



COLLEGE GYMNASTICS ASSOCIATION BIG TEN CONFERENCE

WEEKLY REPORT
WEEK ENDING March 2, 2009
By Jerry Wright

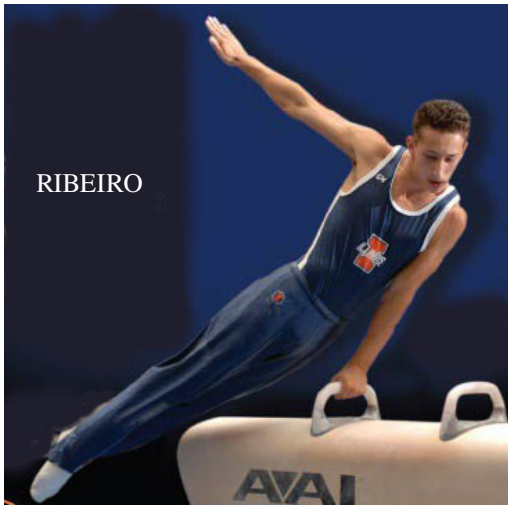


UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Illinois men's gymnastics team posted its season-high score in a dominating, 353.00-337.50, win over the 11th-ranked Iowa Hawkeyes, Saturday evening at Huff Hall. The Orange and Blue took four individual event titles with Ross Bradley winning high bar, Brian Liscovitz taking first on parallel bars, Tyler Williamson winning the still rings title and Daniel Ribeiro taking the pommel horse crown.

"In tonight's meet everybody came out and corrected some of the rough spots they've had in our last few meets," head coach Yoshi Hayasaki said. "The guys were able to polish up the skills in their routines and I was very pleased with the way they performed today. We were able to give a few guys some much-needed rest from our lineup in preparation for our upcoming competitions. Overall, I was very happy with our performance today across the board."

As a team, the Illini hit a season-high 59.80 on pommel horse, led by Daniel Ribeiro who tied his career-high with a 15.70 for first place. The Illini swept the top-three finishes



RIBEIRO

on horse as Luke Stannard took second with a 14.90 and Roger Pasek hit his career-high of 14.70 on the event for third.

Pasek and Ribeiro also led the Orange and Blue on floor, with Pasek taking second (15.15) and Ribeiro scoring a personal best 15.00 for third place.

On rings, the Illini relied on the senior class to pull them through. Tyler Williamson took the event title with a 14.80, while fellow senior Nick Stango placed second with a 14.40.

The Orange and Blue also swept the top-three finishes on high bar. Ross Bradley took

the event title with a season-high score of 14.70. Coming in second on the event was freshman Austin Phillips, who notched a career-high 14.55, while fellow freshman C.J. Padera scored a 14.15 on the event for third place.

The Illini had a strong night on parallel bars with scoring 58.05, just shy of its season-high of 58.85. Liscovitz captured the event title with an individual season-high of 14.80. Padera and Phillips were right behind him, coming in second and third, with scores of 14.55 and 14.50, respectively.

On vault, Andes Saavedra, making his season debut, scored a career-high 15.700, for second place. In all, the Illini tallied 14 top-three finishes on the night.

For the record, the meet was completed in under two hours, possibly a record time under the new rules.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The University of Minnesota rebounded from a rough showing last week to turn in their second-best score of the season Saturday night in Chicago. The Gophers defeated the University of Illinois-Chicago by a tally of 348.450-338.150.

The Golden Gophers held an advantage in all six events during the dual meet at the UIC Physical Education Building. Minnesota's biggest edge came on the floor exercise. The Gophers, led by Cole Storer's score of 15.000, held a nearly four-point edge in the event (58.900-55.200).

The Gophers also enjoyed their best performance of the season on the pommel horse Saturday. Minnesota scored a season-high 58.250 total on the apparatus, easily topping their previous best of 57.450. Kit Beikmann had another great performance on the horse. He topped the 15-point plateau for the second consecutive week, posting a career-best 15.400.

Minnesota also turned its best night of the season on the still rings, tallying a score of 57.400. Russell Dabritz turned in a 14.850 performance on the rings to record a season-high score for the Gophers.

All six of Minnesota's performers on the vault turned in a score of 15.100 or better. The Gophers were paced by Cole Storer's 15.750. Andre Berry (15.650), Adam Reichow (15.600) and Colin McGuire (15.450) turned in the other three scores to account for a total of 62.450.

The Gophers' struggled just a bit on the



STORER

parallel bars and high bars. Aaron Fortunato led the way on the parallel bars with a 14.100. McGuire was Minnesota's top performer on the high bar at 14.550.

The Gophers took the top five scores of the night on the floor exercise. Minnesota accounted for the top four positions on the vault and the top three on the parallel bars.

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Led by the Canadian duo of Casey Sandy and Warren Yang, Penn State won its third consecutive regular season dual meet versus Ohio State, downing the Buckeyes in a tightly-contested Big Ten battle, 347.60-346.50, on Saturday afternoon in Rec Hall.

