After last season’s Nationals I needed a new crystal ball, but instead I went to a fortune teller that used a deck of cards. With this in mind I make the following predictions.

It has happened, even recently, but not very often does a team win two championships in a row. I believe that is going to happen this season. The University of Oklahoma gives every appearance of being in a position to repeat as National Champions in 2016. Actually 2016 may prove to be more of a contest, between Oklahoma, Stanford and Ohio State, than 2015 was.

Note: Gymnasts listed in the following preview placed, for the most part, in the top 8 of their 2015 conference and/or at the National Championships.

1. In spite of losing 8 seniors, all of whom placed in the top 8 as mentioned above, the University of Oklahoma returns 7 that also accomplished this feat. OU will also present an entirely new assistant coaching staff in former team members Steve Legendre and Taqiy Abdulla-Simmons.

Losses: Dylan Akers-5th PB-NCAA; Danny Berardini-4th PB-NCAA, 4th PB, 1st HB-MPSF; William Clement-4th HB-MPSF; Michael Reid-1st PH-NCAA, 1st PH, 7th PB-MPSF; Sergey Resnick-3rd PB-NCAA, 5th PH, 4th PB-MPSF; Alec Robin-5th HB-MPSF and Michel Squires-1st SR-NCAA, 1st SR-MPSF.

Returning: Allan Bower-6th AA, 4th PH-NCAA, 2nd AA, 8th PH, 1st V, 3rd PB-MPSF; Colin Van Wicklen-2nd FX, 7th V-NCAA; Kanji Oyama-8th FX, 3rd V-NCAA, 5th FX, 2nd SR, 1st V-MPSF;

2. Stanford University is in a slightly better position in terms of less graduation losses and also has 7 returnees that placed in the top 8.

Losses: Brian Knott-8th PH 1st PB-NCAA, 3rd PH, 6th PB-MPSF; Michael Levy-9th SR-NCAA, 5th FX, 7th SR-MPSF; Sean Senters-1st V NCAA, 4th V-MPSF.

Returning: Akash Modi-1st AA, 8th FX, 3rd PH, 2nd PB, 2nd HB-NCAA, 1st AA, Hunter Justus-8th R-NCAA, 3rd SR-MPSF; Josh Yee-5th V-NCAA, 7th V-MPSF; Todd Dowby-8th V-NCAA, 2nd FX, 5th V-MPSF; Theo Hoang-6th V-MPSF.

Frosh: Grant Breckenridge (IL), Josiah Eng (WI), Tucker Haas (NC), Luke Sturm (FL), Barrett and Gareth Weiss (CA).

3. Ohio State University may not prove to be the surprise of the year, but may very well make the most improvement compared to their 2015 season. The obvious reason for this is three-fold; Sean Melton and Jake Martin, with the added attraction of Jake Dastrup; all three of whom were red-shirted in 2015. Being the host school also has to be considered a factor.


Pre-Season Coaches Poll:
1. Oklahoma
2. Ohio State
3. Stanford
4. Penn State
5. Michigan
6. Illinois
7. California
8. Minnesota
9. Iowa
10. Nebraska
11. Air Force
12. Army
13. Navy
14. William & Mary
15. Ill-Chicago
16. Arizona State
17. Springfield
18. Temple
19. So-Cal. United
20. Washington
AA, 5th PB, 4th HB-Big Ten; Alex Nork-8th HB-Big Ten. 

Frosh: Mitchell Avisus (NV), Bailey Chang (CA), Aaron Mah (Canada), Haden McCary (AZ), Harrison Plate (CA), Roshan Toopal (AZ).

