

Huskers get commitments from four more

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

With only two days remaining until recruits sign their letters of intent, the Nebraska football team hauled in four of the bluest blue-chip athletes in the nation Monday.

Grant Wistrom, a USA TODAY All-American and Super Prep Midlands defensive player of the year from Webb City, Mo., said he had chosen Nebraska over Michigan.

Wistrom played defensive end in high school and will likely be an outside linebacker at Nebraska.

In addition to Wistrom, the Cornhuskers also got a commitment from Shevin Wiggins, a tailback from Bradenton (Fla.) Manatee High School, the same school that Huskers Tyrone Williams, Tommie Frazier and Justin Stephens attended.

Brian Knuckles, a highly touted running back from Coffeyville (Kan.) Junior College, also committed to Nebraska, Coffeyville coach Skip Foster said.

The Daily Nebraskan has learned that the Huskers also received a commitment from Amp Campbell, a USA TODAY All-American defensive back from Sarasota (Fla.) Riverview High School.

The four new commitments bring the number of players expected to sign Wednesday with the Cornhuskers to 19. Tight end Sheldon Jackson from LaVerne (Calif.) High School also committed this weekend.

The Huskers are allowed to give out as many as 25 scholarships, but recruiting coordinator Dave Gillespie said Nebraska would probably offer 23.

Wiggins, a 6-foot, 168-pound tailback, ran for 2,265 yards in his senior season at Manatee. He was named the Class 5A player of the year in Florida and was Florida's all-class player of the year, Manatee coach Joe Kinnan said.

"He's as good a runner as Tommie Frazier is a quarterback," Kinnan said. "He is the best tailback we have ever had here, and he is for real."

Kinnan said Wiggins was still awaiting his entrance exam results.

Knuckles—who was the No. 2 rusher in the nation among junior college running backs in 1992—gained more than 3,000 yards in two seasons, Coach Skip Foster said.

"If he's not the top tailback in junior college football, then he's in the top two or three," Foster said of the 5-foot-11-inch, 200-pounder. "He has 4.5 speed and was a two-time junior college All-American."

Campbell, a 6-foot-1-inch, 175-pounder, scored 23 touchdowns in four years as a kick returner for Riverview High School.

"As far as getting a high school athlete, Amp is as good as they come," Riverview coach John Sprague said.

Wistrom led Webb City to the 1993 Class 4A state title in Missouri by making 122 tackles and eight sacks and causing nine fumbles.

"I can't say enough good things about Grant," Webb City coach Kurt Thompson said. "He's as good as any player that we have ever had. I think if things go right for him, he can have a very good career at Nebraska."

The 6-foot-5-inch, 225-pound Wistrom, who carries a 3.95 grade point average, said he was impressed with Nebraska.

"The coaches were great," Wistrom said.

NU gymnast hopes to return to NCAAs

Duval wants trek to be with team

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

For the past two years, junior gymnast Nicole Duval has seen her name placed on numerous individual awards.

This year, she'd rather see her name alongside the names of her teammates at the NCAA meet.

As a freshman, Duval finished in a 29th-place tie with fellow Husker Martha Jenkins by scoring a 37.60 in the all-around at the NCAA meet.

"I would like to get back there—but as a team," Duval said. "It was hard as an individual. You don't have a team behind you. I think this is the year we can get there."

Cornhusker coach Dan Kendig said he knows Duval will do her best to get the team to the championships.

In fact, she might try too hard.

"Nicole is such a good team person," Kendig said, "that she is sometimes a little tough on herself because she feels like she is letting the team down. Sometimes it takes her a little while to get over a mistake. She is so motivated and intense. And all that shows is that she cares."

Duval said she used to care almost too much. When she made a mistake, she said, it wore on her.

"Now I'm focusing more outward on the team than on myself," she said. "If I fall, there is nothing I can do except go on."

"If I mess up, all it does is make me want to get back up there and hit it even harder. It makes me mad."

The 5-foot, 3-inch native of Lincoln hit her routines as often as any Husker gymnast during her first two seasons.

