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## Hoops

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were looking forward to next season. "With three starters back and winning the NIT, we really have something to build on," Markowski said. "I've really never thought about leaving with those opportunities."

With Nelson's departure, the Huskers are left with two open scholarships to fill in the spring signing period, which begins today and runs until May 15.

One of those spots may be filled by Rodney Fields, an all-state guard from Tampa, Fla.

Fields, a 6-foot-3 190-pounder helped Tampa Bay Tech High School within one game of the Class 5-A state tournament. He averaged 20.9 points, 14 rebounds and 6.3 assists per game and was named first-team all-area by the Tampa Tribune.

Tampa Bay Tech assistant coach Leo Haggerty said Fields would make a decision in the next two days. Fields is strongly considering Nebraska after visiting Lincoln this past weekend, Haggerty said.

"He told us he had a great visit," Haggerty said. "We'd love to see him go there."

Duke, Michigan, Connecticut and Miami, (Fla.) are all bidding to sign Fields.

Haggerty, who coached with Nebraska assistant coach Jimmy Williams at Minnesota and with Nee at Notre Dame, compared Fields' offensive skills with those of former Husker Jaron Boone.

Fields is still waiting for the results of his ACT, which he took during basketball season.

"We want him to be happy," Haggerty said, "and I think Nebraska would be a great place for him."

Kris Hunter, a 6-10, 210-pound center from Tallahassee, Fla., also has made a visit to Nebraska. Hunter averaged 15.5 points, 14 rebounds and eight blocks per game at Class 2-A Florida A&M Developmental Research School.

Hunter's high school coach, Ronnie Lang, said Hunter already had visited Nebraska and Virginia. Hunter has a visit scheduled to Auburn this weekend, Lang said, followed by a visit to Georgia the next week.

"He's a strong rebounder," Lang said. "He's a great shot blocker. He's very quick on his feet, and his best days are still ahead of him."

Like Fields, Hunter has not qualified academically. He has met his core course requirement, but doesn't have the ACT score necessary to become academically eligible. He plans to take the test again soon, Lang said.

Lang said Hunter would not choose a school during the first few days of the spring period.

Another player showing interest in Nebraska is Midland, (Texas) Junior College guard Devon Phillip.

Phillip, 6-2, said he could play either the point guard or shooting guard position. He has narrowed his list of schools to Nebraska and St. John's.

"I haven't set any specific time to choose one of those two yet," Phillip said.

Phillip averaged 17 points per game his freshman year, and last season he averaged 20 points per game, helping to lead Midland to an 18-12 record. He said he had not made an official visit to Lincoln or to Jamaica, N.Y., home of the Red Storm.

## Gymnastics coach gets reality check

By Gregg Madsen  
Staff Reporter

When Francis Allen lies in bed at night, frightening thoughts enter his mind.

The coach of the fourth-ranked Nebraska men's gymnastics team dreams that his leading all-arounder, sophomore Jim Koziol, is suffering from a lower-back injury.

He dreams that J.D. Reive, a true freshman with unlimited potential, also is slowed by back problems.

And he wakes up in a cold sweat thinking that one more injury on his team will virtually eliminate the Cornhuskers from contention in the NCAA Midwest Regional on Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

But this nightmare isn't a dream. It is reality.

"I'm always optimistic this time of year," Allen said. "But now, optimism is out the window. It's time to look at reality."

The reality is that the Huskers will have to place in the top three Saturday to advance to the NCAA Championships in Stanford, Calif., April 25-27. Considering the competition and Nebraska's current condition, that may be easier said than done.

Allen said X-rays on Koziol's lower back found no broken bones, but the Omaha native still would be questionable for this weekend.

Reive, who saw his first competition of the season two weeks ago against Ohio State, will be available for rings, and questionable on the vault and parallel bars.

The regional will feature No. 3 California, eighth-ranked Okla-

homa, No. 10 New Mexico, Brigham Young and defending national champion Stanford.

California won the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Championships last weekend, followed by Oklahoma, New Mexico and Nebraska. Stanford finished fifth.

