feel better that it was not just us that did it. It was kind of nice to see ISU make the same errors," said Williams.

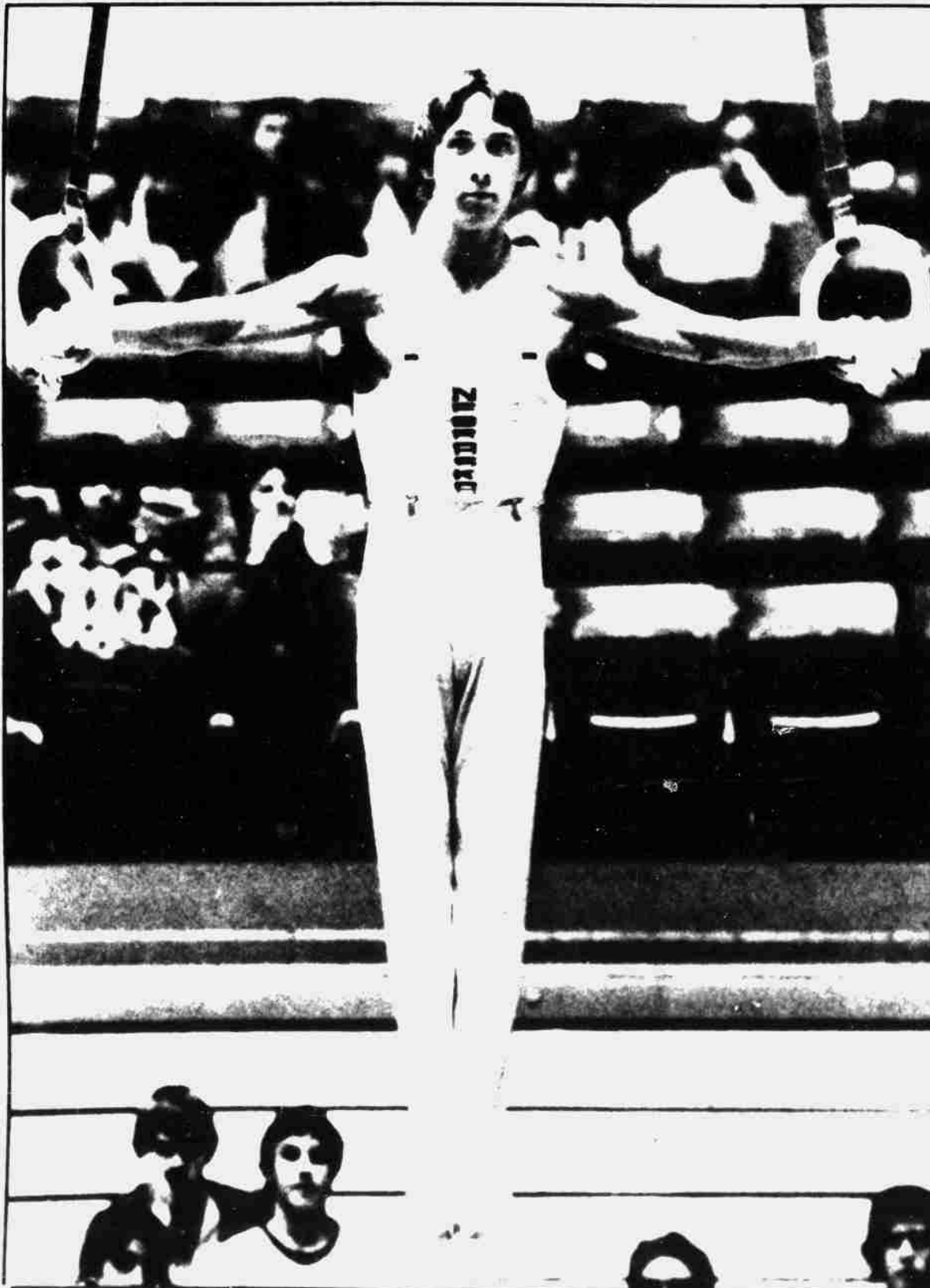


Photo by Bob Pearson

Sophomore gymnast Mark Williams does the iron cross during his still rings routine at the Big Eight Conference Gymnastics Meet Saturday at the Sports Complex.

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UNL won six events to edge host Arkansas 69-61 in a track quadrangular at Fayetteville Saturday. It was the Huskers first outdoor meet of the season. Northeast Missouri took third place with 17 points and Lincoln (Mo.) University finished with 10 points.

Senior sprinter Ron Hoagland won the 200-meter race in 21.2 seconds and took second place in the 100-meter dash to pace UNL. Other Nebraska winners were Jeff Lee in the 110-yard high hurdles, Rex Davies in the long jump, Everad Samuels in the 100-meter dash, Randy Raymond in the pole vault and Lee Kunz in the discus.

UNL's women's softball team was eliminated from the Sooner Invitational in Norman, Okla., Saturday. The Huskers lost to Southwest Missouri State University, 12-1. Tammy Poe's fifth-inning homer was the lone run for UNL. The team record is now 3-4.

The women's tennis team won five of six singles matches in Lawrence Saturday to beat Kansas University in a dual meet 5-4. Kansas won all three doubles matches. Winners for UNL were Joyce McVicker, Sue Sloboth, Vicki Maseman, Judy Huerter and Dee Pavelka. The win gives the Huskers a 5-1 dual meet record.

UNL's golf team finished 13th at the Morris Williams Intercollegiate Tournament in Austin, Texas, Monday. The Huskers finished with a three-day total of 905. Oklahoma State University won the tournament with a 870 total. Individual scores for UNL were Larry Sock, 222, Steve Statton, 224, Knox Jones, 226, Rick Reynolds, 233, and Jim Julian, 234.