

Observerland sports people

No shame at No. 2

Ex-Marlin McGrath leaving Meagher's shadow?

By C.J. Riskak
staff writer

For almost any swimmer anywhere in the country, Kara McGrath's accomplishments over the past two seasons would be exhilarating. Finishing second in the NCAA championship meet in the 200-yard butterfly is, after all, something to be proud of.

But for McGrath, a junior at the University of Texas from Birmingham, such accomplishments meant little if there was no improvement. In other words, why continue as No. 2 if there was no evidence that No. 1 was within reach?

That was the disillusioning spectre confronting McGrath — until last weekend.

Underdog McGrath went up against Olympic gold medalist and world record holder Mary T. Meagher of California in the NCAA finals last week and placed second. Again. She was second to Meagher at the 1985 NCAA meet, too.

BUT THIS time it was different.

"I've swam against her at least 50 times and I've never beaten her," said McGrath. During their high school years, the pair trained together in Louisville, Ky., where McGrath attended Sacred Heart Academy. She went to Farmington Hills Mercy as a freshman.

Such a long string of frustrations can be overpowering. But McGrath has endured, and at last weekend a NCAA meet there was something different. Meagher did beat her in the 200 fly, McGrath's specialty, but it wasn't so easy. Meagher won in 1:54.52; McGrath clocked a personal best of 1:56.91.

"I felt better this time," said McGrath, "because I felt I made progress against her. This was the first time I felt good about it."

She could give no single reason for her improve-

'I felt better this time because I made progress against (Meagher). This was the first time I felt good about it.'

— Kara McGrath
No. 2 in nation



ment and the resulting optimistic outlook. "I think I'm stronger this year," she said. "And my parents wanted me to change what I was eating. They think that helped."

WHATEVER THE REASONS, McGrath's 200 fly swim was the second-most exciting thing for her at the NCAA meet, which was March 20-22 in Fayetteville, Ark. The first was U-T's third consecutive national title, making the Lady Longhorns the first women's team ever to win three straight NCAA swim championships.

"It was really exciting," said McGrath of the team victory. "It was the high point of the whole meet for me. I've gone three-for-three, and next year we'll be going for a perfect record — four-for-four."

This title didn't come easy for U-T after the 1985 team's record-setting point-scoring effort. And the team's struggle — the Lady Longhorns totaled 633 points to 586 for runner-up Florida — helped motivate McGrath.

"I didn't swim well at all the first two days of

the NCAA meet," she admitted. U-T coach Richard Quick figured it would be best for the team if McGrath swam the 500 freestyle as well as the 100 and 200 fly and 400 individual medley.

She finished 15th in the 400 IM (4:24.35) and 16th in both the 500 free (4:53.83) and 100 fly (56.16). At last year's NCAA meet, McGrath was eighth in the 100 fly, but this time she swam it 10 minutes after finishing the 500 free. She also had to swim the 100 fly and 500 free twice each on Thursday.

STILL, WITH U-T behind after the first day of the NCAA meet, McGrath knew she'd have to do better. She did; on Saturday, her 200 fly time beat her previous best of 1:57.54 by six-tenths of a second.

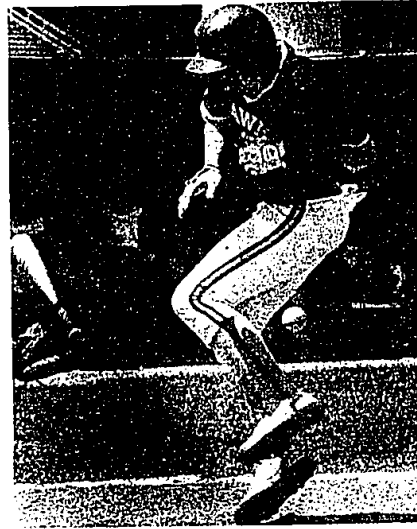
Following the NCAA championships, McGrath took time off for spring break to visit her family. But when classes resume today (Monday), she'll go back into training. Her goal is the World Games trials, held in Orlando, Fla., in June.

McGrath wants to be one of the two swimmers to make the team in each event and travel to Germany for additional training prior to the World Games to be held in Madrid in July.