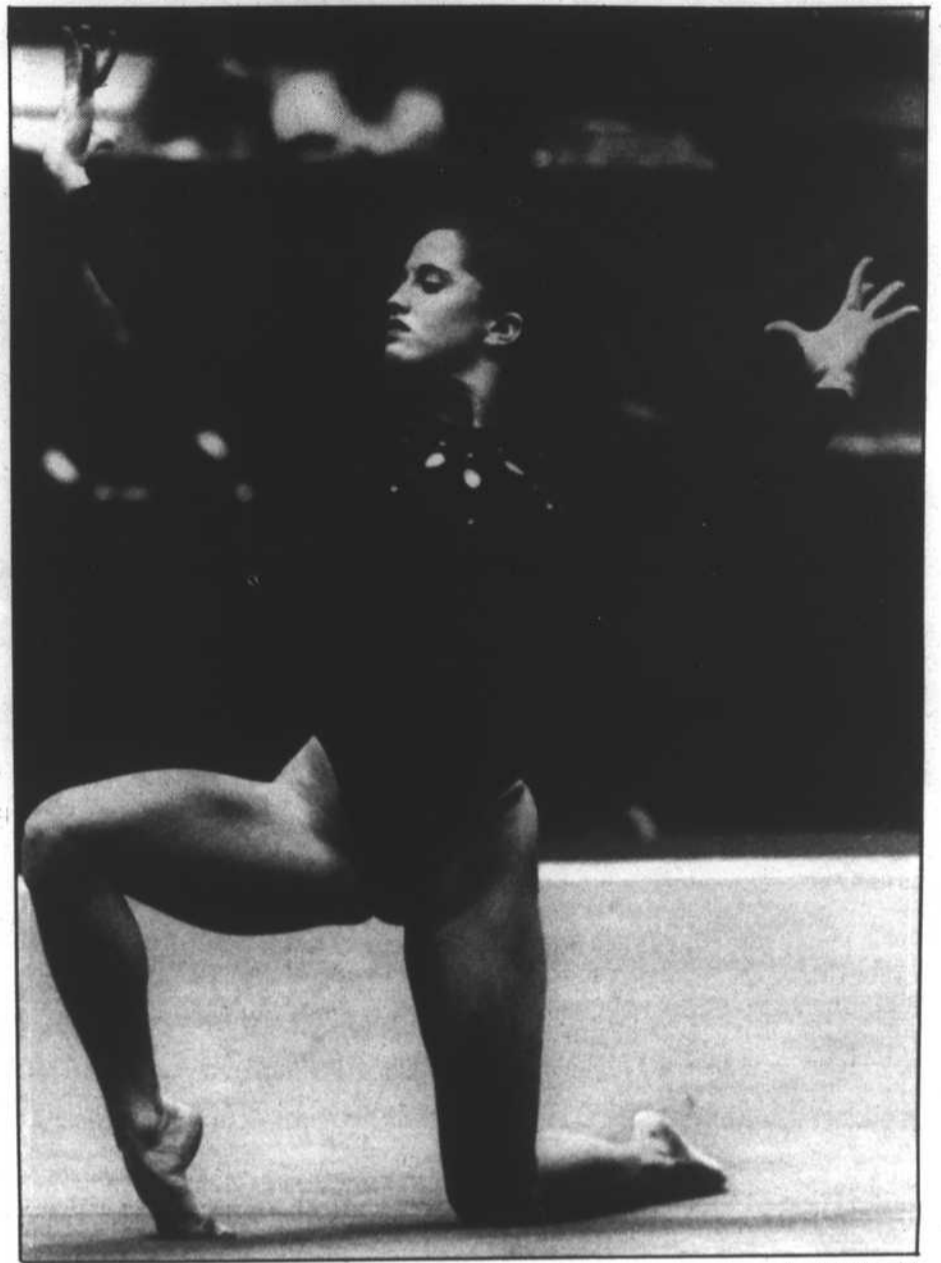
After qualifying for the NCAA meet her freshman year, Duval, who was named Big Eight gymnast of the month for January 1993, set five personal records—including two school marks last season. On Feb. 5, she shattered the school record with a 9.9 in the floor exercise and one week later broke the record on the balance beam with a 9.9.

