

Huskers vault past Minnesota

By GREGG MADSEN
Staff Reporter

It was another day at the office for the Nebraska men's gymnastics team Sunday afternoon at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The third-ranked Cornhuskers defeated Minnesota in workman-like fashion, 230.175-225.15.

NU Coach Francis Allen said the Huskers, who hit 88 percent of their routines, grinded out the victory with a complete team effort.

"This isn't a team of ten stars," Allen said. "We've got some blue-collar workers that are doing the job. We have some stars, but we have some good blue-collar workers."

Nebraska gymnasts won or tied each event and as a team the Huskers scored above a 38 on every event but the still rings.

Despite dominating the Golden Gophers, junior Bill Mulholland said the Huskers didn't have their best performance of the season.

"It was a day at the office," Mulholland said. "Things started off a little slow, but we didn't let up, we kept fighting. Some days are better than others, but we came through."

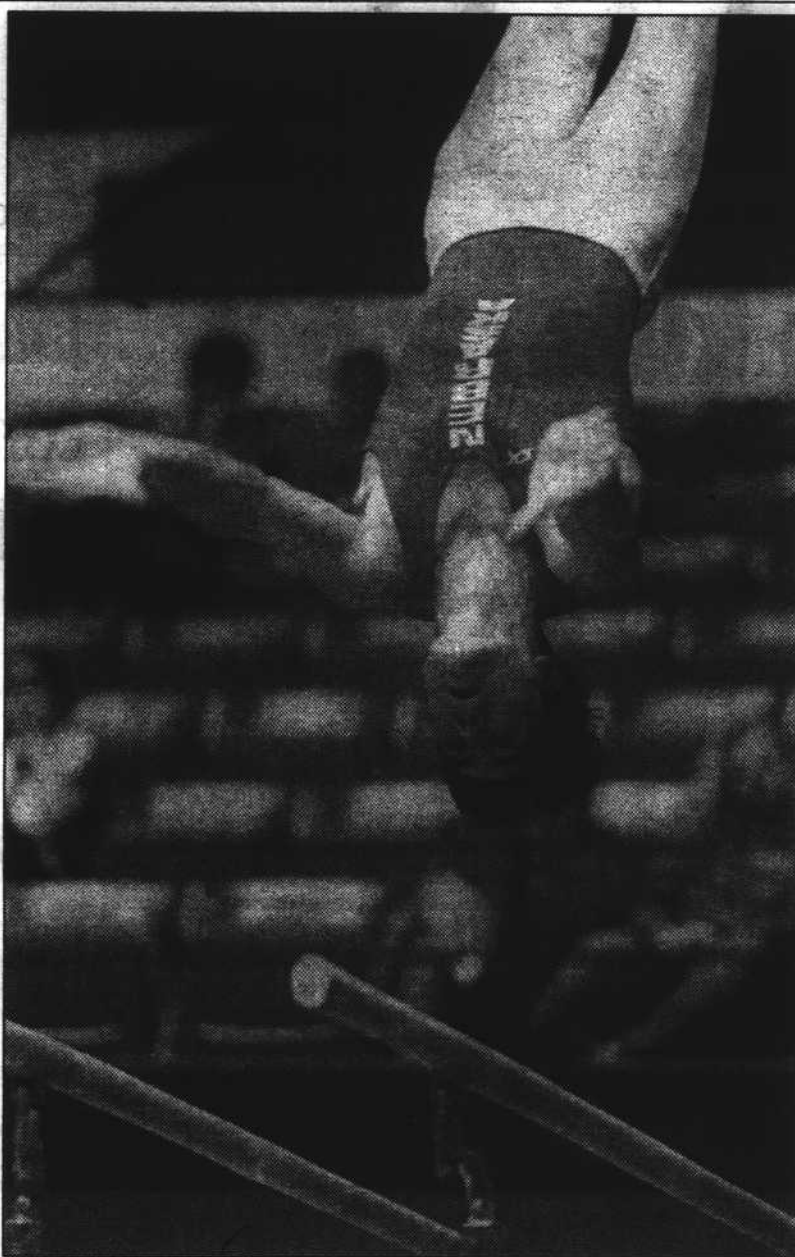
Mulholland, a North Plainfield, N.J., native, won his third all-around of the season with a 57.25. He finished second on the floor exercise (9.6), and third on the high bar (9.675).

Freshman Derek Leiter was third in the all-around (56.325) behind Minnesota's Frank Ticknor (56.75).

Sophomore J.D. Reive had his best meet of the year. He finished second on the parallel bars (9.775) and won the pommel horse and the vault with a 9.7.

