



# COLLEGE GYMNASTICS ASSOCIATION BIG TEN CONFERENCE

WEEKLY REPORT  
WEEK ENDING March 9, 2009  
By Jerry Wright



## UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Illinois men's gymnastics team sent its seniors out in style Saturday afternoon posting a season-high score of 357.85 to defeat the 12th-ranked Illinois-Chicago Flames, 342.80, in front of 1,155 fans at Huff Hall.

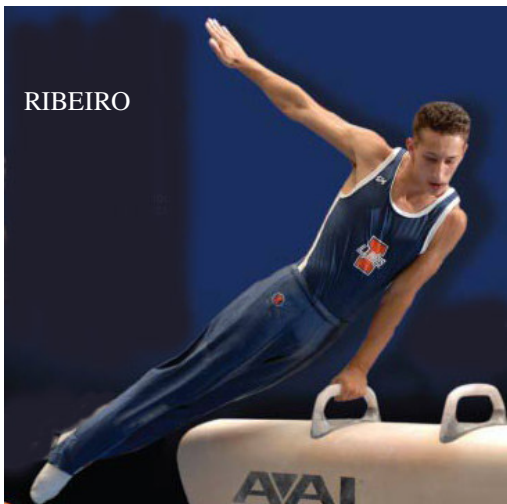
On senior day, the Illini honored Nate Luketin, Nick Stango and Chris Lung in their final home meet. The Illini also celebrated 100 seasons of men's gymnastics with the honoring of over 100 former Illinois gymnasts.

"I believe we are definitely on the right track at this point in the season," head coach Yoshi Hayasaki said. "Everyone has improved and heading into these last few weeks of the season, we are definitely hitting at the right pace. It was very special to have over a 100 alumni back this afternoon and show them how gymnastics has changed since they were here."

As a team, the Illini posted season-high scores on four events including floor (60.00), pommel horse (60.05), vault (62.85) and high bar (57.80).

The Illini started off the night hot on the floor exercise, sweeping the top four spots on the event. Roger Pasek took the event crown with a 15.15. Tying for second place were Luke Stannard and Daniel Ribeiro who both posted career-highs of 15.00. Rounding out the Illini top-four finishers was senior Tyler Williamson who posted another career-high of 14.85.

On pommel horse, Ribeiro took the event title for the second week in a row, posting a career-high 15.95 in a solid performance on



the event. Stannard was close behind coming in second place with a 15.25, his personal-

best.

In the next rotation, the Illini showed improved rings performances across the board. Williamson took second place with a 14.90, while freshman Tyler Mizoguchi hit a career-high 14.65 for third.

Behind a team season-high score on vault, the Illini swept the top three finishes as Williamson posted a career-high 15.80 for the vault crown. Freshman C.J. Padera and Chris Lung tied for second place with 15.75s.

Andres Saavedra had another stellar meet for the Orange and Blue coming in first on parallel bars with a score of 14.80, while Brian Liscovitz tied for second with a 14.65.

The Illini rounded out the afternoon with a season-high score of 57.80 on high bar. Freshman C.J. Padera took his first high bar event title of his young Illini career with a personal best score of 14.90. Ross Bradley came in second with a score of 14.85, his career-high.

The meet also saw the return of sophomore Paul Ruggeri. Ruggeri competed exhibition on high bar, scoring a 15.70. It was his first time competing since suffering a knee injury on Feb. 5 at the Winter Cup Challenge in Las Vegas.

## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The University of Minnesota hosted the No. 1 and No. 2 teams in the nation Saturday at the Sports Pavilion. Oklahoma, which entered the meet ranked No. 2 upset No. 1 Stanford, while Minnesota finished the meet in third.

The Sooners scored a total of 357.85 points, defeating Stanford by more than a full point. The Cardinal tallied 356.40. The Gophers put up a tally of 347.95.

