



COLLEGE GYMNASTICS ASSOCIATION BIG TEN CONFERENCE

WEEKLY REPORT
WEEK ENDING Jan. 26, 2009
By Jerry Wright



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Illinois opened its season in style, downing the Ohio State Buckeyes, 351.95-349.05, Saturday night at Huff Hall in front of over 1,100 fans. Paul Ruggeri captured the AA title edging out the Buckeyes' Jake Bateman 87.95-87.05, in spite of a fall in FX.

After a posting a disappointing score on the high bar at Windy City, the 2008 NCAA High Bar Champion Ruggeri rebounded quickly, capturing the event title with a 14.80. Ross

third. Pasek posted his second top-three finish of the night on floor with a 14.45.

Note: Your reporter was able to attend this meet and was very impressed with the performances of the freshmen and sophomores for Illinois. Of course the juniors and seniors did their jobs, but that is more or less expected.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Ohio State lost a conference dual to Illinois, 351.95-349.05, Saturday night at Huff Hall in Champaign, Ill. Senior captain Jake Bateman finished second in the all-around for the second-consecutive week with an 87.05.

On pommel horse, Ohio State scored a 54.45, bettering its score from a week ago by more than 2.5. Tai Lee registered a Buckeye-high 13.95, which tied Illinois' Daniel Ribeiro for fifth, while freshman Steven Spencer tallied a 13.85 and Bateman added a 13.75.

On floor Eddie Hay separated himself from the competition, earning a 15.35 to capture first. Competing in his first meet of the season, Brandon Wynn had the second-best Buckeye score with a 14.2 while junior Shachar Tal scored a 14.15.

Freshman Philip Onorato received a meet-high 16.0 to win on vault. Justin Myers tied for fourth with a 15.50 and Bateman added a 15.45.

Wynn and Bateman went 1-2 on rings, scoring a 15.05 and 15.00. Also supporting the team effort were classmates Lee and Tal. Lee finished tied for fourth with a 14.85 tally and Tal finished sixth with a 14.8.

For the second-consecutive meet, Myers led the Buckeyes on high bar, finishing third with a 14.45. Bateman was in fourth with a 14.4 and Sean Regan in fifth (14.2).

Bateman concluded his all-around effort with a second-place finish (14.85) on parallel bars. Myers had the second-best score with a fifth-place 14.5.



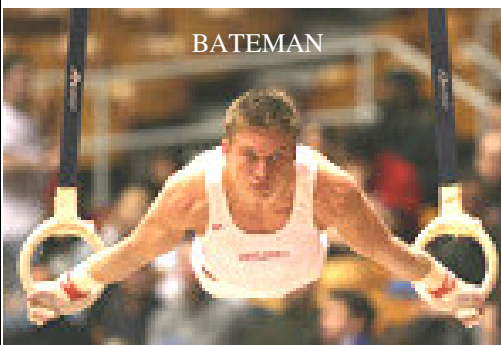
RUGGERI

Bradley scored a season-high on the event coming in second with a 14.60.

Luke Stannard won the event title on pommel horse, posting a 14.65. Stannard also placed second on FX with a score of 14.60.

On pommel horse, Ruggeri and freshman C.J. Padera tied for second scoring a 14.15. Padera also captured the parallel bars event title with a career-high 14.95. Another Illini freshman, Tyler Mizoguchi, posted his first top-three finish with a third place score on parallel bars of 14.75. Tyler Williamson was the top-Illini on rings, coming in third with a 14.95.

On vault, the Orange and Blue placed second and third with Ruggeri posting a 15.75, his season-high, for second place and Roger Pasek scoring a career-high 15.65 to come in



BATEMAN

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

After two consecutive heartbreaking regular season losses to Michigan, Penn State finally got the better of its conference rival on Saturday night at Rec Hall, knocking off the No. 2-ranked Wolverines, 348.90-348.35, in a back-and-forth, down-to-the-wire, thrilling match-up of Big Ten and national powers.