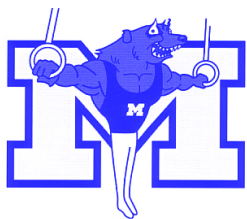
Less than 48 hours after winning the all-around at the Elite Canada 2009 and qualifying for the Canadian National Team and following a cross-continent red-eye flight from British Columbia to University Park, Casey Sandy was stellar in limited action. Competing in just three events, he won all three, placing first in the pommel horse (14.80), parallel bars (15.05), and high bar (14.50).

The seven-time All-American was particularly dominant in the pommel horse, scoring .7 of a point higher than the second place finisher. Sandy's parallel bars score was also a season high and team best. For the season, the reigning Big Ten Gymnast of the Year has



SANDY

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posted 29 top three finishes, a remarkable 25 of which have been title wins.

Warren Yang lent support to Sandy's efforts by contributing the best performances of his young career. Competing in four events, he established season highs in all four. The sophomore also claimed his first title, winning the floor exercise with a team season best score of 15.40. Yang also placed third in the high bar (14.05), fifth in the vault (15.55), and seventh (tie) in the parallel bars (14.00). For his efforts, Yang was presented with the Gene Wettstone Award, an honor bestowed upon the most outstanding gymnast at each home meet.

As a team, Penn State overcame a season-low score on the vault (61.80) by posting the Lions' top score of 2009 in the parallel bars (58.10). Overall, PSU took four of six events. Ohio State scored above its season average in the floor exercise (58.90), pommel horse (54.60), and vault (62.60) but faltered late, struggling in rotations five and six on the high bar and parallel bars.

Freshman Miguel Pineda also played a major role in the victory. He tied for second in the rings with score of 14.95, placed fourth in the pommel horse (13.55), and earned personal season best marks in the vault (15.25) and the parallel bars (14.25).

Other standout performances were turned in by Allen Harris a third-place finisher in the vault (15.70), and Shaun Antonio who took second in the parallel bars (14.75).

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Ohio State held a two-point lead over No. 7 Penn State after four events, but the Nittany Lions countered with a three-point advantage on parallel bars and high bar to take the conference win, 347.60-346.50, Saturday in State College, Pa.

The Scarlet and Gray posted a season-high 59.35 on floor to jump ahead and won rings, 59.00-57.45, and vault, 62.60-61.80, to hold the lead heading into the final two rotations. The Nittany Lions mounted a comeback with wins on parallel bars, 58.10-56.50, and high bar with the Buckeyes turning in a season-low, 54.45 to Penn State's 56.15.

Shachar Tal finished first on rings with a 15.20 for the Buckeyes while Pejman Ebrahimi led on vault for the second-consecutive contest, scoring a first-place 15.90 on the event. Jake Bateman compiled a meet-best 86.10 in the all-around while Brandon Wynn hit a season-high 85.25 and freshman Philip Onorato tallied an 83.65. Penn State did not



have a gymnast compete the all-around.

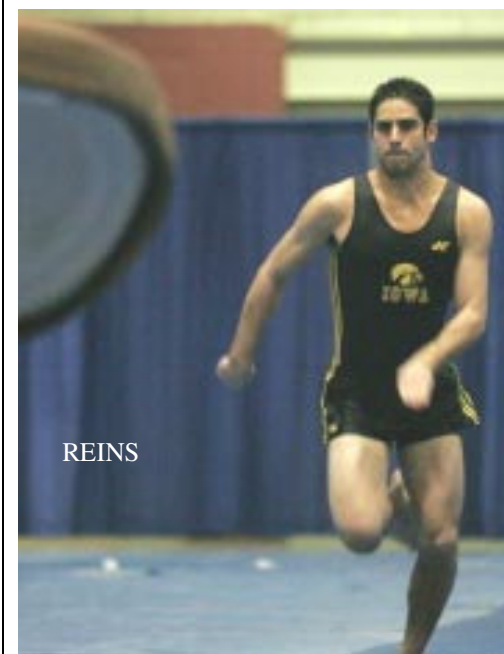
In the first rotation, Eddie Hay scored a team-best 15.25 and Justin Myers had a season-high 14.85 to finish second and third, respectively, to help Ohio State to its 2009-best 59.35 on floor. In just his second meet, freshman Ty Echard led the Buckeyes on pommel horse, scoring a 14.10 to place second. Michael Bell followed in third with a season-high 13.75.

On rings and vault, Ohio State went 1-2 on both events. Tal took the top spot with a 15.20 while Bateman had a 14.95 to tie for second on rings. On vault, Ebrahimi tallied a 15.90 for first while Wynn scored a 15.75 for second.

Wynn and Onorato tied for third on parallel bars with a pair of season-high 14.40s to lead the squad while Bateman recorded a 2009-best 14.45 for second on high bar.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

The University of Iowa fell to No. 5 Illinois Saturday in Champaign, 353.00 to 337.50.



Geoff Reins once again captured first place on both floor exercise (15.25) and vault (16.05). His score on vault broke his previous season record on the event of 15.95. Reid Urbain tied for second on rings with a 14.40, while Ben Ketelsen placed fifth on pommel horse with a 13.90.

Jonathan Buese led the Hawkeyes on parallel bars (14.00) placing sixth and horizontal bar (13.80) placing fourth.

See MPSF pages for Southwest Cup results.