6. The University of Illinois has had the great misfortune to place 7th or 8th each year, except one year, since 2008. Unfortunately it looks like it could be 7th/8th place again in 2016. The losses of Ellis Mannon and Steve Jaciuk are huge for the Gophers, but they do have some quality talent returning. Losses: Mannon-7th PH-NCAA, 6th AA, 1st PH-Big Ten; Jaciuk-3rd HB-NCAA, 5th SR, 3rd PB-Big Ten.
Returning: Zach Liebler-3rd FX-NCAA; Joel Gagnon-6th FX-NCAA, 6th FX-Big Ten; Jack Metcalf-6th SR-NCAA, 8th SR-Big Ten; Yaroslav Pochinka-9th V-NCAA, 2nd V-Big Ten; Paul Rizkalla-7th FX-Big Ten.
Returning: Nolan Novak-2nd PH-NCAA, 4th PH-Big Ten; Dimitri Belanovski-3rd HB-NCAA; Michael Strathem-8th V-Big Ten. Frosh: (Huge class !). Corey Aurentz (VA), Matthew Beck (CT), Brandon Burns (AL), Emre Cole (NV), Ryan Dunning (NM), Uche Eke (MD), Mitchell Gorno (NC), Justin Hopgood (OH), James Hudson (TX), Jack Jerry (MI), Anthony McCallum (SC), Sam Su (FL), Matthew Whitaker (AZ).

7. It is hard to put on paper that the University of Michigan may finish as low as 7th place, but the loss of Adrian de los Angeles and Stacey Ervin, coupled with the lack of returning depth, makes this statement possible. Freshmen will have to come on strong.

Losses: de los Angeles-9th AA, 9th PH-NCAA; Ervin-3rd FX-NCAA, 5th AA, 2nd FX, 7th HB-Big Ten; Nick Hunter-6th PH,
9. The University of Iowa has recently saved its best for the post-season by bucking the odds and earning a surprising spot in the Super Six team finals two years in a row. There is good reason to believe that this could happen again in 2016.

   Losses: No significant losses.

   Returning: Jack Boyle -6th SR-Big Ten; Douglas Sullivan-3rd PH-Big Ten; Austin Hodges-7th PH-Big Ten; Matthew Loochtan-7th SR-Big Ten; Cyrus Dobre-Mofid-6th PB-Big Ten.

   Frosh: Todd Beyer 11
   (IA), Jake Brodarzon (NJ), Wesley Estrada (CA), Kevin Johnson (MI), Ryan Ruckdaschel (IA), Rogelio Vazquez (FL).

10. The University of Nebraska showed some signs, in 2015, of future promise, led by freshman Kyle King.

   Losses: Andrew House-8th PH-Big Ten.

   Returning: Sam Chamberlain-7th V-Big Ten; Ethan Lottman-5th PH-NCAA; Travis Gollott-7th AA, 8th FX-Big Ten; Kyle King-3rd V-Big Ten; Grant Perdue-5th FX-Big Ten-2014 (medical year for 2016).

   Frosh: Heath Anderson (AZ), Jordan King (TX), Anton Stephenson (IN).

11. In recent years the U.S. Air Force Academy has made the most of the talent it is able to recruit, recruit under very difficult circumstances. Having to recruit soldiers as well as gymnasts has to be an uphill battle. In 2015 they captured the All Academy Championships for the 5th time and the USAG Collegiate Nationals team title for the 6th time. It is virtually a foregone conclusion that they will repeat these wins in 2016.

   AF will have a new head coach in ‘16 in the person of former assistant coach Jeff Robinson.


   Returning: Aaron Nubine-5th FX-USAG, 5th FX-MPSF; Tim Wang-1st PH-USAG, 7th PH-MPSF; Arinn Wade-4th PH-USAG, 2nd PH-MPSF; Denis Aurelius-1st SR-USAG; Fletcher Brauntu-2nd SR-USAG; Josh Pyne-1st V-USAG; Chase Cannon-6th V, 7th HB-USAG, 3rd HB-MPSF.

   Frosh: Large class: Casey Brani (CA), Ryan Girouard (MA), Alex Hess (FL), Christian Kalustian (CA), Eric Klein (MA), Troy Mather (IL), Jacob Stanley (TX), Lukas Texeira (WI), Jonah Urlaub (CA).

12. In 2015 the U. S. Military Academy had one of its most successful seasons in several years and prospects are that this will continue in 2016, with a very solid group of returnees.

   Losses: Connor Venrick-4th PH, 4th SR-ECAC.

   Returning: Jesse Glenn-1st AA, 1st V, 1st PB, 1st HB-ECAC, 9th HB-NCAA; Nathan Goff-6th AA, 5th PB, 5th HB-ECAC; Sam Kusnitz-1st FX, 7th V, 7th HB-ECAC; Seth Cannon-3rd FX-ECAC; Joe Pritts-6th SR, 8th V-ECAC; Chris Short-3rd PB-ECAC.

