

# Stoffels golden at season-opening gymnastics meet



Photo by STEVE LeBLANC

Milton Springs (from left) Christina Chimonides, Stephanie Deumer, Alexis Stoffels, Julia Gagnon and Jaimi Fellows display the medals and ribbons they won at the first provincial qualifying event of the season, held last weekend in Burlington.

The torch has been passed. Stepping into the spotlight which previously followed a now retired Ashley Quinn, Milton Springs Alexis Stoffels has picked up right where her former teammate left off — in victory.

The 15-year-old gymnast — who's assumed a leadership role over the past year, both during training and competition — offered her strongest showing to date this past weekend in Burlington.

Opening up her provincial qualifying campaign in fierce fashion, she upstaged all challengers in the Senior 1 division. Her all around triumph was fueled by a first-place finish on beam and bronze medal performance on bars.

On top medal and floor, her efforts were good enough for fourth.

"She's slowly but surely been improving, and this was by far her best showing in the seven years she's been here," said veteran coach Janet Campbell. "It's hard for Ali to make the commitment to training now that she's in high school. But you couldn't ask for a more focused worker and I'm delighted it paid off for her."

Meanwhile, Milton delivered a triple threat in Pre-Junior 1 competition.

Leading the 11-year-old threesome was Jaimi Fellows, who took second-place honours on both bars and vault en route to securing silver overall. Her beam and floor routine each ranked fifth best.

Stephanie Deumer took seventh overall — due in large part to a silver medal effort on beam and fifth on vault — while grabbing gold on vault and fourth on the floor was Christina Chimonides.

The Springs' youngest representative, 10-year-old Julie Gagnon, topped the field on bars and finished fifth on beam.

The second provincial qualifying event will be held late next month in St. Catharines.

The Ontario junior championships are slated for May in Sudbury while the senior showcase will be held in April in Toronto.

## Skiers needed

The Milton Heights Racing Club still has spaces available on its skiing and snowboarding teams.

The organization is looking for racers six to 19 years of age to fill out their ranks. Weekly practices are held at nearby Glen Eden Ski Area while competition is held at resorts throughout southern Ontario.

Those who'd like to sign up, or obtain further information, are asked to call Lin Leeson at 336-5382.

## Public skating

Milton's arena are now offering free public skating starting this weekend.

At John Tonelli Sports Centre, public skating is available throughout this month on Saturdays from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m. while the same goes for Memorial Arena — only on Sundays from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

From there, free public skating will be held at various times throughout January as well as the March break.

## Manbert-Serniuk fifth for season

Milton's Heather Manbert-Serniuk closed out a strong show jumping season with an overall fifth-place standing on the Jump Canada Series.

The 34-year-old equestrian — along with nine-year-old Dutch Warmblood Just Julia — finished with a total of 116.15 points, falling just six shy of fourth-place Jonathan Asselin of Calgary.

Manbert-Serniuk's best efforts over the 16-event tour, which wrapped up recently at Toronto's Royal Horse Show, were reserved for the second last stop at the Tournament of Champions where she placed second behind winner and eventual grand champion Frankie Chesler.

Meanwhile, fellow Miltonian Ainsley Vince competed in only three of the series' events but managed to place 12th. That was due mainly to her victory at June's L'International Bromont.

Both Vince and Manbert-Serniuk were among those who showed at the Olympic Trials this past summer, including at nearby Hendervale in July.

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