

Raiders rate with best in Plymouth Invitational



Kristin Szutarski was instrumental in North's fourth-place finish with performances such as this on the bars. She scored 8.75 and placed 13th.

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Wendy Minch of Westland John Glenn walked away with the all-around title Saturday at the Plymouth Gymnastics Invitational, but no one had a stronger team than Midland Dow.

Dow outlasted the 17-team field at Plymouth Canton with 142.15 points, followed by Rockford (140.80) in second place and third-place Troy Athens (140.35). Oberverland was well represented by North Farmington, placing fourth with 137.80 points and Plymouth Canton taking fifth (131.10). For the rest of the team standings, turn to page 5D.

Minch's all-around numbers were impressive, as she earned 37.50 points out of a possible 40.0.

But Dow, which placed fifth last year in the Class A meet, has superior depth and it showed Saturday. Four Dow gymnasts finished among the top 15 all-around performers, led by Bethany Freeman, who was third with 36.70 points.

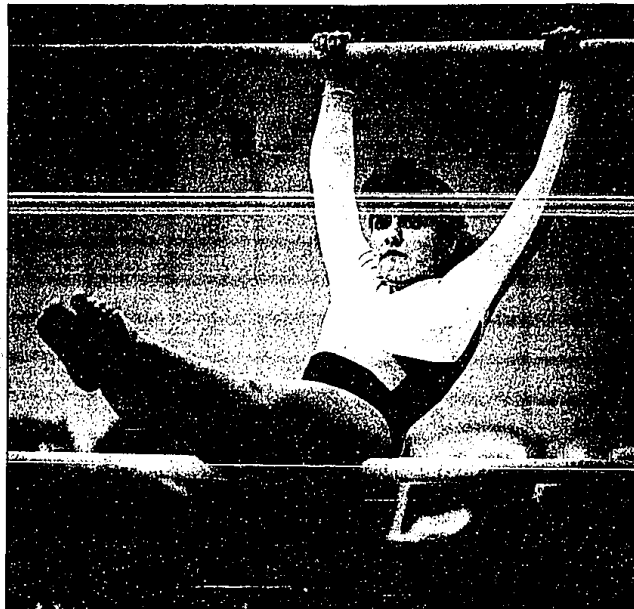
Freeman didn't win any events but she finished second on the bars (9.40) and her lowest score of 8.95 on the beam would make any gymnast smile.

"I'VE GOT A lot of depth this year," Dow coach Cyndi Whitaker said. "It's been a major benefit because we've had several injuries and illnesses."

"I have five or six very talented girls. I was impressed with my team in that they gave each other mental and physical support. They pulled together. The meet was so close the whole way and we couldn't give up. I'd love to see the same results at the state meet."

North didn't pose a big threat to the top three teams, but sophomore Heather Kahn kept the Raiders close. Kahn led North's effort with an all-around score of 35.95, tying her for fifth individually. She tied for second on the beam (9.10) and her lowest score was a very good 8.8 on the vault.

"This is the second meet in a row I've made my routine on the beam," said an elated Kahn. "I'm more confident in myself and we've gotten a lot better since the beginning of the season. I just hope I can improve on



Julie Lawton of Farmington concentrates on her uneven bars routine Saturday in the annual Plymouth Invitational. The senior gymnast

scored 8.0 on the bars and tied with five others for 31st place.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

the bars and vault." Said North coach Jeff Dwyer: "This is a great meet and everyone who competed for us pulled through. We don't have a lot of big meets like this. On the beam, Kahn was the last one up, and the whole gym was watching, but she came through."

"NOW WE KNOW we can compete with the top teams. It gives them confidence."

Other strong performers for North were Kim Heller and Kristin Szutarski, who finished with 34.80 and 33.45, respectively, in the all-around.

Canton's Dawn Clifford led the Chiefs, finishing 12th all-around with 34.20 points, including an 8.80 on the beam. Johanna Anderson scored 32.30 all-around and Heather Murphy's was right behind at 32.10.

"I was immensely pleased," Canton coach John Cunningham said. "We scored the exact same (last) Wednesday against John Glenn and it tells me my team's performing consistently."

"I was surprised we did as well as we did against the level of competition. It tells me we have a chance to do something at the state meet."

No one stood out individually for Salem, but the Rocks finished 10th with 125.80 points and got strong performances out of Autumn Bunch and Lisa Wietfeld.

Bunch tallied 31.55 points All-Around, placing 14th on the floor (8.45) and earning an 8.25 on the bars. Wietfeld wasn't far behind Bunch in the all-around, scoring 28.95.

