

Former Nebraska gymnast hopes Barcelona is golden

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of profiles on Nebraska athletes, past and present, headed to the 1992 Olympics.

By Jeff Singer
Senior Editor

Former Nebraska gymnast Trent Dimas is hoping his reunion with Nebraska Gymnastics Coach Francis Allen is a golden experience.

Dimas and Allen will be teaming up in pursuit of a gold medal for the U.S. Gymnastics team in next month's Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain.

Dimas earned a spot on the squad when he finished fifth earlier this month in the U.S. gymnastics trials at Baltimore.

Allen, who has helped lead the Cornhuskers to seven national titles, was chosen by the U.S. Olympic Committee to head the 1992

olympians.

Dimas contributed to Allen's last national championship in 1990, as he was an All-American in the high bar and floor exercises.

But Dimas left Nebraska after his All-American freshmen year to return to his hometown of Albuquerque, N.M.

He said there are many reasons why he left Nebraska to return home.

"I wanted to compete internationally, but

having to compete in so many collegiate meets wouldn't allow me to do that," Dimas said. "I wanted to go and see the rest of the world."

Allen said Dimas would have become a better gymnast to compete in Spain if he had remained at Nebraska.

"Most people who aren't in a regimented program usually don't do that well," Allen said.

See GYMNAST on 10

USC can't stand up to Nebraska tradition

Usually when a column is written about Nebraska athletics in the Daily Nebraskan, it's filled with negatives about Cornhusker sports.

Personally, my columns have often been the fuel to the athletic program's fire with my critical comments concerning our beloved Nebraska teams.



Jeff Singer

But I've decided that I'm going to take a week off from writing my pessimistic views in order to defend the Huskers from some harsh comments that the program has recently received from someone outside the basement of the Nebraska Union.

Mike Garrett, an associate athletic director at the University of Southern California, recently blasted Nebraska in an interview conducted by the Omaha World-Herald.

Being a native of the Los Angeles area, I was offended when I read last Wednesday's World-Herald and saw Garrett's remarks concerning Nebraska.

After being rejected as a finalist in Nebraska's athletic director search, Garrett acted just like you'd expect a rich, stuck-up USC person to react — by whining.

Garrett basically said that moving to Nebraska's program from USC would be a step down.

Question: Why would a person be so upset about not getting a job if it's such a demise in status from the position you already hold?

After all, Garrett is in charge of such sports vital to USC's athletic program as water polo, golf, swimming, volleyball and tennis, all of which probably have a total attendance this season in double digits (I didn't want to use actual numbers and confuse the USC people who haven't taken the popular Southern Cal course — "Numbers 101: Learning to count with your shoes on").

In an analysis of Garrett's comments to the World-Herald, the intelligence of the administrators at Southern Cal really stood out.

●Comment No. 1: "I think across the board, they don't play all the sports we play and expect to win at all the sports."

To begin with, the Huskers compete in 21 sports, while USC participates in 20.

Secondly, the Huskers won seven Big Eight championships this season, compared to USC's grand total of one Pac-10 title.

●Comment No. 2: "If you talk about football over the years, I would think USC and Notre Dame are the names you talk about. Nebraska, I think they're in the top five, top 10 in the country. I don't equate them to a Notre Dame or USC."

Well let's see, the Huskers finished 9-2-1 last season following another Big Eight title, while improving on its NCAA record strings of 30 consecutive winning seasons and 23 straight trips to bowl games.

The Trojans on the other hand wound up with a tremendous 3-8 record last year. That gives them a total of zero consecutive winning seasons, and their last trip to a bowl came after the 1990 season, in which USC played in the ever-important John Hancock Bowl. (Just think, at the same time the Huskers were getting some sun in Florida, USC got to experience the excitement of El Paso, Texas at Christmas-time. Wow!).

●Comment No. 3: "It's a step down (Nebraska athletics), because you have to work harder to make that program go."

