

Team title is 'the biggest thing' to all-around champion Hartung

By Paul Martin

Although he already had captured the NCAA all-around title and UNL had nearly a four-point lead in the team race, Jim Hartung wasn't taking any chances on the Huskers getting caught in Saturday's gymnastics finals.

"The all-around wouldn't mean that much if we hadn't performed as well as we did as a team," Hartung said. "A first place in the all-around and a second-place team finish wouldn't have been very satisfying," he said.

After holding off UCLA's Peter Vidmar 115.02-113.45 in the all-around competition, Hartung posted a 58.025 in Saturday's team competition as Nebraska coasted to a 563.300 to 557.650 win over Iowa State. Oregon, the third team qualifier, was well off the pace with a 553.450 score.

Hartung's 58.025 topped former Indiana State stand-out Kurt Thomas' NCAA single session all-around scoring record of 57.70, registered in last year's championship.

Team title biggest

"Sure, the scoring record is nice, but the team title is the biggest thing," Hartung said. "I'm just happy to be a part of it. Everybody hit great."

After setting an NCAA team scoring record in Friday night's preliminaries with a 281.225, the Huskers showed no complacency, coming out Saturday and shattering their day-old record by scoring a 282.075.

Husker Coach Francis Allen, named coach of the year by the National Gymnastics Coaches Association, was happy about his team's aggressiveness.

"It was great the way we really went out strong even though we had a pretty fair lead," Allen said. "It just shows they're all champions, the way they refused to let up," he said.

Hartung typified this attitude as he won the still rings title and gained All-American in five events after the Huskers had already won the team title.

Hartung scored no worse than a 9.5 Saturday, with the score coming in Saturday night's individual vault finals.

Galimore nearly perfect

Iowa State's Ron Galimore won the event for the second time, capturing the crowd with his near flawless vaulting.

In Saturday afternoon's team competition, two judges gave Galimore a perfect 10.0 score. And though Galimore handily won the vaulting title Saturday night scoring 19.75, he was unable to duplicate his afternoon feat.

"On my landings (Saturday night) I had the slightest bit of movement," Galimore said. "My toes didn't dig into the mat. That's what the judges look for, the slightest bit of movement. I guess those were 9.9s tonight. The ones this afternoon were 10s," he said.

Hartung said performances like Galimore's vaulting help put things into perspective for him.

"When someone like Galimore sticks vaults the way he was doing," Hartung said, "you realize that there's plenty of room to improve."

Hartung has little time to relish his honors as he will be heading to Japan next weekend for international competition, before returning to the United States for the U.S. Gymnastics Federation Championships scheduled for late April.

Hartung said the meet has added to his confidence and said he would "try to make up for the routines" he missed in the NCAA championships in his upcoming competition.

