

Big 12 Notebook

Nebraska Track and Field Coach Gary Pepin was named a co-Big 12 Indoor Coach of the Year Sunday.

Texas A&M Men's and Women's Coach Ted Nelson and Texas Women's Coach Beverly Kearney also earned the award.

In his 18th season at Nebraska, Pepin guided the Cornhusker men to their fifth straight indoor conference victory last weekend in Ames, Iowa. Texas A&M finished second.

The NU women finished in second place behind Texas.

The 1998 Big 12 Women's Basketball Tournament begins today at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Mo.

Top-seeded Texas Tech, No. 2 seed Iowa State, No. 3 seed Kansas and No. 4 seed Nebraska earned first-round byes and will play today's winners on Wednesday.

Big 12 women's basketball standings (Through Monday)

	Conference	Overall
Texas Tech	15-1	22-4
Iowa State	12-4	23-6
Nebraska	11-5	22-8
Kansas	11-5	19-7
Baylor	10-6	17-9
Oklahoma State	10-6	17-9
Texas	7-9	12-14
Colorado	5-11	11-15
Kansas State	4-12	10-16
Oklahoma	4-12	8-18
Texas A&M	4-12	8-18
Missouri	3-13	11-15

Big 12 women's tournament

Today's games:

Colorado vs. Oklahoma (noon)
 Oklahoma State vs. Missouri (2:20 p.m.)
 Texas vs. Texas A&M (6 p.m.)
 Baylor vs. Kansas State (8:20 p.m.)

The 1998 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament begins Thursday at Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo.

Top-seeded Kansas, No. 2 seed Oklahoma State, No. 3 seed Oklahoma and No. 4 seed Nebraska earned first-round byes and will play Thursday's winners on Friday.

Big 12 men's basketball standings: (Through today)

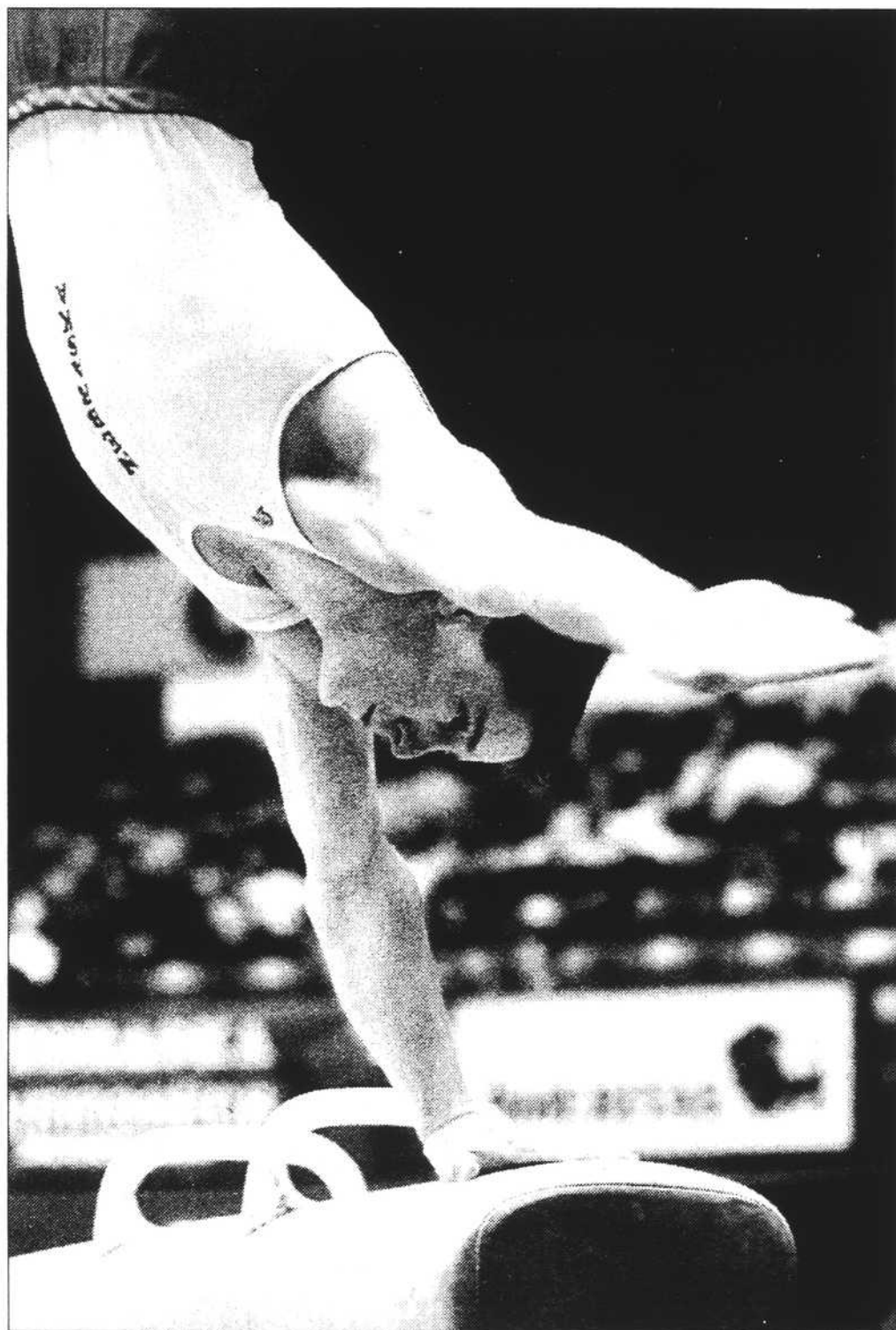
	Conference	Overall
Kansas	15-1	31-3
Oklahoma State	11-5	21-5
Oklahoma	11-5	20-9
Nebraska	10-6	19-10
Missouri	8-8	16-13
Baylor	8-8	13-13
Kansas State	7-9	16-10
Colorado	7-9	13-13
Texas Tech	7-9	13-13
Texas	6-10	12-16
Iowa State	5-11	12-17
Texas A&M	1-15	7-19

Big 12 men's tournament

Thursday's games:

Colorado vs. Kansas State (noon)
 Texas A&M vs. Baylor (2:20 p.m.)
 Texas vs. Texas Tech (6 p.m.)
 Iowa State vs. Missouri (8:20 p.m.)

