

Gymnasts of the Week – Feb. 10-12, 2012

Awards are given by conference offices

Big Ten Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Sharaya Musser, Penn State

- Placed first in the all-around to lead No. 10 Penn State to a quad-meet win over No. 21 NC State, George Washington and William & Mary
- Took the all-around title with a score of 39.525, also winning the balance beam (9.950) and bars (9.900) titles
- Took second on the vault with a score of 9.875 and placed seventh in the floor exercise (9.800)
- Earns her second straight weekly award, marking her fourth this season and the ninth of her career

Freshman of the Week

Jessie DeZiel, Nebraska

- Took first place in the all-around to push No. 8 Nebraska to a win against No. 22 Michigan, No. 20 Washington and Southern Utah
 - Totaled an all-around score of 39.450, also finishing first on the vault (9.925)
 - Placed second on the balance beam (9.850), fourth on the bars (9.850) and eighth in the floor exercise (9.825)
 - Collects her fifth consecutive Freshman of the Week award
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Big 12 Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Taylor Spears, Oklahoma

Spears led Oklahoma in an event-winning performance in the all-around in the Perfect 10 Challenge. She captured her third all-around title in just four AA appearances with a career-high 39.400. She finished second on vault with a score of 9.875 and shared third-place honors on floor with a career-high-tying 9.875 on the event. The sophomore tabbed her third-straight score of 9.85 on beam, earning her fourth place. Spears has scored a 9.8 or higher 17 times this year, including eight of her last 10 routines.

Specialist of the Week

Megan Ferguson, Oklahoma

Ferguson helped the Sooners top Iowa State and SEMO Friday night, leading OU to its third 197-mark on the road this season. She notched her 10th score of 9.900 or higher this year after producing a 9.950 showing on floor, tying her career high and earning top honors in the event. The senior posted a 9.900 on beam to take her second title of the night. Her routines at the Perfect 10 Challenge boosted her ranking to third nationally on beam (up one spot) and fifth on floor (up six tallies). The native of Olathe, Kan., is also 14th-best in the nation on bars. Her marks have led league gymnasts in individual national rankings all season. Ferguson has posted a 9.8 or higher in 20 of her 21 routines in 2012, and has registered a 9.9 or higher in 10 of her routines.

Newcomer of the Week

Rebecca Clark, Oklahoma

Clark snags her first weekly award after collecting third place accolades for her 9.825 vault. She also generated a 9.85 on beam, good for fourth place. The Blue Springs, Mo.-native hit her sixth

bar score of 9.800 or higher this season, and has achieved that mark or higher in her last 10 routines. Clark breaks Rachel Updike's (Missouri) streak of five consecutive Newcomer Awards.

East Atlantic Gymnastics League

Gymnast of the Week

Jess Panza, North Carolina State

Panza recorded a pair of 9.9s on beam and floor to lead the Wolfpack in both of those events. The New York native registered new season-highs with both scores, tying her career-high on floor. Panza finished first on floor and second on beam at the meet. She is currently tied for 14th nationally for best average on beam (9.833) and leads the league in beam average.

Specialist of the Week

Diahanna Ham, North Carolina State

Ham tied the school record with a 9.95 on vault, the highest on vault by a Wolfpack gymnast since 2004. Hailing from Massachusetts, the Pack sophomore becomes only the third Wolfpack gymnast to score a 9.95 on vault. The 9.95 is the highest score any State gymnast has recorded on the season. Ham also scored a 9.875 on floor to finish second in that event.

Rookie of the Week

Kayla Gray, New Hampshire

Gray registered a career-high 9.9 to finish in first place on balance beam and added a personal-best 9.825 on floor exercise to share the top score in that event during UNH's quad-meet victory at the University of Pennsylvania on Feb. 10. The Wildcats extended their winning streak to seven and improved to 8-1 on the season by defeating Penn, Brockport and Wilson.