   Frosh: Colton Bradley (MA), Cole Casanova (TX), James Gamarra (VA), Elliot Herman (CA), Elijah-Ty Phelps (VA), Brandon Shively (FL).

13. The College of William and Mary is going through a little bit of down time, but may see some higher scores in 2016.

   New Assistant Coach-Mike Powell.

   Losses: Michael Deitz-2nd HB-ECAC, 1st HB-USAG; Peter Ten Eyck-7th PH-ECAC; 4th PH-USAG, Jason Wang-3rd PH-USAG.

   Returning: Keaton Ackerman-5th PH-ECAC, Jeremiah McReynolds-8th SR-ECAC, 6th SR-USAG; Rob Meyer-2nd PB-ECAC; Aria Sabbagh-8th AA-ECAC, 2nd AA-USAG; Nick Van Dyke-5th V-ECAC, 8th V-USAG. Also Neal Courter and J.J. Jindra (neither one had successful 2015 post-seasons, but make W&M much stronger).

   Frosh: David Allen (TN), Jacopo Gliozzi (VA), Jack Hasenkopf (GA), Peter Makey (MN), David Watkins (IL).

14. The U. S. Naval Academy enjoyed a bit better season in 2015 than in recent years and appears to have the talent to possibly move up a notch or two.

   Navy will have a new head coach with Kip Simons switching over from Air Force.

   Losses: Thomas Goodell-3rd SR, 8th HB-ECAC, 7th SR-USAG; Joshua Steves-5th SR-ECAC, 8th SR-USAG; Eric Viscardi-4th FX-USAG.


   Frosh: Christian Correale (PA), Mitchell Fornek (IL).

15. Springfield College will field one of its stronger teams in recent years, in spite of the graduation of 7 team members.

   Losses: Sam Docherty-8th PB-ECAC, Pat Ryther-1st PH-ECAC, 6th PB-USAG.

   Returning: Jon Zirna-“Elite 89” co-winner, 5th AA, 3rd PH, 3rd V-ECAC, 3rd AA, 2nd PH, 8th PB-USAG; Ian Stratton-4th AA, 2nd FX, 7th V, 5th PB-USAG. Peter Auer-1st PH-ECAC, 2nd AA, 1st FX-ECAC, 3rd AA, 2nd HF-ECAC.
FX-ECAC; Joshua Dieker-7th SR-ECAC, 5th SR-USAG; Tucker McClure-6th FX, 5th V, 6th HB-USAG.

Frosh: Drew Carter (FL), Stephen Frost (NY), Joe Medina (NY), Isaiah Burgess (RI), Jannik Haas (CA).

16. The University of Illinois-Chicago has been down lately and, unfortunately, it appears that they will struggle again in 2016.

Losses: Jason Gaides-2nd AA, 8th PH, 2nd SR, 5th FX, 2nd HB-ECAC; Brett Valin-4th AA, 1st SR, 7th PB, 4th V, 4th HB-ECAC.

Returning: Alex Dumstorf-6th FX-ECAC.

DUMSTORF

Frosh: Wes Diveney (IL), Steen Haugsted (NC), Patrick Howard (CT), Ethan Sansone (IL), Christian Winstead (IL).

POTENTIAL NISSEN-EMERY NOMINEES

Air Force

Denis Aurelius

Army

Jesse Glenn

California

Kevin Wolting

Illinois

Logan Bradley

Illinois

Fred Hartville

Iowa

Jack Boyle

Michigan

Nolan Novak

Minnesota

Jack Metcalf

Navy

Mitchell Larios

Nebraska

Sam Chamberlain

Nebraska

Ethan Lottman

Ohio State

Alex Johnson

Oklahoma

Todd Dowdy

Oklahoma

Kanji Oyama

Penn State

Trevor Howard

Penn State

Alexis Torres

Springfield

Jon Zima

Stanford Dennis

Zareski

William/Mary

Neal Courter

Top returning gymnasts:

(according to 2015 NCAA Nationals finals):


SR: Alexis Torres-Penn State, Jack Metcalf-Minnesota, Hunter Justus-Oklahoma.

