

sports

Cornhuskers' first NCAA title earned by gymnasts



Daily Nebraskan photo

Athletic Director Bob Devaney congratulates NU gymnast Jim Hartung on leading his team to Nebraska's first NCAA championship. Hartung arrived at the Lincoln Municipal Airport Sunday evening ahead of the rest of the team which was delayed.

The Nebraska Cornhuskers won their first NCAA championship in any sport Saturday in Baton Rouge, La., and Francis Allen's gymnasts had to come from behind to knock off a twice defending national champion for it.

Ironically enough, the two-time champion was Oklahoma, who has been the Husker's football nemesis for years. And although the Nebraska football team won national championships in 1970 and 1971, they were not NCAA titles since the football titles are determined by Associated Press and United Press International polls.

For the record, Nebraska totaled 448.275 points to 446.625 for Oklahoma. Indiana State was third with 441.300.

Awesome performances by senior Larry Gerard and freshman Jim Hartung sparked the Nebraska effort Saturday, after the Huskers had found themselves trailing OU Friday following the optional rounds.

Gerard fell off the pommel horse in the first event during the championship session and scored a 7.8. But he followed that with a 9.6 on the rings, 9.55 on the parallel bars, 9.5 in the floor exercise, a 9.4 on the high bar and a 9.35 in vaulting.

Hartung's gems included a 9.7 in floor exercise, 9.65 on rings, 9.55 on the parallel bars, 9.5 on the pommel horse and vaulting and a 9.4 on the high bar.

But it took depth to overtake the Sooners and Nebraska was loaded with it.

Freshman Steve Elliot, who doubles for the NU swim team, averaged 9.55 on the floor exercise and 9.775 in vaulting. Chuck Chmelka scored nine plus in every event but the floor exercise. Richard Brindisi scored 9.2 or higher in three events. And Terry Nowels, Steve Todd, Kirk Fridrich, Kevin Dunkley and Mark Williams each scored over a nine in at least one event.

Allen said he couldn't believe his team could hit so many routines for three straight days. Looking back at the scores, Allen said they made up three points difference — and that was the difference between winning and losing.

After being named Midwest Regional Coach of the Year by the National Association of College Gym Coaches earlier in the week, Allen was automatically named National Coach of the Year after Saturday night's finals.

Now Francis Allen knows the good feeling after a long season. But, Allen admitted, he and his assistants, Jim Howard and Jim Gottschalk are already thinking about next year. To him, that means just as much.

Scrimmage lacks intensity—Osborne

By Jack Shockley

After a week of practicing in snow, wind and unseasonably cold temperatures, springlike weather greeted Nebraska's football team for its first spring scrimmage Saturday.

The temperature was a balmy 75 degrees and sunny skies prevailed throughout the afternoon in Memorial Stadium.

But Coach Tom Osborne said he detected a lack of intensity among the players and said the sudden warming trend may have been partly responsible.

"I didn't feel the hitting was really all that good, but I hope it will improve and get sharper," he said.

The temperature, which was about 30 degrees warmer than the day before, might have "had something to with us being so lethargic," he said.

Still, a number of good things emerged from the scrimmage, Osborne said.

He said the quarterbacks played well and, although the hitting could have been better, "it wasn't a bad scrimmage."

No injuries

"There didn't seem to be any serious injuries," he said, "and there were a few decent players even on the fourth and fifth units, which I was pleased to see."

The top three units worked against each other for the first half of the three-hour scrimmage, with the lower units finishing up.

In early spring practices, the defense usually dominates but that didn't happen Saturday.

After a slow start, the offensive units piled up four touchdowns. One of the touchdowns was by the number one offense, directed by Jeff Quinn, against the number one defense.

I-backs Isaiah Hipp, Craig Johnson and Jarvis Redwine accounted for the biggest chunk of the rushing yardage.

Hipp was the afternoon's leading rusher with 75 yards on 10 carries. Johnson carried 13 times for 64 yards and Redwine gained 51 yards on seven attempts.

Johnson, playing with the first unit, also scored one touchdown on a one-yard run against the number three defense.

