

1999 NCAA

THE EVENTS



VAULT

Each vault is categorized in the Code of Points, the official text giving relevant value of each skill performed. The gymnast is required to pass through certain minimum height and distance requirements on every vault.



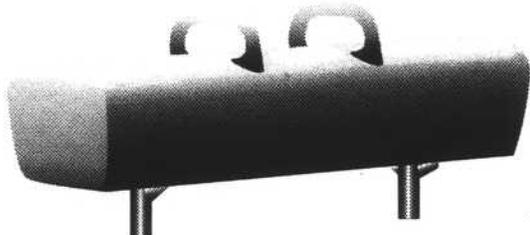
FLOOR EXERCISE

The entire floor area must be used during the exercise, which consists primarily of three to five tumbling passes performed in different directions.



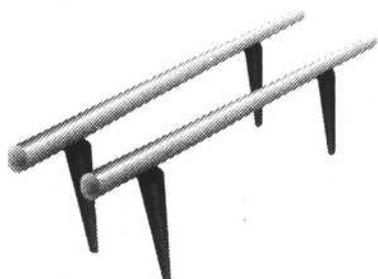
HORIZONTAL BAR

The routine on the horizontal bar consists exclusively of swinging parts without stops. The parts are generally called giant swings, with more specific terms applying to changes in grip, direction and body position.



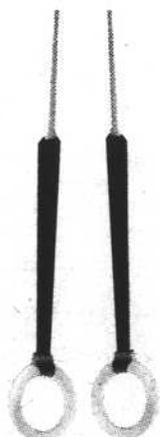
POMMEL HORSE

The gymnast must cover all three areas of the horse, the middle and both ends, while performing continuous circular movements interrupted only by the required scissor elements.



PARALLEL BARS

A parallel bars routine consists of swinging, flight and hold elements. The gymnast is required to execute two swinging elements, one supported and one from a hang. The gymnast is also required to perform a skill in which both hands release and regrip the bars, commonly referred to as a release move.



STILL RINGS

The still rings must include at least two handstands: one arrived through strength, the other through swing. At least one element of strength must be held for two seconds.

Graphics by Matt Haney and Jon Frank



NU gymnasts hope to beat strong field

■ Hardabura and the Huskers prepare for to peak Thursday while trying to top Big Ten powers Michigan, Ohio State and Penn State.

BY DARREN IVY
Senior staff writer

As the NCAA Men's Gymnastics Championship press conference wound down Wednesday and reporters were running out of questions, Nebraska's Jason Hardabura came back with a question of his own.

"What are you guys expecting out of the gymnastics meet tomorrow?" Hardabura asked the 10 to 15 media people in attendance.

Hearing no response, the sophomore from Toronto, Ontario, proceeded to answer his own question.

"You are going to see a dogfight," said Hardabura as his passion for gymnastics showed through in the way he talked.

"There will be six teams giving 110 percent. You will see a lot of great gymnastics out there. It's an event spectators will really enjoy."

Team competition begins tonight at 7 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center for the 57th Annual NCAA Championships, with the top three teams advancing to Friday's final.

Being at home, many opposing coaches list the fifth-ranked Cornhuskers as the favorite, but NU Coach Francis Allen said it's any team's meet to win.

"It will be as quality of an NCAA as I've seen in some time," said Allen, who in his 30 years at NU has won eight national titles.

The Cornhuskers are playing host to the NCAA Championships for the 11th time, and are seeking their ninth national title. The last time NU won a national championship was 1994, which has many of the Husker gymnasts hungry for another.

"I think everyone is as fired up as I am," Hardabura said. "It's been a long time coming."

On paper, the teams who stand between NU and another national title are Michigan, Ohio State and Penn State, although NU defeated Penn State earlier this year.

All those teams are from the East region. The contrast in scores between West region and East region teams has many East region coaches upset. Third-ranked Iowa finished fourth in the East region and failed to qualify, but would have been second in West.

"I haven't met any teams from the West," Coach Kurt Golder said. "I don't know what to expect. The East is very tough. We've been beating each other up all year long. I think it's going to be close between the teams from the East. I don't know how the teams from the West fit in."

Said Allen: "It's hard to compare East scores with West scores. If I were there I could tell you how they compared. It's like comparing apples and oranges."

Hardabura and his five healthy NU teammates aren't going to worry about how they stack up to the competition.

"Our goals are obvious," Hardabura said. "We want to win a national championship. But the way I see it, win, lose or draw everyone here is a winner. This is the big dance - the icing on the cake."

NU's lack of depth is one of the things that makes them vulnerable in the three-day meet, Penn State Coach Randy Jenson said.

Defending national champion Marshall Nelson has missed the whole season to recover from a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his knee, and several other NU gymnasts also are sidelined with injuries leaving Allen with six gymnasts.

"I've never come in with six people and won a national championship," Allen said. "I've come in with seven or eight. I wish we had a few more. You get blue-chip all-arounders and they will beat specialists most days."

Hardabura is one of those blue-chip all-arounders, coming into the meet with the top all-around score. Derek Leiter and Martin Fournier are Huskers that rank in the Top 20 in the all-around. These three gymnasts, along with senior Jim Koziol and junior Blake Bukacek, will try to give the home fans something to cheer about.

"Nobody remembers who was ranked No. 1 at the end of the regular season," Hardabura said. "It's where you finish at the end of the season."