V: Wolting-California, Oyama-Oklahoma, Josh Yee-Oklahoma, Ryan Patterson-California, Van Wicklen-Oklahoma, Todd Dowdy-Oklahoma, Yaroslav Pochinka-Minnesota.


HB: Modi-Stanford, Dmitri Belanovski-Michigan, Jack Boyle-Iowa, Robert Neff-Stanford, Alex Johnson-State, Jesse Glenn-Army.

Results of my predictions for 2015:

Picked Oklahoma 1st finished 1st
Picked Illinois 2nd finished 8th
Picked Michigan 3rd finished 4th
Picked Ohio State 4th finished 9th
Picked Stanford 5th finished 2nd
Picked Penn St. 6th finished 3rd
Picked Minnesota 7th finished 7th
Picked California 8th finished 5th
Picked Iowa 9th finished 6th
Picked Nebraska 10th finished 10th
Picked Air Force 11th finished 11th
Picked Army 12th finished 12th
Picked William/Mary 13th finished 14th
Picked Navy 14th finished 13th
Picked Ill-Chicago 15th finished 16th
Picked Springfield 16th finished 15th

CLUB REPORTS:

Listed in alphabetical order:

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, simply put, will be heavily favored to win its 10th consecutive USAG Collegiate Club Division National Team Title. It is apparently still a possibility that the sport could be reinstated as a varsity sport at the University.

Losses: Bryton Boucher, Jared Chin, Ty Loughridge, Mike Repp.

Returning: Thomas Hanson-3rd AA-USAG; Nikita Latman-4th AA, 6th PB-USAG; Daniel Bronnenberg-3rd FX, 2nd V-USAG; Zeke Howard-7th PH-USAG; Landon Fischer-4th R-

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA UNITED gymnasts are working hard to get ready for their 2nd season. Their very first year was great and the guys are determined to be even better this year. Last year they started out with 11 guys, and they are losing one to retirement but gaining four new team members this season.

All the guys have improved tremendously, but one gymnast has excelled above and beyond expectations, Bryan de los Santos. Bryan will have new routines on all six events and Coach Heinz Schulmeister is particularly excited about Bryan’s ring routine, which will have a 16.7 start value.

Returning: Douglass Johnson, Bryan de los Santos, Nick Horner, Jesse Bustamante, Micah Cliffe, Matt Fukomoto, Ben Van Aken, Stephen Graham, Andrew Kirk, Kevin Kichic. The New Guys: Cameron Edwards Rae (CA), Daniel Amiri (CA), Nick Ury, (CA), Manni Maddah. This will make the team 14 men strong.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY is entering its second year as a club team and is looking forward to a competitive year with its fellow clubs and varsity teams. Temple continues to compete in the ECAC Championships as well as the USAG Collegiate Championships and the NAIGC Championships.

Losses: Mike Bittner-1st PH-NAIGC and Colt-son Howard.

Returning: Jon Rydzewski-1st PB-NAIGC, and other NAIGC medalists-Blaise Cosenza, Pat Henley, Casey Polizzotto, Jakob Welsh and Antonio Wright.

Frosh: Matt Moc-cato (PA) and Joe Fernandes (So. transfer-PA)

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON Coach Mark Russo states that “I believe we are better than last year and, with a healthy team, we will be in contention for the Collegiate Club title!” Washington also gained a strong re-
cruiting class this fall as five freshmen, from around the world, joined a young, and improving team (last year’s team improved 24 points over the previous year).
Losses: Franklin Stutevoss.
Returning: Justin Rowen-2nd AA, 3rd V, 5th HB-USAG, Carl Meader-4th AA, 8th 
FX-USAG, Nick Kano-8th AA, 3rd R-USAG, Nathan Tsuji-6th AA-USAG, Aaron Moss-7th FX-USAG, Max Soifer, and Brandon Waller.

Frosh: Garrett Dee (ID), Ben Fisher (OR), Jacob Jarrett (TX), Mike Sibley (Canada), and Phil Chantler (England).

Photo Gallery

AKASH MODI: STANFORD UNIVERSITY  BOBBY BAKER: UNIV. OF ILLINOIS  NOLAN NOVAK: UNIV. OF MICHIGAN