

# Ballantrae youth is having a 'gym dandy' season

*Rebecca Muir hopes to vault her way to a gold medal at Ontario gymnastics finals in Oakville*

BY JIM THOMAS  
Correspondent

Her trophy chest is filling up. On March 8, Rebecca Muir, 10, won a total points gold medal at an international gymnastics meet in Montreal against 34 of the best from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.

On March 13, in a Spring Cup gymnastics tournament at Burlington, the Ballantrae resident came home with three medals, two golds and a bronze.

Then, adding a little spice to her athletic menu, she won the 2002 Master Bantam bowling championship, March 2, in zone competition at Markham.

Rebecca's next stop in her gymnastics tour of duty is April when she enters the provincial championships at Oakville.

The nationals are scheduled for 2003 in Saskatoon, Sask. Rebecca has high hopes of being there too.

A former student at St. Mark Catholic School, Rebecca is now enrolled in Sport Seneca and

attending the Claude Watson School for the Arts in North York. Because Rebecca combines both academics and athletics at the same site, her day extends from 7:30 in the morning to six o'clock at night.

She commutes to and from Sports Seneca with her father, a gymnastics coach there at the national level.

Rebecca is one of his students.

To qualify, Rebecca had to meet a high academic and gymnastics standard.

*Muir's long-range goals are to compete in the Olympics and earn an athletic scholarship*

The gymnastics program is geared to Olympic competition. Sport Seneca athletes have represented Canada at the 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games where they placed 8th in the world on the balance beam. Their athletes have won medals in the Junior and Senior Pan Am Games as well as the Commonwealth Games.

Since 1987, Sport Seneca gymnasts have competed in seven World Championships.

Although some distance down the road, Don and Anne Muir are hopeful Rebecca will

qualify for an athletic scholarship at a university in the United States.

"Gymnastics is very big in the U.S.," says Anne.

Sport Seneca is the only instructional facility of its kind in Ontario, Don explains. He describes the program as one of the finest in Canada.

"I love it," enthuses Rebecca, "the Olympics are my goal."

Instruction includes the bars, the beam, the floor and the vault.

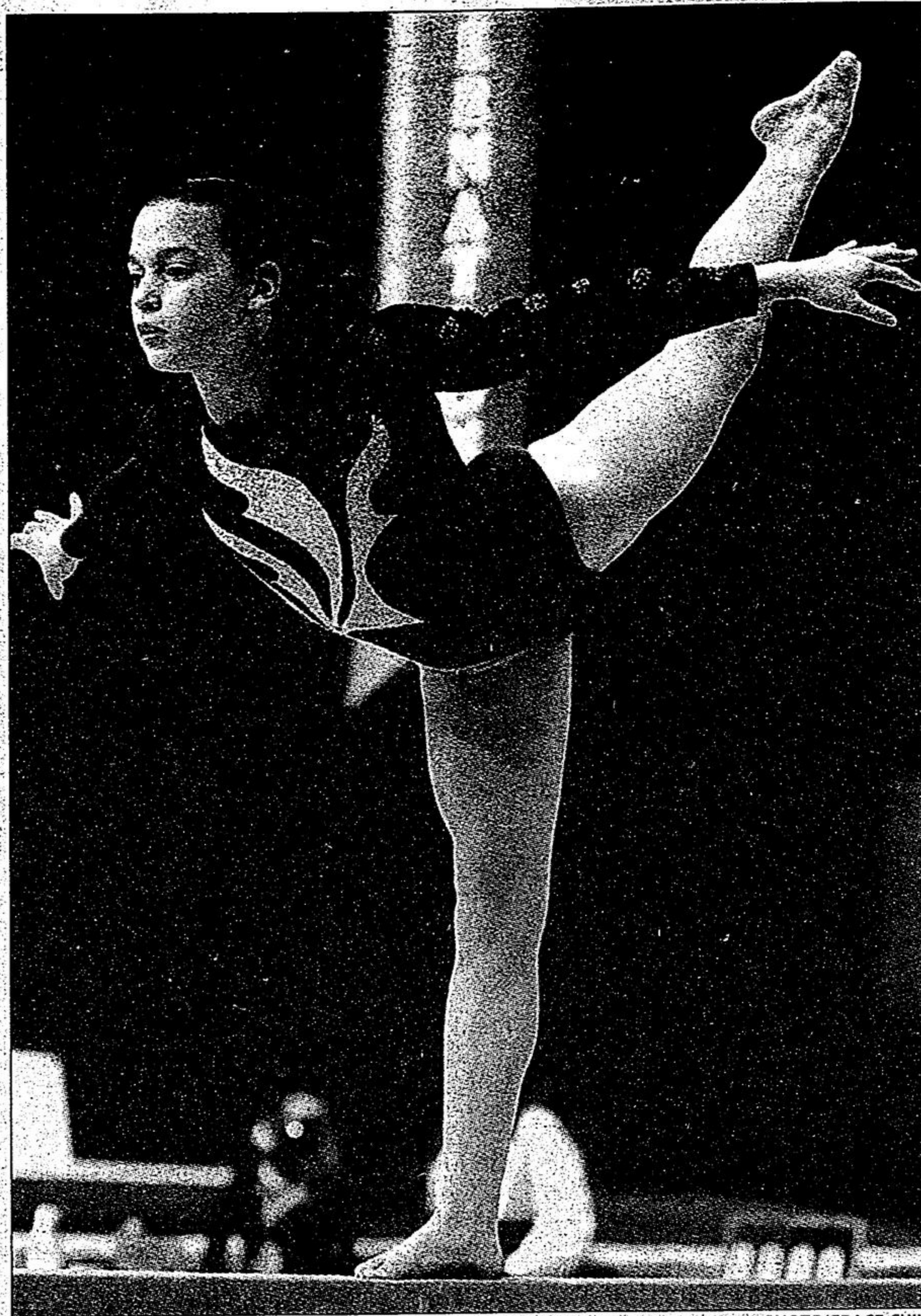
Her father's specialty is the bars and that, by no co-incidence, is where Rebecca shines.

