

All-Observer gymnastics from page D1

team by three repeat selections — Keating, Ulewicz and sophomore Clara Seymour — plus Houchins.

Wayne-Westland Unified senior Nicole Simonian and Plymouth Salem sophomore Bethany Bartlett also are repeat members of the all-area team.

ALL-OBSERVER TEAM

Chelsea Keating, Farmington Unified: A Division I gymnast, Keating had an "awesome" state meet, according to Dwyer. She placed second on the balance beam (9.55) and ninth on bars (9.35), and she tied for 10th on floor exercise (9.25).



Chelsea Keating
Farmington Unified

under nine on vault and ninth-plus in the other events; her average all-around score was 36.24.

"She really shines on beam," Dwyer said. "She makes it look like an art. She has a presence on the beam you can't teach. She has a style that's all her own."

"She's a great competitor who doesn't like to lose. It doesn't matter if she's hurting physically; when it comes time for the meet, she's always ready."

Clara Seymour, Farmington Unified: Seymour scored 9.2 on floor exercise and 9.0 on vault in the Division I state meet. At the regional, she was fifth in the all-around (36.875), third on beam and seventh on vault and bars.

In the WJAA championships, Seymour placed third on beam, sixth on bars and floor, seventh on vault; she tied for fifth in the all-around (36.975).

"When she walks in the gym, she lets the other girls know she's out for business," Dwyer said. "She's very intense and competitive. She's what I like to think

of as a warrior.

"Between her and Chelsea, the girls felt confident with them in the lineup. We always knew we were going to get quality attempts."

Sara Houchins, Farmington Unified: Houchins was a welcome addition when she joined the team in January upon her return from Texas where she had been training.

The Division I freshman was the highest-scoring all-arounder in the state team meet with a 37.65 total. She scored 9.1 on vault, as did Keating and Seymour, 9.45 on bars, 9.6 on beam and 9.5 on floor to lead Farmington to its third-place finish.

In the individual state meet, Houchins was sixth on bars (9.4), but an ankle injury kept her out of the floor exercise. She was Farmington's top all-arounder in the WJAA meet, finishing third (37.05).

"She has a ton of talent," Dwyer said. "She could challenge for the state title next year. She has more tricks up her sleeve than she just didn't throw this year."

Kristin Ulewicz, Farmington Unified: Ulewicz often provided the all-important fourth score that made Farmington a strong team.

A Division II gymnast, she placed sixth on beam and eighth on vault at the regional, qualifying for state in both events.

In the WJAA championships, Ulewicz was eighth in the all-around (34.025). She averaged mid-eight on vault and low nines on beam and floor at the end of the season.

"You need four solid scores in each event, and she came through again," Dwyer said. "She's very consistent; she just does her job. We needed that score, or we wouldn't have been scoring in the 340s."

Nicole Simonian, Wayne-Westland: The John Glenn High senior was a Division II state all-around qualifier after finishing fourth in the Hartland regional with a score of 34.925.

She placed second at the regional in vault (9.0), fifth in the balance beam (8.775), and tied for seventh on floor exercise (8.9).

In the WJAA state meet, Simonian took seventh in the all-around (34.025) after placing fifth on vault (8.75) and sixth on floor (8.85).

Her high scores for the year included all-around (35.35), floor (9.4), vault (9.0), uneven bars (8.9) and beam (8.85).

"Nicole puts her heart and soul into gymnastics," co-coach Katie Boogren said. "She is a very hardworking young lady. She is every coach's dream — a leader, a good listener and a responsible young lady. She was a big asset to the team for four years and will be missed by her teammates and coaches."

Michelle Wimberly, Livonia Unified: The senior was a Division I state qualifier in three events after finishing sixth in the regional in the uneven bars with an 8.725 and eighth in both the floor exercise (8.8) and vault (8.65).

She was seventh at the Hartland regional in the all-around (34.875). In Division I at the WJAA meet, Wimberly took a 10th on floor (9.1).

Her best all-around, showing came in a dual meet against Canton where she had a 35.65 with scores of 9.15 on bars, 9.1 on floor, and 8.7 on both beam and vault.

"Michelle is very dedicated to her sport and her team," Livonia Unified coach Christa Hinderliter said. "She always gave 110 percent. She's just a great role model. I never had to worry because she always gave a strong performance at every competition. She was very consistent."

Wimberly, headed to Eastern Michigan University, will be a part of the six-member Michigan National High School Gymnastics team, which will compete May 25-26 in Madison, Wis.

Mary Moreau, Livonia Unified: The sophomore did not compete in gymnastics for three years, but returned to the sport when the Livonia Public Schools formed a unified team.

And Moreau had saved a year as she competed in All-State honors with a ninth-place finish in the vault at the state meet with an 8.795.

At the Hartland regional, Moreau took fourth in the vault (8.8) and sixth on beam (8.725) to qualify for the state meet in those events.

In the Western Lakes meet, Moreau finished fifth in the all-around (35.1) after gaining third on vault (8.9), fifth on beam (8.95) and eighth on bars (8.5).

"Mary's a hard worker who is eager to improve her skills," Hinderliter said. "When she gets into the gym she develops a strong work ethic."

And old injury prevented Moreau's from straddling on the uneven bars, but she adjusted her routine to earn top 10 honors at both the regional and league meets.