Eastern College Athletic Conference – Division I

Co-Gymnasts of the Week

Lindsay Poplaski, Towson University

Poplaski helped the Tigers to a first-place finish at a tri-meet at Ursinus College on Sunday afternoon, leading the Tigers to their best road score of the season. She placed in the top five in each event. She was fourth in the vault (9.725) and fifth on the uneven bars, matching her career high with a 9.7 score. Poplaski also finished second on the balance beam (9.6) and the floor exercise (9.725). In the all-around competition, she earned a career-high 38.75 score to finish second. The senior has been the Tigers' steadiest gymnast this season, averaging 38.5 in five meets to date.

Katie Canning, Temple University

Canning once again had a tremendous performance for the Temple Owls on Friday evening at Illinois State. In the quad-meet, Canning put up her highest score of the season on the vault (9.825) to take first place overall in the meet. The Billerica, Mass., native finished second overall in the all-around (38.8), trailing only Illinois State's Kim Genereux (38.825). Canning showcased a strong performance on the beam, as she tied with Illinois State's Melissa Mann for the event title (9.775).

Co-Rookies of the Week

Morgan Traina, Yale University

Traina once again set a career high in the all around with a 38.475 and a second career high on the floor exercise at 9.5. She has been a very consistent and top scorer for Yale in all four of her

NCAA competitions. She continues to break her career highs in all events each week. She helped Yale to its second-best team score of 190.40 this season.

Sammy Lutz, Towson University

Lutz helped the Tigers earn their best road score of the season with a first-place finish at the Ursinus tri-meet. She competed in two events and earned a career high of 9.80 on the bars as the leadoff person, helping the Tigers earn a season high of 48.90 team score on bars. She also led off on the floor exercise and had a 9.425 score.

Specialist of the Week

Lindsay Andsager, Yale University

Andsager broke her career high with a 9.85 on the bars. She placed first and led the bar team to the top three places in the competition and a total score of 48.65. This was the team's highest score in the event since 2003.

Coaches' Choice

Brittanie DeMeno, Temple University

Prior to the start of Friday evening's meet at Illinois State, freshman teammate Natali Ruzich suffered an injury during warm ups, which was severe enough to scratch her from the competition. Head coach Aaron Murphy immediately turned to DeMeno, as the team now needed her to perform in the vault exercise. DeMeno responded to the call with a very strong performance, as she earned a score of 9.475. Then, DeMeno had a big contribution as she helped Temple take first place overall in the balance beam exercise with her score of 9.475.

Eastern College Athletic Conference – Division II

Gymnast of the Week

Rebecca Brady, Southern Connecticut State Univ

Brady, a team captain, set a school record with her 9.9 vault performance, extending a streak of personal highs in each meet this season, while helping Southern Connecticut establish a team benchmark in the event. She also tied her personal best on the floor exercise with a 9.775, and recorded a 9.075 on the balance beam. The Owls defeated Division I host Cornell, West Chester and Ithaca in the Big Red Invitational.

Specialist of the Week

Alli Aquila, West Chester University

Aquila has been a strong competitor for West Chester University over the last four years, continuing her consistent weekly performances during her senior campaign. At the Cornell Big Red Invitational, she led the Golden Rams on the vault by scoring a career-best 9.675 to place third in the event. She also registered a 9.225 on the uneven parallel bars.

Rookie of the Week

Meghan Cole, Southern Connecticut State University

Cole scored a personal-best on the vault with a 9.625 as part of a record-setting performance by the team in the event (48.125). She contributed a 9.575 score in the floor exercise. In addition, she performed an exhibition routine on the beam with a 9.7, which outscored the line-up roster to make a statement on her capabilities of competing in the event officially in the future.

Coaches' Choice of the Week

Caitlin Perry, University of Bridgeport

Perry helped the University of Bridgeport capture first place in the four-team Yale Bulldog Invitational, which also included Springfield and Rhode Island College. After missing four days of practice due to illness, she returned to the gym on Friday and did a solid job competing in

Saturday's meet as she grabbed seventh place among the 23 athletes in the floor exercise (9.575) and was 18th on the vault (8.9). Her scores – which also included a 9.55 on the bars – helped the Purple Knights record a team total of 193.075 – the second-highest mark in 2012. Bridgeport head coach Byron Knox stated, "Caitlin's dedication to gymnastics and to her teammates is truly something to be admired as she battled through her illness last week."

