

Gymnasts take 2nd in championship meet

Stanford upsets top-ranked NU

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Nebraska's best ever was only good enough for second place in Friday night's NCAA Men's Gymnastics team championships at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The top-ranked Cornhuskers scored 288.95, which beat the Nebraska record of 288.15 set in 1988, and the NCAA record of 288.40 set earlier this season by Stanford.

But No. 2 Stanford churned out a 289.575, shattering its own record by more than one point to win the school's first national championship in gymnastics in front of 5,059 fans.

The Cardinal was led by Jair Lynch, who scored 59.025 in the all-around competition. Lynch's lowest score of the night was a 9.675 on the rings.

Third-ranked Ohio State finished third with 286.250.

Nebraska coach Francis Allen was impressed with the talent displayed by the three teams, which were narrowed from an eight-team field in Thursday night's opening competition.

"This is one of the best college gymnastics meets I've been in," Allen said. "The most important thing, from my perspective, is that Stanford took the meet away from us. We didn't give it away."

Nebraska's second-place finish was the fifth time the Huskers have been national runners-up. Nebraska has won seven national titles.

Nebraska scored above 48 on every event but the rings. The Huskers averaged 9.632 per event, while Stanford gymnasts averaged 9.6525 per event.

Nebraska's 48.50 on the pommel

horse was good for a new school record, and several Huskers turned in career- and season-high scores Friday night, including Dennis Harrison (9.85, parallel bars), Sumner Darling (9.525, rings), Richard Grace (9.775, parallel bars), Burkett Powell (9.65, parallel bars) and Richard Kieffer (9.825, high bar).

Harrison said he had no regrets about finishing second in the team race.

"This is the worst feeling I've ever had after a gymnastics meet," he said. "But we did our best. I'm proud of the whole team in general. We showed our character out there tonight."

Allen agreed. "I couldn't be much happier if we won," he said. "They gave me the character I thought they had, and people who were here tonight had to be pleased with what they saw."

Stanford coach Sadao Hamada said the championship was a team effort, and that the 289.575 was "pretty much what the team projected" at the beginning of the season.

Cardinal senior Tim Ryan said he thought the meet was one of the most exciting ones he had ever been involved in.

"The team came together, and that's what makes it so sweet," Ryan said. "That and beating Nebraska in its own gym."

Ryan said Nebraska was very consistent throughout the meet, and that Stanford missed more often, but picked up the slack with good individual performances.

"We missed a few routines (Friday night), but when we hit, there's nothing more to be said," Ryan said.



Shaun Sartin/DN

Nebraska gymnast Dennis Harrison performs on the parallel bars in Saturday's all-around competition at the NCAA championships at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Harrison finished fifth in the competition, earning All-America honors.

1992 NCAA men's gymnastics meet results

TEAM FINALS

1. Stanford 289.575
2. Nebraska 288.95
3. Ohio State 286.250

EVENT CHAMPIONS

- Pommel horse—Che Bowers, Nebraska
 Floor exercise—Brian Winkler, Michigan
 Rings—Scott Keswick, UCLA
 Vault—Jason Hebert, Syracuse
 Parallel bars—Dom Minicucci, Temple
 High bar—Jair Lynch, Stanford



All-Around Champion: John Roethlisberger, Minnesota

Scott Maurer/DN

Tired Husker claims 5th in gymnastic competition

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Dennis Harrison sat in the interview room Saturday afternoon, sucking on his trademark post-competition lollipop.

Harrison, a sophomore who led the Cornhusker men's gymnastics team throughout the season, had just finished fifth in the NCAA all-around championship competition with a combined compulsory and optional score of 113.950.

He was exhausted. "I tried pretty hard to give it away," Harrison said. "It was really tough coming back today."

It was the third time Harrison had competed in 42 hours, counting Thursday night's team preliminaries and Friday night's team championships, in which Nebraska competed against Stanford and Ohio State.

"I think everyone ran out of gas,

especially the ones who were in the team competition last night," Harrison said. "Everyone comes in here to put everything they have into the team title. This was very tiring."

Minnesota's John Roethlisberger won the all-around title with 116.075, capturing the championship for the second consecutive year. He is only the ninth gymnast to win the all-around title more than once.

Scott Keswick of UCLA was second, while Stanford's Tim Ryan and Jair Lynch were third and fourth, respectively.

Nebraska's Sumner Darling finished 18th in the competition with a score of 109.750, while Husker Richard Grace was 23rd with a 55.975 in the optionals only.

Lynch, who generated an all-around score of 59.025 during Friday night's team finals, agreed that the team race was a factor in Satur-

day's competition.

"Physically, I'm OK," Lynch said. "Mentally, that was a problem. I think it was because of the pressure of last night."

Roethlisberger said this year's championship was better than last year's.

"Any time you go up against these guys, it's tough, because they're great gymnasts," Roethlisberger said. "I had a bit of an advantage because I didn't have to compete in the team finals."

Fred Roethlisberger, Minnesota's coach and John's father, said he was proud of his son's performance.

"I noticed right away, as soon as John got off the high bar and he knew he had the award, he turned to the team and pointed to them like, 'Hey, guys, this is for all of us,'" he said.

5 NU All-Americans churned out at meet

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Che Bowers saved his best for last. Bowers, a sophomore Cornhusker gymnast, scored a school-record 9.90 to win the individual title in the pommel horse Saturday night in the NCAA individual championships at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The mark broke Bowers' previous career-high of 9.85, which he scored April 11 at the West Regional in Albuquerque, N.M.

It also paved the way for four other Huskers to earn All-America status by finishing in the top six in their respective events.

Bowers said he was pleased with his performance in the three-day championship meet at the sports center.

"Thursday, Friday and Saturday, my scores went up," he said. "I just felt better each time. All the work has paid off."

Sumner Darling, Richard Kieffer and Josh Saegert all set career-high scores Saturday night. Darling and

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— Bowers, NU men's gymnast

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 Saegert scored 9.825 and 9.80 on the parallel bars, respectively.

Kieffer, Bowers and Dennis Harrison became All-Americans on the high bar, finishing second, fifth and sixth respectively.

Darling's second-place finish on the parallel bars, coupled with Saegert's fourth-place finish, earned Nebraska two All-Americans in the event.

Other individual champions included Michigan's Brian Winkler (floor exercise); Scott Keswick, UCLA (rings); Jason Hebert, Syracuse (vault); Dom Minicucci, Temple (parallel bar); and Jair Lynch, Stanford (high bar).