

# Gymnasts want success at UCLA Invite

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Editor

Nebraska senior gymnast Patrick Kirksey doesn't want to leave California without a title.

Kirksey said his top goal Saturday is to lead the Nebraska men's gymnastics team to the team title at the UCLA Invitational. He said he is placing heavy emphasis on the meet because it is one of the few competitions that Nebraska has not been overly successful in.

Kirksey and his teammates will try to change their fortunes when they travel to Los Angeles to compete in the invitational, which includes six ranked teams. In addition to top-ranked Nebraska and fifth-ranked UCLA, the meet's field includes fourth-ranked Minnesota, 10th-ranked Arizona State, 11th-ranked New Mexico and 19th-

ranked Illinois.

Nebraska will tune up for the UCLA Invitational by facing Cal State-Fullerton tonight.

Kirksey admitted that he feels somewhat frustrated by Nebraska's lack of success in the UCLA Invitational. The competition has been dominated by the Bruins, who have claimed seven of the last eight team titles.

Illinois ended UCLA's dominance last season by earning the team crown.

"I don't know if we've ever won the UCLA Invitational," said Kirksey, the defending NCAA all-around champion. "I know we haven't won it since I've been here, so we really want to win it this year."

Nebraska men's gymnastics coach Francis Allen said two factors have prevented the Huskers from winning the UCLA Invitational. He said those

factors include the meet's competition and the home-floor edge that the Bruins enjoy.

Allen said UCLA is not an easy place to perform.

"It's hard to go to UCLA and win," Allen said, "but we need to."

"Our meet will pretty much be a good indicator of who is the best team in the country."

Allen said UCLA will counter the presence of Kirksey and fellow all-arounders Bob Stelter, Mark Warburton and Trent Dimas with Scott Keswick, Chainey Umphrey and All-America selection Chris Waller. Kirksey and his teammates will have their hands full against the trio of Bruins, Allen said.

"Patrick won't want to get beat, but they will battle him," Allen said. "It will probably just come down to whoever performs the best."

UCLA men's gymnastics coach Art Shurlock said the team race will come down to whoever has the most depth. He said depth will be a key because all of the teams involved have superior gymnasts.

Shurlock said UCLA will rely heavily on Umphrey, Waller and Keswick.

"Those guys are used to this type of competition, and they're dependable," he said. "They know what it takes."

Shurlock said his team's ranking is misleading because UCLA scored 278.675 points in its only meet of the season. Because official rankings have not been released, team scores are the only determining factor for national rankings.

Shurlock said UCLA is capable of scoring much higher than it did in its

season-opening win against Cal State-Fullerton. The Bruins will need to, as Nebraska tallied 282.90 points en route to whipping Ohio State on Sunday.

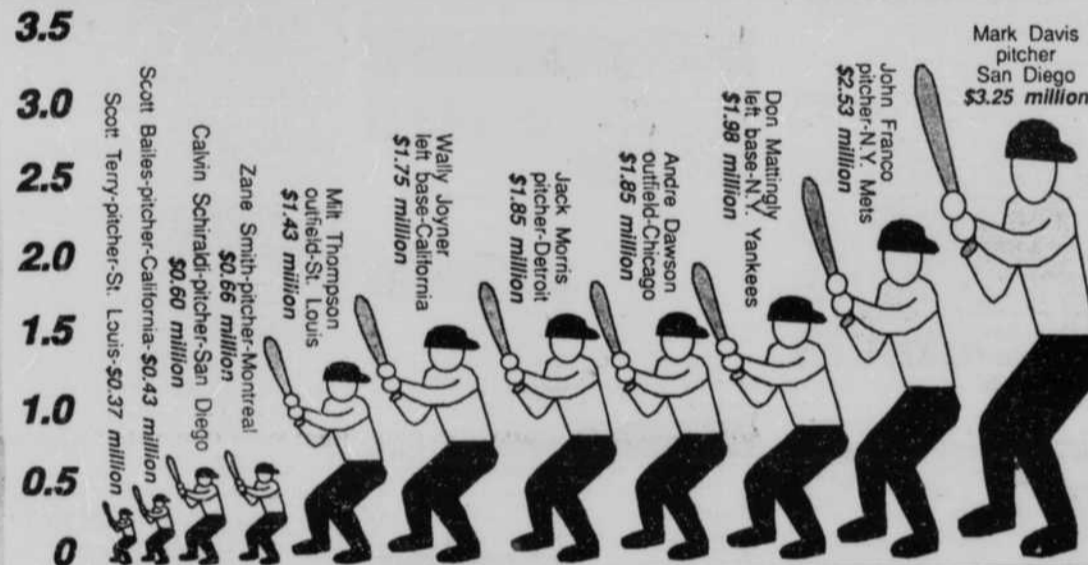
"We scored (278.675) and had a lot of misses," Shurlock said. "We can score a lot higher than that."