Good sportsmanship is an important part of the program as well, adds Don.

While Sport Seneca is Rebecca's "home away from home" five days a week, nine months of the year, she still retains a close-knit group of Ballantrae friends, her mother says. Bowling at the Stouffville Bowling Centre has also helped bridge the gap, a facility Anne describes as "Stouffville's hidden gem."

As with all sports, gymnastics has its risks. Rebecca's suffered broken toes on several occasions but these injuries, considered 'rather minor', haven't lessened her enthusiasm.

While still at the first level of the national stream, Rebecca already has her sights set on a greater goal, a university scholarship and place of prominence atop an Olympic podium.



PHOTO/GRACE CHIU

Ten-year-old Ballantrae resident Rebecca Muir, shown here performing on the balance beam, has been winning numerous awards while competing for the Sport Seneca gymnastics team under the guidance of her father, Don Muir. Muir is setting her sights on trying to make her presence felt at the upcoming provincial championships in Oakville next month.

## High school, community sports are big part of Andrea Meyer's life

*Seventeen-year-old Stouffville student is an athlete for all seasons and venues*

BY JIM THOMAS  
Correspondent

To put it mildly, 17-year-old Andrea Meyer is an athletic dynamo.

The Grade 12 student from Stouffville District Secondary School is involved in just about every sport going during the year including: volleyball, basketball, softball, badminton and rugby.

Meyer entered SDSS well prepared. For she was a leading light at the elementary level with sparkling performances in volleyball, basketball and track and field at St. Mark Roman Catholic School.

At the conclusion of her Grade 8 year, she was voted top female athlete.

But playing sports in school isn't the end of Meyer's recreational activities.

During the winter months she's also an avid hockey player and centres a line with the Markham-Stouffville Stars, competing in a league with Barrie,



**ANDREA MEYER:** Stouffville resident has been an integral part of Stouffville District Secondary School's athletic program.

Oshawa and Chingacousy.

And when Meyer isn't on the ice she can be found on the slopes as she's an ardent downhill skier and snowboarder.

Her favourite skiing and snowboarding resort is nearby Lakeridge in Uxbridge Township.

During the spring and summer months Meyer can be found on the ball diamond as she plays second base in tier 1 softball with the Markham Wildcats.

While the Stouffville resident enjoys to partake in all of these activities, she acknowledges that some sacrifices might have to be made.

Among them is her hockey career as she hinted this may be her last year in competing at a competitive level with the Stars' rep team.

With her OAC year on the horizon, Meyer is aiming to retain her current honors academic standing, then enter university in the fall of 2003.

A member of the SDSS athletic council, Meyer was recently selected Athlete of the Week.

Meyer's exploits aren't only centered on the field of play.

Off the field, she's lending a helping hand to organize the school's athletic banquet in June. More than 300 students are expected to attend the annual event that honours the school's athletic competitors.

In reflecting on her athletic career at Stouffville District Secondary School, Meyer has high praise for girls' physical education instructor Sharon MacFarlane.

Meyer feels her low profile, yet enthusiastic approach to athletics has helped her and other students attain their highest potential — a level that she's well on her way to attaining by the time she graduates.

## SPORTS DIGEST

### Stouffville Clipper peewees ice title in Peterborough

The Stouffville peewee select Clippers won the A title from the recent Peterborough All Saints minor hockey tournament after routing Newcastle 7-1 in the championship final.

The Clippers went undefeated in the tournament as they posted victories over Peterborough 9-2 and Oshawa 3-2 to reach the final.



Team members included: Ryan Barkey, Nick Stratas, Colin Dickie, Brayden Todd, Nick Busato, Simon Kennedy, Justin Lawrence, Tyler Neil, Matthew Fockler, Jeremy Schell, Brandon Cowie, Chad Kingston, and Justin Lougheed. Goaltending duties were shared by Brad Whittingstall and Justin Dunbar.

#### Minor novice Clippers up on Vaughan in semis

The Stouffville minor novice Clippers are off to a good start in their York-Simcoe semi-final hockey series against Vaughan by winning the first two games in their best-of-five series.

Josh McChesney, Connor Cadaret and Michael Bourgeois each scored once to propel the Clippers to a 3-0 win in the series opener last Saturday.

On Monday, the Clippers received another balanced scoring attack as Robbie Acton, Dalton Mayo and Michael Mingay each scored once in a 3-2 win.