



# COLLEGE GYMNASTICS ASSOCIATION BIG TEN CONFERENCE

WEEKLY REPORT  
WEEK ENDING Feb. 16, 2009  
By Jerry Wright



## UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Illinois took down Penn State, 345.500-339.800, Saturday night at Huff Hall. Illinois scored a season-high on pommel horse, led by Daniel Ribeiro, to gain an early lead that held off the Nittany Lions.

The Illini were competing without the services of Paul Ruggeri who was injured recently at the Winter Cup and had to undergo surgery to his knee. The hopeful word is that Ruggeri will be able to return to practice in about three weeks.

"Without Paul Ruggeri many people didn't give us a chance, but that tells you something about this team," head coach Yoshi Hayasaki said. "We had a lot of guys step up, especially our young guys. We had a great night on horse, and that gave us a cushion. It was our last two events where we really came through. The good news is that we can still do better on parallel bars and floor."

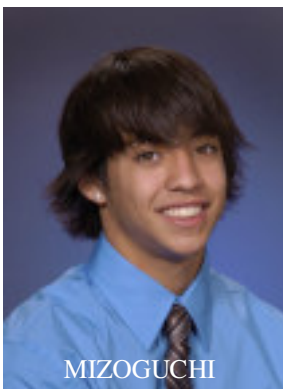
The Illini took the top-four spots on pommel horse, led by Ribeiro's title winning 15.05, to garner their season-best score (58.55). Freshman Tyler Mizoguchi (14.65) and sophomore Roger Pasek (14.55) tallied their personal-best scores to finish second and third, respectively.

Brian Liscovitz captured his season-best on the high bar (14.35) to take the title, while freshman C.J. Padera took second (14.30) and senior Ross Bradley finished third (14.25) to lead Illinois to a 57.05 on the event.

Pasek scored a season-best 15.80 to earn second-place honors on vault, while Tyler Williamson led the Orange and Blue on rings, finishing third with a 14.35. Chris Lung finished runner-up on parallel bars (14.350), while Padera was right behind to take third with a 14.200.

Mizoguchi looked good in his first all-around competition, taking second with an 84.80 behind Penn State's defending national champion Casey Sandy (86.80).

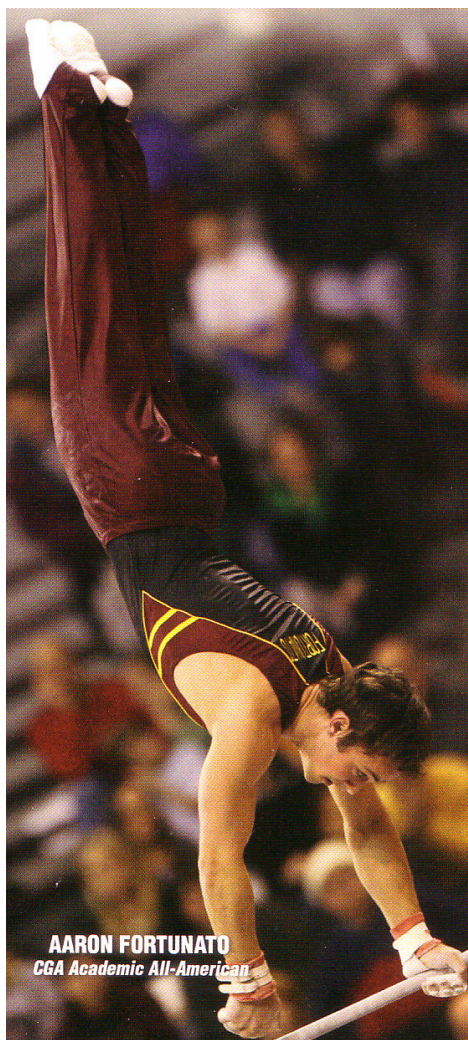
Also looking good for a freshman was Austin Phillips with a score of 82.40 (a dynamic performer with some rough edges but great potential).



MIZOGUCHI

## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The University of Minnesota was victorious over much-improved Iowa and Nebraska teams Saturday night in Iowa City.



AARON FORTUNATO  
CGA Academic All-American

"It seems like we brought the best out of our competition tonight with both teams scoring season highs against us," said head coach Mike Burns. "We ran into a much tougher, competitive environment than we expected. But these guys continue to prove to me that they are a team determined to find a way to win these meets."

The Gophers started on pommel horse and put up a solid 5 for 6 effort with Kit Beikmann posting the Gopher's high score of 14.2. "Cole Storer did his best horse set of the year and posted a career high of 13.8.

Minnesota then moved to the still rings where they posted their highest team score of the year with a 57.25. Thomas O'Brien was UM's top guy with a solid 14.50 score while freshman Russell Dabritz posted a 14.35.

The Gophers moved next to the floor exercise where Aaron Fortunato posted the top score for the Gophers with a 15.00, good for third place overall in the meet.

