



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Former Nebraska gymnast Kevin Davis competes on pommel horse. Davis finished third in the NCAA All-Around competition in April.

Olympics draw former Huskers

By Lori Griffin
Staff Reporter

A summer of sweat and cross country travel awaits four former members of Nebraska's men's gymnastics team.

Gymnasts Kevin Davis, Scott Johnson, Tom Schlesinger and Wes Suter are all preparing to participate in the Summer Olympics. The Olympic games will be held in Seoul, South Korea in September.

But the Olympics are still in the back of their minds. Before receiving the Olympic invitation, the athletes must meet the requirements.

The first step towards the Olympic games is the USA Championships to be held July 7-10 at the Summit in Houston. The top 18 finishers out of the field of 46 will be invited to the Olympic Trials, Aug. 4-7 in Salt Lake City.

Seven Olympians will be chosen to represent the United States by counting 40 percent of their scores from the USA Championships and 60 percent from the Olympic Trials. The top six individual qualifiers will make the team and the seventh will be considered an alternate.

Nebraska men's gymnastics coach Francis Allen said the four Nebraska athletes have a good chance at making the Olympic team. If this prediction holds true, Allen said, this will make 10 Nebraska gymnasts who have made the Olympic team. This includes Johnson, who was a member of the 1984 gold-medal-win-

ning team at Los Angeles.

Johnson will not be able to participate in the USA Championships because of a broken hand suffered in practice. He has petitioned to compete in the Olympic Trials and the petition was granted.

Allen said he also has three current Nebraska gymnasts preparing for the 1992 Olympics. The gymnasts include juniors Patrick Kirksey and Bob Stelter and senior Mike Epperson.

Allen said the athletes preparing for the 1988 games are looking "pretty darn good at this point."



"Sometimes they may be a little too intense," Allen said. "But this is their Olympic games. They only have one shot."

Allen said he expects the United States Olympic team to be one of the top six teams at the Olympics, but the athletes are thinking about going even higher.

Schlesinger, Suter and Davis all agree that the United States team has a good chance of receiving a bronze medal in Seoul.

"We have a fair shot at the bronze," Schlesinger said. "We have a shot at the gold or bronze but that is not likely because of the politics in the sport."

According to the athletes, the Soviets will provide the biggest challenge. Second place will probably go to the Chinese. The Bulgarians, Romanians and East Germans are also expected to challenge the United States.

But Suter, who competed in a recent meet in East Germany, said he thinks the East German team may be overrated.

"They are definitely beatable," he said.

Besides the former Nebraskans, former Arizona State gymnasts Dan and Dennis Hayden and 1984 Olympian Tim Daggett were also mentioned as possible Olympians. Daggett is attempting a comeback after breaking a leg at the World Championships in February.

It was also agreed that former Southern Illinois standout Charles Lakes and UCLA gymnast Curtis Holdsworth may also make the team. Oklahoman Mike Rice and former Husker gymnast Neil Palmer are also vying for a spot on the Olympic team.

"Right now there are ten guys running neck and neck to qualify for the Olympic team," Davis said. "It is hard to say who will make it at this point."

Suter said he feels the team will be strong because of its possible strong Nebraska contingency.

"There is going to be a strong Nebraska team there and I think that will help a lot," Suter said. "We all get along well outside of the gym and I think that will help to make a strong team (at the Olympics)."

Illinois athlete accepts NU track scholarship

Tim Hartmann
Senior Editor

High school track and football athlete Kevin Coleman signed a letter of intent with Nebraska because things were clearer in Lincoln.

When Coleman, who attended Elgin, Ill., Larkin High School, says things are clearer he is not referring to the weather. He is talking about honesty.

"I felt that some of the other schools that were recruiting me were giving me a bunch of harky malarkey," Coleman said. "They weren't telling me everything."

Coleman accepted a Nebraska track scholarship and will be a freshman this fall. He said he chose Nebraska over schools such as Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina and Texas because the Cornhusker coaches, especially assistant coach Mark Kostek, were up front and honest with him.

"Mark Kostek didn't give me a bunch of baloney," Coleman said. "A lot of schools tried to sweeten me up. They would tell me the good points of the school, but they wouldn't tell me the bad points. Every school has both good and bad points. Mark gave me the whole story, and he gave me a chance to meet the other athletes."

Coleman registered the longest high school shot put throw in the

country this season with an effort of 66 feet, 1 3/4 inches. The throw was over a foot longer than the previous best throw in Illinois state history.

Once recruiters learned of Coleman's ability, he said, the scholarship offers came pouring in. Many of the schools wanted Coleman to play football in addition to being on the track team.

Coleman, who is 6-foot-3, 229 pounds and runs the 40 yard dash in 4.7 seconds, played fullback and defensive tackle on Larkin's 3-6 football team.

As a freshman at Nebraska, Coleman said he will be on the track team and concentrate on his school work. In his sophomore year he will again compete in track, and will also walk on the football team, where he will be a freshman in eligibility.

Coleman said he knows that two-sport athletes are rare in college athletics, but he thinks he has the ability to play both sports.

"If there is a problem I guess I would just have to drop one of the sports," he said.

Kostek said that it is possible that Coleman could get injured playing football, but the track coaches will let him play if he wants to.

"We hope that he is so successful at track that football is not a high priority

See COLEMAN on 8

Big Eight dominates picks in 1988 basketball draft

The Big Eight conference continued its basketball dominance this year, but this time it wasn't on the court.

Tuesday, five former Big Eight players were among the first 16 picks in the 1988 NBA draft held at Madison Square Garden in New York City.



Mark Derowitsch

Of course, the first pick of the draft was no surprise to anyone. Kansas' Danny Manning was selected by the lowly Los Angeles Clippers as this year's top choice. He's billed as the franchise's savior, but he should have a decent supporting cast (via the past two drafts) to make his task a little easier.

Manning led the Jayhawks to the NCAA championship and became only the second player in history to win the Player of the Year Award and Most Valuable Player of the NCAA tournament in the same year.

The Clippers also drafted guard Hersey Hawkins, but traded the former Bradley star to Philadelphia for Charles Smith of Pittsburgh.

But the Clippers weren't finished

yet. They traded forward Michael Cage to Seattle for first round draft choice (the No. 15 pick) Gary Grant of Michigan.

With the three first round choices along with Reggie Williams and Ken Norman (first round picks last year) the Clippers could sneak into the play-offs. All that's missing is a dominant big man, and former Creighton star Benoit Benjamin isn't the answer.

The next Big Eight pick was Kansas State guard Mitch Richmond to the Golden State Warriors with the fifth pick of the draft.

Richmond averaged 22.6 points while leading the Wildcats to the NCAA Midwest finals before losing to Kansas. Richmond is expected to play off guard for the Warriors.

Harvey Grant of Oklahoma, Iowa State's Jeff Grayer, and Derrick Chievous of Missouri were the other Big Eight selections in the initial round.

Grant was taken by Washington, but won't help the team catch the Boston Celtics, the Atlantic Division champs. The Bullets basically need a whole new team if they lose center Moses Malone, who is a free agent.

Grayer was picked up by Milwaukee and should help the Bucks get back into the race of the Central Division. Teamed with former

See DRAFT on 7