

Champion expresses herself on ice

BY LANA HING
STAFF WRITER

A few years ago, Olympic skater Sasha Cohen watched the 1968 film version of *Romeo & Juliet* and was in awe over the music. "I knew when I watched it that someday I wanted to skate to that music," Cohen said. Cohen will get her wish when she skates solo to the music in *Champions On Ice* May 2 at Joe Louis Arena. "This is a special performance because the music is so amazing to me," Cohen said. Cohen, 18, will skate with

other pros including Michelle Kwan, Elvis Stojko, Vladimir Besedin and Victor Petrenko. The show gives Olympic skaters more freedom to express their creativity without the pressure of competition. "This is my fifth time on this tour; it's so great to be relaxed on the ice without worrying about scores," Cohen said. The show includes the solo and duo performances and a finale involving the entire cast. "Being around all these great skaters is so inspiring, it's just fun to watch," she said. One of skating's brightest new

stars, Cohen is one of only a few women hoping to become the first to land a quadruple jump at the Olympics. She's quick to point out that she has accomplished the jump several times - just not at the Olympics yet. A serious back injury in 2000 set her back a year, but she rebounded to make the U.S. Olympic Team. She placed fourth in Salt Lake City and at the 2002 World Championships, and third at the 2003 U.S. Nationals. She knows she's a role model for young skaters nationwide and offers this advice to them. "Keep a reality check as to

what's really important in life," Cohen said. "If you aren't doing well, take a look at the events happening around the world... there's more important things. Have fun, but work hard and don't do it for anyone but yourself." It's her own determination that makes her succeed, not the words of others. "I still have a lot to learn and always like *Champions on Ice* to do that because I work with so many great people. The music is great, the costumes are fun and we'll all see some really great new things."

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CHAMPIONS ON ICE

Where: 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 2

Where: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit

Tickets: \$30-\$65 at the box office and all Ticketmaster outlets, or call (248) 645-6666

Performers: Michelle Kwan, Irina Stutskaia, Timothy Goebel, Evgeni Plushenko, Elvis Stojko, Sasha Cohen, Victor Petrenko, Michael Weiss, Philippe Candeloro, Surya Bonaly, Rudy Galindo, Nicole Bobek, Oksana Kazakova and Artur Dmitriev, Naomi Lang and Peter Cherenyushev, Shae-Lynn Bourne and Victor Kraatz, Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow, Dan Hollander, Irina Grigorian, Vladimir Besedin and Oleskiy Polischuk, Ann Patricia McDonough, Tatiana Totmianina and Maxim Marinin

Spotlight Players present comedy

BY LINDA ANN CHOWIN
STAFF WRITER

Mary Lynn Kuna doesn't have time to feel sad about the Spotlight Players' last production, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* opening Friday, April 25, at the WaterTower Theater in Northville. She's too busy making preparations to move the theater troupe to Summit on the Park in Canton. The community center will be the temporary home for the Players until the new Canton Performing Arts Center is completed in the fall of 2004.

"There's no time to grieve," said Kuna. "We close our 'Forum' production May 10 and have to be out of the theater by May 16. And then we're performing something from the 'Forum' for the groundbreaking ceremony for the arts center on May 20."

Kuna expects the Spotlight Players to do three dinner theaters at the Summit during the 2003-2004 season. In the meantime, they're having fun rehearsing *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. The storyline follows a crazy slave struggling to win the hand of a courtesan for his young master. "It's a hilarious show," said Kuna. "And you can't beat the music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim."



Spotlight Players (formerly the Plymouth Theatre Guild) closes its season with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Pictured are Kate Weiss and Mike Hammonds.

SPOTLIGHT PLAYERS

What: Present the Stephen Sondheim musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*

Where: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, April 25-26, May 2-3, and 9-10, and 6 p.m. Sunday, May 4

Where: WaterTower Theater on the campus of Northville Psychiatric Hospital, 41001 W. Seven Mile Road, west of Haggerty, Northville

Tickets: \$14 ages 19 and older, \$10 ages 2-18. Call (248) 349-7110

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