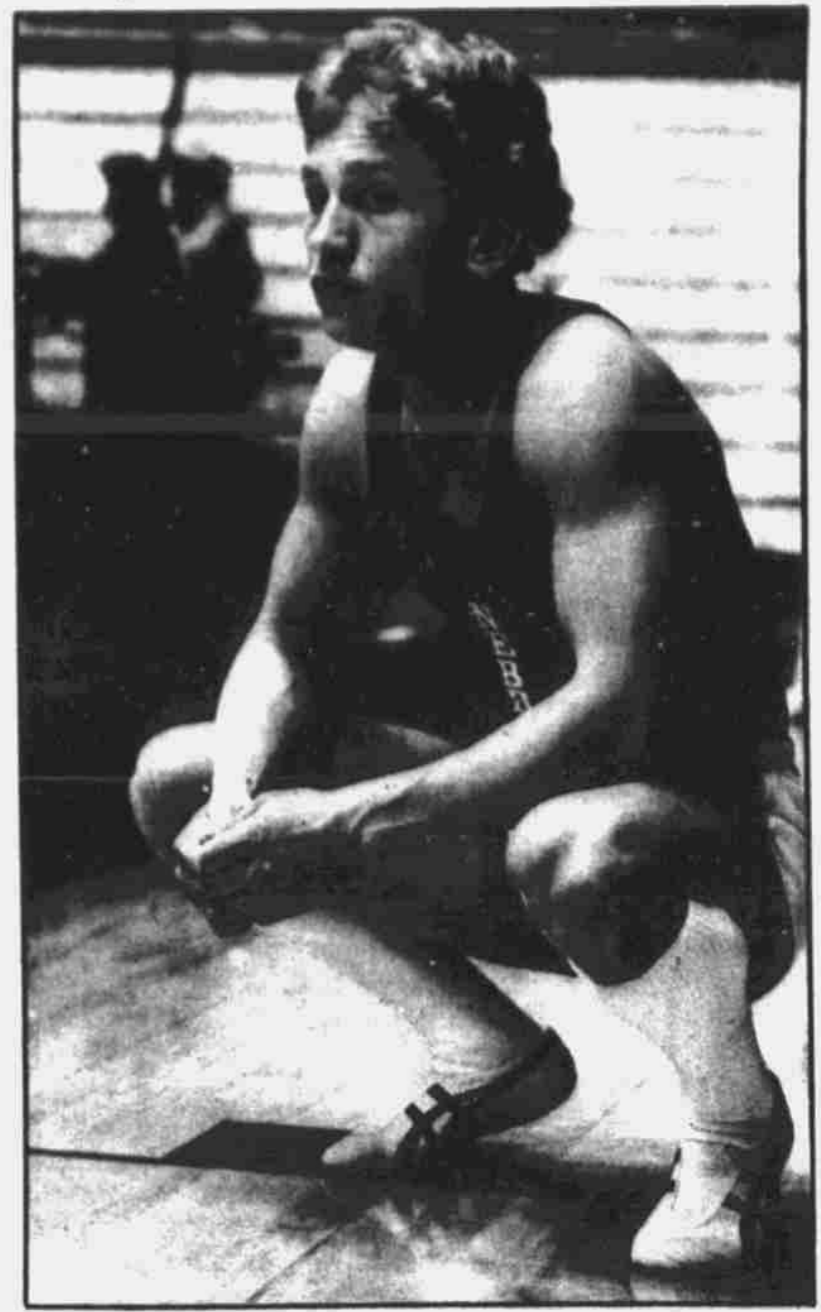


Photo by Mark Billingsley

UNL gymnast Jim Hartung watches NCAA gymnastics action intently. Hartung won the all-around title, the still rings, and helped lead Nebraska to its second straight NCAA Gymnastics Championship title Saturday.

Johnson vaults to All-American gymnast status

By Kim Hachiya

A year ago, even as recently as a few months ago, Nebraska's Scott Johnson had no idea he'd be where he is today—an All-American vaulter and second in the nation in that event.

Johnson's score of 19.325 earned him a second place finish behind Iowa State's Ron Galimore, who recorded straight 9.9s and one perfect 10 during the NCAA national gymnastics meet Saturday.

For Johnson, the meet was a new high in a career that started in fourth-grade tumbling class.

"God, I feel so good," Johnson said after the meet. "It's so great to come back, and to come back this fast is just amazing. I was just booming the last few weeks."

Johnson was hampered by a shoulder injury early in the season and the freshman from Colorado Springs said he bombed on some routines earlier this year.

"I'm OK now though. A lot of credit has to go to Coach (Francis) Allen, he pushed me really hard," Johnson said. Francis Allen agreed.

'Has what it takes'

"Scotty Johnson just did an overall good job," Allen said. "He just put it all together on the floor today. When I scouted him last year at the Colorado State High School meet I said 'that kid has what it takes to be a good gymnast.'"

Johnson said his performance was secondary to the team's.

"I'm really kind of a team person. I get along real well with everybody. I just wanted the team to do so well. And they did," he said.

Johnson's parents were with him on the sidelines after the meet, savoring the moment.

"We almost didn't get here because of the weather," Scott's father Phil Johnson said. "We had called him Thursday and said the weather is just too bad for us to

drive in from Colorado. But then late that night, the weatherman said it would clear, so we said what the heck, and came up.

"I'm sure glad we did."

Team-oriented

Phil Johnson echoed Scott's enthusiasm for the team. "We're a team-oriented family. We get the most excitement from seeing the team do well. But this (Scott's finish) was a treat too," Phil said.

