

NU women finish 2nd at regional

By Jeff Apel
Senior Editor

Nebraska women's gymnastics coach Rick Walton touted his team for the national championship after the Cornhuskers finished second at the Midwest regional.

Walton said he was pleased with Huskers' performance Saturday at Salt Lake City because they overcame a hostile crowd and some controversial judging.

Utah won the meet with a 192.80 score, followed by Nebraska at 192.40. Oklahoma and Arizona State tied for third at 190, followed by Arizona (188.90), Utah State with (188.30) and Brigham Young (187).

Walton said Nebraska should have won the meet. He said Utah used its home-floor advantage to edge the Huskers.

"We won the meet," Walton said.

"It was a road meet for us and Utah had the advantage of being at home. That's worth tenths of a point, and that's what they beat us by."

Walton said the narrow loss will not affect Nebraska as it prepares for the NCAA championships on April 14-15 in Athens, Ga. He said the Huskers proved they are legitimate NCAA title contenders by narrowly losing to Utah. The Utes won six consecutive NCAA titles from 1982 to 1987.

Nebraska will enter the 12-team NCAA competition seeded fourth in the final rotation. UCLA earned the competition's top seed, followed by defending national champion Alabama, Utah, the Huskers, Georgia and California-State Fullerton.

"I think we have a chance to win a national championship," Walton said. "If we go down and hit our routines and let things fall as they

will, we could win it."

Walton said Nebraska was plagued throughout the regional meet by controversial judging. He said the judges began the meet by awarding a wide range of scores for similar performances, then attempted to solve the problem by holding conferences before issuing their scores.

Walton said the judges hurt Nebraska because they gave the Huskers a low score each time a discrepancy arose. He said he attempted to solve the problem by talking with the meet referee, who told him that there was nothing she could do because the scores were within range.

"We lost every time," Walton said. "There were seven conferences -- four on the last event. We just didn't understand why all the scores were being conferred."

Walton said Nebraska could solve the problem by staging future re-

gional competitions at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. He said the Huskers have been burned by scoring for the last three regional competitions.

"This has been three years in a row," Walton said. "We need to put in a serious bid to host the regionals so we can get some better judging."

Walton said Nebraska's second-place finish was a total team effort. The Huskers were led by sophomore Lisa McCrady, who finished third in the all-around with a 38.60 score.

Utah's Patti Massoels and Oklahoma All-American Cassie Frey tied for the all-around title with 38.75 scores. Nebraska's Michele Bryant and Angie Burdette tied for fifth with 38.40 totals, while the Huskers' Tami Bair was 10th with a 38.10 mark.

"I think we did a good job," Walton said. "It was an outstanding meet for us."

Interim coach in unlikely position

SEATTLE (AP) - Steve Fisher has brought as much attention to the word interim as he has to the Michigan basketball team he has been coaching for the past five games.

The storybook career of interim ends tonight when Fisher's Michigan Wolverines face Seton Hall in the championship game of the NCAA tournament. The game, which will be televised by KMTV (channel 3) begins at 8:13 p.m.

The final game of the college basketball season is an unlikely place for an interim coach to be. Until last season it was just as an unlikely place for a Seton Hall team to be.

Fisher's story started 48 hours before the tournament began when Bill Frieder was fired by Michigan after agreeing to take over as the coach at Arizona State next season. Since then, the Wolverines have not only not lost but they have played their best basketball of the season and their best of any recent NCAA tournament.

"Timing is everything and I jumped in at the right time," Fisher said. "We have not been lucky in the tournament the last six years. Balls bounced off instead of in. We've gotten lucky but the players have put themselves in position to win games."

The five victories included Saturday's 83-81 victory against Illinois.

Seton Hall advanced to tonight's championship game by using a tough defense to defeat Duke 95-78. The Pirates' defense has shined throughout the tournament, as no team has managed to shoot better than 40 percent in the second half.

"We're able to wear teams down as the game gets on," Fisher Darryl Walker said.

Robinson, Rockenbauer qualify for NCAAs

By Darran Fowler
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's Renita Robinson and Nora Rockenbauer didn't waste any time qualifying for this year's outdoor track and field championships.

Robinson and Rockenbauer turned in NCAA-qualifying performances during Nebraska's first outdoor meet of the year at Tucson, Ariz. The Cornhusker men, behind double winner Mark Perry, finished second.

