



Cindy Evans of Livonia goes through a routine under the close scrutiny of judges. She was just one of the 60 contestants drawn to the competition last weekend.

Strutting their stuff

Baton twirlers compete for state honors

By Mario McGee
staff writer

Even though few of the divisional champs were from this immediate area, local members of the Drum Majorettes of America twirling association feel like they were the big winners following last weekend's successful statewide competition at Clarenceville's Schmidt Auditorium.

The pageant drew 60 contestants from all areas of the state and several hundred spectators at the afternoon and evening competitions.

Thirteen-year-year-old Shannon Lang of Walied Lake emerged as the overall winner in competition that included five divisions: modeling, fancy strut, twirling, military marching and

talent other than baton twirling.

The area's only divisional winner was Michele Smith, 16, of Redford who was selected most beautiful majorette.

"IT WAS BEYOND belief," a jubilant Micki Skarvi said in commenting on the outcome of the competition which she helped bring to Clarenceville as a fund-raiser to help the high school newspaper staff meet printing expenses.

Skarvi, who lives in West Bloomfield, is a Clarenceville teacher and advisor to the school newspaper. Her daughter, Derek, 14, is a nationally ranked twirling champion. It was through Skarvi's involvement in the twirling association over the past 30 years — dating back to when she was a twirling champ — that

she was able to get the statewide pageant for Clarenceville.

By handling the food concessions, the newspaper staff was able to raise \$800. Some of the money will be used to put out the school paper for the remainder of the year. The rest will make it possible for color to be used in the school yearbook.

A touch of irony marred the financial triumph, however. Because of her mother's involvement in staging the competition, Derek was not allowed to compete.

"I thought it best that she not compete because of a conflict of interest," said Skarvi.

JUDGES INCLUDED David Faber, of North Carolina, executive director

of the Drum Majorettes of America; Loretta Gloede, also of Charlotte, N. C.; and June Lauer, former majorette queen of America, who now teaches and who helped coordinate the event. Also helping with the judging duties was Debbi Gray of Livonia.

Special guest was Gray's sister, Cindy, who is the reigning grand national twirling champion and is one of two University of Michigan marching band majorettes from Livonia.

"There were many positive comments about the competition," said Skarvi. Especially praised were the "great stage crew" and auditorium facilities, she said. Attendance at the state meet also was considerably higher than it has been for several years, she added.



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Wendy Lauderback of Farmington knows that poise is something the judges will be considering. There were five divisions of competition: modeling, fancy strut, twirling, military marching and talent other than baton twirling.



At left, Derek Skarvi of West Bloomfield performs a twirling routine. Like all the other contestants, she is a local member of the Drum Majorettes of America. Hundreds of spectators were drawn to the competition at Clarenceville's Schmidt Auditorium. Below, a row of trophies glitter as a hopeful reminder to all of the competitors.



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