"We just need to be a little more consistent, and hopefully we will be."

Allen said Nebraska needs to be consistent in order to defeat Cal State-Fullerton. He said the Titans are in the same class with Oklahoma, a team which the 6-0 Huskers defeated twice this season.

"Cal State-Fullerton is probably not as strong as UCLA, but they are about as good as Oklahoma," Allen said. "I don't think Cal State is at Ohio State's level either, but it's always more difficult to perform before judges from other regions."

## Baseball Salaries for the Upcoming Season



Figures in millions of dollars and rounded to the nearest hundredth.

Source: Associated Press

## Wrestling coach worried about next two matches

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

Although the Big Eight wrestling championships are still more than a month away, Nebraska's wrestling team is getting restless.

But, Coach Tim Neumann said, the Cornhuskers' meet against the University of Nebraska at Omaha tonight and Saturday's meet against Northern Iowa should lessen some of the anxiety.

At least he hopes so. "We need to get through this weekend's schedule," he said.

Neumann said he doesn't think this will be a problem, especially after last week's win against North Dakota and North Dakota State -- ranked fourth and fifth, respectively, in Division II.

Tonight's dual is the third consecutive for the No. 4-ranked Huskers against a highly ranked Division II team. The Mavericks are ranked No. 2 by Amateur Wrestling News.

Neumann said UNO's talent concerns him.

"They've got one of their best teams in seven years," he said. "UNO normally gears up for this dual. They look at a dual like this as an opportunity to knock off a pretty good Division I team, and they really get after it."

UNO has not beaten Nebraska since 1978 when the Mavericks won 26-12

in Lincoln.

But Saturday's meet is against an even scarier opponent for Neumann -- Northern Iowa, a team Neumann hasn't beaten in his four years as Nebraska's coach.

The last Husker win against the Panthers came in 1984.

"We're really looking forward to the Northern Iowa match," he said. "They're one of the few teams we haven't been able to beat... yet."

Saturday's match is the 11th time in the last 16 duals against Division I opponents that the Huskers have faced teams ranked in the top 20. Nebraska is 6-3-1 in those matches, which includes a 1-0 default against Iowa State in the consolation round of the National Team Championships on Jan. 13.

Notes:

Layne Billings, Nebraska's top wrestler at the 142-pound weight class, has decided to quit the team. Billings had been slowed by a dislocated rib during the past several weeks.

Neumann said Billings' performance was slowed by the injury. "Priority changes" in Billings' life added to his decision, he said.

"It was good to have him in the program," Neumann said. "He just wasn't sure he wanted to wrestle anymore."

Billings, a junior math education major, plans to complete his degree a year from May, Neumann said.

## NU men snap road losing streak with win against CU

From Staff Reports

Two years ago when Nebraska beat Colorado in Boulder, Colo., it would be the last time the Cornhuskers would win a Big Eight road game.

Until Wednesday night.

Seven Huskers scored in double figures to lead Nebraska past Colorado 91-82 at the CU Events Center, snapping a 14-game conference road losing streak.

Nebraska coach Danny Nee called the effort was "a solid, super win."

"We weren't going to be denied tonight," he said. "Everyone that played, played well for us."

