

# Coming back

## McGrath puts swim career back on its course

By C.J. Rissak  
staff writer

A year ago, Kara McGrath was tired. Then a junior swimming star at talent-rich University of Texas, the Birmingham native was working harder than ever. Countless hours were spent in the pool and weight room, pushing a body that already bordered on physical perfection closer to that goal.

It wasn't working. McGrath, second in the nation only to Olympic gold medalist and world-record holder Mary T. Meagher in the 200-meter butterfly, wasn't improving. When so much work results in little or no improvement, it wears on the mind. And when that happens, when an athlete's optimism and confidence is shredded by frustration, slippage can occur. Instead of getting better, they get worse.

McGrath WAS on that fence. She wasn't beaten mentally, but she wasn't showing much improvement, either. The dream of any swimmer — a chance to win an Olympic

medal — was not part of McGrath's plans.

"Any swimmer is thinking about 1988," she said, referring to the next Olympic year. "I wasn't thinking that way, but now I am."

What caused her to change her mind is not difficult to discern. Her summer's goal was to make the U.S. team for the fifth World Aquatic Championships, held in Madrid last month.

McGrath not only qualified for the team, she sliced more than two seconds off her previous best in the 200 fly in the U.S. trials, dropping from 2:17 to 2:04.

HER REACTION was predictable: "It was a really good feeling. I haven't felt that good about swimming since I was young."

McGrath's coach, Paul Bunt, was her first international swimming experience abroad. And despite suffering from the stomach virus that infected nearly all of the U.S. swimmers, she made a good account of herself, finishing fourth out of second place.

Meagher, her long-time nemesis, won the 200 fly. Two East Germans placed second and third, but just

### people in sports

two-tenths of a second ahead of McGrath's 2:10.7.

The time I did at the trials would have placed me second," she said. But McGrath wasn't too disappointed. "I came back from the meet and even though I didn't get a medal, considering everything that happened I was pleased."

"I guess what it really did was give me some confidence," she said.

What caused her sudden improvement is not easy to figure. McGrath credited it not to harder work, but to more rest.

"Richard (Quick, the Texas and U.S. team coach) rested us more, and I think that really helped," said McGrath. "I felt a lot stronger in the water."

PREVIOUSLY WHEN McGrath

tuned up for a major meet, Quick's regimen would be to stop weight training three weeks before and decreasing swim yardage every day. For the U.S. trials Quick altered that, ending weight training five weeks before and alternating heavy and light swim workouts.

Whether that was responsible for McGrath's impressive drop or not, one thing is certain — it couldn't have come at a better time. McGrath's enthusiasm is renewed, and her plans are changed. The Olympics are now a firmly-entrenched goal. "I'm so close now," she said.

She won't have much time to savor her accomplishment. She's already in training for her senior year at Texas, and she has other aims to pursue as well. She'd like to improve in the 100 fly and 500 free-style, and she'd also — just once — like to beat Meagher.

That may be difficult to do, but McGrath is confident — and patient. "I'm going to take it one step at a time."

## Livonia gymnast is world-class

By Bill Parker  
staff writer

Bulgaria. Romania. Hungary. Your average 15-year-old wouldn't even know how to spell these countries let alone have any interest in or thoughts about them.

But Livonia's Adrian Besancon is no average 15-year-old. The well-muscled youngster is one of the top junior gymnasts in the nation and the next time someone mentions Bulgaria, Romania or Hungary around Besancon — it will undoubtedly spur some fond memories.

Besancon recently returned home from a tour of these three nations with the U.S. Junior National Gymnastic Team.

The team performed two exhibition matches and one competitive meet (which they lost to Hungary) during the three-nation tour (Aug. 11-27).

A member of the Genesee Valley Gymnastic Club in Flint and trained by Kurt Golder, Besancon had to compete in three qualifying tournaments before earning an invitation to compete on the U.S. Junior National team.

HE PLACED second overall in the state meet which took place in May at Michigan State University. Besancon finished the meet with 107.35 total points. His teammate Paul Bautel won the competition with a total of 107.40 points.

One month later, in the six-state regional tournament hosted by the Genesee Valley Gymnastics Club, Besancon put on a spectacular performance, winning the tournament with a score of 108.7. Bautel was second with 105 points.

Besancon then competed June 26-28 at Atlanta, Ga. in the nationals.