Nebraska won the women's competition with 188 points, followed by Arizona with 123. Colorado finished third with 92 1/2 points, while California-Irvine was fourth with 67 1/2 points.

Nebraska was second to Arizona in the men's competition. The Wildcats tallied 178 points compared to the Huskers' 151. California-Irvine was third with 115 1/2 points and Colorado was fourth with 102 1/2.

Robinson, who qualified for her

second national meet, won the triple jump with a leap of 41 feet 5 1/4 inches. Rockenbauer, a freshman from Budapest, Hungary, won the javelin with a throw of 187-4.

Nebraska assistant and distance coach Jay Dirksen said he considers Rockenbauer to be a contender to win the javelin at the NCAA meet in Provo, Utah.

"She's an outstanding javelin thrower," Dirksen said. "It was a good opener for her, but she's (going to) throw a lot further than that by season's end."

Dirksen said because more teams compete outdoors than indoors, the standards for qualifying outdoors are more difficult. But based on the performance of some athletes in their first outdoor competition, Dirksen expects others to soon qualify.

Dirksen said junior Joanne Gomez missed qualifying in the triple jump by one centimeter and the women's

400-meter relay team of Tanya Lidy, Linetta Wilson, Ximena Restrepo and Prema Govindan missed qualifying by one-tenth of a second. Their winning time was 45.44 seconds.

"They had only been outdoors one time to practice their handoffs and so they should qualify," Dirksen said.

In addition to winning the 400 relay, Lidy and Wilson also contributed team points in other events.

Lidy, a freshman from Pampa, Texas, won the 100 in 11.96 and the 200 in 24.89. She also combined with Restrepo, Susan Hedrick and Wilson to win the 1,600 relay in 3:48.04. Wilson won the 400 hurdles in 1:00.23.

Teammate Sammie Resh won the 5,000 in 17:20.84.

"We have a tremendous women's team with a lot of quality athletes and depth," Dirksen said.

The men's team was without some

of its key performers and had just one entrant in some events which hurt the Huskers in the team scoring, Dirksen said.

"It was a pretty close meet," he said. "The women pretty much dominated, but the men's was a lot closer than the score looked."

Perry won the 100 and 200, leading the men with times of 10.48 and 21.43.

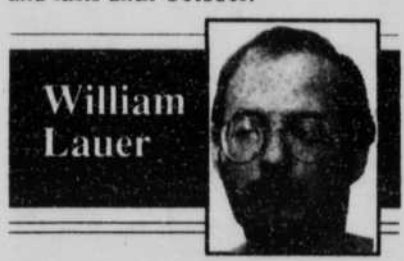
Also winning for the Huskers were Scott Parker in the triple jump with a leap of 48-3 1/2 and Joe Kirby in the steeplechase with a time of 8:59.61.

In addition, Jeff Hooper won the discus with a heave of 176-4 and Roddy James captured the javelin with a throw of 204-4. Ken Waller, Dale Burrage, Jerry Marsee and Mark Jackson teamed to win the 1,600 relay in 3:11.03.

"We got off to a good start and we were really encouraged by what we saw," Dirksen said. "We have two really fine teams."

Cards will win N.L. East without Cox

Hope is the byword for baseball fans today. With only 162 games left to play, all the things that could go wrong with a team haven't yet. The Major League fantasy begins again and lasts until October.



William
Lauer

Of course that fantasy will be more pleasant for some fans than others. But the race for the National League Eastern Division pennant should be exciting enough to chase the boogiemans out of Cubs' and Phillies' fans worst nightmares.

Step aside New York Mets. Here comes the 1989 N.L. Eastern Division champions -- the St. Louis Cardinals.

Starting pitching is the only weakness on this Cardinal team. Danny Cox is out for the season with a blown elbow but the Cards still have a respectable rotation that includes Jose DeLeon, Joe Magrane and Scott Terry.

This is the healthiest staff Cardi-

nals manager Whitey Herzog has had on opening day in years. Count on him to work his rotation magic.

DeLeon showed promise last season of becoming the pitcher he was predicted to be since his early years at Pittsburgh. Look for him to win 20 games this season. The bullpen has solid middle relief with Ken Dayley and Frank DiPino and closer Todd Worrell rarely falters.

The batting order is the best in the majors with an incredible balance of speed and power. With Vince Coleman, Ozzie Smith, Willie McGee, Pedro Guerrero, Tom Brunansky, Terry Pendleton, Tony Pena and Jose Oquendo, the Cards will lead the majors in stolen bases, and lead the league in visiting home runs.