Reive's vault, which he was performing for the first time this season, was the highest-scored Husker vault this season.

"I haven't really done that vault in about six months," Reive said. "I've done about five of them this past week



MARSHALL NELSON competes on the parallel bars Sunday afternoon against Minnesota.

into a soft mat. I definitely wasn't expecting to do that coming in here."

Allen said Reive, who competed in five events Sunday, should add floor exercise to his repertoire before the Huskers host the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Championships March 28-29.

For the second meet in a row, Marshall Nelson won the floor exercise (9.65) and the high bar (9.85). Nelson also won the parallel bars with a 9.8 and tied Mulholland for third on the vault (9.5).

Senior Ted Harris tied Ticknor for first in the still rings at 9.675.

Lincoln native Ryan McEwen was second on the high bar (9.775) and third on the pommel horse (9.65).

Mulholland said it didn't matter that the Huskers didn't have a blockbuster performance.

"Things are proceeding in the right direction," Mulholland said. "We get better just about every meet. In a way, this meet was better because we had a little bit of a rough day and were still over 230."

Thompson wins; Huskers fourth

By ANTONE OSEKA
Staff Reporter

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Going into the Big 12 Conference Wrestling Championships on Saturday, everyone knew Oklahoma State was a shoe-in to win the title.



Thompson didn't happen for the Cornhuskers as they finished fourth out of the five teams that wrestle in the Big 12.

Nebraska heavyweight Tolly Thompson was the only Husker to return to Lincoln with an individual championship.

Thompson cruised to his third conference title by earning a 16-1 technical fall over Iowa State's Trent Hynek only 3:18 into his semifinal match, and defeating Oklahoma's Trey Swan 13-3 in the finals.

Both ISU and OU beat Nebraska in the team race, however. The Cowboys won the meet with 92 team points followed by the Cyclones who scored 78. OU was third with 55 points, Nebraska came in fourth with 41.5 and Missouri was last with 20.

The only other Husker to make the finals was 134-pounder Brad Canoyer. Canoyer finished second, losing 6-4 to Oklahoma State's Steven Schmidt on a last-second takedown in the third period. With his second-place finish, Canoyer guaranteed a spot at the NCAA Championships later this month.

OSU Coach John Smith said he was happy with the victory.

"This is a stepping stone to something bigger," Smith said.

"This was our first real test since the National Duals."

Oklahoma State qualified wrestlers in all 10 classes for the NCAA Championships March 20 through 22 in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Nine of the 10 qualified by finishing in the top three, and heavyweight Ben Lee — although finishing fifth in the meet — received a wild-card spot.

Nebraska will send six wrestlers to the NCAA Championships, two on wild cards. Todd Beckerman (118 pounds) qualified with a wild card after finishing fourth in the bracket with a 22-15 record. At 126 pounds, Jeramie Welder also received a wild card.

Welder finished fourth in the hardest bracket in the tournament, where there were four ranked wrestlers competing.

Jason Kraft finished third at 158 pounds, qualifying for the NCAA's after an early loss in the meet to OU's Byron Tucker. Kraft worked his way back to earn his third place spot.

Freshman Charles McTorry will also wrestle at the NCAA's. McTorry finished third at 177 pounds. Canoyer and Thompson round out the Husker qualifiers.

NU Coach Tim Neumann said he had hoped for a higher finish by the Huskers.

"We wrestled to our talent and experience level," Neumann said. "I hoped we'd come out here and upset people. We didn't do that."

Neumann said Oklahoma State is the team to beat at the NCAA Tournament. Of OSU's 10 qualifiers, six were conference champions, one finished second, two were third and one was a wild card.

Oklahoma State 177-pounder Mark Smith was named one of the two most outstanding wrestlers for the tournament. He upset the Cyclones' top-seeded Barry Weldon in overtime in the finals. Smith shared the award with 150-pounder Chris Bono of ISU.

NU winless in March

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Sanders said. "He's really playing hard and playing well with emotion and giving everything he has."

Lambert (3-1) then held NU hitless until the eighth when the Huskers added a run on a single by second baseman Kevin Harrington.

Lambert started for the Bears in the last meeting between the two teams and held the Huskers scoreless through 7 1/3 innings in a 1-0 win on March 11, 1995, in the Irish Classic in San Antonio.

"I've just improved all the way around since then," Lambert said. "I throw a little harder and I mix my pitches a little better than I did back then."

With eight strikeouts on Sunday, Lambert tied Baylor career-leader Glenn Nevill with 225 career strikeouts. Lambert said he threw mostly fastballs against NU.

"Kris, a year ago, was almost exclusively a fastball pitcher," Baylor Coach Steve Smith said. "He's really worked hard on his changeup and his breaking ball."