In the final event season-high high bar scores from Noam Shaham (14.70) and Casey Sandy (15.45) fueled an unlikely Penn State comeback and propelled the Lions to the upset win.

For Sandy, his career-best performance on the high bar was the icing on the cake of an overall exceptional effort. The defending NCAA All-Around Champion willed Penn State to victory with his clutch performances, winning the vault (15.95), parallel bars (14.70), and high bar titles on his way to capturing the all-around crown with a score of 90.00, the highest in the nation thus far this



SANDY

season.

Shaham placed second in the floor exercise (tie, 14.90) and third in the rings (tie, 14.80) and the high bar. For his contributions, he was honored as the meet's Gene Wettstone Award recipient.

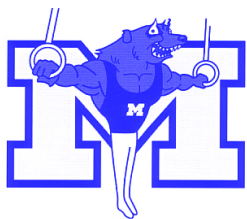
Emerging freshman Miguel Pineda took the rings with a score of 15.10, his third title-win in the event this season.

The Nittany Lions were also dominant on the vault, took the top six spots. Title-winner Sandy was followed in the standings by Matt Greenfield (15.65), Nick Virbitsky (15.55), Allen Harris (15.50), Matt Albrecht (15.45), and Noam Shaham (tie, 15.35).

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

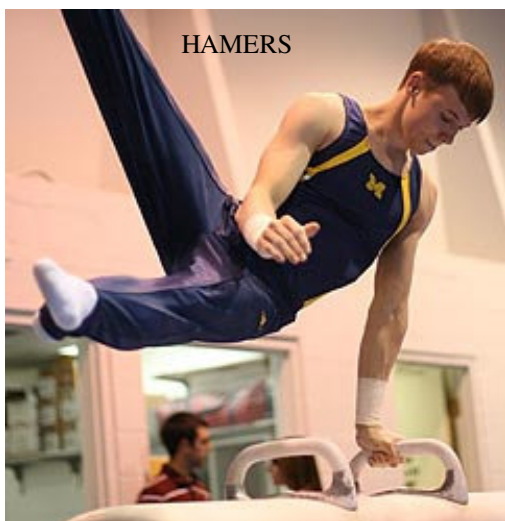
The University of Michigan fell to Penn State by a narrow margin of 348.90-348.35 on

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Friday night at Recreation Hall, giving U-M its first loss of the season.

Chris Cameron garnered the night's top floor routine with a score of 15.10 and sophomore/freshman Adam Hamers registered the meet's highest pommel horse score (14.60) in his collegiate debut.



HAMERS

Paul Woodward earned the team's second-best score with a 14.35 as Michigan gymnasts earned five of the six top scores on pommel horse on the evening.

Cameron had the highest score of the night in FX with a 15.10 and rookie Syque Caesar earned a 14.60, helping U-M take the lead.

Three Wolverines registered scores over 15.00 on the vault to increase Michigan's advantage over the Nittany Lions in the third rotation. Thomas Kelley, Mel Santander and Jamie Thompson registered 15.35, 15.10 and 15.00, respectively, allowing U-M to lead PSU 174.90-173.15.

The Nittany Lions retook the lead 235.800-233.45 after the fourth rotation, where U-M posted a 58.5 on rings to PSU's 62.65 on the vault. Kelley earned the Wolverines highest score in the event with a 14.850, and Phil Goldberg garnered a 14.800 on rings -- the event that he earned All-America honors on last season -- to earn third.

In the fifth rotation, Kelley paced the Wolverines on high bar -- with a 14.90, cutting Michigan's deficit to 291.35-291.85. The Maize and Blue earned a 57.800 on the high bar compared to PSU's 56.05 on the parallel bars.