Competing against the best junior gymnasts in the nation, Besancon finished fifth overall. He placed second in the rings, his best event, with scores of 9.4 and 9.1, respectively, and placed third in the horizontal bar with scores of 9.3 and 8.95. His overall performance was also good enough to earn him an invitation to compete with the U.S. Junior team.

"I almost had a heart attack," said Besancon, reflecting on his notification of making the team. "It was a big surprise. I was pretty excited. But it was a great experience. It kind of opened my eyes to how hard I have to work."

AS HE TOURED the three countries Besancon was able to check out some of the different life styles and cultures of these foreign countries and also spoke with some of the athletes on the other national teams.

"The people were extremely friendly," he said. "A few of them spoke a little English but not very well. Fortunately we had an interpreter to help us."

The bigger difference I saw between their lifestyle and ours was that they seem to mix the old culture with the new. You could go down one street and see all the old ways of life and old buildings and cathedrals. Then you go down once block and see a bunch of skyscrapers, modern buildings and things. It's not like there's an old area and a new area. It's all mixed together."

Besancon also was not accustomed to the popular food and music of the culture.

"They still like Elvis Presley a whole lot," said Besancon. "They like jazz a lot too, but especially Elvis. They were always listening to him while we're listening to new wave."

"The food was a lot different. They eat a lot of meat and it's really spicy. It kind of makes you sick to your

stomach after awhile. They don't eat many vegetables."

BESANCON got an early start in gymnastics. At the tender age of six, his parents decided to enroll him in a gymnastics class through the Community Education program at Schoolcraft College. They did it for his own well being.

"I was kind of a little monkey," said Besancon. "I was always jumping around on the furniture and my mom wanted to make sure I knew how to fall so I wouldn't kill myself. So they decided to enroll me in the class."

And he's been at it ever since. Besancon has always wanted to compete nationally and hopes to earn a gymnastics scholarship one day. And with the persistence that keeps him training 364 days a year the possibility of that scholarship seems only to get better.

He feels that the U.S. gymnasts need to devote more time to the fundamentals and work slowly up to the more advanced and difficult moves.

"Our program has to become a lot stricter about certain developmental skills," Besancon said. "All of the Europeans' basic skills are perfect. We seem to jump right over the basic skills and go on to the harder skills. Then you go down once block and see a bunch of skyscrapers, modern buildings and things. It's not like there's an old area and a new area. It's all mixed together."

ON THE RECENT tour, Besancon also got a look at the training methods used by athletes in other countries.

"Their programs are very defined," he said. "They have very little outside activity. If you are a gymnast then you don't go out and play baseball or anything. They just concentrate on one sport."

"The gymnasts work their school around their sport. They seem to



Adrian Besancon  
top gymnast

concentrate more on the sport than the education. They work out two or three times a day and get their schooling in between."

For now, Besancon will stick to his once daily workouts as he prepares for the upcoming season.

The U.S. Junior National Gymnastics Federation breaks down the competition into four age groups including 7-9 years, 10-12, 13-15 and 14-16. Besancon competed in the 13-15 division this year, but will move into the 16-18 year-old class when the new season begins in November.

"Next season I'll be moving up an age group at the Junior National level and I'd like to make the team again," said Besancon. "I'd also like to try out for the senior national team when I get a little older."

If the past is any indication of the future, it's sure well be hearing much more from Adrian Besancon.

### tennis

FARMINGTON 5  
WESTLAND JOHN GLENN 2  
Monday at Farmington

No. 1 singles: Evita Mus (JG) defeated Chris Brown, 7-5, 6-2.  
No. 2: Tracie Moore (F) def. Jenny Swalec, Campbell, 6-4, 6-3.  
No. 3: Sue Gusho (F) def. Veronica Melum, 6-0, 6-0.  
No. 4: Terri Bellville (JG) def. Michelle Shuler, 6-3, 6-3.  
No. 1 doubles: Julie Smith-Kelsey Kramer (F) def. Heather Hockley-Hancy Slusher-Kelly, 6-0, 4-6, 6-1.  
No. 2: Carol Junker-Judy Penn (F) def. Amy Peters-Sue Pace, 6-1, 6-2.  
No. 3: Veranda Sienso-Joe Fox (F) def. Tammy Davey-Kim Swalec, 6-3, 6-2.  
Farmington's overall dual record: 2-1.  
Farmington's next match: Friday at Northville.

