

Sports

Ex-Huskies make national team Olympians Johnson, Cahoy to help U.S. in world championships

By Richard Cooper
Staff Reporter

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Nebraska men's gymnastics coach Francis Allen had a good reason to be smiling Friday night at the World Gymnastics Championships Team Trials — two former Nebraska gymnasts, Scott Johnson and Phil Cahoy, earned berths on the U.S. team.

For the other three Nebraska gymnasts, Wes Suter, Mike Epperson and Tom Schlesinger, the meet proved to be a learning experience.

Johnson finished second in the all-around, behind his 1984 Olympic teammate Tim Daggett. Cahoy finished in fourth place behind the current U.S. champion Brian Babcock. The U.S. team will have three former Olympians competing.

"It is really gratifying to see people that you have coached for years to get to this level of competition," Allen said about Johnson and Cahoy.

Suter, Epperson and Schlesinger did not have a good two days of competition, Allen said. Suter was unable to compete in Friday's optionals because of a pinched nerve in his neck.

Epperson finished 21st and Schlesinger finished 23rd.

"The one thing I learned from this meet is that for something this big you have to train really hard," Epperson said. "I feel that I took this meet a little too lightly and it showed in my performances."

Epperson said he felt like he was only at about 70 percent shape for the meet. He said he is excited about the upcoming college season because he is a better gymnast than last year.

Epperson said the next time he competes at the World Championships trials in 1987, the outcome is going to be different. He said he is going to take a two week break from training hard to get rid of all his little body aches.

Allen said that this time of year is not a good time for college gymnasts because they are not in peak shape.

That was evident, because only two college gymnasts, Charles Lakes of Illinois and Dan Hayden of Arizona State, made the U.S. team.

Hayden finished fifth with a score of 109.75, and Lakes edged out California-Berkeley graduate Billy Paul in the last event, the parallel bars, by scoring a 9.6 to finish with a score of 108.40.

Hayden said the key to his success was that he didn't compete too much last summer, so he was



Photo courtesy of Dave Black of the United States Gymnastics Federation

Former UCLA gymnast Tim Daggett competes on the still rings during the 1984 season. Daggett, a member of the U.S. gold-medal winning gymnastics team, won the all-around title at the U.S. trials for the World Gymnastics Championships.

not as burned out as the other gymnasts. He said he wished he had more endurance going into the meet, but that should change as the NCAA gymnastics season progresses.

Suter said he was not disappointed about not making the team because now he can take a break. He said he has been in a lot of competition since the NCAA Championships, and that he deserves a break so he can defend his NCAA all-around title in April.

Allen said he hopes that the experience of competing in a major national meet like the U.S. trials will help his gymnasts when it comes to

handling pressure.

Allen said the U.S. team that is going to the World Championships is good, but they have to improve a lot if they are to challenge seriously for the World Championship.

Johnson said he agreed with Allen about improving the team's skills. He said they are going to have to improve their compulsory scores and the level of difficulty in their routines if they are to make a good showing at the Championships.

U.S. team head coach Abie Grossfeld said the team is great. He said he thinks they are as good as the three best teams in the world: The Soviet

Union, China and Japan, but because of the order in which they are scheduled to compete it could hurt them.

Johnson said he was nervous the whole meet and that it showed in his routines. Johnson finished 1.70 points behind Daggett, a big margin in gymnastics. He said that if he is to do good at the Championships he is going to have to gain more confidence in himself.

Cahoy said he felt psychologically ready, and that except for his dismounts and pommel horse routine, he is ready for the World Championships in November at Montreal.

Hard work puts Suter out of trials with sore neck

By Chuck Green
Staff Reporter

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Hard work is the name of the game in gymnastics. Ask Scott Johnson and Phil Cahoy. The two former Cornhuskers are now members of the United States team that will compete in the world championships at Montreal in November.

But if you ask Wes Suter, you may get a different story.

The 21-year-old senior Husker from Reston, Va., who is the defending NCAA all-around men's champion, was removed from competition in Friday's U.S. world championship team trials because of a pinched nerve in his neck.

"I've just ruined my body during training," Suter said. "That's the main reason for my injury."

Suter injured his neck two weeks ago while working out in preparation for the U.S. trials.

"It's a little sore right now," he said, "but it feels better than it did yesterday (Thursday)."

Suter said if he could do it all over again, he'd "try not to work out as hard."

"I definitely wouldn't compete at as many meets. This year, I took every trip that was offered to me. That was just too much. I thought it was fun at the time, but it doesn't seem so great right now."

Suter said he is disappointed he won't be able to compete for the team.

"It's really hard to watch the meet and know I won't be a part of it," Suter said. "I think I had a good chance to make the team. I feel I definitely could have made the top eight, and possibly even the top six."

Suter has been a four-year performer for Nebraska. As a freshman, he competed on the high bar and in the floor exercise despite a broken finger. As a member of the U.S. junior team, he scored the highest of any American (56.4) while finishing second in the U.S.-Japan duel meet in 1982.

Suter said part of the reason he was injured in the team trials is because he "didn't train well" in preparation for the meet.

"I was hurt a couple weeks ago," he said. "I don't feel like I trained well. During my time off, I'm going to work more on my original skills and just try to be ready the next time around."

Intramural sports deadlines today

Entry deadline is today for intramural women's volleyball, men's, women's and co-rec intertube water basketball and men's and women's badminton singles. Entries must be made by 5 p.m. at the Office of Campus Recreation at 1740 Vine St.



Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Daily

Former Nebraska gymnast Scott Johnson competes on the rings during the U.S. trials for the World Gymnastics Championships. Johnson finished second in the meet to former Olympian Tim Daggett.