

# OFSAA dream attained by Roberta



Gail Eastwood (left) and Roberta Burke placed well at the OFSAA high school gymnastics finals. Gail, in grade nine, is just starting her high school competitive gymnastics while Roberta will graduate this year. (Photos by Harold Branch)

By PAM DOUGLAS  
Herald correspondent

GDHS' other OFSAA gymnast, Roberta Burke, is also hoping to attend university to study physical education. She accumulated a score of 8.5 on floor to place 10th out of 30 in Ontario.

"It's always been my dream to make it to OFSAA, and just to say I've competed against Ontario's best gymnasts is an honor in itself; but I was really happy with my placing," says Roberta.

Roberta has never competed with a club, but she began her gymnastics career 11 years ago in recreational gymnastics.

"I was a monkey when I was little," she says. "I was always doing tumblers in the back yard and I never sat still. My mom saw that I had a bit of a talent, but my parents didn't push me. Gymnastics was something that I wanted to do. My parents always encouraged me in anything I wanted to do."

"I like gymnastics because it's one of the original sports. You can create your own style and express yourself. I

can express myself best on floor. It's my favorite piece of apparatus. I have confidence in myself and I'm not as nervous as I am on bars or vault."

**BIG INFLUENCE**

The 18-year-old grade 13 student didn't begin competing until she was eight and she didn't start taking gymnastics seriously until six years ago. "The Olympics were a big influence," she says.

Seeing the professionals compete increased her interest in the sport.

"I was in grade eight and I knew there was a high school team and I knew I wanted to be on it."

Although she admits she likes gymnastics because it's an individual sport in which she feels she's doing something for herself, Roberta is a very staunch team supporter.

Her grade ten season was slowed down when she suffered whiplash in a fall she took while practising. She injured her shoulder and elbow in another fall that same year which took her right out of competition.

"We were trying for the team title that year, so I didn't stop practising

even though I couldn't compete. I wanted to help my team mates. I didn't want to let them down," she says.

"I don't think I could have done as well as I did this year if I didn't have my coaches, Mrs. White, Mr. Kotani, and Mrs. Peden, and my team mates encouraging me. They were a big influence."

**HARD SPORT**

"Gymnastics is a hard sport to continue if you don't have the right coaches and the right team members. I wouldn't be where I am in gymnastics

if it weren't for them."

In her spare time Roberta is an avid bowler, a sport in which she has competed and excelled.

"I have applied for a scholarship from the Youth Bowling Council and I think I have a good chance of getting it," she says.

She plays for the school field hockey team and is involved in other sports such as waterskiing and indoor hockey.

Roberta is also an instructor at The Fitness Makers, a fitness club in Brampton.

## No corresponding ref increase

Following up on the goalie 4-step rule from last week begins this week. The keeper is considered to have the ball under control once the ball is held in the hand or hands, and is not to be prevented from putting the ball back into play. The 4-step constraint



### Soccer

By ALEX TOUGH  
Herald Special

begins when the goalie has control, so defined. When the goalie has taken up to 4 steps, the ball must be released into play. The keeper may put the ball on the ground and play it further with the feet, and on no account is allowed to pick the ball up again unless the ball is touched by another player.

During the time when the ball is first picked up and the end of the 4-steps the goalie may throw the ball in the air and catch it or bounce it off the ground and catch it without penalty. These moves are not considered to be releasing the ball into play.

No longer may the keeper play around with the ball by rolling it out to edge of the penalty area under protection, for example. The basic concept is to prevent the goalie wasting time and holding up play. The whole concept is to keep the ball in play at all times and prevent goalies as well as outfield players wasting time.

The penalty for delays of the game by the goalie touching the ball with the hands after release without another player touching the ball first is an indirect free kick to the opposition. If the keeper persists in the practice a caution may be issued, (yellow card).

At mini level in the youth club referees are being instructed that this rule will not apply. At other youth house league levels the interpretation will not be very strict in the beginning. At youth competitive the rule will be applied strictly as is also the case at senior level.

**RIGHTSTEP**

Six of our local referees will be used by the Toronto and District League this year on a regular basis. In the past we have only supplied refs on an emergency basis. This is a step in the right direction for local officials. A recent meeting of the Development committee for referees at Peel Halton stressed the shortage of officials in quantity and quality.

A large problem in Canada as a whole has been the growth of player numbers at a much faster rate than that of coaches and referees. As the kids have flocked to sign up for soccer the concentration on game time is understandable although a little shortsighted. Ever increasing numbers of players gives us just that - increasing numbers.

There is no corresponding increase in club administrators, coaches and referees. No quality, no skill, no knowledge of rules. Certainly the kids enjoy a kick around, which is a beginning. However, it is not enough. It is not enough when there is so much teaching to be done. Teaching to develop natural skills; there is nothing more frustrating to a young player attempting to try something and not knowing why it cannot be done. Well meaning unknowledgeable coaches are not the answer.

Would you send your child to a well meaning friend for a brain operation with the knowledge that your friend was not a qualified surgeon? Would you send your child to school to be taught by an unqualified teacher? You do with soccer. The number of qualified coaches in our soccer in town is a mere handful. The numbers of qualified referees is limited also. Hence the moves by clubs and referee organizations to organize clinics and upgrade those who do qualify. This year more than any other there is more than lip service being paid to the problem.

**FALCON SCHEDULE**

The Falcons open up their T and D schedule in the First division west on Monday 30 May against Halton Portuguese at 8:45. They follow up with two more home matches on successive Moodsays. The reserves start with 8 away games and will not be

seen at Cedarvale until the last Monday in June.

Last minute drop outs from the Inter County leaves scheduler Haddy Smedema with wholesale changes to make to league schedules. This season Butcher, Bracken, Acton Villa, Meteors Blue and White and the Ancient Mariners make up the first division. The Inter County season is scheduled to commence the week of 10 May.

Most, if not all, house league drafts took place last week. Players should know by the end of the week which team they are placed on. Competitive team coaches have yet again made several choices of player selection without the benefit of seeing their charges under outdoor conditions, never mind games. I believe it is unfair to say the least, upon players and coaches, to make cuts under these conditions. Over the years we have attempted to arrive at a fair system, without much satisfaction to rep or house league.

There is little doubt in my mind that a healthy house league system is necessary for the competitive teams to be competitive and healthy. The same in reverse. They need each other. The time for separate organizations is past. The OSA constitution forbids it for beginners.

Examination of the meaning of competitive teams is required. They are supposed to represent our club system against other clubs. They are supposed to be our best players and should be and are not. They should be coached by our best and most competitive and qualified coaches and are not. This is not to say that we do not have some good ones because we do. The system, however, prevents all the best.

Do we really want our teams to compete against others? If the answer is yes, then we must ensure that the best is what represents us, and even go out of our way to make sure it happens. Half measures do not work. We do place handicaps upon our selections of coaches and players which does more harm than good.

See you next week.

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### Jills

## Meet Sunday

The Halton Hills Jills gymnastics club will be hosting a gymnastic meet Sunday May 1 at the Georgetown District High School.

Out of town clubs competing for medals and ribbons will be Peterborough gym club, Bramalea gym club, Guelph Saults gym club, Orangeville Lions gym club and Bolton Langstaff.

Eighty-five gymnasts are expected to compete at the pre-competitive and competitive levels.

The warm-up begins at 8 a.m. while the competition starts at 9 a.m. Another set of competitive routines starts in the afternoon.

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