

Too close to call between duo

Little was decided from the Stephanie and Christine show recently at the Milton Springers Club — other than the fact that both are exceptional gymnasts.

It was just too close to call between teammates Stephanie Deumer and Christine Nellis in the Elite eight-year-old class at the fifth annual Spring Challenge.

In the end they shared top spot on the podium as co-winners of the all-around gold medal.

Stephanie's case for victory was made with silver medals on vault and beam plus a bronze for floor routine. Christine meanwhile, topped the beam event, vaulted her way to bronze and took fourth on bars.

Completing the clean sweep was Jaimi Fellows, who placed second overall — on the strength of silver-medal performances on both bars and beam.

Age class teammate Shanelle Vaillou wasn't far behind. A gold on vault and silver on bars paved the way for her top five all-around finish.

Christine Chimonides tumbled her way to gold on floor and earned fourth on bars. Third-place honours on beam went to Jade Ryan.

Another see-saw battle was seen in the Elite seven-year-old division where Alina Ferguson and Julie

Gagnon fought tooth and nail for supremacy.

Alina took silver on vault and bronze on floor while Julie swung to a silver on bars and garnered third-place honours on vault.

Neither could quite wrestle the overall silver medal away from the other and split the votes right down the middle.

Lindsay and Kim Chadwick — each making their competitive debut — provided an effective one-two punch in C class action.

Lindsay, 7, showed strongly in the Mini C division, capturing bronze on floor as well as in the all-around scoring. Kim, 6, placed fourth overall among Argo C participants on the strength of silver and bronze on beam and vault respectively.

Also competing for the first time was 10-year-old Sarah Christink who collected silver medals on beam and vault and placed fourth overall.

Naomi Anderson earned a silver medal on vault, bronze on bars, fourth on beam and fourth overall in the Tyro C loop.

Teammate Muriel Mangialardi came away with a bronze on vault and fourth on bars while Kathryn Devries took fourth-place honours on vault.

Horse joins millionaires club

Canadian harness racing crowned its newest millionaire Saturday evening at Mohawk Raceway.

Native Born, one of the classiest campaigners of the 1990's, boosted his lifetime bankroll over the magical mark by capturing the \$35,000 free for all pace for driver Stephane Bouchard. It was the 50th career win for the eight-year-old son of Nihilator.

His official earnings now stand at \$1,014,128.

For Bouchard, who joined the Ontario Jockey Club's driving colony this spring, it was his third time

driving Native Born and first time visiting the winner's circle.

"I drove him a couple of times but he wasn't quite himself," said Bouchard of a pair of fourth place finishes in March. "Tonight he was much sharper. That's pretty good, an eight-year-old pacing a mile in 1:53 and beating those type of horses."

"This is the first horse I've driven that's won a million (dollars). I didn't win the million with him but I won the one that got him it."

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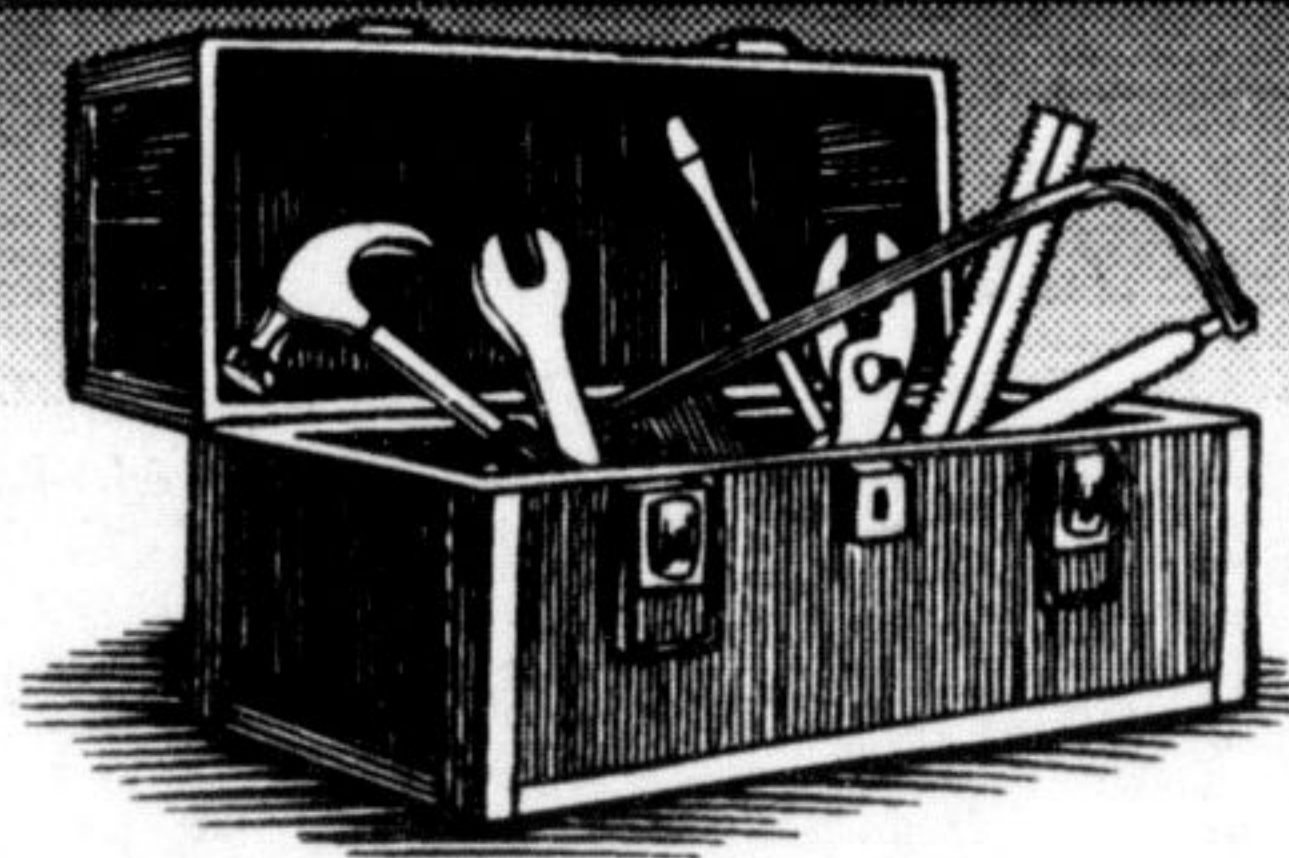
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