

# Huskers set goals

## Women gymnasts spring for the top

By Tim Hartmann  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska's women's gymnastics team may end this season in the same city they ended the 1986-87 season in, Coach Rick Walton said, but with one major difference.

At last season's NCAA Championships in Salt Lake City, the Cornhuskers ended their season 10th in the country. This year their goal for the tournament, which will be in Salt Lake City again, is higher.

"The girls tell me they want to finish in the top five," Walton said, who is entering his fifth year as coach of the women's team.

The return of the entire 1986-87 team, two freshman recruits and a year of NCAA experience make that goal attainable, he said.

"I think it is (realistic)," Walton said. "Most teams that have recruited well this season don't have everybody coming back like we do. Our experience should give us an advantage."

The addition of freshmen Laura Saviski from Illinois and Lisa Mc-

Crady from Minnesota will be the only changes from last season's squad. Walton said he expects the two new gymnasts to compete right away.

"They're pretty talented," he said. "They are going to help us out a lot this year, especially in some areas where we lacked a little depth in the past. The floor exercise is an event that they could help out in."

Among those returning to the team this season are sophomore Michele Bryant, who finished 27th in the all-around at the NCAA Championships last season; junior Crystal Savage, who placed 31st, and junior Jeanne Smith, who finished 39th.

Walton said individual scores and the team score might have been higher at the NCAA Championships had the Huskers not competed in the first rotation, where the scoring traditionally is tighter because the judges are getting a feel for the scoring.

Savage posted the highest indi-

vidual score in the all-around, a 37.8, on the team last season. Smith was a close second, twice scoring a 37.75.

Walton said it is hard to predict which gymnasts will be in the hunt for the individual all-around title this season.

"It's awfully hard to say at this point," he said. "It all depends on who has a good season, who avoids the nagging injuries and who is hot that particular night."

This season's schedule is not yet complete, but Walton said he is trying to schedule more home meets to help increase fan support.

One of the home meets is tentatively called the Runza Invitational, and it will feature Nebraska, Brigham Young and Denver. Other teams on the Huskers' schedule include Utah, Arizona State, Penn State and Ohio State.

Three other teams besides Nebraska — Iowa State, Missouri and Oklahoma — compete in women's gymnastics in the Big Eight Conference. Walton said this season's Big Eight race should be interesting.

"It will be tough," Walton said. "Oklahoma is going to be strong, we're going to be strong, and Missouri has added a couple of recruits. We won the title last season and we'd like to win it again."



Savage



Smith



Walton

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