Eastern College Athletic Conference – Division III

Gymnast of the Week

Sarah Nadrowski, SUNY Cortland

Nadrowski had another consistent performance in the all-around for SUNY Cortland in its road meet at Rutgers University, with visiting Brown University. She finished second in the all-around, posting a career-best performance of 38.45.

Rookie of the Week

Amanda Carney, College at Brockport

Carney scored a personal-best on the vault (9.625) and the floor exercise with a 9.6 to help Brockport earn its highest point total for the season.

Specialist of the Week

Kay Gordon, Ithaca College

Gordon performed an exceptional floor routine to score her personal best and finish in a second-place tie in a quad-meet dominated with DI and DII competitors.

Coaches' Choice

Kileigh Chapman, College at Brockport

Chapman had one of her better meets of the year, helping Brockport to a season-high 187.875 team score.

Mid American Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Kristin Teubner, Central Michigan

Senior Kristin Teubner continued her impressive streak of performances Saturday versus Kent State, scoring above a 39 for the second-straight meet as the Chippewas earned a key win over their rival to keep their MAC record perfect at 4-0. Teubner scored a 9.8 or better in three of four events to score a 39.225 and claim the all-around, finishing first in uneven bars with a 9.825, first on the floor with a 9.850, tied for second on the vault with a 9.825 and tied for second on the beam with a 9.725. The win was the fourth-straight over the Golden Flashes for the Chippewas and their 26th straight over a MAC foe.

Specialists of the Week

Megan Valentini, Bowling Green

In her only two events of the afternoon, Megan Valentini made a major impact, helping the Falcons to a season-best 193.975 score versus Northern Illinois. The sophomore captured the beam crown, scoring a 9.750, a season-best. Valentini added a 9.775 on floor to finish sixth, her second-best mark of the season.

Meaghan McWhorter, Central Michigan

Sophomore Meaghan McWhorter helped the Chippewas keep their Mid-American Conference record unblemished Saturday, scoring a 9.8 on the vault for the second-straight week and the

third time this season as the Chippewas defeated rival Kent State, 194.475-193.550. The vault mark tied her season high as the Chippewas extended their streak of consecutive wins over MAC foes to 26. McWhorter finished tied fourth in the event and also finished eighth on the floor with a 9.625, just a week after being hampered by injury.

Megan Melendez, Northern Illinois

Melendez' performances on balance beam and bars helped cement the Huskies' stellar day at Bowling Green Saturday as NIU posted the 7th-best team score in school history with a 194.775. Melendez earned a 9.750 on balance beam to take first place in the event, her third first place finish on beam in the last four meets. Melendez' score helped the Huskies secure the victory with their season-best beam score – a 48.475. Her career-best 9.650 on uneven parallel bars contributed to NIU's season-best performance on that event (48.800). As a team, NIU scored its season-bests on every event en route to a 194.775 total for its best score since March 14, 2009.

Midwest Independent Conference

All-Arounder of the Week

Rashonda Cannie, Texas Woman's

Cannie captured the all-around title against Centenary on Saturday, Feb. 11 with a score of 39.850. It's her ninth all-around title in her career. Cannie recorded a 9.650 on vault, a 9.700 on bars, a 9.725 on beam and a 9.775 on beam and placed in the top three on bars and beam.

Specialist of the Week

Emma Garrett, Southeast Missouri State

Garrett continued her strong season at the Perfect 10 Challenge last Friday, showing well in a field that included No. 5 Oklahoma and Iowa State. The junior tallied a 9.825 on the floor exercise and posted a 9.700 on vault, earning top-10 finishes in both events.

