

Figure skating: all that glitters isn't old



Collecting gold

Mitzi Amelon takes a turn on the ice at the Detroit Skating Club. Eleven-year-old Mitzi may be the youngest skater in the country to earn a gold medal as a figure skating dancer. Her sister, Peggy, earned a gold medal three years ago at the age of 12.

By SHIRLEE IDEN and TOM BAER

Mitzi Amelon didn't have to wait until the first of the year to start collecting gold.

The 11-year-old Southfield girl has been awarded a gold medal as a figure skating dancer by the U.S. Figure Skating Association.

Mitzi's skating instructors — Robert Allen, executive director of the North Elba district in Lake Placid, N.Y.; Vicki Stander, of the Detroit Skating Club; and Gene Heffron, of the Lansing Skating Club — think she is the youngest skater in the country to earn a gold medal.

It's certain that she's the youngest in Michigan since she broke a record held by her 15-year-old sister, Peggy.

Peggy became a gold medalist three years ago when she was only 12.

Mitzi, who first donned a pair of skates at the age of three, says she doesn't remember not being able to skate. She has been working at dancing on ice for more than five years.

"She had to pass a total of 20 tests to get that medal," said her mother.

A sixth grader at Southfield's MacArthur Elementary school, Mitzi adds up to four hours of skating practice a day to her normal school routine when she's in training.

In the Amelon family, that's par for the course. Dr. and Mrs. Maynard Amelon's five daughters are all skaters, and they've all accumulated medals and trophies.

PEGGY BECAME the junior lady figure skating champion for the Eastern Great Lakes Region last month. It was a sweet victory for the teenager, who had been out of competition for six months because of illness.

"We had to nurse her through hursitis all through the competition," Mrs. Amelon said.

Peggy will compete again in Illinois early this month. If she is successful, she'll go to California for more meets. Competitive skating means lots of traveling, but nei-

ther Mitzi nor Peggy seem to mind.

Both girls say they would like to follow their 19-year-old sister Debbie, who joined the Ice Follies more than a year ago.

"I miss her a lot," Mitzi said. "I'd like to skate in that show someday, but I think I want to be a doctor."

Mitzi also is determined to add to her collection of medals and achievements, and "to be good enough for the Olympics." Peggy also considers the health field as a possible career.

The oldest Amelon daughter, 21-year-old Cindy, is at Valparaiso College in Indiana. She plans on a career in nursing.

MRS. AMELON said the girls have been skating for more than 11 years. They were introduced to dance and music studies, but skating soon became everyone's favorite pastime. "When we travel, we pack everyone's skates," Mrs. Amelon said.

Mitzi's instruction for dance skating began in earnest when she was just five years old. She's been in competition most of her young life, and she's always been the youngest in her competitive age group in the Eastern Great Lakes Figure Skating events.

Mitzi said she enjoys her studies at school, but she added that she felt she had a certain advantage over some of her friends.

"Most of my friends are often bored," she said. "With my skating, I'm never bored and always have plenty to do."

Last winter, Mitzi and Peggy spent three months in Denver studying skating while continuing their regular school studies with private tutors. The Amelons plan to send Mitzi to a skating school in Lake Placid this year.

Finding a suitable skating partner sometimes presents a problem, according to Mitzi.

"There usually aren't any really good boy skaters, so I've skated in competition with my instructors," she said.

Mrs. Amelon admits it takes a lot of patience and a lot of driving hours to get the girls to practice and to meet. "But we're very proud of both of them," she said.

Observer & Eccentric SPORTS

JANUARY 2, 1975

(B-9,F)

Without clock or scoreboard

Raiders win in 3 OT's

By TOM BAER

North Farmington and Farmington High put up with some terrible working conditions for their loser's bracket game in the North-west Suburban holiday basketball tournament last Saturday at Livonia Bentley High School.

North Farmington nipped the Falcons, 53-50, in triple overtime in Bentley's gym which was lacking a time clock and a scoreboard for that game.

"The clock was kept at the scorer's table, and they'd announce the score once in awhile," said North Farmington coach Ken Dean. The Raiders earned their spot in the

loser's bracket by dropping tournament games to Walled Lake Central and Walled Lake Western.

Farmington's Mark Schultz tied the game at 44-44 when he sank a corner shot with just four seconds left in regulation time. The score remained tied, 46-46, after the first overtime and 48-48 after the second.

Farmington had several players in foul trouble in the third overtime when the Raiders outscored the Falcons, 5-2. Bob Patek swished a pair of free throws late in the period, and Dan Werner added two more to clinch the victory for North.

Both teams played conservative basketball during the three extra periods.

"MOST OF the time, we'd get the tip," Dean said. "We'd come down and either take a bad shot or throw the damn thing away. They'd come down and hold on to the ball for the rest of the period. They'd get the last-second shot."

Werner, a 6-0 guard, led the Raiders with 15 points. He showed signs of "coming out of his slump a little," according to Dean. North's Kevin Gasior scored 13 points, including 11-16 free throw attempts.

"Several times Gasior came down on fast breaks and got fouled in the act of shooting," Dean said. "He was penetrating a little bit and they were coming in on him, reaching and slapping and that kind of thing."

"But you look at the free throws and that's what won the game for us. We were 25 of 39, they were four for four. I didn't realize that we had shot so many free throws and that they had shot so few. I know that if I were on the other side, I'd be a little skeptical about the officiating."

Mark Schultz led Farmington with 18 points on nine buckets. Farmington outrebounded North Farmington, 33-27, with Mitch Thomas grabbing seven for the winners.

Farmington's tournament efforts included losses to Bentley and Redford Union. "The whole tournament was weird for us," said Falcon coach Bruce Brown. "I'm hoping that the kids can just forget it and come back and play some ball. It (the tournament) was just a bad experience."

Both teams are 2-7 this season. Farmington plays next on Jan. 7 at home against Plymouth Canton. North is inactive until Jan. 10 when Oak Park invades the Raiders' gym.



Brian Steussloff (54) scored eight points and helped Farmington whip NFHS last Saturday

Make it... 7.5% FOR \$75

Michigan National Bank has a new 7.5% savings account.

It's not for speculators; it's for prudent people. People who have worked long and hard. And who don't want to see it go down the drain with the Dow Jones Averages.

Put \$1,000 or more in our new 7.5% savings account and you're safe and secure for a full 6 years. With interest compounded daily, which is an effective yield of 7.79%.

That 7.5% interest is the highest bank interest you can get in the Detroit area. And you can have an interest check mailed to you quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

For extra security, all deposits are insured up to \$40,000 by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

A prudent account for prudent people. You can open one at any office of Michigan National Bank in the Metropolitan Detroit Area.

MICHIGAN NATIONAL BANK

The Saturday Bank. Open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon. thru Sat. Member FDIC



Withdrawals prior to maturity earn regular passbook rates, less 90 days' interest.