She was named All-Big Eight in the balance beam, uneven bars and the all-around competition. Duval, who has a 3.93 grade-point average, was also named a third-team Academic All-American.

The recognition "is kind of icing on the cake," Duval said. "You see 'Academic All-American' and you see your school there, too. So it's not just for you. It's for your school, too."

Duval said the sixth-ranked Huskers have more of a chance to represent their school at Nationals this year because of the tough competition between team members—something that had been missing for the last two years.

"This is the first year we have had to make the lineup," she said. "In the past, they just



Jon Waller/DN

Junior gymnast Nicole Duval performs her floor exercise routine during Nebraska's meet with Southeast Missouri State earlier this year. Duval, who qualified for the NCAA Championships during her freshman year, said she "would like to get back there—but as a team."

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—Kendig
Nebraska women's gymnastics coach

put you in if you were healthy. Now there are so many people who can do so much."

Duval has made the lineup in all three meets for the undefeated Huskers this season. Her best all-around score, a 38.45 on Jan. 22 against Southeast Missouri State, ranked her 17th in the nation in the latest standings.

She said the closeness of the gymnasts

should help the Huskers prepare for the big meets, including the Big Eight Championships in March, which could lead to the Midwest Regionals and the NCAA Championships.

"We set our goals at making Nationals," Duval said. "That's the goal of any team. We want to get there because it's the big meet you strive for every year. I think we can do it."

Bills' determination in Super Bowl loss wins respect

Who cares about the repeat?
It seems like in this era of sports dynasties, anyone can repeat.

The Buffalo Bills accomplished a great deal more in losing Sunday to Dallas 30-13 than the Cowboys did with back-to-back Super Bowl wins.

The Bills secured themselves a spot as one of the greatest groups of losers of all time.

The Bills joined the Broncos and the Vikings as the only teams to lose four Super Bowls, but Buffalo was able to accomplish something that no other team in professional sports has ever done—lose four straight championships.

Maybe it's not exactly an achievement that all the Bills and their fans will be particularly proud of, but they should be.

After last season's demoralizing

52-17 loss to the Cowboys, most people felt like they had seen the Bills in the Super Bowl for the last time.

The Bills were aging. They had lost some of their unity. And it appeared that they had also lost some of their fighting spirit.

But the Bills did something that Nebraska football fans should be very familiar with: They picked themselves up after a crushing, season-ending loss and started the season with fresh hopes.

The Bills fought and scraped and clawed their way back to the Super Bowl one more time.

They put themselves in position to win, even though it brought the possibility of heartbreak for a fourth straight year.

So the Bills lost.

Don't hate them because they wast-



Jeff
Griesch

ed your Super Bowl Sunday in another rout. Cheer them for their desire to overcome the impossible obstacle. And applaud them for their relentless pursuit.

The Bills had three chances to prove themselves in the eyes of millions and failed, and all they wanted was a fourth shot.

They got it and failed one more time.

Now the question is, will they want a fifth chance? Again, experts say probably not.

The Bills didn't look as down after this game as they had the three previous losses, but then again these feelings aren't new.

The players are experienced in dealing with the pain. Deep in their eyes and their voices, the emptiness was evident.

It was an emptiness all too familiar to Nebraska football fans.

Big Red fans have seen their beloved Huskers lose seven straight times in bowl games, yet the fans and the players just keep coming back for more.

Why? Simple. Respect.

Nebraska gained a lot of respect this year while losing to Florida State, and the Bills probably gained some respect just by returning to this year's Super Bowl.

Maybe it is cruel, but Buffalo vs.

NFC V has a certain appeal. The Bills have proven time after time that they are the best team in the AFC, which is sad for a conference that has lost 10 straight Super Bowls.

If you're a real sports fan or just a real Nebraska football fan, you just hate to see a team give up.

The essence of sports is to come back and keep trying, even when it seems hopeless.

Don't scorn the Bills, Husker football fans. Help them.

Like it or not, the Bills and Huskers share a common bond, so let's hope Buffalo can find a way to make it back to the Super Bowl one more time.

Griesch is a junior news-editorial major and is the Daily Nebraskan assistant sports editor.