Andre Berry also saw action on floor as he continues to return to form after two off season shoulder surgeries. Berry posted a 14.25 which is a season high score.

The fourth rotation had the Gophers on the parallel bars, where Thomas O'Brien again posted the high score for the Gophers with a 14.50.

Going into the last two events (high bar and vault), the Gophers were almost seven points behind Iowa, while staying comfortably ahead of Nebraska.

The Gophers, however, won the next two events with scores of 57.05 on high bar and 62.30 on the vault to post their second highest score of the year (345.90). Aaron Fortunato again was the anchor for the Gophers on the bar with a meet-winning score of 14.70. Colin McGuire also stepped up and posted his own season-high score of 14.35 on the high bar for a 3rd place finish on the night.

Going into the last event, Iowa had what seemed like an insurmountable lead of more than five points over the Gophers. However, the five Minnesota vaulters posted the second best team score of the year on vault and catapulted the Gophers to a four-point victory over the Hawkeyes and an almost 2.5-point victory over the Cornhuskers.

On the vault, Ali Aleiou led off with a 15.00, while Andre Berry and Cole Storer posted identical scores of 15.85. McGuire posted a 15.6 that gave the Gophers the meet-winning team total of 62.30.

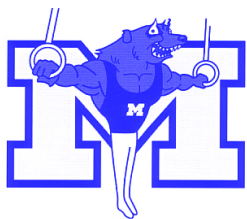
## PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

An uneven performance by Penn State in its dual meet with No. 3 Illinois on Saturday evening foiled the Nittany Lions' designs on claiming a conference road win and resulted in a 345.500-339.800 defeat at Huff Hall in Champaign.

Penn State's outing was highlighted by a season-high score of 62.750 in the vault but diminished by season-low team totals in the pommel horse (52.600) and parallel bars (53.400). Illinois used its home gym advantage to its fullest, scoring well above its season averages in the pommel horse and vault.

The Nittany Lions won three of six events as a team while Casey Sandy captured all four of Penn State's individual titles. The 2008 Big

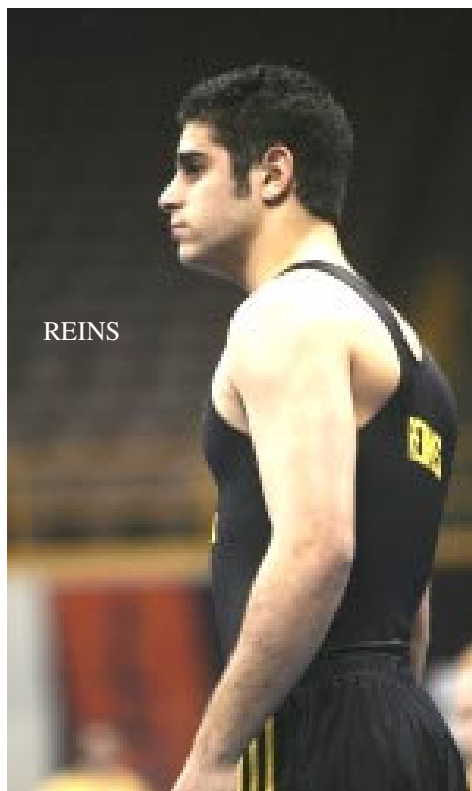
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Ten Gymnast of the Year placed first in the floor exercise (15.150), still rings (14.550), vault (15.900), and parallel bars (14.400) on his way to claiming his fourth all-around crown of the season. Sandy accomplished all of this in spite of having what was for him a seriously off meet.

event record for the season.

Other top scores for Iowa were turned in by: Buese 5th FX (14.70), and 5th PB (14.20); Zach Cazabon 6th PH (13.65); Ben Ketelsen 6th V (15.55); Joel Snyder 11th HB (13.60).



As it has throughout the 2009 season, Penn State shined in the floor exercise and the vault. Sandy, Nick Virbitsky and Allen Harris finished 1-2-3 in the floor. Virbitsky contributed heavily to the Nittany Lions' setting a 2009 high score in the vault, placing third with a personal season best mark of 15.750.

Noam Shaham was also a key contributor, finishing second overall in the rings (14.400) and leading Penn State in the high bar with a score of 13.950.

### UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

The University of Iowa fell to Minnesota (345.90) and Nebraska (343.50) Saturday, placing third with a final score of 341.60.

The Hawkeyes had five season bests including a top team score for the night. Senior Geoff Reins dominated in his last home appearance as a Hawkeye with two first place finishes, in floor exercise (15.40) and vault (15.95) which garnered him two season records as well.

Mike Jiang showed up for Iowa on the pommel horse, placing first with another season record score of 14.50. Another record was on rings by Reid Urbain who scored a 14.80 to beat-out his previous record holding score. Captain Jonathan Buese scored a 14.20 on parallel bars to earn the Hawkeyes another

See MPSF pages for Gold Country Invitational results; See ECAC pages for All Academy Championship results and New England Open results.