Mountain Pacific Sports Federation

Co-Gymnasts of the Week

Katie Yamamura, UC Davis

UC Davis junior Katie Yamamura (Palo Alto, CA) posted a career all-around (39.125), helping the team shatter its previous best against Oregon St. and Sacramento St. (193.875). She tied for third on vault (9.825), tied her personal-best on bars (9.825), helped UCD score its No. 2 beam total ever with a 9.70, then closed with a 9.775 on floor.

Katie Hawthorne, Air Force

Air Force sophomore Katie Hawthorne (Forney, TX) set or tied career-bests in all four events and the all-around in a dual win vs. UAA. She won all-around (38.550), as well as tallying career-high marks on vault (9.525), bars (9.725, 1st), beam (9.70, 2nd) and floor (9.60, 2nd).

Pac-12 Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Leslie Mak, Oregon State

Mak, a senior from Toronto, Ontario, helped the Beavers in tying the fifth-highest score in Oregon State history with their 197.400-193.875 win over UC Davis. Mak had a career night, earning three event titles with a 9.950 on the beam, a 9.90 on the floor and a 9.875 on the vault. Her 39.675 in the all-around is the highest score in the Pac-12 this season.

Special Performance of the Week

Melanie Jones, Oregon State

Competing in her first all-around of her collegiate career, Jones, a native of Melbourne, Australia, delivered an exceptional performance. Her 9.825 on the bars, 9.900 on the beam and 9.950 on the floor were all career highs for the junior. Her routine on the floor also earned a perfect 10.0 from one judge.

Southeastern Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Kat Ding - Georgia

In just her second career all-around, Georgia senior Kat Ding placed first with a 39.550 in the Gym Dogs' win over No. 3 Arkansas last Friday. The Sparks, Nev., native matched the highest all-around score by a Georgia gymnast since the 2009 NCAA Super Six. Ding also finished first on bars with a 9.95 – her fourth score of at least 9.925 on the event this year – and tied for first on vault with a 9.9.

Freshman of the Week

Kytra Hunter - Florida

Freshman Kytra Hunter used collegiate-best marks to win two of the three events she performed in the Gators Link to Pink meet on Feb. 10. Hunter shared the balance beam win at 9.925, as she previously achieved her then-season high beam mark of 9.85 in the prior three meets. Hunter anchored the Gators' floor lineup with a 9.975, making her the first Gator freshmen to achieve the near-perfect mark on floor and the fifth overall in school history. The win was her fourth win in the six floor competitions she performed in. She also took third in vault at 9.90.

Western Athletic Conference

Gymnast of the Week

Thomasina Wallace, San Jose State

Wallace, a senior from Pomona, Calif. (Diamond Ranch HS) won the all-around title in a conference meet at Utah State. Wallace made history for a second time in six days as she broke her own school record in the all-around with a 39.525, breaking her old mark of 39.425 she set just last week. Wallace placed or tied for first in all four events. She tied a career best on vault with a 9.900. She also placed first on bars (9.875), on beam (9.875) and on floor (9.875).

Specialist of the Week

Moriah Martin, Denver

Martin, a sophomore from Lake Mary, Fla. (Lake Mary HS) turned in a 9.900 on vault for the third time this season in last week's meet at Brigham Young. Martin matched her total of 9.900 or better scores from 2011. Martin also won her third vault title of the season.

Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

Specialist

Jamie Ries, Gustavus Adolphus

Ries had her best meet of the season, scoring team high on the three events she competed on at the Best of Minnesota meet on Feb. 11. She scored a 9.375 on floor exercise, a 9.2 on vault and a 9.0 on balance beam.

All-Around

Courtney Benson, Hamline

Benson finished fourth with a score of 37.850 at the Best of Minnesota meet on Feb. 11, trailing only three University of Minnesota gymnasts. She was the top non-Gopher finisher in floor exercise (sixth), balance beam (seventh) and uneven bars (seventh). She tied for 10th place in the vault (six U of M gymnasts ahead of her).