

Penn State

Grabs the Win

Men's NCAA Championships

Penn State came into the Men's NCAA Championships ranked third but left University of Illinois' Assembly Hall as NCAA Champions. The event took place April 2-4 and utilized a podium, a first for the NCAA Championships. The Nittany Lions beat two-time champions Oklahoma and number one ranked Illinois. Penn State finished with a score of 223.350 over Oklahoma's 222.300 and Illinois' 222.225.



Penn State Men's Team

Penn State Head Coach Randy Jepson said, "When I looked at what we lost from last year I thought we could maybe be top three this year. However, by Christmas time I knew we had a team that could possibly win. The thing that surprised everyone is that we were not higher in the rankings. But the reason was because we didn't have our best line up until the night of team finals. We had guys traveling internationally and resting and we pulled it all together when it counted."

Season-high team scores on four of six events propelled the Penn State team to the title. Sophomore Luis Vargas won the all-around title with a career-high 56.475, becoming the first Lion to win the overall since Marshall Avenier won the title in 1973.

Penn State needed a strong performance on vault, the final event, to bring home the national title for the first time since 2000, and they got what they needed, scoring a 37.200 and beating second-place and two-time defending champion Oklahoma.

Oklahoma was trying to become the first school to win three straight NCAA titles since Nebraska won five in a row from 1979-83. The Sooners went into the final rotation with a 0.175 lead, but they finished on the parallel bars while Penn State was on vault, which was a higher-scoring event.

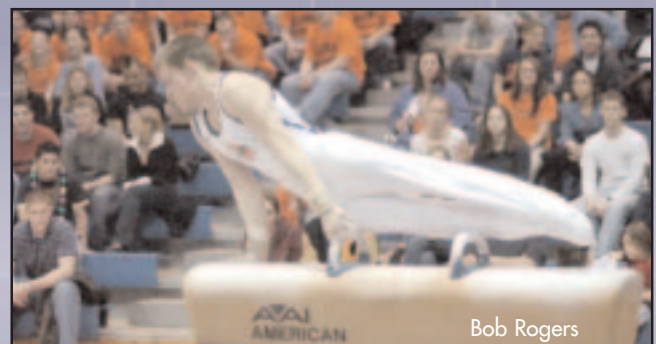
Penn State wasn't perfect on vault, in fact several gymnasts took small hops on their landings. But the Nittany Lions were good enough, with all six gymnasts scoring 9.050 or above.



Luis Vargas

After a disappointing 217.750 in the qualifying session on Friday, the Sooners roared back during the team finals with their second highest score of the season. In his fifth season, Oklahoma head coach Mark Williams has won two NCAA titles, finished twice on two occasions and fourth in his first year. Williams had this to say after his team's effort during the NCAA Championships "Saturday was an absolute turnaround from the performance we had on Friday. Even though we did not win the title, I am thrilled because we gave a 100 percent effort. We had a fantastic meet but Penn State was better and they deserve a lot of credit. I am extremely proud of my team for coming back the way they did after the qualifier."

The Illini gymnasts, looking for their first NCAA title since 1989, put themselves in the running with impressive high bar routines. But the meet slipped away from the Illini on floor. Illinois rebounded with the highest score of any team on pommel horse, but it wasn't enough.



Bob Rogers

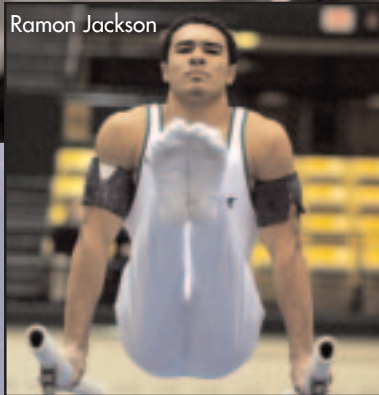


Graham Ackerman

CAI MEDIA RELATIONS



Kevin Tan



Ramon Jackson



Justin Spring

"Today was a different day from yesterday," head coach of Illinois Yoshi Hayasaki said. "Our guys put up a fight and set a school record. Penn State had a great day, it was their day. I don't think we should be ashamed with the way we competed and this score we put up today. We could've beat anyone in any other competition."

Illini Senior Bob Rogers and sophomore Justin Spring became national champions during the NCAA Event Finals. Rogers won pommel horse with a career-high score of 9.775 and Spring won high bar, also with a 9.775.

"Going into this routine, I was thinking 'I've done this routine a thousand times,'" said Rogers moments after winning the title. "I knew the door was open for me, going last. The opportunity was there and it worked out. I can't even think, I am so excited right now."

California's Graham Ackerman became the first Bear to win two national titles in the same year. He also became the fourth Bear to earn All-American status in four different events in the same night. Ackerman won both floor and vault with scores of 9.687 on each event.

Penn State senior Kevin Tan became the 2004 rings champion scoring 9.812. The title was Tan's second consecutive crown, becoming Penn State's first back-to-back national champion on rings and capping off an outstanding collegiate career on the event.

