

# Sports

## NU gymnasts challenge Ohio State

By Rich Cooper  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's gymnastics' teams will travel to Columbus, Ohio, this weekend to take on Big Ten Conference power Ohio State in a double dual meet Sunday.

Nebraska women's coach Rick Walton said he hopes both his team and Ohio State's team are warmed up for this meet because if both teams have a good meet, the Cornhuskers average score may increase.

"I hope both us and Ohio State are as hot as a firecracker," Walton said. "If we are hot, then maybe we can score that 188 or 189 that we have wanted to hit all season."

Last weekend against Missouri, the Huskers, ranked No. 9 in the NCAA coaches poll, defeated the Tigers 187.05 to 177.65 to stay undefeated in the Big Eight Conference. Walton said he thought Nebraska would finally score a 188 in the final rotation against Missouri, but three Huskers fell on floor exercise.

Walton said the meet against Ohio State is going to be a good meet because both teams have good talent. "Ohio State is going to be tough to

beat at home," Walton said. "We have to continue to raise our average up, it would be nice to go into regionals with an average of 186, which might give us an automatic berth into the NCAA finals."

Another important thing about the Ohio State meet, Walton said, is that it will be a good tuneup for the Big Eight Championships next weekend in Columbia, Mo.

Walton said the Big Eight Championships are going to be a "dogfight." The Huskers have defeated three-time Big Eight Champion Oklahoma twice this season. This means that Oklahoma will be ready to protect its title, he said.

Walton said this weekend's meet could be the one his two freshmen all-arounders, Tami Bair and Michelle Bryant, break 37 points. Nebraska's other two all-arounders, Jeaneane Smith and Crystal Savage, are ranked No. 8 and No. 15 in the nation in all-around scoring average.

The men's team is coming off a two-week break. Last weekend they were supposed to compete in a triangular against Minnesota and Wisconsin but their flight out of Lincoln was canceled because of engine problems.

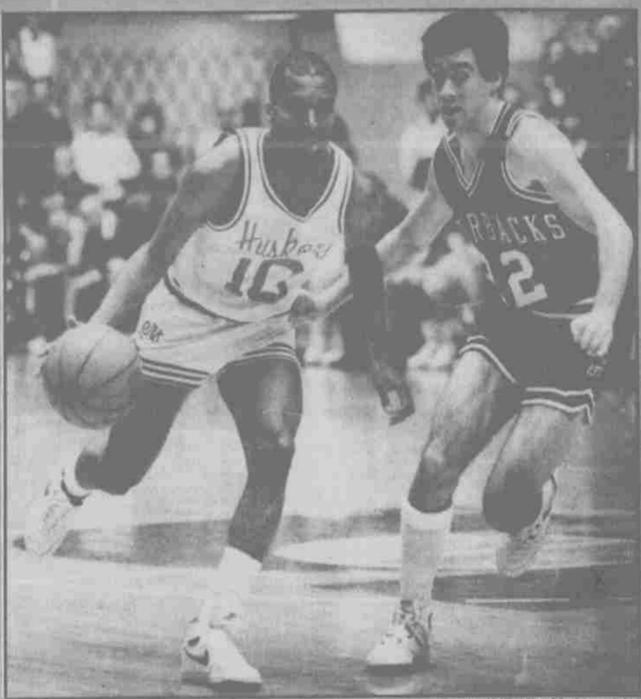
Nebraska men's coach Francis Allen said the Ohio State meet will be important because they need to get a fifth road score to count for the NCAA Championships. He said if they don't do well against Ohio State, they would have to count the 273 that they scored in their loss to Oklahoma on Jan. 30 in Norman, Okla.

"The score against Ohio State will be very important, but the team seems very anxious for this meet," Allen said. The Huskers are ranked No. 2 in the nation behind UCLA with a scoring average of 282.22.

Allen said he thinks he has the two best all-arounders in the nation in Tom Schlesinger and Kevin Davis. Schlesinger's all-around average is a 57.45 and Davis's is 57.35.

