

## sports

## Nebraska gymnasts fight letdown, build momentum for season's end

By Mark Getzfred

While the Nebraska men's gymnastics team hopes to use Friday night's dual against Louisiana State as a tune-up for the Big Eight meet, the women's team faces a difficult task because of injuries to two all-arounders.

Both Francis Allen's No. 1 ranked men and Judy Schalk's women face LSU Friday night at 7:30 p.m. in the track at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Despite a 217.70 to 213.40 win over Southern Illinois last weekend, assistant coach Jim Howard said the men had a let down after defeating Oklahoma the previous weekend.

"We're working to get back on the upswing and are looking for a better team output," Howard said. A score of 220 team points would get Nebraska rolling again, he added.

But, Judy Schalk said the outcome of the women's meet is in doubt because of injuries to Patty Carmichael and Renee Reisdorff. Reisdorff hasn't worked out this week because of a back injury and Carmichael is suffering from tendonitis and may be able to compete in only a couple of individual events, Schalk said.

### Important time

If neither of the all-arounders can compete, Karen Matson and Tami Pawlichka will replace them, she added. LSU has injury problems of their own as their top all-arounder, Jeanne Beedle, is out with a knee injury.

"The girls are feeling down right now. It's an important time of the year and they are frustrated because they are not working out because of injuries," Schalk said.

Although LSU is currently ranked 16th, Schalk said her team would beat them if it was healthy.

But the meet is important to the women's team because of the AIAW National championships March 30-31. Seven teams who don't win regional championships will receive "at-large" berths to the nationals based upon their dual meet scores, Schalk said. If Nebraska doesn't win its regional, a berth is a possibility.

### Missing men

While the women may compete without two all-arounders, the men also may be without the services of

two gymnasts. Vaulter Steve Elliott will be competing in the Big Eight swimming and diving championships this weekend. Junior Richard Brindisi may be sidelined because of a foot injury, Howard said.

"He has been working on it some but he is questionable," Howard said. LSU, he said, will provide the type of competition the team needs to get ready for the Big Eight meet March 8-9 in Norman, Okla.

"I think we are going to need 222 or 223 points to beat Oklahoma on their home floor. We're looking at this meet as an upswing into the Big Eight meet," Howard said.

Seniors Kirk Fridrich and Larry Gerard agreed.

"We need this meet to start off the Big Eight. We were down a little last week," said Fridrich, NU's high bar and parallel bars specialist. "We hope to get a big crowd. It's our last meet before we go to Norman."

### Peak at end

Although Gerard said the team should perform better than it did against Southern Illinois, it probably won't top the score of the Oklahoma meet.

"I don't think everyone is going to be psyched to the max," Gerard said. "We want to do well in the meet to get ready for the Big Eight."

Gerard said the team has been working to peak out at the end of the year. The number one ranking has added dignity to the team, he added.

For Fridrich, Gerard and three other seniors, the LSU meet will be the last one before a home crowd. Terry Nowels, Steve Parks and Steve Todd will be making their final home appearance.

"I want to do well. I won't ever compete here again," Gerard said. An added incentive, Gerard said, is that he didn't perform well against Southern Illinois.

Fridrich said his final home appearance will be sad, but the four years under Coach Allen have been fun. In four years Allen has expanded the team from Omaha and Lincoln people to out-of-state gymnasts, he added.

"It's progressing at a rate which is just fantastic," Fridrich said.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

UNL gymnast Larry Gerard performs on the high bar.

## Jamaican speedster runs into homestretch for Huskers

By Ed McClymont

Ray Mahoney. The name isn't as familiar as Richard Berns, Carl McPipe or Scott Poehling, but it would be a lie if one said his level of success wasn't on an even keel with any one of the three.

Mahoney, a senior member of the UNL track team, is the reigning champion in the Big Eight outdoor 400 meters and the indoor 440 yards, which he won last week at the Big Eight Indoor Championships at Oklahoma City.

What makes Mahoney's story a little more unique than most is he hails from Jamaica, one of four team members (Everton DaCosta, Pat McKenzie and Everad Samuels are the others) from the country.

"Coach Sevigne has a lot of contacts down there," Mahoney said. "A couple of ex-Nebraskans from Jamaica watch out for new prospects."

The native Jamaican is a co-captain with Mark Fluit for this year's squad.

"Being a co-captain along with Mark, we try to set an example and lead the team," Mahoney said.

### At work

If he is letting his actions set an example, Mahoney would earn an "A+" for his work. He has qualified for the NCAA national championships in the 440 yard dash and mile relay. This marks the fourth consecutive year he has made the trip to the meet, which is in Detroit this year.

"I'd rather not run the quarter, I want to concentrate on the mile relay," Mahoney said.

The best finish for a Husker mile relay team at the nationals with Mahoney was fifth place, a spot which he feels can be improved upon.

"I'm sure we do stand a good chance of winning the mile relay," Mahoney said. "We're not awed by anyone."

When Mahoney first arrived in Lincoln in 1975 the track conditions were a little different than now. At the time the squad still ran under Memorial Stadium which was and still is called the "mushroom gardens."

"I had a lot of weird experiences in it," Mahoney said. "I sure was glad to get out of there."

