

# NU gymnasts face 3 ranked teams tonight

By Lori Griffin  
Staff Reporter

Three teams ranked in the top 20 and about 9,000 fans will greet the Nebraska women's gymnastics team when it competes in a quadrangular meet tonight at Salt Lake City.

The No. 7-ranked Cornhuskers will face six-time defending national champion Utah, which is ranked No. 4 in the nation. Nebraska also will face No. 18-ranked Cal State-Fullerton and No. 19 Utah State.

Nebraska women's gymnastics coach Rick Walton said the meet will be fun to compete in because of the crowd. He said Utah has designated this meet as "School Pride Night."

"It will be fun to be out there," Walton said. "There is a lot of electricity out there and it will be an outstanding meet."

Walton said the Lady Utes are very competitive.

"I think that a bomb would have to fall on their campus for them not to be competitive," Walton said.

Walton said the Huskers will have to be competitive and perform their routines perfectly to stay in contention for the team title. The team score will take care of itself if Nebraska performs its routines well, Walton said.

"This is the kind of meet for the athlete to enjoy," Walton said. "It is a blast to be in this kind of a meet."

Walton said the Huskers plan to use the crowds to their best advantage.

"The girls are performers and they do better in front of large crowds," Walton said. "I enjoy going to places where the crowd is large. It's an advantage for us."

Utah women's gymnastics coach Greg Marsden said he expects Nebraska to be competitive against the Lady Utes. He said the fans attending the meet will help his team's progress.

"Our kids feel a lot of support and it is a motivator for us," Marsden said. "Our fans will support any good performance."

Utah, 7-2, is led by Hilarie Portell, who scored a 37.7 in the all-around competition against Oklahoma earlier this season. Utah posted a 189.8 against the Sooners, its highest score of the season.

Utah State women's gymnastics coach Ray Corn said he doesn't expect his team to be competitive against Utah, but the Aggies can give Nebraska a challenge.

Corn said his team has three consistent all-arounders: Lena Adomat, Stephanie Green and Julie Ryan. The other eight team members will be used as specialists.

"We are doing this in order to have a good meet," Corn said.

Ryan has been scoring consistently in the 37-point range in the all-around competition, Corn said. Green broke the school record in the

uneven bars against Denver by scoring a 9.75, breaking the old record of a 9.7 held by 1987 graduate Robin Conklin.

Corn said Utah State has to perform five solid routines to contend with Nebraska.

"We need solid routines, especially on the bars and balance beam," Corn said. "I hope we are able to show signs of consistency Monday night."

Corn said he hopes to see his team break the 184-point barrier as it did against Denver. The Aggies defeated Denver 184.6-180.1.

Cal State-Fullerton women's gymnastics coach Lynn Rogers said the Utah gymnasium makes competing difficult. He said gymnasts are able to see their own scores but can't see the team standings. He said that despite the trouble of not knowing where each team is point-wise, the meet will be a good one.

Rogers said his team consists of eight freshmen who are "young, strong and aggressive."

"We hope to give them a run for their money," Rogers said. "This is not going to be a slouch meet. I'll be surprised if this is not a close meet. This is our first chance to see anybody further east than Utah."

Rogers said Cal State-Fullerton wants to beat Nebraska and Utah. He said the Titans will have to perform well to accomplish that goal.

"The meet will be a confidence-builder," Rogers said.

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