

Ducks fourth; Sooners prove a point to win NCAA

By MIKE MARINO
Of the Emerald

Oklahoma, the gymnastics team with something to prove, finally made its point Saturday.

"People are going to have to realize that gymnastics is changing," said Paul Ziert, the Sooner coach. "I think we've started something here, and the rest of the country is going to have to join the new look."

While everyone else was gunning for an Oklahoma flop, the Sooners were having a great time in Mac Court over the weekend, and they ended Saturday after-

noon with a record performance to win the NCAA team championship.

"We can't be denied anymore," Ziert said. "We've been pushed around a lot, but now people are going to have to take us for real."

The Sooners beat Arizona State by over two points in the team finals, with Southern Connecticut, the team without scholarships, taking third. The fourth-through-eighth place finishers — led by Oregon with a 429.40 team total — did not compete in the team finals.

It came down to Oklahoma win-

ning with its strengths — namely all-arounders Bart Conner and Mike Wilson. That was touch-and-go for a while, as Friday night Wilson injured his knee in the floor exercise. Ziert considered taking Wilson out of the vault and the high bar, leaving Oklahoma dangerously weak in those events, but the junior made the decision to go.

"He decided to use himself," Ziert said. "You don't win the national championship without a guy like that."

And then there was Conner, the resplendent sophomore who captured the all-around title Friday night. In scoring 56.325 points for the six events — exactly half of his winning AA total, Conner led the Sooners to the inevitable.

"This is just the greatest," said Conner. "They say that gymnastics is a team sport, but I came here for Oklahoma."

Saturday night Conner was en-

tered in three individual finals, but finished behind some great performances, like Mel Cooley of Washington on the high bar. Cooley won the event with a 9.7 in the finals — beating Conner's 9.6 after the duo were tied going in — but his toughest job was struggling through six takes of an ABC interview.

Ron Galimore of LSU won the vault with Mike Burke winning the pommel horse and Oregon's Tom Truedson taking fourth.

"I'm disappointed, sure," Truedson said. "But there was some tough competition out there. I just did my best, and I'm glad to be an All-American again."

The Ducks finished fourth for the second straight year, but Oregon coach Bill Ballester was optimistic about the future. "We'll be back," he said. "The nationals are at LSU next year, and we're gonna love the South."

Individual Finals

Floor exercise — 1, Curt Austin, Iowa State, 19.075. 2, Mike Silverstein, Temple, 19.025. 3, Perry Johnson, BYU, 19.00. 4, Mark Goodson, No. Ill., 18.90. 5, Pete Murao, Indiana, 18.725. 6, Mark Mueller, Illinois State, 18.6.

Pommel horse — 1, Mike Burke, No. Ill., 19.425. 2, Dave Stoldt, Illinois, 19.250. 3, Mike Dahl, LSU, 19.15. 4, tie, Tom Truedson, Oregon and Dave Schieble, So. Ill., 19.125. 6, Andy Isaacson, Illinois State, 18.9.

Rings — 1, Scott McEldowney, Oregon, 19.050. 2, Kirk Mango, No. Ill., 18.95. 3, John Bernal, New Mexico, 18.925. 4, Mike Silverstein, Temple, 18.9. 5, Jim Blush, LSU, 18.85. 6, tie, Bart Conner, Oklahoma, and Skip Zimmer, Temple, 18.8.

Vault — 1, Ron Galimore, LSU, 19.3. 2, Mark Trippel, Iowa State, 19.275. 3, Dennis Chase, Chico State, 19.0. 4, tie, Jim Neilson, Arizona State, and Mike Silverstein, Temple, 18.925. 6, Carl Badger, Michigan, 18.85.

Parallel bars — 1, John Corriere, Michigan, 19.275. 2, Yoichi Tomita, Long Beach, 19.225. 3, tie, Scott Barclay, Arizona State and Bart Conner, Oklahoma, 18.9. 5, tie, Tim LaFleur, Minnesota, and John Bernal, New Mexico, 18.575.

High bar — 1, Mel Cooley, Washington, 19.20. 2, Bart Conner, Oklahoma, 19.1. 3, Masahiko Kinjoh, BYU, 18.875. 4, Mike Silverstein, Temple, 18.825. 5, Yoichi Tomita, Long Beach, 18.8. 6, Mark Williams, Nebraska, 18.750.

All-around — 1, Bart Conner, Oklahoma, 112.65. 2, Yoichi Tomita, Long Beach, 111.60. 3, Mike Wilson, Oklahoma, 110.15. 4, Mario McCutcheon, So. Conn., 109.70. 5, Rick Adams, South Illinois, 108.85. 6, Scott Barclay, Arizona State, 108.70.

Team — Oklahoma, 439.350. Arizona State, 437.075. Southern Connecticut, 435.675. Oregon, 429.40. Indiana State 428.45. Penn State, 428.20. Minnesota, 427.05. Fullerton 413.60.

Series sweep gives Oregon division lead

Oregon's Ducks scored two runs with no outs in the ninth inning of Saturday's second game and in the process swept a three game set from Washington in Pac-8 Northern Division play, this weekend at Howe Field.

The Ducks parlayed three walks, an error and Mike Ritchey's sharp single to left to drop the Huskies, 3-2. Tom Dodd accounted for the other run with a home run over the centerfield fence.

In Saturday's opener the Ducks had to make a comeback for a 6-4 victory. Behind 3-0 after four innings, the Ducks got one back in the bottom of that same inning when Glenn Baggerly ripped an run scoring double. Oregon iced it with a five-run fifth inning.

In that flurry, Ron Sloy and Steve Elam brought in two runs each with singles. Gig Nelson brought in one run.

In Friday's opener, Oregon fell behind 4-0 in the second inning, most of it attributable to sloppy play. But the Ducks set the trend for the rest of the weekend, by putting their bats to action. Steve Elam was the Duck's driving force, hammering two homers and driving in six runs.

The division-leading Ducks travel to Washington State to face the 2-1 Cougars next weekend.



Photo by Neil Gruentfelder

Sophomore right-fielder Mike Carr takes a cut in action against Washington Saturday afternoon.

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