Short runs

Fullbacks Jim Kotera, Brent Evans and Dave Zobel produced the other touchdowns by scoring on short runs.

The longest run from scrimmage was by fullback Mark Moravec, who gained 38 yards on his only carry.

The day's longest pass play came when wingback Anthony Steels made a leaping catch of a Mark Mauer pass for an 18-yard gain.

"We were a little better offensively than in a lot of first scrimmages," Osborne said.

"A lot of players did some good things today. Of the quarterbacks, Jeff Quinn seemed to have a good day. Hipp did a good job as I-back and Redwine did some things offensively, so did Junior Miller."

Quinn, who is tied for number one with Tim Hager, completed only one of six passes for 10 yards, but ran for

20 yards on four carries and led a pair of scoring drives.

Hager was the afternoon's most effective passer, with three completions in six attempts for 29 yards. He also directed a touchdown drive.

Good plays

Miller, an All-Big Eight tight end, caught three passes for 33 yards to lead the receivers.

Defensively, first unit middle guard Kerry Weinmaster and second-team tackle Bill Barnett, "made some good plays," Osborne said.

Other defensive gems were turned in by defensive end Derrie Nelson, safety Russell Gary, who recovered fumbles, and cornerback Ric Lindquist, who intercepted a pass.

The Huskers have 16 practices remaining in their 20-practice spring schedule, which ends with the annual Red-White game May 5.

Osborne said that in the meantime, his major assignments will be to resolve the unsettled offensive line and quarterback situations.

"We've really got to get settled up front (the offensive line) and at quarterback," he said. "It's probably going to take us all spring and part of the fall to get it settled."



Photo by Mark Billingsley

I. M. Hipp, the leading rusher in Saturday's football scrimmage, makes his move through the Nebraska defense.

sports shorts

The Nebraska baseball team took a doubleheader from Colorado, 7-5 and 4-1, Saturday in Boulder to open the Big Eight Conference regular season.

In the opener, Gary Nolting pushed his record to 3-0 in relief for starter Jim McManus.

Colorado led 5-4 entering the seventh inning, but the Huskers rallied for three runs when Pete O'Brien drew a bases-loaded walk to score John Russo, and Steve Oakley singled in Jeff Hunter and Val Primante.

Tim Burke upped his record to 4-1 with a three-hitter in the nightcap. Burke got all the support he needed in the second inning when Stan Haas singled, Bob Gebler walked, Russo doubled in Haas and Scherger singled in Gebler.

Nebraska added single runs in the sixth and seventh innings as Oakley singled in Primante and Scherger, who had four hits in four at bats, singled in Gebler again.

The wins moved Nebraska's record to 19-4 overall and 2-0 in the Big Eight while Colorado fell to 4-14 and 0-2.

The Huskers were scheduled to meet Kansas State in a doubleheader Monday in Manhattan. Wednesday, the Huskers travel to Omaha to meet UNO.

Kansas won the final event—the mile relay—to edge the Nebraska women's track team 147-144, Saturday in the second annual Husker Invitational track meet at Ed Weir Stadium.

Entering the final event Nebraska led 140-139, but placed fourth in the mile relay and lost the lead.

Nebraska freshman Sharon Burrill set meet records while winning the high jump (5-11) and the long jump (19-1). Other Nebraska firsts were Janet Bates in the 400-meters (:57.22), Sue Kobza in the discus (143-0), and the two-mile relay team of Cindy Vickers, Julie Seaton, Lisa Kramer and Janet Bornemeier (9:14.02).

Nebraska Coach Carol Frost said the team is still suffering from injuries to distance runner Carol Schenck, sprinter Cindy Tatum, pentathlete Nancy Kindig, hurdler Cheryl Zajic and middle distance runner Tami Essington.

"I'm really tired of making excuses," Frost said, "but we've got as much as 40 points sitting out. Second place is nice but it's hard to live with when you know you're a more superior team than that."

Lincoln High won the high school portion of the invitational with 121 points. Class C Hastings St. Cecilia finished second with 86 points.

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