Minnesota started the meet strong. The Gophers turned in their best score of the season on the floor exercise, breaking the 60-point plateau for the first time this season. Cole Storer led the way with a 15.15, while Andre Berry was right on his heels at 15.10. After one rotation, Minnesota led the meet.

But the Gophers struggled a bit in the next two rotations. Minnesota scored a 54.50 on the pommel horse and a 56.45 on the rings. Both scores were the lowest scores posted by the Gophers in more than a month. However, Kit Beikmann placed 1st on the PH with 14.70. By the third rotation, Oklahoma held a commanding 177.40-175.40 lead over Stanford, while Minnesota had tallied 171.15 points.

The Gophers came back strong on the vault.

Their team score of 62.85 was a season-high mark. Storer led the way with a 16.10 for a 3rd place, the first time a Minnesota athlete broke the 16-point mark on the vault this season. Adam Reichow (15.75) and Colin McGuire (15.65) also turned in strong performances on the apparatus.

The Gophers continued to perform well moving to the parallel bars and the fifth rotation. Minnesota tied its season-high score on the bars, scoring a 58.40. The Gophers topped



Oklahoma in the parallel bars, earning praise from Coach Burns. Russell Dabritz paced Minnesota with a 15.10 for 2nd place.

The Gophers had a shot at breaking past the 350-point plateau with a strong showing on the high bar. But they struggled on the event, tallying their second-lowest score of the season (55.55) on the event. Colin McGuire's 8th place 14.25 was the best the Gophers could do in the event.

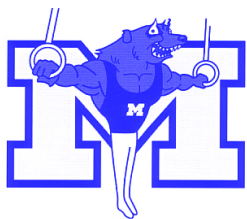
## PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Penn State men's gymnastics team used standout performances from a variety of competitors to gain a 347.55-332.30 victory over No. 11 Temple on Friday evening in Philadelphia at the Owls' McConigle Hall. Four different Nittany Lions captured event titles while seven earned top three finishes.

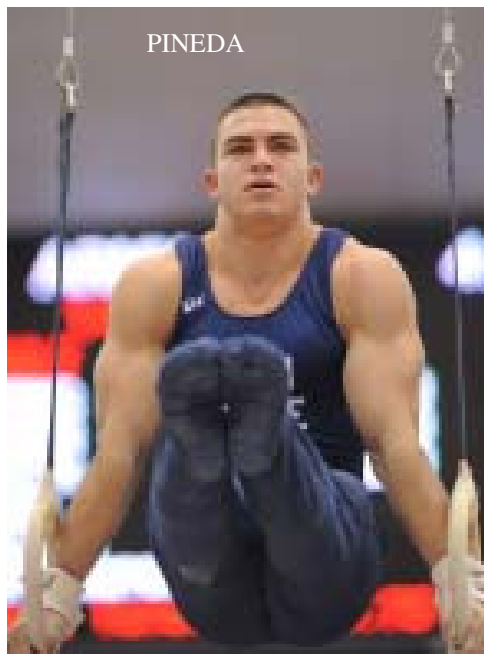
Penn State won all six events as a team, establishing a season high in the high bar with a score of 57.95 without Casey Sandy, its top performer in the event. Getting some well-deserved rest, Sandy, the reigning Big Ten Gymnast of the Week, competed in just three events, placing first in the pommel horse (14.50) and second in the still rings (14.60), and parallel bars (14.60).

Freshman Miguel Pineda was the star of the night for Penn State, though, as he

Continued next page



claimed his first career all-around title with a personal season best score of 85.30. He won his fifth still rings crown of the year (14.85) and finished in third place in the pommel horse (13.90) and the parallel bars (tie, 14.20).



PINEDA

For the second consecutive meet, Shaun Antonio stepped up to help fill the void left by Sandy's absence. He placed first in the high bar (14.75) and second in the floor exercise (14.90), setting career highs in both events. Antonio also tied with teammate Pineda for third in the parallel bars (14.20).

