



Staff photo by Joel Sartore

Kevan Moenzl, licks at some of the leftover champagne on the bow of the "Californians for Nebraska," the newest UNL crew team boat, the boat was christened Friday while the group, which donated \$7,000 for the shell, was in town for the UCLA-Nebraska football game. Kevan is the grandson of Sid McVicker, president of the alumni group.

UNL women's gymnastics has depth, new coach says

By Laurie Moses

Taking over the head coach's spot for a top women's gymnastics team may seem like a tough job, but Rick Walton seems to be taking it all in stride.

Walton, UNL's new women's gymnastics coach, speaks with confidence about his team.

"We are shooting for scores in the 180's this season," Walton said. "It's possible, but will require a lot of discipline."

Walton came from the University of Georgia, where he directed a successful program.

"We were third in our region last year and our region (south) was the toughest in the country," Walton said. "Three teams qualified and finished in the top six at nationals."

The teams in the Big Eight are evenly matched right now, Walton said.

"We're shooting to place no less than third at regionals, and if we get to nationals, we want to place better than tenth," he said.

Walton is very impressed with the support Lincoln gives the gymnastics program. "The booster club is one of the best in the country," he said. "Community support is tremendous. I left a good situation for a better situation."

The team has been practicing since the beginning of school, and it has improved greatly, Walton said.

"We don't have a 'star' on the team," he said. "We want a clean team on the floor, one that's concise and hits six out of six (girls) in each event."

Judy Schalk, who coached Nebraska to two Top-10 finishes in the past two years, resigned last spring saying she was "burned out."

She left Walton with a strong but young team, which includes senior Kim Grabowski, the Big Eight vault and all-around champion and three-time all-conference performer, and junior Terri Furman, who set a Big Eight record with a 9.45 in the floor exercise last season.

Senior Renee Bosie and sophomores Jodie Twoey and Char Hagemann also placed well in conference and regional competition.

"We're going to eat a lot of teams because we're better, others because they will make mistakes. Depth alone will help a team," Walton said.

Walton said he would like the women's team to come "up to par" with the men's team, which has won five national championships in row. Recruiting has started to accomplish that goal, he said.

"We want to recruit the best," Walton said. "If you have one good recruiting year, your program can turn around."

The women's gymnastics team will not see its first action until the Rocky Mountain Open Dec. 9 and 10 at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado.

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