Any year that anyone attempts to predict how the Men’s NCAA Gymnastics season they will almost certainly come down to a lot of simple guess work.

This season promises to be even more unpredictable than ever, as almost every team has lost extremely important personnel either through attrition or through graduation and the new 5 up 5 scores to count rule. Even more than usual this looks to be a 3-team race with very little difference between them. Those three teams are Michigan, Illinois and Stanford and I will take a wild guess and give Michigan a slight edge over Stanford.

NOTE: For the most part the following names listed indicate those gymnasts that placed in the top 8 in 2012 post season competitions.

The defending champions University of Illinois lose Paul Ruggeri, a multiple national champion and a near Olympian. Ruggeri is a 2-time NCAA HB champion and winner of PB and V events as well as a 6-time Big Ten champion.

1. The University of Michigan looks extremely good at this point. They lose no one from their 6th place finish in 2012. This was a very disappointing finish for them as they had to compete without the services of Syque Caesar.

Returning: Sam Mikulak-2nd AA, 8th PH, 1st HB-NCAA; 2nd AA, 3rd FX, 5th V, 1st PB, 1st HB-Big Ten, Olympian !!! Also returning (MI), Adam Dunn (MI), Matt Lee (TN) and Nolan Novak (NM).

1. Stanford University happens to be one of only 2 major programs that enjoys absolutely no graduation losses. Their 5th place team returns intact. This bodes well for them.

Returning are nine gymnasts that won honors in 2012. James Fosco-10th SR-NCAA, 1st SR MPSF; Cameron Foreman-6th PB, 9th HB-NCAA, 7th AA, 2nd PB, 7th HB-MPSF; Paul Hichwa-6th FX-NCAA, 5th FX, 4th HB-MPSF; John Martin-10th PH-NCAA, 6th PB-MPSF; Jordan Nolff-8th FX, 7th SR-MPSF; Eddie Penev-8th AA, 1st FX, 1st V-NCAA, 2nd AA, 1st FX, 1st V-MPSF-Nissen-Emery favorite. Cole Robinson-8thFX, 7th PB-MPSF; Sean Senters-5th FX, 10th V-NCAA, 3rd V-MPSF; Chris Turner-6th AA, 2nd PH, 7th V, 7th HB-MPSF.

Frosh: David Baker (KY), Brandon Beckhardt (NY), Jonathan Deston (MA), David Frankl (NJ), Wilson Patton (TN) and Dennis Zaremski (NY).

2. Defending champion Illinois also loses Kyle Moe, C. J. Padera-10th HB-NCAA, 8th HB-Big Ten; and Anthony Sacramento-8th SR-NCAA, 8th SR-Big Ten.

However, they return the sensational C.J. Maestas-2nd AA, 6th PH, 1st SR, 9th PB-NCAA, 1st AA, 2nd FX, 2nd SR, 6th PB, 2nd HB-Big Ten; Yoshi Mori-6th AA, 5th PH-Big Ten.

2013 NISSEN-EMERY FAVORITE: Eddie Penev
Stanford University
In addition they have only 2 significant losses from their 3rd place team of 2012 and, not to overlook, a fantastic fan base.

However, the team depth does not appear to be there for this level of competition.

Penn State’s significant losses were Miguel Pineda and Warren Yang. Although neither had successful 2012 post seasons both contributed significantly.

Returning for PSU are Felix Aronovich-7th AA, 5th PB-NCAA; 4th AA, 3rd SR, 4th PB, 6th HB-Big Ten-potential Nissen-Emery nominee; Craig Hernandez-2nd PH-NCAA, 1st PH, 2nd HB.

6-7. The University of California will suffer two great losses in Glen Ishino-4th AA, 1st PH, 2nd HB-NCAA, 6th FX-MPSF and Dennis Mannhart-5th AA, 7th PB, 4th HB-NCAA, 5th AA, 8th SR, 5th HB-MPSF, and as a result may have trouble making the Super Six in ’13. This may turn out to be a battle for 6th place between California and Ohio State. A huge influx of freshmen should pay off in the future.

Returning: Donothan Bailey-potential Nissen-Emery nominee-10th AA-NCAA, 3rd AA, 3rd FX, 1st PH, 8th V-MPSF. Also Steve Lacombe-4th SR, 5th V-NCAA, 5th V-MPSF; Jonathan Liu-10th PB-NCAA, 4th PB-MPSF; Frosh: Travis Cameron, Ryan Patterson, TJ Bzoskie, Kevin Tran, Kevin Wolting, Kevin Ko, Austin Gandy, Takahiro Kawada, Capri Sano, Tanner Dowell, Kyle Zemeir, (all from California), Daniel Khomenko (NJ), Colt Kucker (NY).