The loss extended Nebraska's losing streak to 11 games, but Sanders remains confident the Huskers will improve.

"It's still relatively early and we still have a lot of games," Sanders said. "We have a chance to catch fire. The pizza just doesn't taste very good after the games."

years and it becomes a reality. It's like nothing else."

For years, former NU shot putter Paulette Mitchell helped set the pace for Thompson. Colligan said Thompson's success was a journey — not a destination.

"It's definitely been motivation," Colligan said. "Tressa has always looked at the talent ahead of her and said, 'Well, why can't I be that good?' She hasn't let little hurdles and stumbling blocks get in the way."

Although she has achieved her goal of winning the indoor title, Thompson is reaching for greater heights.

"I'm going to throw over 19-meters," Thompson said confidently.

NU is ninth, 18th

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I knew."

Last year, Laster and Robert Thomas were among the nation's leading jumpers, but only scored two points for the Huskers.

Scoring for the men was sophomore high jumper Shane Lavy, who placed fourth with a leap of 7 feet 5 inches. Lavy placed seventh at last year's national indoor meet.

"I didn't care about where I placed, I just wanted to get 7-6 1/2," Lavy said. "I didn't do it, I'm not too pleased, but I'll look to outdoors now."

Scott Warren's toss of 66-10 1/2 in the 35-pound weight throw was good enough to finish fifth.

"I didn't perform as well as I wanted to, but coming to nationals is a good experience," Warren, a junior, said.

The only Husker runner to score was Tom Fish who placed sixth in the 200-meter dash with a time of 21.17 seconds.

"I had a good time," Fish said.

NU, UW to meet in NIT

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Nebraska's third consecutive NIT appearance after four straight berths in the NCAA Tournament. With a victory, NU (16-14) will face either Fresno State or Nevada-Reno, which play a first-round game in Fresno, Calif. The Huskers won at Fresno State last season in the NIT quarterfinals.

"A new style of track, atmosphere. All the hard work paid off and it's a great way to end my indoor career."

On the women's side, the Huskers — who were fourth last year — finished ninth. NU was led by shot putter Tressa Thompson, whose throw of 59 feet was good enough for a championship meet record and a national title.

Placing fifth in the long jump was defending indoor and outdoor champion Angee Henry. Despite competing with a severely injured quadriceps, Henry managed to jump 20 1/2 feet just jumping once.

"Angee is a true warrior," Pepin said. "It had to be a bitter feeling for her not to be able to compete at full strength. She definitely showed a lot of courage."

A bright spot for the Huskers was a third-place finish by the 4 X 400-meter relay team. The team of LaTisha Croom, Jill Myatt, Stella Klassen and Charmaine Burton ran the third fastest time in school history at 3:35.40.

"I'm not sure how everyone is going to play," freshman guard Cookie Belcher said. "I guess it will tell us if we've got any soldiers among us. It's kind of like we're defending the title."

Oklahoma State is the only other Big 12 team selected for the 32-team NIT field. Tickets go on sale today for \$11 and \$6. Student tickets are available for \$4.

Huskers finish 2nd in Oregon

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska women's gymnastics team didn't defeat eighth-ranked UCLA at the Shanoico Invitational in Corvallis, Ore., but the Cornhuskers still finished second in the six-team field.

Sixth-ranked NU fell to the Bruins, 196.5-194.275. No. 21 Arizona was third at 193.4 and 13th-ranked Oregon State was fourth (193.175).

Nebraska Coach Dan Kendig said he isn't disappointed with the loss — only the second of the season for the Huskers.

"I thought the girls did well," Kendig said. "I think they realized there are some things we need to work on, though."

Shelly Bartlett led the Huskers with a fifth-place finish in the vault (9.85). Sophomore Misty Oxford was sixth at 9.825.

Bartlett finished fourth out of 15 competitors in the all-around with a score of 39.1. UCLA's Stella Umeh won with a 39.325.

Husker freshman Nicole Wilkinson was sixth in the all-around at 38.9. Wilkinson finished in a four-way tie for sixth on the vault (9.8) and led Nebraska on beam, tying for 10th with a 9.55.

Thompson wins crown

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weekend, Thompson took a back seat to no one.

"I knew I was going to win," Thompson said. "Even though she beat me before, I knew she wasn't going to beat me. This was going to be my week."

Besides winning the title, Colligan said, setting a collegiate record this year has put Thompson in an elite class of throwers.

"Championships are forever and records are made to be broken," Colligan said. "It's a moment of immortality when you break a record. But it's immortality forever when you win a championship."

"It's indescribable when you've been planning for something for four