That lineup also includes three Gold Gloves. They'll stop scoring as well as produce runs.

But the Cardinals had better not look over their shoulders or the Mets might slip by.

The Mets still have the dominate pitching that has made them the decade's winningest team. The rotation of Dwight Gooden, David Cone, Ron Darling, Sid Fernandez and Bob Ojeda has only one weakness -- the defense behind them.

Manager Davey Johnson insists on playing Howard Johnson at third base, no matter how many teeth he'll lose, for another season and moving Gregg Jeffries out of position to second base. If this doesn't work Johnson plans to give HoJo more time at shortstop. Center fielders Lenny Dykstra and Mookie Wilson could run 15 40-yard sprints a game to field grounders missed at short.

The once feared power lineup of the Mets has wasted with age. Gary Carter's bat has no more long-ball.

Darryl "Mr. Attitude" Strawberry and Kevin McReynolds carried the team through some lean low scoring summer months last season and will have to do it again this year.

The Mets have the pitching and enough offense to repeat as division champs, but inconsistency in the field and the heralded tension in the clubhouse will stop them.

The spoiler this season will be the Pittsburgh Pirates. A great defensive team with catcher Mike LaValliere, shortstop Rafael Belliard, second basemen Jose Lind and center fielder Andy Van Slyke up the middle, will not allow many cheap runs against them.

The Pirate pitching is solid with starters Doug Drabek, Mike Dunne and relievers Jim Gott and Jeff Robinson.

Offense will be a problem in Pitts-

burgh. The Pirate pitching staff combined for more RBIs than the Pirate shortstops last season (17 and 16 respectively).

Switch hitter Bobby Bonilla is an impressive offensive threat but needs help. Van Slyke is as good as Strawberry against right handers but can't hit lefties. Look for some low-scoring games in the heat of July.

The enigma of the National League East will once again be the

Montreal Expos. Loaded with offense players including Tim Lincecum, Andres Galarraga, Hubie Brooks and Tim Wallach, they will be a fun team to watch.

The Expos finally improved their defense with the addition of shortstop Spike Owens. Their pitching is at the middle of the pack with the average Kevin Gross acquired to complement the average Dennis Martinez, Bryn Smith and Pascual Perez. The bullpen isn't deep and will lose some games.

The most painful thing in all baseball is to be a Chicago Cubs fan in the winter. That's when the Cubs trade their proven, talented young players for unproven pitchers.

So long Rafael Palmeiro, hello Mitch Williams from Texas; a reported 90 mph plus hurler who occasionally gets it over the plate. Of

course if Lee Smith was still in Chicago instead of Calvin Schiraldi (who knows where Al Nipper will be), the Cubs might have a bullpen. The Cubs cooked Rich "the Goose" Gossage last season and are smart enough not to want leftovers.

There is some promise on the staff, however. Rick Sutcliffe has lost weight and Greg Maddux starts the season with a fresh arm. Maddux shouldn't poop-out after the All-Star

break this season. The brightest spot will be rookie Mike Harkey. Harkey will start the season with the Cubs' AAA club in Des Moines because of a rocky spring training, but he'll be in the big leagues soon and win Rookie of the Year honors.

The Cubs' lineup doesn't have the power of years past, with Andre Dawson being their only legitimate long-ball threat. But the Cubs will be fun to watch with the best defensive infield in the major leagues. Ryne Sandberg will win his 10th-consecutive Gold Glove and 1989 is the season Shawon Dunston will replace Ozzie Smith as the best shortstop in the league.

The only pain that could rival being a Cub fan is being a Phillies fan in 1989. Philadelphia will be the worst baseball team this season.

The Phillies' starting rotation won 19 games in 1988. Their best second baseman, Juan Samuel, plays in centerfield. Their double-play combination of Dickie Thon and Tommy Herr has the range of an orthopedic rehabilitation nurse. My worst fear this season is turning on the television some late summer evening and the only game on is Philadelphia against Atlanta.

The predicted finish:

	Wins	Losses	Games back
St. Louis	102	60	--
New York	95	67	7
Pittsburgh	85	77	17
Montreal	79	83	23
Chicago	71	91	31
Philadelphia	62	100	37

Lauer is a junior news-editorial major from Lincoln and is a Daily Nebraskan photographer and baseball predictor.

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