

Husker gymnasts to battle the Nittany Lions for pride

By Lori Griffin
Staff Reporter

Pride will be on the line when the Nebraska women's gymnastics team faces No. 14-ranked Penn State tonight at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Nebraska women's gymnastics coach Rick Walton said the Cornhuskers were lacking intensity and emotion during a 183.5-182.65 loss to Ohio State Friday night at the sports center.

But Walton doesn't expect Nebraska to be caught sleeping when it faces the Nittany Lions. The meet begins at 7 p.m.

"Ohio State got us on a night when it didn't look like we were willing to compete," Walton said. "And the girls could be a little angry about Friday night. You're going to see a different meet. I think the girls let themselves get a little embarrassed. I think they were embarrassed with

their performances."

Walton said he hopes the embarrassment will inspire Nebraska. He said the Huskers spent the weekend watching film from the Ohio State meet in hopes that they would learn something about their performance.

"No one sustained anything other than pride," Walton said.

Walton said the Husker coaches have taken a different approach to the Penn State meet.

Walton said Nebraska went through a light workout Sunday night to correct minor errors in their performances. He said the Huskers worked on expression and on sticking their landings so they would not have to take an extra step.

"That's all you can do," Walton said. "In order for us to score in the 186-188 range, which we are capable of doing, you can't just go through the motions. You need to have a lot of energy and we were off because we did not have much intensity and

emotion."

Walton said Nebraska will need to stay one step ahead of the Nittany Lions to maintain control of the meet.

"We never took charge of the meet (Friday night)," Walton said. "We opened too many doors to Ohio State. We just opened one door too many."

Walton said the Huskers don't plan to do the same things against Penn State.

"I'd like to see the girls take charge right away," Walton said. "I like to see them take charge of each event like we did at Missouri and at Oklahoma."

Penn State women's gymnastics coach Judi Avenier said the Nittany Lions will enter the meet tired because they competed in the Purina Cat Classic in Columbia, Mo., last Friday and Saturday.

Penn State, which is ranked No. 2 in the Northeast region behind Ohio State, is led by junior Debbie O'Brien. O'Brien scored a 36.75 in

all-around competition earlier this season.

Avenier said Penn State's major goals for the meet will be to have a good performance and to stay healthy.

The Nittany Lions' top performers are being hindered by chronic ailments. Avenier said Kathy Parody, Susan Repmann and Pam Braun have all seen limited action this season because of injuries.

Allen pleased with team's score as NU upsets three top 10 squads

By Richard Cooper
Staff Reporter

Although all-rounder Tom Schlesinger competed in only three events Sunday night because of an injury, Nebraska gymnastics coach Francis Allen was still pleased with his team's score of 281.10.

The No. 11-ranked Cornhuskers defeated No. 5 Iowa, No. 7 Houston Baptist and No. 8 Arizona State in a quadrangular meet at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Schlesinger, who competed in the floor exercise vault and pommel horse, injured his sternum two weeks ago while practicing on the parallel bars.

"For me 281 is a real good score for this team without Schlesinger," Allen said. "That is an excellent score. Some good things that have happened is that Bob Stelter and Patrick Kirksey are doing what they are supposed to do by scoring around a 56."

Stelter finished third in the all-around with a 56.45 behind Houston Baptist University gymnast Alfonso Rodriguez and Miguel Rubio, respectively. Rodriguez won with a 57.05 and Rubio scored 56.85.

Allen said he was impressed with Houston Baptist. The Huskies finished second behind Nebraska with a score of 278.35. Iowa finished third at 273.55 and Arizona State finished with a 272.4.

"HBU is gonna be good," Allen said. "In fact I think they are good. They had two all-rounders that scored 56.8(5) and 57.05 and that will hold them up."

HBU gymnastics coach Hutch Dvorak, whose team lost to No. 1-ranked Illinois 284 to 280 on Thurs-

day night, said he thinks Nebraska and Illinois will battle for the NCAA title at the NCAA Championships April 14 to 16 in Lincoln.

"Nebraska hit better than Illinois hit," Dvorak said. "But Illinois really has some talent and I know with Schlesinger and Kevin Davis at full strength Nebraska is going to be a lot

better. It's really hard for me to compare them."

Nebraska will meet the Fighting Illini at the UCLA Invitational next weekend. UCLA, Minnesota, Arizona State and New Mexico also will compete in the meet.

"Illinois is way over-scored," Allen said.

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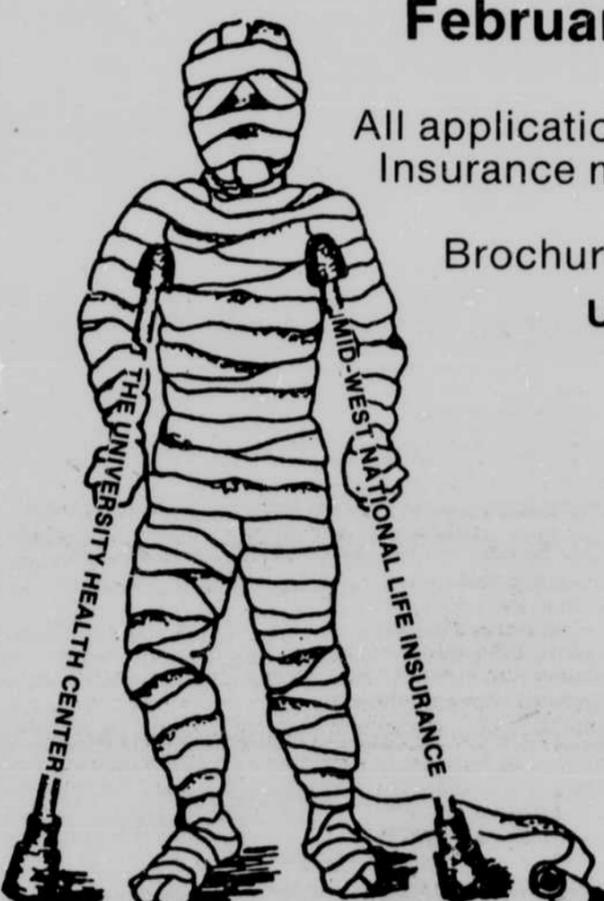
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