Clifford Scales led the Huskers with 16 points, while Ray Richardson added 14. Carl Hayes and Dapreis Owens each added 13 points for Nebraska, while Rich King and Richard van Poelgeest each scored 11.

Colorado's Shaun Vandiver and Stevie Wise led all scorers with 20 points each, while Reggie Morton added 17.

Eighteen of Wise's points came in the first half.

Colorado jumped to a 46-8 lead

early in the game and led by as many as nine points in the first half. But the Huskers chipped away at the Buffaloes' lead throughout the remainder of the first half.

During one stretch toward the end of the first half, the Huskers outscored Colorado 13-1.

A three-point shot by Nebraska's Carl Hayes tied the game 41-41 about three minutes before halftime. Another three-point shot -- this time by Chris Cresswell -- gave Nebraska a 44-42 lead.

The Huskers led 48-45 at halftime. Nebraska extended its lead by as much as 13 points in the second half. The Buffaloes came to within two points, but they never led.

The Huskers shot 56 percent from the field -- only the second time this season Nebraska has shot better than 50 percent from the field on the road.

Nee said the biggest factor in the game was the Buffaloes' free-throw shooting. Colorado made only half of its free throws in the game.

"Our kids were really together

See HUSKERS on 14

## Major league's arguments irrational; pay should be based on performance

There they go again. Yes, fans, once more the major league baseball owners and players are arguing with each other.

This time the owners are serious. The owners are threatening to lock the players out of spring training camps if the two sides can't reach an agreement.

Excuse me, but this seems a little irrational. Even though the players won't be practicing or playing, they still have to be paid, don't they? Personally, if I were an owner I'd rather pay a player \$3 million to play baseball than sit at home watching reruns of "Mister Ed" or whatever baseball players watch.

This leads to another question: Why are baseball players paid so much anyway?

It seems odd that some 25-year-old guy gets paid \$1 million to \$3 million a year to play in the afternoon sun compared to a 40-year-old college professor who is lucky to get \$50,000 a year to educate the future leaders of the country. College professors can't use rain as an excuse for a day off either.

Since the whole pay thing is a

major issue between the players and owners, I've decided to step in and solve the whole problem for a small sum which still is being discussed (arbitration talks start tomorrow).

These proposals are designed to do two things: Save the owners a lot of money and make the players do something to actually earn their salaries.

First, pitchers should be paid only one fourth of what other players make.

Pitchers only play every four or five days, so why should they make just as much or more than their teammates who play every day? Of course, they can receive a few bonuses along the way.

A shutout would be worth a grand or two and every five wins should merit a few extra bucks. But it's absurd that some pitchers make twice as much as their teammates for only a fraction of the playing time.

Designated hitters only should be paid about half as much as the everyday players. After all, they only bat four or five times a game and once in a while put in a token appearance in the outfield to give fans the illusion that they actually have talent.

Designated hitters don't need the money anyway. A designated hitter is just a fat, over-the-hill player trying to hang on to what's left of his career because he doesn't know how to do anything else.

Dave Parker is a prime example of this.

Catchers should be paid twice as much as anyone else. Anyone who has to squat in the dirt for nine innings and get run into by the likes of Bo Jackson deserves big bucks. Besides, catchers need extra money for arthritis treatment on their knees after their career is over.

Anyone who plays for the New York Yankees deserves at least \$2 million. They also should be given a complimentary mental health care plan for having to put up with owner George Steinbrenner.

Yankees managers should be given a free pass to the front of the line at the local unemployment office -- they'll need it.

Chicago Cub players also deserve a little extra money for holding up the reputation of being the league's biggest losers.

All other players should have their salaries based on performance. This way a player can get a raise every year if he increases production.

This solution also works the other way. If performance drops, so does the paycheck.

By basing pay on performance, players will put out more of an effort. Also, a player no longer will tell the manager he can't play because his cat (girlfriend, wife, son/daughter, teammate or all of the above) scratched his pinky, and

See BICKERING on 14

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