William and Mary sophomore Ramon Jackson rose to the challenge by capturing the national title on parallel bar with a score of 9.20. "This is what intercollegiate athletics is all about," said Tribe Head Coaching veteran Cliff Gauthier. "A William and Mary scholar who has designed his own major becomes a national champion. This victory is a real testament to his hard work and his ability to take advantage of his opportunity to compete for William and Mary."

Stanford's Dan Gill, the only current NCAA athlete on the U.S. National Team, finished second all-around and tied for second on pommel horse and high bar. Gill beat out several of the top gymnasts in the country to win the Nissen-Emery award, gymnastics' equivalent of the Heisman Trophy.

Penn State's head coach Randy Jepson earned his second national coach of the year nod after leading the Lions to their second NCAA title in five years and an NCAA record 11th overall.

Men's NCAA Championships Results

Team Standings

Place	Name	Score
1.	Penn State	223.350
2.	Oklahoma	222.300
3.	Univ. of Illinois	222.225
4.	Ohio State	221.350
5.	Michigan	220.525
6.	California	220.325

All-Around Results

Place	Name	Gym	AA
1	Luis Vargas	Penn State	56.475
2	Dan Gill	Stanford	56.125
3	Randy Monahan	Ohio State	55.725
4	Heath Mueller	Oklahoma	55.000
5T	Justin Laury	Michigan	54.675
5T	Guillermo Alvarez	Minnesota	54.675
7	Linus Gaveika	Iowa	54.375
8	David Henderson	Oklahoma	53.875
9	Michael Reavis	Iowa	53.850
10	Geoff Corrigan	Michigan	53.275
11	Jeff Andersen	Air Force	52.525
12	Randall Hefflin	California	51.575
13	Justin Spring	Illinois	46.600
14	Gerry Signorelli	Michigan	44.400
15	Mace Patterson	Nebraska	4.900

Floor Exercise

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Graham Ackerman	California	9.687
2	Randall Hefflin	California	9.550
3	Jock Stevens	Oklahoma	9.525
4	Guillermo Alvarez	Minnesota	9.450
5	Luke Bottke	Michigan	9.337
6T	Dan Gill	Stanford	9.312
6T	Adam Pummer	Illinois	9.312
8	Kerry Adderly	Ohio State	9.075
9	Randy Monahan	Ohio State	9.050
10	Geoff Corrigan	Michigan	8.875

Pommel Horse

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Bob Rogers	Illinois	9.775
2T	Dan Gill	Stanford	9.687
2T	Luis Vargas	Penn State	9.687
4	Ben Newman	Illinois	9.575
5	Peter Shostchuk	Illinois	9.525
6	Guillermo Alvarez	Minnesota	9.425
7	Aaron Rakes	Michigan	8.925
8	Nathaniel Eng	Penn State	8.775
9*	Jamie Henderson	Oklahoma	8.300
9*	Zack Roeder	Penn State	8.300

Still Rings

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Kevin Tan	Penn State	9.812
2	Nyika White	Temple	9.787
3	David Henderson	Oklahoma	9.600
4	Peter Derman	Stanford	9.562
5	Josh Rasile	Nebraska	9.525
6	Jamie Henderson	Oklahoma	9.475
7	Randy Monahan	Ohio State	9.437
8	Brian Lee	Army	9.387
9	Cody Trobaugh	Ohio State	9.312
10	Jay Yee	California	9.237

Vault

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Graham Ackerman	California	9.687
2	Adam Pummer	Illinois	9.637
3	Theo Maes	Temple	9.550
4	Michael Reavis	Iowa	9.437
5	Dan Gill	Stanford	9.425
6	Neil Faustino	UIC	9.350
7	Justin Spring	Illinois	9.300
8	Josh Rasile	Nebraska	9.250
9	Jock Stevens	Oklahoma	9.212
10	Guillermo Alvarez	Minnesota	9.075

Parallel Bars

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Ramon Jackson	Wm & Mary	9.200
2	Linus Gaveika	Iowa	9.187
3	Joshua Gore	Oklahoma	9.100
4	Luis Vargas	Penn State	9.025
5	Justin Spring	Illinois	9.000
6	Graham Ackerman	California	8.987
7	Kerry Adderly	Ohio State	8.937
8	Brian Trause	Oklahoma	8.912
9	Kevin Tan	Penn State	8.450
10	Gerry Signorelli	Michigan	7.575

High Bar

Place	Name	Gym	Score
1	Justin Spring	Illinois	9.775
2T	Dan Gill	Stanford	9.737
2T	Graham Ackerman	California	9.737
4	Linus Gaveika	Iowa	9.687
5	Ronald Ferris	Ohio State	9.537
6T	Luis Vargas	Penn State	9.475
6T	Quinn Rowell	Oklahoma	9.475
8	Randy Monahan	Ohio State	9.312
9	Justin Laury	Michigan	9.075
10	Heath Mueller	Oklahoma	8.700