LIVONIA CHURCHILL 7  
REDFORD UNION 0  
Monday at Churchill

No. 1 singles: Lisane Morfiorio (LC) def. Laura Kitchin-Beth, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 2: Delsey Pollock (LC) def. Stacy Bond, 6-2, 6-0.  
No. 3: Michelle Pachera (LC) def. Pam Rose, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 4: Brenda Carmon (LC) def. Autumn Galt, 6-2, 6-1.  
No. 1 doubles: Stefanie Peterson-Stacy Trux (LC) def. Julie Garon-Karen Berry, 6-2, 6-0.  
No. 2: Gianna Bode-Robyn Perle (LC) def. Teresa Williams-Laura Burnham, 6-1, 6-2.  
No. 3: Jill Karlovitz-Kim Maruszewski (LC) def. Lisa Melis-Jane McKinnon, 6-0, 6-7, 6-4.  
Dual meet records: Churchill, 2-0; RU, 0-3.  
Next match: RU home Thursday vs. Redford. Churchill home Friday vs. Salem.

FARMINGTON HILLS MERCY 7  
STAR OF SEA 0  
Monday at Grace Pointe Woods

No. 1 singles: Becky Tassch (FM) def. Daniela Rodriguez, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 2: Carole Williams (FM) def. Budget Sullivan, 6-2, 6-1.  
No. 3: Kim Walker (FM) def. Kathy Eldot, 7-6, 6-1.  
No. 4: Kisty Phoney (FM) def. Jennie Baker, 6-2, 6-1.  
No. 1 doubles: Kristin Orlanot-Cindy Vail (FM) def. Roseanne Pajala-Eva Abanay, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 2: Sharon Fitzpatrick-Sue Kang (FM) def. Corrine Pajala-Beth Phoney, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 3: Candy Boyle-Cathy Best (FM) def. Amy VanAshe-Kim DeFore, 6-1, 6-2.  
Mercy's record: 1-1.  
Dual match: Thursday at Birmingham. Marian

LADYWOOD 4  
MARION B 3  
Monday at Ladywood

No. 1 singles: Beth Zimmerman (LJ) def. Anne Polard, 7-6, 6-2.  
No. 2: Claudia Paquette (LJ) def. Heather Campbell, 6-4, 6-3.  
No. 3: Amy Norris (HJ) def. Dana Hunsberger, 6-1, 6-4, 6-0.  
No. 4: Megan Calmes (HJ) def. Kitty Beasberger, 6-0, 6-2.  
No. 1 doubles: Margie Marsh-Margaret Murphy (LJ) def. Rosemary McLaughlin-Stephanie Stroughter, 6-4, 6-4.  
No. 2: Jane Belenda-Lisa Belenda (LJ) def. Holly Hynette-Kaane Stewart, 6-2, 6-3.  
No. 3: Shannon Nichols-Angela DePonio (HJ) def. Beth Marshall-Liane Tyler, 6-2, 6-1.  
Dual meet record: Salem, 2-0; Ladywood, 1-2.

PLYMOUTH SALEM 4  
LADYWOOD 3  
Tuesday at Salem

No. 1 singles: Anita Toth (PS) def. Beth Zimmerman, 6-2, 6-1.  
No. 2: Mazy Smith (PS) def. Claudia Paquette, 6-2, 6-0.  
No. 3: Janet Turner (PS) def. Dana Hunsberger, 6-1, 6-3.  
No. 4: Lisa Vahndt (PS) def. Kitty Beasberger, 6-1, 6-0.  
No. 1 doubles: Margie Marsh-Margaret Murphy (LJ) def. Beth Condit-Robin Shuter, 6-2, 6-3.  
No. 2: Jane Belenda-Lisa Belenda (LJ) def. Susan Chung-Le Kaye, 2-6, 7-5, 7-5.  
No. 3: Beth Marshall-Liane Tyler (LJ) def. Stacy O'Day-Sharon Soenen, 6-4, 6-3.  
Dual meet record: Salem, 2-0; Ladywood, 1-2.  
Next matches: Salem at Churchill, Friday; Star at the Sea at Ladywood, Thursday.