### More spectators

The next season the team moved into what is now the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Along with the move came an upswing in spectator and team spirit.

"I'm sure the spirit is picking up," Mahoney said. "The crowds have been great. We get more people for a dual meet than there was for the Big Eight indoor meet."

"Since I've been here the program has been going up every year. This year we have a real mesh team, a lot of team spirit."

Mahoney admits the transition from Jamaica to Ne-

braska was difficult four years ago, because it allowed him few visits to his home country. Generally he made it back during the summer, and sometimes, during Christmas. His Christmas break was cancelled this year because of a track meet.

Since Mahoney made the transition, he has enjoyed his years at Nebraska, except for one thing.

### Respects his coach

"Every winter I look out there and see the cold," Ma-

honey said. "But I'd be lying if I said I wasn't happy here. I've really liked Nebraska since I've been here. Most of all I have a lot of respect for Coach Sevigne."

Mahoney said he isn't sure what the future holds for him after he graduates this summer from Teachers College. He has been taking a look at the Olympics, as a possible entry on the Jamaican national team.

"I'm not sure about it (the Olympics)," Mahoney said. "I'll just have to wait and see what happens."

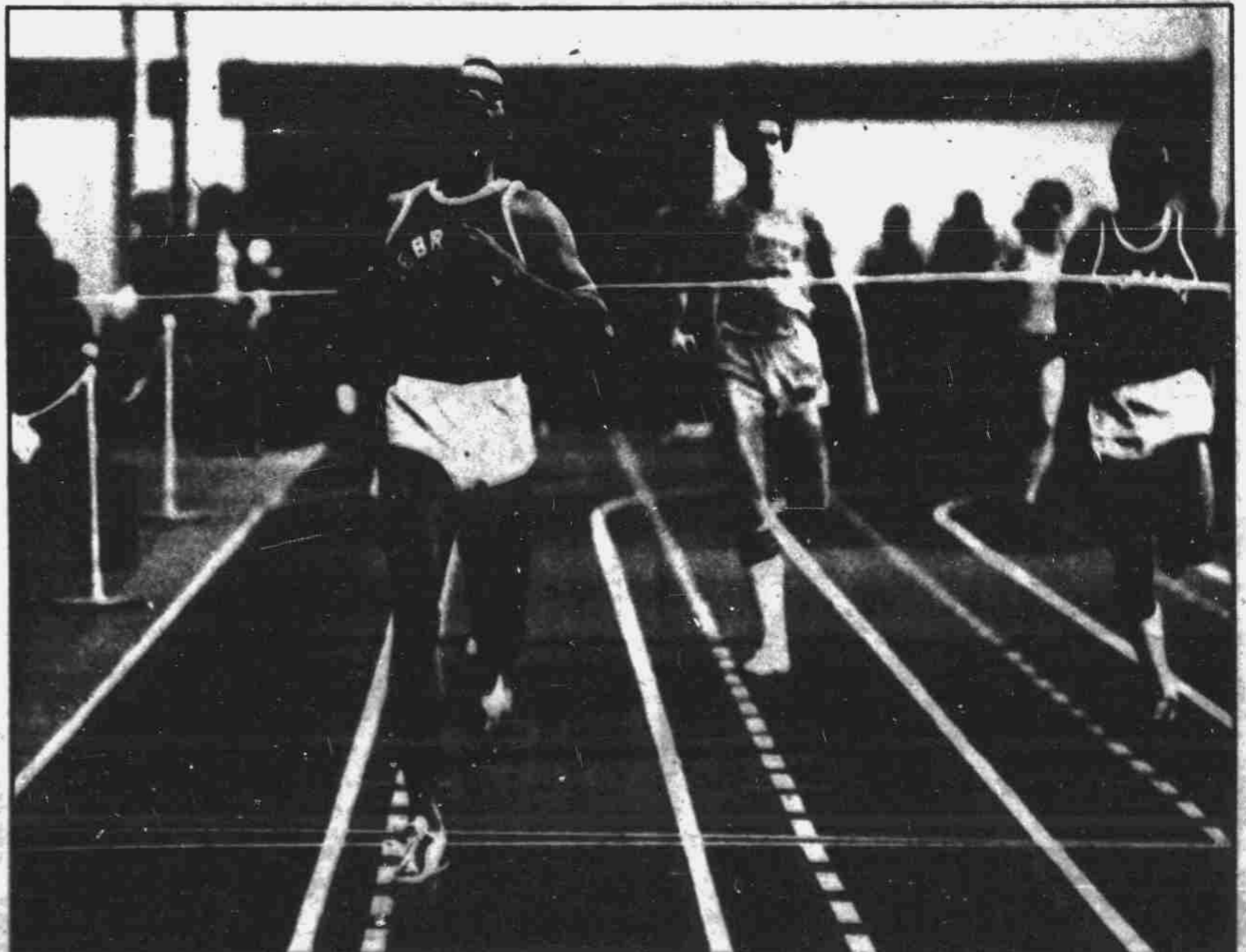


Photo by Bob Pearson

UNL sprinter Ray Mahoney finishes first in the 440 yard dash, qualifying him for the NCAA meet. His time also set a new school record of 48.83 seconds.