"Once she got her strength back, she was phenomenal," Hinderliter said.

"She'll come back next year and be able to do even more tricks."

Bethany Bartlett, Plymouth Salem: Bartlett's summer training paid off right from the start of the season. She was the Rocks' only Division I gymnast and qualified for the state meet in the all-around.

"Bethany has become a great competitor over the years," Salem coach Melissa Hopson said. "She has beautiful dance and is a very hard-working gymnast."

She stood out at the regionals, placing fourth on vault at 9.15, third on bars at 8.60, fourth on the beam with a score of 9.25 and fourth on floor with a 9.20. Her all-around of 36.50 placed her third.

Her season highs were 9.20 on vault, 9.45 on bars, 9.40 on beam, 9.25 on floor and 36.90 all-around.

Melissa Drake, Plymouth Salem: Drake was unable to compete two seasons ago due to a foot injury that required surgery. She came back and qualified for the state meet in the all-around, where she finished sixth with a 35.70 score.

She scored a 9.05 on the bars in the state meet, was also at 9.05 on the beam and scored a 9.10 in floor exercise.

"She was such a focused gymnast this year," Hopson said. "She gave her all in practices and competitions. Melissa is one of our captains for 2001-2002."

Her high scores this season were 9.00 on vault, 9.25 on bars, 9.30 on the beam and 32.85 on floor. Her best all-around total was 38.85.

At regionals she was fifth on bars at 8.625, tied for seventh with an 8.90 on floor and sixth all-around at 34.55.

April Aquino, Plymouth Salem: Aquino came back from serious knee surgery to qualify for the state meet in the all-around. She finished seventh in the state in floor exercise with a 9.05 score.

At the regional, she was second on the beam with a 9.175, fourth on floor at 9.05 and fifth in all-around at 34.70.

Her high scores for the season were 8.60 on vault, 8.80 on bars, 9.20 on beam, 9.45 on floor and 35.15 in the all-around.

"April is a talented, gutsy, hard-working gymnast who helped our team out greatly this season," Hopson said. "She will be our other captain for the 2001-2002 season."



Clara Seymour
Farmington Unified



Sara Houchins
Farmington Unified



Kristin Ulewicz
Farmington Unified



Nicole Simonian
Wayne-Westland



Michelle Wimberly
Livonia Unified



Mary Moreau
Livonia Unified



Bethany Bartlett
Plymouth Salem



Melissa Drake
Plymouth Salem



April Aquino
Plymouth Salem

ALL-OBSERVER GYMNASTICS

ALL-AREA GYMNASTICS

FIRST TEAM

Chelsea Keating, junior, Farmington
Clara Seymour, sophomore, Farmington
Sara Houchins, freshman, Farmington
Kristin Ulewicz, junior, Farmington
Nicole Simonian, senior, Wayne-Westland
Michelle Wimberly, senior, Livonia
Mary Moreau, sophomore, Livonia
Bethany Bartlett, sophomore, Ply. Salem
Melissa Drake, junior, Plymouth Salem
April Aquino, junior, Plymouth Salem

COACH OF THE YEAR

Jeff Dwyer, Farmington Unified

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Farmington: Lindsay Smith, Dayne Warheit, Nicole White, Anne Lieberman;
Canton: Audra Ahern, J. Q. Williams, Jill Rakowski, Amy Driscoll, Jacque Bennington, Kristin Schick; Salem: Ashley Heard, Kara Dendros; Livonia: Gina Macent, Kelly Ostrosky, Lisa Thompson; Wayne-Westland: Jessica Hialop, Sarah Varnes, Chelsea Jenks, Kristen Costantino.

Whalers from page D1

his torrid scoring pace into the playoffs, lighting the lamp eight times to go along with 13 assists in 10 games.

Alexeev was the Otters' seventh-leading point-getter during the season, but he has stopped it up in the playoffs, accounting for six goals and seven helpers.

Erie's deep and potent offense also features forwards Jason Baird (30 goals, 58 assists) and Cory Pecker (41 goals, 38 assists).

When their offense did blow a fuse this season — something that rarely happened — the Otters relied on dependable goalie Adam Munro to bail them out. Munro kick-saved his way to

a 26-6-6 record thanks to a .920 save percentage.

The Whalers do have at least one thing going for them: They're the only team that managed to compile a winning record (3-2-1) against the Otters this season.

Included in Plymouth's head-to-head success were two wins and a tie in Erie.

"It's a tough arena to play in if you're the visitor," DeBoer said. "It's an older building — probably 30 or 40 years old — and their fans can get pretty vocal."

If they plan on playing the OHL final series for the second consecutive year, the Whalers would need a huge series from veteran center Stephen Weiss, who

leads the team with 16 playoff points. Tomas Kurka (12) and Chad Wiseman (10) will also be counted on heavily by DeBoer's well-rested team.

"When you have nine days off between series like we have now, it's up to the coaching staff to try something different things in practice to keep the players sharp," DeBoer said. "We had a similar lay-off (10 days) between our first and second series this year and I thought we came out a little flat in the first game against Windsor."

"Fortunately, Erie has been off quite a while, too, neither team should have an advantage," DeBoer said his team is as

healthy as you can expect a team to be after 68 regular-season and 10 playoff games.

"I don't think you're ever going to be 100 percent healthy at this point in the season," he said.

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