Allen said the Husker coaching staff was working hard this week to alter routines and fill the scoring holes left last week by the injuries.

"What we're trying to do is take out any mistakes that they could make so we can reach our highest possible score," he said.

Junior still rings specialist Ted Harris, who placed second in the rings at the MPSF Championships with a 9.5875, said the injuries to Koziol and Reive had unified the team.

"I think we're reacting well," he said. "We've really got to come together now, and I think it has brought us together. It's really focused us on what we have to do."

What the Huskers will have to do, Harris said, is hit 100 percent of their routines, especially on the horizontal bar and floor exercise, where only four of the possible six gymnasts will compete for Nebraska.

Harris and Allen both said they thought a flawless performance could give the Huskers a berth in the NCAA Championships, and if they perform to near perfection, a win over California.

"We can't go into Saturday's meet and have a disaster," Allen said. "If we were healthy, we could afford that, but we can't with the shape we're in now. Every guy has to hit or it's over."

## N.Y. Jets eye Phillips

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. (AP) — Lawrence Phillips, whose stock has soared in post-season workouts, has impressed the New York Jets enough that they're considering taking him with the top pick in next week's NFL draft.

The Jets seem set on picking either Southern California wide receiver Keyshawn Johnson, Illinois linebacker Kevin Hardy or Phillips, the former Nebraska running back who was suspended for six games last season after being convicted for assaulting an ex-girlfriend.

"We evaluate every player very thoroughly," Jets coach Rich Kotite said. "We feel Lawrence Phillips is a very good player. We don't discuss the personal sides of people."

Several NFL teams have expressed added interest in Phillips since his private workouts.

"We talked about his career and being in New York, and I think it was a very positive conversation," Kotite

said. "I think he felt relaxed in the conversation, and so did I."

Phillips was in New York Tuesday, meeting with both the Jets and the Giants.

"It's evident to everybody that he is a big-time running back," Jets personnel director Dick Haley said. "He's 225 with excellent speed and explosiveness, and he catches the ball, something we have not seen at Nebraska very often."

Johnson, Hardy and now Phillips certainly have No. 1 potential, Haley said.

"I don't believe there is a down side to Lawrence Phillips," he said.

After signing tackles Jumbo Elliott and David Williams, the Jets don't appear as high on UCLA tackle Jonathan Ogden. So, barring a trade, which Kotite admitted remained a possibility, Phillips, Johnson or Hardy will be bound for New York on draft day.

## Line

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do it," Dishman said. "I won't second-guess the coach. That's why they call him coach."

Winning three straight national titles would enable Nebraska to stand alone in college football history. According to Dishman, that is a common goal among the offensive linemen.

"We definitely want the third one. I think we need to work twice as hard as we did last summer," Dishman said. "We need to step it up a notch to be at that top level."

At left tackle, Adam Treu, a senior, will move into a starting role. Despite not starting last year, Treu saw extensive playing time. The Lincoln Pius X graduate is a former walk-on who has waited his turn.

"My first couple years, I wasn't playing as much as I wanted to," Treu said. "He (Tenopir) told me to just keep working at it and my time would come."

Many times, offensive linemen are recognized for the wrong reasons, such as penalties. The Huskers, however, are known for delivering countless

pancake blocks. A year ago, the line did not yield a sack en route to Nebraska's second straight national title.

"I take pride in not getting mental penalties like jumping offsides," Treu said. "But we don't throw the ball that much, so it's not too difficult not to give up a sack."

Nebraska's strong tradition does not appear to be in jeopardy. According to Tenopir, several nonstarters also have shown promise, including juniors Fred Pollack and Josh Heske and redshirt freshmen Adam Julch and Jeff Clausen.

Junior Eric Anderson is set to resume action at right tackle. The Lincoln Southeast graduate said Tenopir helped each player strive for excellence.

"He never settles for second best," Anderson said. "He pushes us harder to get better and top everything we've already done."

As a native of Lincoln, Anderson has seen Nebraska's offensive-line tradition firsthand.

"You look at the Rimingtons, the Steinkuhlers, the Wigerts and Will Shields," Anderson said. "You just want to be like them."

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