Dalton would have been the odds on favorite to win the Nissen-Emery Award; He decided instead to become a professional.

Also gone is Patrick Piscitelli-7th V-NCAA and 5th V-MPSF and Michael Heredia-8th V-NCAA.

Returning: Dylan Akers-12th AA-NCAA, 9th FX, 4th AA, 2nd HB-MPSF; Danny Berardini-3rd PB-NCAA, 3rd PB-MPSF; William Clement-3rd HB-MPSF; Alex Robin-6th FX-MPSF, Preston Ellsworth-3rd V-NCAA, 7th PH, 7th PB-MPSF; Ethan Jose-6th HB-MPSF; Troy Nitzky-6th SR-NCAA; and Chris Stehl-potential Nissen-Emery nominee-5th SR-NCAA, 5th SR, 7th HB-MPSF.

5. This observer was tempted to pick Penn State to win the 2013 NCAA Nationals, primarily due to the fact that they have been gearing towards this for the past three years.
Frosh: Daniel DiBenedetto (CT), Michael Farquhar (IL), Paul Montague (WI) and Nick Olson (MN).

9. The University of Nebraska has lost some of its previous luster, but continues to compete strongly with all other teams. The past few years have seen them finish mostly in 9th place and they will most certainly qualify for the Nationals (top 12 teams) again, but will most likely not make it into the top six.

Last season was their first in the Big Ten which just may prove to be a plus in the recruiting area.

Returning: NU will be led by Grant Perdue-4th-FX-NCAA-potential Nissen-Emery nominee, Eric Schryver-3rd-PH-Big Ten and Wyatt

Baier-7th-V-Big Ten, and they will be backed up strongly by Hayden Henrioulle, Wyatt Aycock, Michael Killeen, Donovan Arndt, C. J. Schaaf, Gabriel Jolley, Robbie Kocks, Josh Ungar, Mark Ringle and Connor Stillwell.

Frosh: Sam Chamberlain (OH), Austin Epper-son (TX), Ryan Irick (RS)

10. The University of Iowa just might be a surprise team for 2013 with virtually their entire team returning. Could be as high as # 8. Team will also have two new assistant coaches in Michael Heredia and Ben Ketelsen.

Returning: Javier Balboa-144 AA-NCAA, 8th PB-Big Ten (potential Nissen-Emery

Emery nominee; Corbin Palmer-2nd FX, 2nd PB-USAG; Josh Ramos-1st PB-USAG; Mac Ritchie-1st HB-USAG; Ben Zaiser-1st V-USAG.

Frosh: Denis Aurelius (OH), Zach Owen (GA) and Josh Pyne (NV).

12-13. Temple University was a surprise team in 2012 finishing the season at # 10 after winning the ECAC/EIGL League Title. It is anticipated that 2013 will probably be a little rougher for them because of several graduation losses. At the same time another ECAC title should be well in reach.

Losses: Adam Al-Rokh-16th AA-NCAA, 4th AA, 4th SR-ECAC; Logan Fiery-7th HB-ECAC; Matt Martin-1st V-ECAC; Chris Mooney-18th AA-NCAA, 2nd AA, 7th SR-ECAC; Jeff Zack-3rd FX-ECAC; Blake Collins-3rd HB-ECAC.

Returning: John Leonard-1st FX-ECAC; Allan Malone-8th FX, 4th HB-ECAC; Mike Bittner-3rd PH-ECAC; Alex Tighe-4th PB, 1st HB-ECAC-potential Nissen-Emery nominee; Brett Statman-2nd V-ECAC; Taylor Brana-2nd SR, 4th PB-ECAC; Brendan Williams-7th PB-ECAC.

Frosh: Wayne Conley (NC), Blaise Cosenza (PA), Evan Eigner (PA, Aaron Meland (VA), Phillip Pruett (MC) and Jon Rydzefski (MA).

12-13. The University of Illinois-Chicago suffered the loss of Kyle Voisem in midseason last year and this proved to be a serious loss for them. UIC does have some talent returning and maybe it will be enough to allow them to challenge for the NCAA number 12 spot.

Losses: Losses are minimal with only Aaron Eyster-6th FX, 4th V-ECAC, leaving.

Returning: Lukasz Adamczyk-8th PH-ECAC; Kyle Christiansen-5th HB-ECAC; Joseph Hodges-3rd AA, 1st PH, 2nd HB-ECAC; David Ishida-5th SR-ECAC; Justin Maxwell-8th SR-ECAC; Dan Zerber-1st PB-ECAC.

Frosh: Not available.

14. The College of William and Mary has been down a bit the past few years, but it definitely looks like the program will be in better shape this coming season. A solid group of freshmen should help.