CHRISTINE OATES is only a freshman at Farmington, but she placed 21st all-around with 33.05. Julie Lawton also turned in impressive numbers, scoring 32.15 all-around. But coach Mary Beth Schornhorst said the meet was a learning experience for the Falcons.

"We were shakier than normal," she said. "A lot of girls haven't normally been in a meet like this. There's a lot of distractions going on. What surprises me is so many teams are getting stronger. The level of performance is improving."

No one could keep up with Glenn's super sophomore Minch, who won the beam (9.35) and bar (9.80) events, en route to the All-Around title.

Minch carried Glenn to the 13th place finish. Without her, the Raiders might have finished last.

Illinois has right combination for Estey

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The University of Illinois offered the best of both worlds, and that's why Jill Estey will be going there on a basketball scholarship.

Plymouth Salem's star point guard, who has given the Fighting Illini a verbal commitment, chose them over Notre Dame and Harvard.

"I was looking for the best combination between academics and athletics," said Estey, who already has been admitted to the engineering program. "I think I'll have both at Illinois."

"They have the second-best engineering school in the country, second only to MIT. Harvard has the academics but not quite the athletics."

"And I'm glad I'm staying in the Big Ten, so I can swing by here every now and then," she added.

Estey eliminated Michigan and Dartmouth early from her short list, and Duke dropped out after signing another player. She visited Harvard and decided to forego the trip to South Bend, Ind., after seeing the Illinois campus.

"Once I visited Illinois, I thought 'Why look at anything else? This is what I want,'" Estey said. "I didn't want to make campus visits just to make them."

"Some girls say 'I'll take all five and go somewhere warm.' I could have dragged it out until signing date, but I said (to the other coaches)

"I'd only be wasting my time and yours."

The 5-foot-4 Estey, a three-time member of the all-Oberver team who was No. 8 in the Miss Basketball voting, will play for former Central Michigan coach Laura Golden, who is in her fifth year at Illinois.

The Illini have a young team with only one senior. The current point guard is junior Kristen Haynes, a three-year starter.

"She'll graduate by the time I'm a sophomore," Estey said. "Hopefully, I can work my way into a starting position. But I have to keep working, because they're going to keep bring-

ing in good players."

In the two years Estey played alongside Dena Head at Salem, she scored in double figures but was a point guard first. As the team leader last fall, she became more of a scorer, averaging 16 points. At the collegiate level, she anticipates reverting to her previous role.

"They're looking at me as a point guard," Estey said, "and that's really what I am. I'm looking to be a passer and playmaker; scoring won't be my first priority."

Estey met most of the Illinois players — including Sonya Waters, a freshman from Detroit, Munford.

North stays unbeaten

With a little improvement in each event, North Farmington might surpass 140 points sometime this winter.

The Raiders reached 137.50 Monday in a tri-meet victory at Troy. The host Colts finished third with 129.50, while Fraser had 130.50.

"I think we're doing really well," North coach Jeff Dwyer said. "But I think we can push even harder, and I think we can even hit 140. We were on pace to do that tonight if we'd really hit our beam."

Kim Heller won the vault (9.3) and beam (8.65) events outright for North and tied teammate Kristin Szutarski and Fraser's Dana Komlenovich for first on the bars at 8.65.

Heather Kahn also turned in fine performances on the vault, scoring 9.2, and she won the floor exercise (9.25).

Szutarski finished second on the floor (8.8), and the Raiders' Rita Dunn earned third place on the beam (8.4).

SWEETHEART OF A DEAL

\$16⁹⁹

PER DAY
ECONOMY CAR

Optional LDW \$9.99 per day.
150 miles per day included;
30¢ each additional mile.



\$48⁹⁹

3 DAY PACKAGE
ECONOMY CAR

Optional LDW \$9.99 per day.
150 miles per day included;
30¢ each additional mile.

Budget
car and truck rental

SEARS
Car & Truck
Rental

Use your Sears credit card or Sears Car and Truck Rental located in most Budget offices. For Sears reservations and information, call 355-5520.

Rates valid February 9 through February 15, 1989. Any day Thursday through Monday at participating Detroit locations. Taxes, insurance services and optional items are extra. Car subject to availability. Normal rental requirements apply. Other special rates available on compact through full-size cars—ask us for details.

For information and reservations, call
355-7900

Easter Seal Telethon

March
4-5



Host
Pat Boone
Co-Host
Mary Frann
Local Host
Mort Crim

March 4
Beginning 11:30pm
Til 7pm March 5

ONLY ON
WIDOW 4