LIVONIA FRANKLIN 4  
EDEL FORD 3  
Monday at Franklin

No. 1 singles: Leigh Bennett (EF) def. Jennifer Orscheski, 6-2, 6-3.  
No. 2: Fumiko Furumoto (LF) def. Mazy Holman, 6-1, 6-3.  
No. 3: Darlene Kohn (LF) def. Cecily Thomson, 1-6, 5-2, 6-1.  
No. 4: Rhonda Burke (LF) def. Kathy Karbowksi, 6-1, 6-2.  
No. 1 doubles: Carrie Brown-Natalia Solovay (LF) def. Kyungil-Lin-Hencher Candy, 6-0, 6-4.  
No. 2: Naki Tichoff-Annette Frustelli (EF) def. Shannon Beer-Alexis Lewandowski, 6-2, 7-5.  
No. 3: Sharon Hagg-Maggie Terry (EF) def. Jean Richard-Jeanne Irwin, 1-6, 6-1, 6-1.  
Franklin's dual meet record: 1-0.  
Next match: Friday home vs. North Farmington.

### sports shorts

• TOPS IN TAEKWONDO

the midwest regional.

Sean Chung, 16, of Farmington Hills, is one of three Taekwondo competitors selected to train at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Marquette.

Chong qualified for the Taekwondo — sponsored elite training camp by finishing in the top three in

• THE LADY'S AN ACE

Patricia Camp of Farmington Hills scored hole-in-one at the 156-yard 13th hole at Glen Oaks Golf Course Aug. 24.  
She scored 47 for nine holes.

## Bootleggers 7th best

Observedland's entry in the Amateur Softball Association National 10 Man Modified Softball Championships did quite well.

Bootleggers' 700 of Westland finished seventh in the nation winning four of its six games Labor Day weekend in Meadowlark, Pa.

Bootleggers beat teams from Maryland, New York, North Carolina and Wisconsin, while bowing to New York and tournament favorite

Mellons, from Pennsylvania.

Brian Murphy of Plymouth pitched all six games and batted .389 (7-for-18). Gary Novak, also from Plymouth, led the offense with a .417 average (5-for-12).

Manager Bob Eves of Livonia praised the defensive efforts of third baseman Dave Finney (Livonia) and catcher Jeff Tanner (Plymouth). Tanner hit .389 in the tourney (7-for-18).

## Miller to get start at cornerback

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"If we're ever going to be tested, it'll be in the first game," Miller predicts. "I think they're going to be passing a lot."

MSU travels to Arizona State for Saturday night's game, and the secondary will be challenged by Jeff Van Raaphorst, who tossed for 2,200 yards and 10 touchdowns last year.

## Salem cagers edge fired-up Chargers

It wasn't easy, and deep down, Plymouth Salem girls basketball coach Fred Thomann knew it wouldn't be. It's never easy for Salem teams to beat Tom Lang-coached teams.

The highly touted Rocks left Livonia Churchill Tuesday night happy with a 49-43 win.

"They got out quick but we started chipping away," said Lang, the former coach at Livonia Bentley in his first season with the Chargers. Lang's Bentley teams used to have wars with the Salem teams in the days of Kim Archer and Jacques Merifield. "We got within two with 1:30 left and just couldn't get over the hill."

Salem scored the final four points of the game after Churchill pulled within a basket, 45-43, with 90 seconds left. Salem had bolted to a 17-5 lead after one quarter.

Dena Head scored 16 to pace Salem and Kristin Hostynski added 12. Tracy Greenwald had a 20-point night for Churchill (9-1).

But Van Raaphorst can't match the quarterbacks Krumm faced last season. Long, Jack Trudeau of Illinois, Jim Everett of Purdue and Steve Bradley of Indiana have all graduated.

That must generate at least a slight sigh of relief among the Spartans. Other than Van Raaphorst, the only proven passer on MSU's schedule is Michigan's

Jim Harbaugh.

ALREADY, MILLER, Bobbitt and Krumm figure MSU's trip to U-M Oct. 11 could decide who goes to the Rose Bowl. The Spartans don't play Ohio State, another preseason powerhouse, this season.

So you can readily see what MSU must do: Play capable pass defense. It won't be easy. Help from

other areas of the defense is undesirable because it's unproven. Birmingham Brother Rice guard Mark Nichols is the only returning defensive lineman.

It's a chancey situation, but if the coaching staff's gamblers instinct remains as accurate as last year, the Spartans could be on their way.

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