

# Field hockey star Gilbert eyes '88 Olympics

By Marty Budner  
staff writer

You've undoubtedly heard the old adage, "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again."

Well, it applies to Jeannie Gilbert. Gilbert graduated from Bloomfield Hills Kingswood High School in June of 1980. At the time, Gilbert, one of the state's premier field hockey players, said she wanted to represent the United States in field hockey at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

The team was recently selected, and, unfortunately for Gilbert, she is not on the squad. But that setback hasn't diminished her desire.

"My chances to make the '88 team should be alright," said Gilbert over the telephone earlier this week from Colorado Springs, Colo.

Gilbert is hoping her battered knees are back in top shape by then. She suffered a knee injury in the fall of '81 that required surgery, and some nine months later, she injured the other knee.

Those problems, more than anything else, said Gilbert, were two key reasons why she is not a member of the 1984 Olympic team.

Chuck Gilbert — Jeannie's dad — is also optimistic that his daughter can make the '88 team.

"THE OLYMPIC coach, Vonnice Gros, said that she was pleased with the way Jeannie had come off the two knee injuries," he said. "And, she felt that Jeannie was as strong as ever, and had a good chance for the 1988 Olympics."

Gilbert is one of the country's top field hockey players.

In fact, she's participated in two national sports festivals — the 1981 games in Syracuse and this summer's camp held last month at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Her teams did well



Jeannie Gilbert represented the North In field hockey at the recently completed National Sports Festival in Colorado Springs.

## sport shorts

### ● KING AND COURT

Sunday, July 31 — Eddie Felchner, the famed star of the touring fast-pitch softball team known as "The King and His Court," will bring his act to Southfield to play Count Scary's All-Stars in a benefit for area youth projects and the John Grace Community Center.

Though the All-Stars will field the customary 10 players, Felchner's team will field five — Felchner on the mound and just four players behind him. Actually, Felchner won't always be on the mound. Sometimes he pitches from second base; sometimes he pitches between his legs; sometimes he pitches blindfolded.

The game — at diamond one of the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Road — is part of a daylong softball tournament featuring teams from Detroit area leagues. For information on ticket prices or on entering the tournament, call the Southfield Department of Parks and Recreation at 354-9603.

### ● MORE DIVERS ADVANCE

Three area divers have advanced to the finals of the U.S. Diving age-group championships with outstanding performances in zone qualifying last weekend in Pennsylvania.

Caroline Kennedy, who as a sophomore last season at Birmingham Groves became the youngest diver ever to win the state high school title, qualified on the one-meter springboard and just missed qualifying on the three-meter. Matt Clark, 17, of Troy High School, qualified on the three-meter board; and Tim Carlson, who will be a senior at Clawson qualified, on both.

All three are members of the Great Lakes Academy Diving team. They compete in the age-group championships in Austin, Texas, next weekend, which are limited to divers 17 and under.

This weekend, they are in Lincoln, Neb., for qualifying for the national senior championship. The seniors aren't divided by age-groups and are open to older divers, resulting in stiffer competition.

### ● STONY CREEK RUNS

Thursday, Aug. 4 — The 12th annual Stony Creek Distance Run will be at the Stony Creek Metropark at 5:30 p.m. It is the first time the runs have been held in the afternoon. Race-day registration begins at 4:30 p.m.

There are six race divisions: ages 1-10, one mile; 11-17, 2 1/2 miles; ages 18-30, 3 1/2 miles; 31-45, 5 1/2 miles; ages 46 and up — 2 1/2 miles; open division — five miles.

Though ribbons, awards and trophies will be given out, the races are considered fun runs and not just for serious runners.

For information, call 781-4242 during business hours.

as she landed bronze medals at both festivals.

"I was injured in 1982 and that's why I didn't go to that Festival," said Gilbert. "So, this year, I had to come a week early and try out for one of the teams. I made the North team and scored one goal against the South team."

"We won two games and lost two games, but it was a great experience," she said. "I was among the best 60 players in the United States and the competition was great."

Gilbert will be starting her senior year at San Jose State University this fall. She is majoring in child psychology.

In her freshman season, Gilbert, playing an inside-forward position, set a school record 24 goals to help lead San Jose State to a fourth place finish at the AIAW national championships.

She was redshirted during her sophomore season because of the knee injuries, which means she'll graduate this year and use up her one remaining year of eligibility next season.

After the '86 season, Gilbert will have two years before the Olympics. But she says there will be plenty of competition to keep her sharp.

"I CAN STILL play club hockey, and there are plenty of Olympic-development camps to keep me going," she said. "I won't stop playing after I graduate because there are tournaments all over California."

Gilbert, 21 years old, took an interest in field hockey while attending seventh grade at Kingswood.

"I never knew about (the sport), we just had it in

our gym classes at Kingswood," said Gilbert, who credited former coaches Nancy Little, Penny Hannett and Margo Johnson for keeping her interested in the sport. "In ninth grade I went out for the varsity team. My coaches told me when I was a senior that I had the ability (to be a good field hockey player)."

"I went to an Olympic-development camp after high school, and I guess it was just a natural progression for me to be where I am," she said. "Right now, my main goal is the 1988 Olympic team."

Gilbert is presently in Colorado Springs trying out for a spot on a U.S. team which will participate in the Pike's Peak Invitational Field Hockey Tournament later this month. In August, she'll head back to California to finish up her last year of school.

*"The Olympic coach, Vonnice Gros, said that she was pleased with the way Jeannie had come off the two knee injuries. And, she felt that Jeannie was as strong as ever, and had a good chance for the 1988 team."*  
— Chuck Gilbert

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