

# Husker gymnast wins golden victory

By Mitch Sherman  
Staff Reporter

At 5-foot, 125-pounds, Nebraska gymnast Richard Grace has been the butt of many jokes about his height over the years.

As a freshman, Grace dressed up as a Keebler elf when he went to eat at the training table on Halloween.

"It was my first year here, and school was going kind of bum," he said. "So I said, 'Mom, make me a costume for Halloween.'"

Grace's mom, Lucille, who is a seamstress, whipped up a costume of an elf.

"It was excellent," Richard said Saturday, as he showed off the tattoo of a Keebler elf on his ankle.

"The guys dared me to wear it to go eat," Grace said. "They said that I wasn't going to wear it. So I said, 'OK, I'll wear it.'"

"Everyone at the training table loved it. I was the only one dressed up."

On Saturday night, the elf was one-of-a-kind again.

Grace, a junior from Omaha, was the only Husker to win an event during the individual finals Saturday. Grace, who was the defending national champion in the floor exercise, took home the crown in the parallel bars.

"It's incredible," Grace said. "I didn't even come into this meet thinking I could win the parallel bars. I got what I wanted — the team championship."

The individual title came after scoring a 57.25 in the all-around Saturday afternoon to help lead the Huskers to their first national championship in four years.

"I didn't have the attitude going into the p-bars that I would win," Grace said. "I didn't even want the individual championship, but I got it."



Nebraska's Richard Grace performs his national title-winning routine on the parallel bars Saturday night.

William Lauer/DN

# Huskers rally past Jays to complete season sweep

By Derek Samson  
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska softball team completed a six-game sweep of intrastate rival Creighton by winning a doubleheader over the Lady Jays 1-0 and 7-3 Monday.



Revelle

Nebraska coach Rhonda Revelle said Nebraska had a mental advantage over Creighton this year.

"I just feel like our kids feel like they have the edge," she said. "They didn't panic at anytime tonight. I really enjoyed being out here. It's always good to beat a team six times, but it's always special when you can beat Creighton anytime."

In the opener, Nebraska ruined a perfect game for Creighton pitcher Stephanie Byrge in the sixth inning.

Byrge had retired the first 16 Husker batters of the game until Rachel Dunham singled in the sixth inning.

Alycia Tiemann followed with a single and Sherry Allcorn reached base on an error to load the bases.

Amy Erlenbusch's sacrifice fly to left field scored Sarah Sinclair, who was running for Dunham, to give Nebraska the 1-0 lead.

"If you go six innings and it's 0-0, the tendency is to feel nervous," Revelle said. "But we stayed real calm and just executed. We weren't swinging the bat with real authority. We started attacking and good things happened."

Melanie Raimondi pitched a complete game, giving up only three hits to earn the victory.

There was a night-and-day difference between the first and second game. Nebraska and Creighton combined for 19 hits in the nightcap, compared to five in the first game.

After scoring two runs in the second inning, Nebraska went ahead in the third when Amy Offenbacher's double and Denise McMillan's triple each knocked in runs to give the Huskers a 4-3 lead.

Nebraska added three insurance runs in the sixth inning, two coming off of an Offenbacher triple.

"That pitcher (Creighton's Dede Pendleton) was a little more our style," Revelle said. "Our pitch selection was very good. We attacked really good and it seemed like we really came alive offensively."

Offenbacher went 2-for-3 with three RBIs and Tobin Echo-Hawk went 3-for-4, while scoring twice in the second game.

Cody Dusenberry pitched 4 2/3 innings for the win as Nebraska improved its record to 21-29.

## Erstad

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a lot of attention on me."

Erstad also said that being on the same field with some of the other Husker players added to his tension.

"After watching guys like Tommie Frazier and other stars on TV," Erstad said, "it hit me that I was on the field with some great players who are among the best in the nation."

Along with the stress created by fans and players, a camera crew followed Erstad's every move on and off both playing fields.

But Erstad wasn't slowed by the extra attention.

"I actually got over here early enough to take more swings than

usual," Erstad said.

Despite the extra swings, Erstad had an off day at the plate. The sophomore from Jamestown, N.D., has struggled during the past few weeks.

After his 2-for-15 hitting performance in the series with the Jayhawks, Erstad's batting average fell to .316.

But with football practice over, Erstad said things should begin to turn around.

"I am kind of glad it's over, because it has been tough to switch pages both physically and mentally from baseball to football and back to baseball," Erstad said. "Mentally, it's going to be a lot easier for me to prepare for every game, and I'll be able to get back into my routine."

"Hopefully I'll be able to turn it up over the next couple of weeks and be hot for the Big Eight tournament."

## Wright

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technique will be a major factor (in the pros), but I was getting much better every game.

"That's the great thing about Nebraska. They are going to teach you

the fundamentals and technique you need to know to make it."

And Wright is not about to forget Nebraska.

"I wish I would have been there for four or five years, instead of two," he said. "The people they have, from

coaches to trainers, were just incredible. That's why people (in the NFL) value Nebraska's word so much. They know football players and people understand that."

Wright said he will leave Thursday for a rookie camp in Los Angeles.

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"The people, the fans and the values that I have learned at Nebraska will always be a part of me and will travel with me," he said.

Adjusting to the level of play in the National Football League might take some time, Jones said.

Solich believes the 5-foot-11 I-I-back has what it takes to play in the NFL.

"I'm sure he'll fare very well," Solich said. "They're getting a complete player."

Jones will leave for the Raiders' minicamp on May 6-8 and also will participate in another training camp at the end of May.



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