Big 12 Notebook compiled from staff reports.



NU FRESHMAN JASON HARDABURA dismounts the pommel horse Sunday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Hardabura finished in the top four in all six events.

SCOTT McCLURG/DN

NU finishes second at conference meet

BY LISA VONNAHME
 Staff Reporter

A second-place finish behind Texas was what the Nebraska men's swimming and diving team expected to get at the Big 12 Conference Championships in College Station, Texas. And that's what they got. "We didn't expect to beat Texas," NU sophomore Adam Pine said. "But when we got down there, we realized they really weren't as good as what we thought. In the future, I hope to surprise them with a win."

The No. 3 Longhorns cruised to the Big 12 title Saturday with 886 points. The 15th-ranked Huskers were next with 638.50 points.

Sophomore Michael Windisch reset his own Big 12 record in the 400-yard individual medley with a time of 3:51.25. The time virtually assured Windisch a spot in the NCAA Championships March 26 to 28 in Auburn, Ala.

"It was a hard race," Windisch said. "But I had to get the time. It burned, but it felt great."

Pine, who is the only Husker with an automatic NCAA qualifying time, placed second in his signature event, the 100-yard butterfly. Pine swam it in 47.18 seconds but was defeated by Texas freshman Nate Dusing.

"We knew Pine, not being shaved for the meet, was going to have some difficulty," NU Coach Cal Bentz said. "He didn't swim his fastest times, and we knew that was going to be the case. He'll swim much better at the NCAA Championships (after he shaves)."

Pine was joined by David Foster, Valerjia Kalmikovs and Mark Bennett in the 400-yard medley relay. Bennett managed to hold off Iowa State's Martin Anderson in the last 25 yards to win with a time of 3:16.17. Texas, which held the fastest time in the 400-yard medley relay this season, was disqualified in the preliminaries.

Going into the meet, NU's goal was to swim its fastest times of the season, Bentz said.

All-American Kalmikovs and

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Pine

NU gymnasts top poll after big victories

BY DARREN IVY
 Assignment Reporter

A newfound confidence can be seen on the faces of the Nebraska men's gymnasts.

Early in the season they struggled, but the past two weekends they have gotten it together and posted the top home and away scores in the country this year.

"Coach has been telling us all year that we are good, but we haven't believed him," said Jason Hardabura, who won the all-around in Sunday's triangular with Oklahoma and New Mexico at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Hardabura, a freshman from Oakville, Ontario, noticed a positive change in his teammates' attitudes after the Iowa triangular Feb. 21.

That positive attitude resulted after Nebraska scored 230.150 and came within .475 points of defeating then No. 2 Iowa in Iowa City.

"Iowa showed that we have it in us," Hardabura said. "Before the meet we were like a deer in the headlights. Now we are looking through people."

The newfound confidence carried over this weekend as the No. 3 Nebraska men's gymnastics team won two more meets and scored a nation-best 231.05 score Sunday against No. 10 Oklahoma and No. 11 New Mexico.

With Sunday's score along with a 229.575 Friday in Minneapolis, the Cornhuskers will move to the top of this week's GymInfo poll.

The GymInfo poll's rankings are based on three scores — the two best away scores and best home score.

NU's score against Iowa is the top away score this season, the home score Sunday is best in the nation, and the Huskers' score Friday against Minnesota ranks as the third best away score in the nation.

Coach Francis Allen said a No. 1 ranking will help the team's confidence.

"This team feeds off one another," Allen said. "This team will continue to do that."

On Sunday, the team fed off Hardabura, Derek Leiter and Marshall Nelson. All three recorded career

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Tournament time Big 12 women tip off 2nd season

BY MIKE KLUCK
 Staff Reporter

Texas Women's Basketball Coach Jody Conradt summed up the Big 12 Tournament Monday during media day at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Mo.

"Obviously, it's time for those of us who have only one chance to get into the postseason play to try to do that," Conradt said.

For eight teams this week, anything short of winning the Big 12 Conference Tournament on Saturday will mark an end to their season.

The top four seeds of the Big 12 Tournament — Texas Tech, Iowa State, Kansas and Nebraska — could survive an upset in the tournament and still receive an invitation to the NCAA Tournament.

But that doesn't mean those teams are going to be nice and let another conference opponent secure an upset.

"We're looking forward to competing," Nebraska Coach Paul Sanderford said. "It's a second season for us. Whoever gets hot has a chance to win it."

Sanderford said he felt the Cornhuskers would earn a berth in the NCAA Tournament with Saturday's win against Iowa State.

"It's a second season for us. Whoever gets hot has a chance to win it."

PAUL SANDERFORD
 Nebraska coach

Nebraska has a 22-8 overall record and an 11-6 mark in the conference with wins against top 20 teams Alabama and Western Kentucky.

Second-year Kansas State Coach Deb Patterson knows the Wildcats, who are 10-16 overall and 4-12 in the Big 12, will have to win the tournament to get an NCAA bid.

"I love playing the conference tournament," Patterson said. "You're in a position where the top-seeded teams are playing for NCAA Tournament seeds. But the rest of us are playing for bids or just miracles in some situations. But I believe in miracles."

Colorado and Oklahoma will

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