



NU GYMNAST HEATHER BRINK practices her gienger release on the uneven bars before the NCAA Midwest Regional meet in Tempe, Ariz., Saturday night. Brink won the all-around title and will go on to compete at nationals. NU ended its season with a fifth-place finish. MATT MILLER/DN

## Brink lone Husker to qualify for NAAs

BY DARREN IVY  
Assignment Reporter

All that stood between the Nebraska women's gymnastics team and a trip to the NCAA Championships were six uneven-bar routines.

Considering that the bars had been the team's best event, the trip seemed to be a lock with NU in second place headed into the final round of the NCAA Midwest Regional in Tempe, Ariz.

But then the No. 10 Cornhuskers got too excited and complacent and lost some of their concentration, freshman Amy Ringo said.

"After the first fall, we were all like, 'It is only one,'" Ringo said.

"We thought it was just a fluke thing. With the second, we said, 'This isn't happening.'"

"Of course we kept cheering, but we knew it was over."

After scoring a 47.875 on bars, Nebraska fell to fifth place and missed qualifying for the NCAA Championships as a team for the first time since 1994.

"It hurt. It hurt bad," Coach Dan Kendig said. "I'm extremely disappointed."

Only one gymnast on the team will continue her season: By winning the all-around with a 39.475, sophomore Heather Brink earned an automatic bid to the NCAA Championships April 16-18 in Los Angeles.

Third-ranked Utah won the

region with a score of 195.575, while Brigham Young came in second with a score of 195.500. Arizona State placed third with a score of 195.025. Arizona came in fourth with a score of 194.75, and NU was fifth with a score of 194.275.

Ringo, a Phoenix native, competed in front of her family and friends at the meet and led NU on the beam with a 9.825.

After a slow start on the beam, Ringo said, the team calmed down and focused on coming back.

NU posted a 49.10 in the floor exercise, the team's second-best score of the year, with help from All-American Brink's 9.90 and junior Jess Swift's career-best tying 9.85.

The Huskers followed the floor exercise with a 48.95 vault score,

also their second-best score of the year. Brink led NU with a 9.90, and junior Misty Oxford posted a 9.85.

After the vault, NU was in second place, .05 points ahead of BYU.

"Everything came down to the last event," Ringo said. "That's where we messed up."

As the team left the University Activities Center, Ringo said the van was "very quiet."

"We were disappointed," Ringo said. "We knew we should have made it, but everything happens for a reason. We tried to focus on the positive and looked toward next year."

Brink's title was the first time an NU gymnast has won an all-around at a regional meet.

Brink said the meet was bitter-sweet.

"I am excited that I get to go," she said, "but I am disappointed for the other girls because they worked as hard as me."

Brink took first on the uneven bars, second in the floor exercise and tied for third on vault.

By winning a tough region and having a lot of confidence from her last two meets, Kendig said, Brink should be prepared for nationals.

"She is the top all-arounder who isn't on a team," Kendig said. "She is capable of big things at nationals."

Brink said she is looking forward to nationals but wishes her teammates could be there with her.

"It's going to be hard to do it without the team there to support me."

## Conference woes continue NU perfect in Big 12

BY ANDREW STRNAD  
Staff Reporter

MANHATTAN, Kan. — It's been 45 days since the Nebraska baseball team played at home. And after losing two out of three to Kansas State last weekend,

NU Coach Dave Van Horn said the Cornhuskers were ready to come home.

The Nebraska bats couldn't keep up with Kansas State as the Huskers dropped the rubber match of a three-game series 11-9 before

612 fans at Frank Myers Field.

The loss concluded a 10-9 road trip for Nebraska. The Huskers will return to Buck Beltzer Field Wednesday for the first time since Feb. 22 when they play host to Peru State in a double-header starting at 2:30 p.m.

"This isn't how we planned it," Van Horn said. "We were looking to win at least two of three (at Kansas State) and look ahead to a week at home."

The Huskers looked like they might take two of three from Kansas State, but

"We felt like for the first three innings that we had them on the ropes."

DAVE VAN HORN  
NU baseball coach

NU's six-run rally in the ninth wasn't enough to catch the Wildcats.

Things looked promising early for Nebraska (13-12 overall and 1-5 in the Big 12 Conference) when NU jumped out to a 2-0 lead against heralded fireballer Mickey Blount in the first.

NU took advantage of two KSU errors in the frame as well as timely hitting by third baseman Danny Kimura.

The freshman's RBI single scored second baseman Cliff Durham, and right-fielder Donny Starkins followed later in the inning with a run-scoring single to give the Huskers their only lead of the game.

"We felt like for the first three innings that we had them on the ropes," Van Horn said.

"We got to (Blount), and they helped us with two errors, but again, we didn't have the firepower to finish the job."

Kansas State responded in the fourth when Wildcat catcher Chet Savage jacked a two-run homer off NU

starter Chad Wiles to give the Wildcats a 3-2 lead.

KSU (13-16 and 5-8) added three more runs in the fifth before Wiles (3-1) left the game. He allowed six runs on four hits while walking four batters in 4 2/3 innings.

NU's bullpen allowed the remaining five runs, as Kansas State opened up a 11-3 lead entering the ninth inning.

The Huskers' bats were resurrected in the ninth, scoring six runs thanks, in part, to the hot hitting of Kimura.

Kimura finished the day 4 for 5 with three RBIs and two doubles.

Shortstop Bryan Schmidt also drove in three runs with a base-clearing double in the ninth, but it wasn't enough for the Huskers, who have dropped four out of five.

"It's a tough loss," Durham said. "Especially when I look at that scoreboard and see that six-run inning in the ninth, and we still lose."

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Senior Reporter

After earning a No. 8 ranking, winning 12 of its last 13 games and posting a 6-0 Big 12 record, the Nebraska softball team had every reason to celebrate Saturday.

But NU pitcher Jenny Voss wasn't concerned with the numbers game after the Cornhuskers swept a double-header against Iowa State.

"Numbers don't matter to us at this time," Voss said. "Someone can put a number by our name, and it doesn't matter."

"We are just going out and playing for the moment."

Nebraska defeated Iowa State 4-3 and 7-2 at the NU Softball Complex Saturday.

The Huskers (28-8 overall) jumped to a 4-0 lead with the help of Ali Viola's 12th home run of the season. But ISU (5-14 and 1-4) rattled Nebraska in the bottom of the third inning.

With two outs and two runners on base, Iowa State sophomore Michelle Junod singled to center field and sent Erin Woods to third and Tacy Riddle home for ISU's first run.

Junod stole second and advanced

to third after Woods stole home on a controversial call.

"I thought we lost our edge a little bit," Revelle said. "We had a tough call at the plate. We let them rattle us, but we weren't too worried."

After Kimi Yoshizawa singled to center, Junod crossed the plate for ISU's third run of the inning and final run of the game.

Voss pitched all seven innings, allowing five hits and three runs while striking out four.

Offensively, Voss was 3 for 3 with one RBI and one run. Designated hitter Christie McCoy connected two out of three times at the plate.

"We had an inning where we were a little nervous," Voss said. "But the defense was excellent, and I did my best to shut them down. And that's the best part. Coming from behind and coming out on top is the most fun."

Nebraska carried its momentum into the second game. The Huskers scored two runs in the first inning, three in the third and two in the fourth, making them one run short of earning a run-rule victory in the fifth inning.

Viola, who leads NU with a .409 batting average, and center fielder

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