Despite Ryan McCarthy's team-high 14.50 on the parallel bar during the final rotation, the Wolverines could not muster the scores to bring them ahead of Penn State, and the final score read 348.90-348.35.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

A strong pommel horse performance was the highlight of Saturday night's victory by the University of Minnesota. The Golden Gophers scored 348.85 points to easily dispatch the University of Calgary, Arizona State and Washington in a quad meet at the Sports Pavilion.

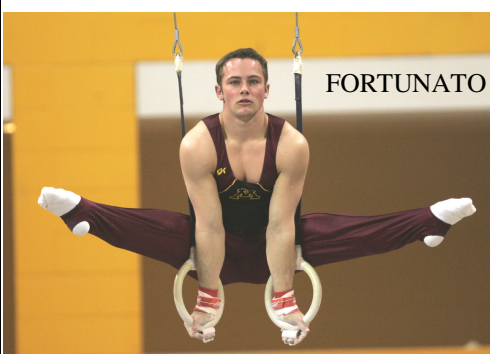
"People are telling me we look like a different team (from last season)," Burns said. "That's a good thing. I'm very proud of what these guys did tonight. I haven't figured out the hit percentage yet, but I'm sure it has to be pretty high. It was a solid team effort tonight."

Minnesota scored 57.45 points on the pommel horse. According to Burns it was the best overall pommel horse performance by the Gophers in his five years with the program. In fact, the team set a new pommel horse record (with the current open-ended scoring system), topping the old mark of 56.45.

Minnesota swept the top three in the pommel horse, with O'Brien scoring a 14.85 for his best performance as a Gopher. Beikmann scored 14.80 and Aaron Fortunato tallied a 14.050 Cole Storer was fourth and also had a personal best mark of 13.75.

The Gophers also swept the top three positions on the rings. Freshman Russell Dabritz won the event at 14.45. Eddie Campbell tallied 14.30 points, while O'Brien was third at 13.90. Minnesota had three scores of 15.00 or better on the vault, led by Colin McGuire's second-place score of 15.55.

The Gophers took the top four positions on both the parallel bars and the high bar. Fortunato won the parallel bars with a 14.75. O'Brien, Michael Paulus and Russell Dabritz tied for second with a 14.55. Fortunato also took high honors on the high bar with a personal best score of 14.85. Freshman DJ Repp



FORTUNATO

was second at 14.25. Ali Aleiou (14.10) and Cole Storer (14.05) rounded out the top four.

Repp won the all-around with a score of

83.65. He was the only all-arounder for Minnesota and out-distanced Calgary's Pat McElroy by nearly three points.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

The University of Iowa defeated the University of Illinois-Chicago Flames Saturday at the UI Fieldhouse with a fairly low final score for both schools of 329.55 to 326.55.

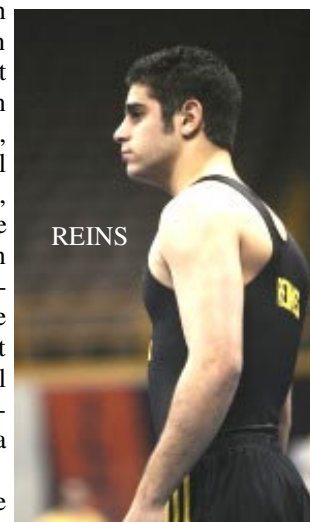
Geoff Reins captured two personal first place finishes, on floor exercise with a 15.10 and on vault with an outstanding score of 15.80. His final score on each broke the season records for the events.

Freshman Zach

C a z a b o n grabbed his first place finish on the parallel bars, with a final score of 14.05, also breaking the season record on the event. Cazabon also broke the season best on the horizontal bar, placing second with a 13.45.

One more event record was broken for the 2009 season, by Reid Urbain on the rings. He tied for third in the tough event with a 14.25.

All the season bests were exactly what Head Coach Tom Dunn wanted to see early in the season. "We have made some big improvements overall," said Coach Dunn. "We still have a few things to correct here and there, but we are headed in the right direction."



REINS