After that, training for her senior season at U-T starts. But that's as far ahead as McGrath will plan, at least not at present.

"I'm planning not to do it right now," said McGrath. "I was really looking forward to the Olympics in '84, and when I didn't make it I was really disappointed. I'm just going to wait and see how things go this year."

Improvement is the key to her future. Should she match this year's performance next year, she just might catch world record-holder Meagher.



file photo

Look out!

That's right, Ken George, look out, because another season of Observerland baseball is on deck. Weather permitting, Harrison, North Farmington and Farmington will begin their seasons April 10 and 11. The Farmington Observer will be featuring pre-season previews of all the teams (softball, too) in the next two weeks.

Walmrouth: master of the masters

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

If Bill Walmrouth put up a banner for every championship he's won in the past 12 years, he could have a liner show in his basement.

There's probably not even enough room in the vast Boston Garden, where championship flags and retired jerseys dangle from the ceiling with regularity, to commemorate his firsts in track and weightlifting.

The 62-year-old Southfield resident won't let that deter him in the pursuit of further glory, though.

Walmrouth, who's totaled 54 championships on U.S. and world levels, plans to win a few more on the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Master's track

and field circuit. In fact, Walmrouth finds himself in a unique situation, which most people his age loathe.

"I CAN'T wait to turn 65," said Walmrouth, who came to the U.S. from West Germany 30 years ago. "I'm looking forward to getting older."

The yearning to age is simple. Walmrouth wants to graduate to the next age group. The Master's program is designed so people can compete with those their own age.

So far, he's pretty much dominated in every age group (50-54, 55-59 and 60-64), since he started competing again at 50.

As a youth, he was involved with track and field in Germany. He gave it up for awhile until his son,

David Walmrouth, took up track at Southfield High. David still holds the Blue Jay record in the shot put, according to Walmrouth.

Watching his son, Walmrouth got the urge to pick it up again — he gave it a good toss.

SINCE RETURNING, Walmrouth won world championships in the shot put in 1979 and 1985. Currently, he holds the world-record in the shot put with a throw of 42 feet with a 16-pound weight.

At the 1984 Pan American games in Ottawa, he set the Canadian record in the weight throw.

In addition to tossing the discus and the shot, Walmrouth also lifts weights competitively. He can clean and jerk 250 pounds, heel 215 pounds on a dead lift, squat with 470 pounds and bench 320 pounds.

Mateers bag national doubles squash crown

Gil and Drew Mateer of Philadelphia were the big winners in the recent United States Squash Doubles Tournament held at the Birmingham Athletic Club.

The Mateers defeated the team of Tom Poor and Kenton Jernigan of Boston in the championship match of the Main Draw, three games to one (a squash game is played to 15 points and each match consisted of the best three of five games).

In other action: Andy Pastor of Toronto and Peter Hall of Hamilton, Ontario, defeated Jim Hesse and Bart McGuire of New York, three games to none for the 40s

Division title. In that division, the team of Gene Perle of West Bloomfield and Dan Eugenio of Grosse Pointe were eliminated in the semifinals — three games to none — by eventual champs Pastor and Hall.

TORONTOIANS Don Leggat and John Fuller defeated Tony Crociata of Chicago (formerly from the Detroit area) and Rex Aubrey of Bloomfield Hills in the championship match, three games to none.

The 60s Division winners were Pennsylvanians S. H. Griffin and Tom Leonard. They defeated the twosome of Del Fuller (Maine) and Bob Stucker (Wisconsin), three games to none.

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DUE DATE AND PLACE:
Proposals will be received at the Farmington Public Schools Maintenance Office, 23350 West Ten Mile Road, Farmington, Michigan, addressed to: Mr. Jack Lawing until the following time:
April 15, 1988, 4:00 p.m.

ISSUE OF DRAWINGS & SPECIFICATIONS:
Drawings and Specifications may be obtained at the Maintenance Office on or after March 26, 1988.

DEPOSIT: \$25.00 per set, maximum two (2) sets per bidder.
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LOCATION OF PLANS:
Drawings and Specifications will be on file for bidding reference at the Maintenance Office, Dodge Reports, and Builders & Traders.

RIGHTS OF THE OWNER:
The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informality therein.

MS. JANICE ROLNICK
School Board Secretary

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