"We weren't too sure that Nebraska would be a good school for Scott because of the superstars (Cahoy and Hartung). But to win the NCAA and medal in his first year—it was obviously the best choice," Phil said.

"I just can't hardly believe my son is going to be on Wide World of Sports. We called his grandparents and told them to be sure and watch it too."

Scott was planning to resume practice Sunday afternoon in preparation for the USA Championships coming up in two or three weeks.

Former Husker gymnast Larry Gerard offered his congratulations and a word of advice.

"You're going to be tired tomorrow (Sunday) so take it easy," he said. "But now just keep saying to yourself 'I'm never going to score below a 56 in the all-around again.' You always have to work harder."

As he signed autographs Saturday night, Johnson seemed just as enthusiastic as he was during the meet. After several performances of his own or his teammates, Johnson would dash out to offer congratulations or just show his own jubilation.

When he hoisted the NCAA team trophy over his head Saturday afternoon, his grin was the proverbial mile wide.

Baseball team wins doubleheader

What had been a question mark before Saturday's Nebraska Big Eight baseball opener with Colorado looked more like an exclamation point in the Huskers' 15-0, 5-1 doubleheader sweep of the Buffaloes at Buck Beltzer Field.

Although the Huskers' pitching has not been as strong as the hitting, it was Saturday as pitchers Tim Burke, now 4-3, pitched a no-hitter and Steve Gehrke held Colorado to just one hit in the second game.

Burke's other no-hitter came in his first start for the Huskers against Austin, Texas College two years ago.

Husker Baseball Coach John Sanders said the pitching performances by Gehrke and Burke "were exactly what we (the Huskers) needed."

"Everyone was saying our pitching was questionable," Sanders said. "But we went against some of the best

hitters in the country on the California trip. We struggled a little bit in California, but it sharpened our pitching staff and it showed today."

"That kind of pitching is encouraging," Sanders added. "It helps pick up our whole team."

In the first game, the Huskers put the Buffs away early, scoring six runs in the first inning and adding four in the second and third frames to lead 10-0 after three.

The Huskers, ranked 28th in the nation in the last college baseball rankings with a 21-7 record, play a doubleheader against Kansas State this afternoon at 1:30 at Buck Beltzer Field. Ray Tromba and Cliff Faust are scheduled as Husker starting pitchers.

Kansas State is 13-11 overall and 0-2 in the conference. The Wildcats dropped a doubleheader to Kansas Saturday.

Gymnasts . . .

Continued from Page 1

Husker Scott Johnson recorded his best all-around performance Saturday afternoon, scoring a 56.325, muffling claims that Nebraska has only two good gymnasts—Hartung and Phil Cahoy.

"I hear people say how we only have two good gymnasts," Hartung said. "Well, now they have to say we have three."

In Saturday's individual finals, Nebraska clinched four of six first places, with Cahoy, a freshman, winning the parallel bars (19.55), and tying for first on the high bar (19.55).

"Both were satisfying wins. I would have liked to have done better on the high bar, but I had a bad grip, I missed the crease and almost fell," he said.

Elliott won the floor exercise with a 19.55, twisting and turning his way to thunderous ovations.

"He's the best tumbler in the world," Hartung said. "I was really happy he won the floor exercise."

Hartung won the still rings with 19.45 points, wrapping up the Huskers' fourth individual title.

Iowa State's Ron Galimore, scoring consistent 9.9s in the vault, received two 10s from judges Saturday afternoon, and one 10 Saturday evening to win the vaulting title with 19.75 points.

Dave Stoldt from Illinois won the pommel horse with 19.45 points.

Allen said he was most pleased with the win because of what it will do for Nebraska gymnastics.

"Those kids up there are going to go home and say 'hey, Nebraska really has a good program,'" he said.



CUSTOM - HAIRSTYLING
AND
BARBER - SERVICE
LOWER LEVEL
NEBRASKA UNION

APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE
472-2459



REALITY:
MATTER OR MIND
with Charles Ferris
Tuesday, April 8
8:00 p.m.
The Rostrum/Nebraska Union