Noam Shaham also provided solid contributions, earning a second place finish in the high bar (14.55) and taking third in the rings (14.55) and vault (15.70). Allen Harris was Penn State's other title winner, claiming first with a personal season high of 15.15.

Matt Greenfield (third, high bar) and Nick Virbitsky (third, floor exercise) recorded Penn State's other top three finishes...Warren Yang (high bar, 14.15), redshirt freshman Logan Wyman (rings, 14.15), and Virbitsky (high bar, 14.05) all set personal season highs in respective events...Penn State has more wins over Temple (73) than any other opponent in program history.

### **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

In its second of three road duals vs. Top 7 opponents, Ohio State scored a season-low 337.25 as it dropped its California (352.70) Friday in Berkeley, Calif. The Buckeyes, who competed without three of their top scorers in

this meet.

Highlighting the meet for Ohio State was the pommel horse squad which produced a 55.35 event total, just .60 point shy of the team's season-high. This effort came from behind a second-place finish from redshirt freshman Steven Spencer. Spencer scored a career-high 15.00, trailing Cal's Glen Ishino by .10 in first. Ohio natives Andy Saurber and Ty Echard a freshman, contributed a 14.05 (fourth) and 13.55 (fifth), respectively. Saurber's mark set a new season high for the 2009 NCAA pommel horse finalist. Despite its best efforts, Ohio State lost the event to California, 56.25-55.35.

Sachar Tal tallied his second-consecutive career high on floor with a 14.95 to lead the Buckeyes with a third-place finish on the event. Justin Myers was fourth with a 14.80 as Ohio State dropped the first rotation, 58.45-57.4.

After an outstanding performance on the



SPENCER

pommel horse, the Scarlet and Gray struggled on their two best events, rings and vault, scoring season-lows on both. The Golden Bears outscored the Buckeyes, 58.65-56.85, on rings while holding a 61.95-58.75 advantage on vault. Tal, who led the squad on four events at the competition, had a fourth-place finish on rings (14.55), tied for fifth on vault with a 14.95 and was sixth on parallel bars (14.50).

After his classmate led the squad on parallel bars in the sixth rotation, Myers recorded a team-best fifth-place finish on high bar with a 13.80.

### **PENN STATE UNIVERSITY (Sunday)**

Competing without its top gymnast, reigning Big Ten and NCAA All-Around champion Casey Sandy, Penn State posted its second highest team score of the season, a 347.85, to claim decisive wins over host Wil-

liam & Mary (340.05) and Navy (336.45) on Sunday afternoon in Williamsburg, Va. The competition was the Nittany Lions' second in three days, after defeating Temple, 347.55-332.30, on Friday evening in Philadelphia.

After winning the all-around crown at the Elite Canada 2009, claiming three titles in a home win over Ohio State, and placing first in the pommel horse in a road dual against Temple, all in the span of just seven days, Sandy was given a well-deserved day off. In his absence, other Nittany Lions stepped up and took advantage of the opportunity to shine. Foremost on that list was Allen Harris who set a team season high (15.45) in winning his second consecutive floor exercise title and tied a personal season best in taking first in the vault (15.70).

On HB Noam Shaham used a season high score of 14.95 to tie for first in the event. He also performed well elsewhere, placing second in the floor exercise (14.80) and the vault (15.55). Shaham also took third in the all-around (85.15).

Freshman Miguel Pineda added another achievement to his successful rookie campaign, capturing his sixth still rings title of the year with a score of 15.05. He also placed third in the parallel bars (tie, 14.20), fourth in the vault (15.30) and high bar (14.50), and fifth in the pommel horse (14.05) en route to second place showing in the all-around with a personal season high score of 86.75.



SHAHAM

Redshirt freshman Logan Wyman established a season and career high mark in the still rings, placing third with a score of 14.15... Matt Greenfield earned his second straight third place finish in the high bar. His score of 14.60 was a personal season high...Warren Yang earned his first ever top three finish in the vault, placing third with a score of 15.45.