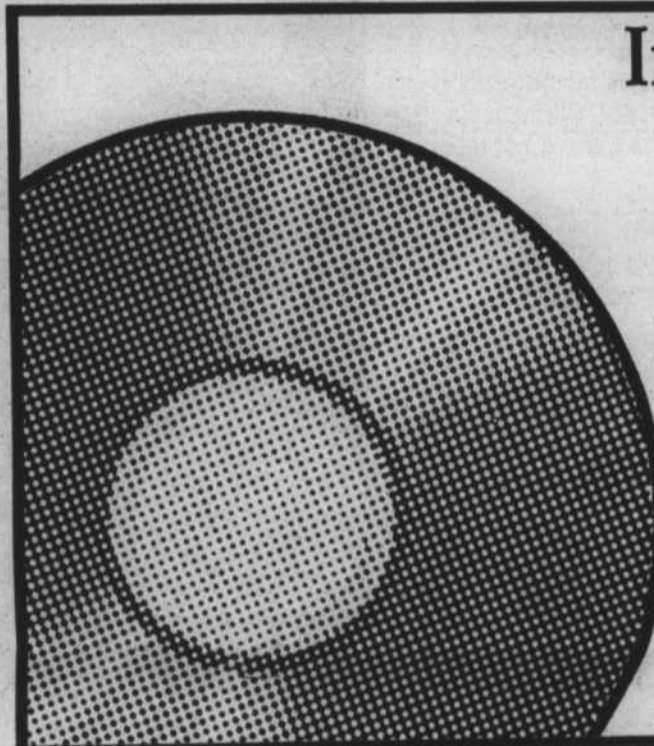
I think the true test of an athletic program is seeing how many athletes can succeed not only on the field, but in the classroom as well.

Southern Cal has produced 19 football academic All-Americans in its history, which isn't bad for your average school. But Nebraska again has set the NCAA standard in this category, even above much-heralded Notre Dame, as the Huskers have had 45 players stand out both on and off the field. Thanks for another valid comment, Mike.

Garrett's bitter words about Nebraska helped make die-hard Husker fans' stomachs turn, but also made it easy to see why he's one of the people in charge at USC — the University for Spoiled Children.

Next time Mike, take your loss like a man and leave the Nebraska heckling for the trained professionals in the Daily Nebraskan's sports department.

Singer is a senior news-editorial and political science major and is the Summer Daily Nebraskan's copy desk editor and a senior sports reporter.



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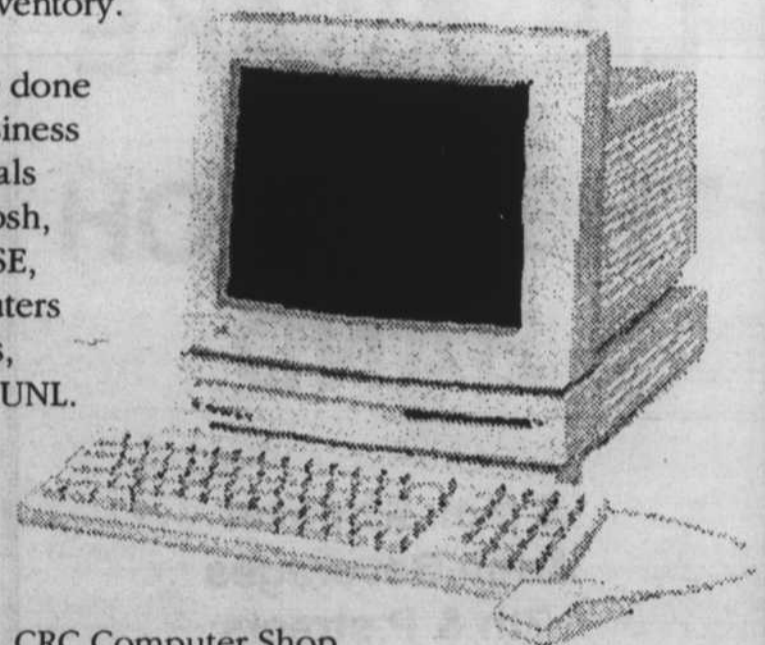
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