Allen said Ohio State is going to try to "pick-off" the Huskers, and since the meet is at home, it will be ready for Nebraska.

For the third year in a row, Nebraska has a candidate for the Nissan Award, the Heisman trophy of college gymnastics. Neil Palmer, the only senior on the team, is in the final balloting with Oklahoma's Mike Rice and other prominent seniors in the nation. Last year, Nebraska's Wes Suter won the award.



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Henry Buchanan dribbles past Arkansas' Canno Whitby during Tuesday night's 78-71 Cornhusker victory.

## Huskers going west

By Tim Hartmann  
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska baseball team opens a nine-game road trip Saturday when it faces Nevada-Las Vegas in a doubleheader. The Cornhuskers will play UNLV five times on the trip and will play Nevada-Reno twice before leaving Las Vegas and traveling to Tempe, Ariz.

In Tempe, Nebraska will play Arizona State twice and then return home to face Iowa State March 28 and 29.

Nebraska is 10-1 but has not played since last weekend. Games on Tuesday and Wednesday with Wayne State and UNL were canceled because of rain and snow.

Nebraska coach John Sanders said he expects to be tested on the road trip.

"Arizona State and Nevada-Las Vegas were preseason ranked, though they're not ranked right now," Sanders said. "But that doesn't make any difference because they'll be tough competition."

Sanders said the trip will help prepare the team for the upcoming Big Eight Conference season and will let them to continue to work on their weaknesses.

"We're climbing the ladder," he said. "We need to show overall improvement."

Nebraska has played several freshmen and junior-college transfers this season, but their quick adjustment to Division I baseball did not surprise Sanders.

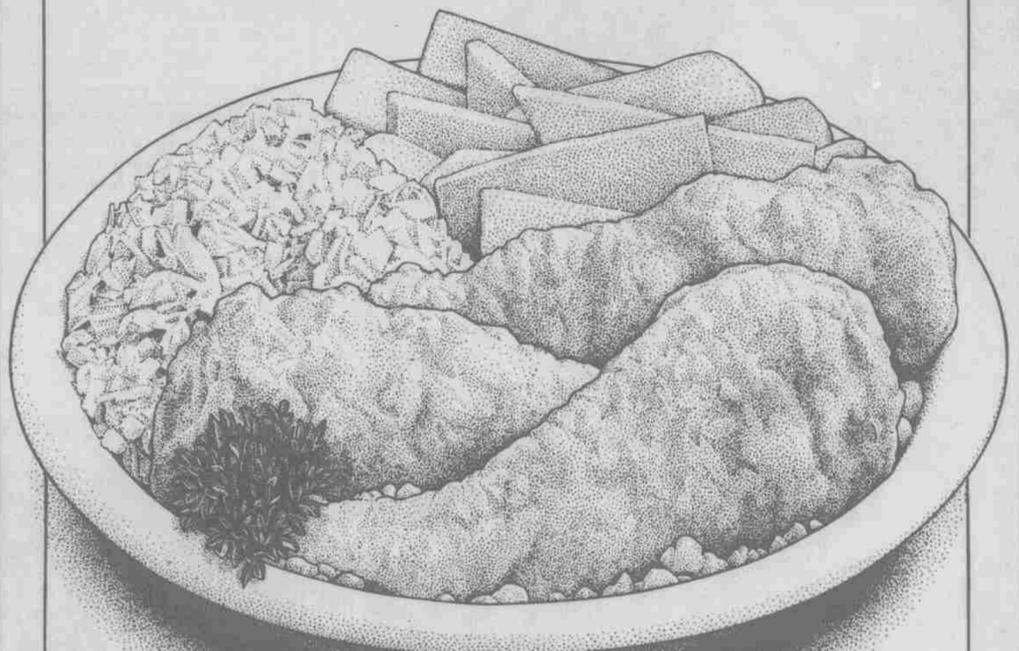
"We've got guys that showed they can play in the past, so their success did not really surprise me," he said.

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