Losses: Steve Deutsch-4th PH, 6th SR-USAG; Futa Ikeda-5th AA, 8th SR, 5th PB-USAG, 8th AA, 8th PB-ECAC; graduated in three years.

Returning: Matt Burns-5th FX-USAG; Landon Funiciello-4th FX-ECAC; J. J. Jindra-2nd AA, 4th HB-USAG; 6th
15. The U.S. Military Academy also looks to have a better program in 2013. With a year of experience under their belts last year, the program should help tremendously.

Losses: Chase Brown
Returning: Jared Breeden-6th SR-ECAC; Nicholas Fettinger-6th PB-ECAC. Also Garrek Hojan-Clark and Ikaika Jakub will help add depth.

16. Springfield College enjoyed one of the more successful seasons in the history of the school in 2012. However, they suffer the huge loss of Ty Evans-6th AA, 4th V, 4th PB, 6th HB-USAG, 7th AA, 8th V, 5th HB-ECAC, who has been a significant force for them the past four years.

Returning: The program does, however, return some potent scoring: Jimmy Pezzino-1st FX, 2nd V-USAG; 2nd FX-ECAC; Alex McCabe- 3rd FX-USAG; Rich Ruggerio-8th PH-USAG; Ryan Ponce-1st SR-USAG; 1st (MA), Tucker McClure (CA), Derek Taranto (MA) and Jon Zirna (NY).

17. The U.S. Naval Academy has suffered through some very lean years recently, but with a quality group of freshmen last season and another huge influx of freshmen this season (12) they will look forward to a better season in 2013 as well as the years to come.

Unfortunately they lose the services of Andrew Faulk-13th AA-NCAA, 1st AA, 7th FX, 4th SR, 7th V, 3rd PB, 5th HB-USAG, 1st AA, 1st PH, 2nd SR, 5th V, 1st PB, 1st HB-ECAC, who has represented virtually one-third of their scoring the past four years. This alone could hold the program down.

Faulk is probably the most outstanding gymnast in the storied history of the Naval Academy; at least since the Olympic Rope Climb champions in 1932.

Also lost will be Aaron Ingram-7th HB-USAG, and Austin Zalik (passed away due to an auto accident).

Returning: Chris Junghans-3rd AA, 1st PH, 8th PB-USAG, 8th HB-ECAC.

Frosh: Zac Ceroli (HI), Michael Dorsey (FL), David Frick (FL), Josh Gong (CA), Connor Gonzales (IL), Mitchell Larios (TX), Cameron Morgenweck (CO), Eric Morrison (CO), Jacob Moses (CO), Eric Poletti (PA), Andrew Potts (MD), Connor Westrick (WI).

There promises to be an exciting battle between Army, Springfield and Navy.

Frosh: Conner Ezell (CO), Joe Frullany (NY) Jesse Glenn (CA), Matt Malcolm (FL), Luis Moreno (KY), Chris Short (WA), Michael York (CA), Aaron Yoshizuka (CA).

POTENTIAL NISSEN-EMERY NOMINEES
James Okamoto, Air Force
Donothan Bailey, California
Yoshi Mori, Illinois
Jordan Valdez, Illinois
Javier Balboa-Iowa
Rohan Sebastian, Michigan
Syque Caesar, Michigan
Wyatt Aycock, Nebraska
Chris Stehl, Oklahoma
Troy Nitzky, Oklahoma
Felix Aronovich, Penn State
Parker Raque, Penn State
Ryan Ponce, Springfield
Eddie Penev, Stanford
Alex Tighe, Temple

Results of my predictions for 2012:
Picked Illinois to win finished 1st
Picked Michigan to be 2nd finished 6th

Picked Oklahoma to be 3-4 finished 2nd
Picked Stanford to be 3-4 finished 5th
Picked Penn St. to be 5th finished 3rd
Picked Ohio St. to be 6-7 finished 7th
Picked California to be 6-7 finished 4th
Picked Nebraska to be 8th finished 9th
Picked Minnesota to be 9th finished 8th
Picked Iowa to be 10th finished 11th
Picked UIC to be 11th finished 13th
Picked Air Force to be 12th finished 12th
Picked Temple to be 13th finished 10th
Picked William/Mary 14th finished 14th
Picked Army to be 15th finished 15th
Picked Springfield 16th finished 16th
Picked Navy to be 17th finished 17th

CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS
Jan. 12/13 Rocky Mt. Open Air Force
Jan. 13 Virginia State Open Wm/Mary
Jan. 19 Windy City Inv. Ill-Chicago
Jan. 19 Navy Open Navy
Jan. 19 Stanford Open Stanford
Jan. 25 Metroplex Challenge Ft. Worth
Jan. 26 Michigan vs. Stanford Michigan
Feb. 1/2 West Point Open Army
Feb. 2 Minn. vs. Nebraska Minnesota
Feb. 2 Penn St. vs. Ohio St. Penn St.
Feb. 7-10 Winter Cup Las Vegas
Feb. 16 Ohio St. vs. Michigan Ohio St.
Feb. 16 All Academy Champ. Atlanta
Feb. 17 New England Champ. Springfield
Feb. 23 California vs. Stanford Stanford
Feb. 23 Nebraska vs. Iowa Iowa
Feb. 23 Navy vs. Army Army
Mar. 1 Air Force vs. UIC UIC
Mar. 2 Penn St. vs. Illinois Illinois
Mar. 3 Japan All Stars Stanford
Mar. 3 Nebraska vs. Oklahoma Nebraska
Mar. 9 Illinois vs. Minnesota Illinois
Mar. 9 Penn St. vs. Puerto Rico San Juan
Mar. 9 Springfield vs. Army Army
Mar. 16 Michigan vs. Penn St. Penn St.
Mar. 17 Temple vs. UIC Ill-Chicago
Mar. 29/30 USAG Collegiates Wm/Mary
Ap. 5-6 Big Ten Champs Minnesota
Ap. 6 MPSF Champs Air Force
Ap. 1/2 ECAC Champs Springfield
Ap. 18 CGA Awards Banquet Penn State
Ap. 19-21 NCAA Nationals Penn State

CLUB TEAMS:

Arizona State University

In 1994, the ASU Sun Devil Gymnastics Team competed it’s first year as a non-funded team and ended the year by winning the USA Collegiate National Championships with 10 All-Americans and one individual National Champion. Now beginning their 19th year as a University non-funded “club” team, the team continues to grow in stature among its peers around the country. The squad size continues to grow as more gymnasts from around the country find a home to pursue their academic and gymnastic careers together.

AA, 5th PB-ECAC; Daniel Potemski-17th AA-NCAA, 4th AA, 4th FX, 4th PH, 3rd V-USAG, 3rd V, 5th AA, 6th PH-ECAC; Peter Ten Eyck-4th PH, 8th PB-ECAC; Jason Wang-6th PH-ECAC; Kris Yeager-6th PB-USAG.

Frosh: Keaton Ackerman-NY, Adam Avant (CO), Simon Casey (MA), Neal Couter (LA), Nick Van Dyke (MD).
The team boasts 24 members strong, which is the highest number they have had in 20 years and encourages lots of internal competition.

Last year, the Devils retained the National Team Title in the collegiate (Club) division of the USAG Collegiate National Championships held at the US Air Force Academy and are looking to try to holding on to that title again this year.

Losses: Cody Payne-6th SR-USAG.
Returning: Alex Gaudaur-1st AA, 5th SR, 3rd HB-USAG; Lee Wilkerson-2nd AA-USAG, Stephen Gragg-3rd AA, 3rd PH-USAG; Stewart MacDonald-4th AA-USAG; Brian Malone-6th V-USAG.

Frosh: Jonah Chavez (NM), Mike Cogan (AZ), Aren Durham (MO), Zachary Engers (AZ), Landon Fischer (CA), Thomas Hanson (AZ), Hobie McCarey (AZ), Zach Mollett (MT), Jared Newman (AK), Zach Pietsch (MD), Michael Repp (NM), Alex Roesler (AZ).

University of Washington
The University of Washington club program competes annually in the USAG sponsored Collegiate Division Nationals. This coming season they will feature a lineup of all arounders in:
Greg Steward, Peter Moser, Layton Oka, Franklin Stutevoss, and freshmen Cory Tsia and Alex Maybrook. They will be led by Peter Moser and Greg Steward who both made the all around top 6 at collegiate nationals last year. They graduated Jon Chapman.

College of Brockport
The College at Brockport enters its 8th season as a collegiate club team in 2013 looking to improve on last year’s second place finish at the USAG Collegiate National Championships. Former Golden Eagle Karl Jaanimagi steps in as the teams new Head Coach after competing last year without one. Jaanimagi was one of the programs most decorated athletes, a 3 time NAIGC national parallel-bar champion, as well as the co-founder of the team back in 2004.
Losses: Brian Gildemeyer and Paul Ferraro.
Returning: Ron Ayello, Matthew Power, Andy Cowan, Alec Chatterton, David Albaranes.
Frosh: Brockport has no freshmen coming in but return alumni Jeff Parker who was part of the 2007 2nd place NAIGC Championship team.

Major skills being performed by collegiate male gymnasts