

SPORTS

Winstonettes open the door to elite Ukrainian gymnasts

Markham gymnastics club hosts 'serious' Europeans training for 2004 Olympics

Not only does the Winstonettes Gymnastics Club play host to teaching girls the sport of gymnastics.

Earlier this week, the Markham-based club took on the added role of goodwill ambassadors when they opened their doors to hosting two international gymnasts and their coach from the Ukraine.

Irina Karsnyanska, 13, and Inna Teslenko, 14, two elite performers from the Ukraine who are gearing up for the 2004 Summer Olympics, along with their coach Inna Korobchinskay, spent Monday and Tuesday with the Winstonettes.

They had one joint training session and found some time to do a little sightseeing in Toronto before departing on Wednesday for the Ukraine.

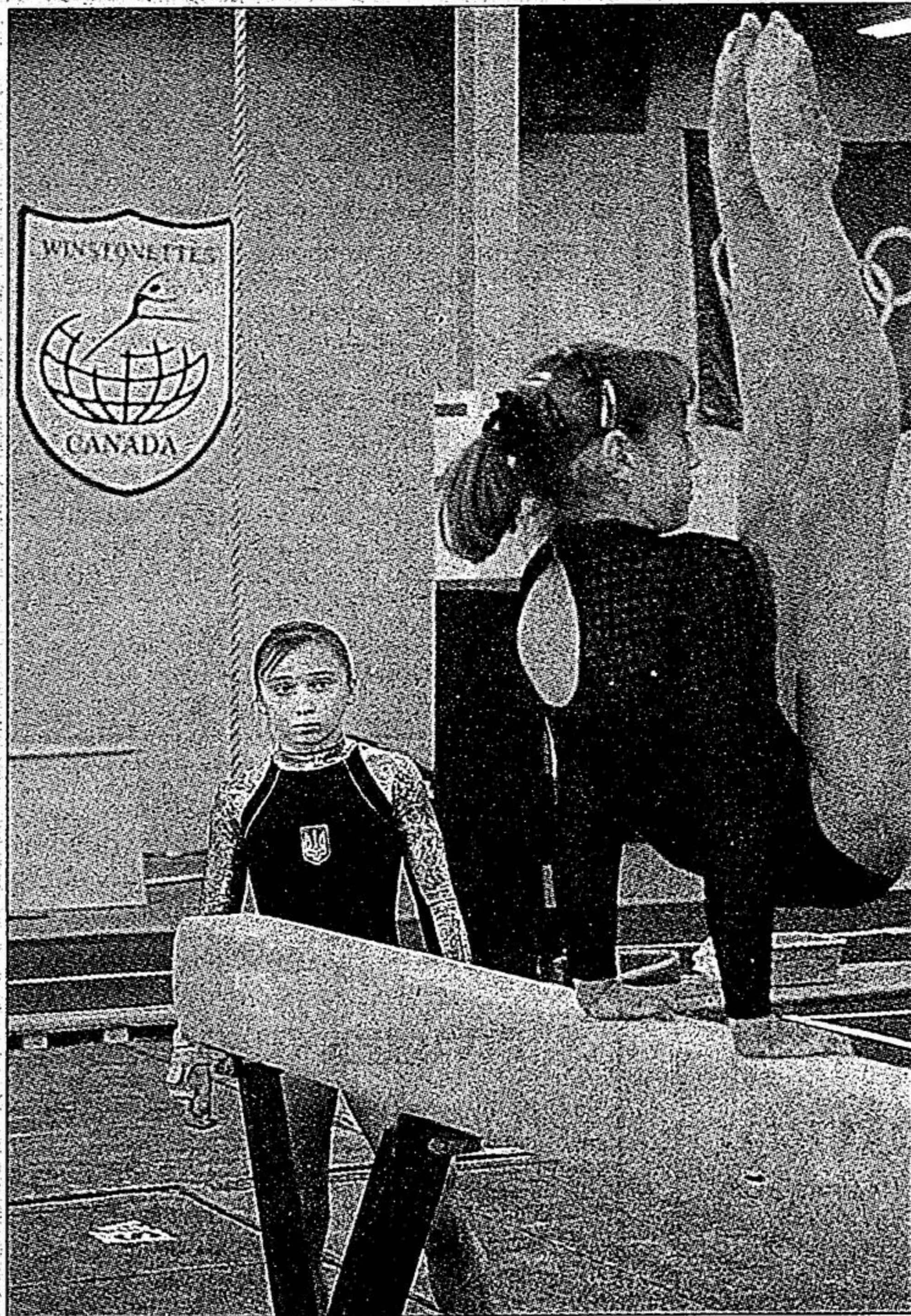
"It was nice to have them with us for a few days," said Winstonette coach July Gerschovich. "The kids are really nice. They have good manners and are mature for their age."

Gerschovich noted their asso-

"We saw how serious they trained. They train seven days a week and four times a week they have three training sessions a day."

ciation with the two Ukrainian gymnasts and their coach came about through two international competitions that took place in Montreal and Burlington over the last two weekends.

It was at these meets where Winstonettes coach Liudmyla Korolenko met the international



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

The Winstonettes Gymnastic Club welcomed two elite gymnasts from the Ukraine to their Markham-based facility earlier in the week where they did some training before returning home on Wednesday. Here, Irina Karsnyanska, 13, performs a routine on the balance beam while teammate Inna Teslenko, 14, looks on.

gymnasts. They also had an association with their coach through working at the national training centre in the Ukraine.

"When you meet people from a foreign country that speak the same language they're almost like part of the family so we opened our doors to them before they went back to the Ukraine," recalled Gerschovich of their meeting.

Gerschovich said the brief time spent with the young gymnasts was a learning experience

for both sides.

"They came over to see what our club system is like here and because the girls spend all of their lives in the gym, we wanted to show them what Canada was about by giving them a tour of Toronto.

"And at the same time, we had a few hours of training with them and we saw how serious they trained. They train seven days a week and four times a week they have three training sessions a day," Gerschovich said

Brother Andre settles for bronze match at OFSAA

Cardinals edged in semi-final 'gold medal game' by No. 1-ranked Mississauga school

Markham's Brother Andre Catholic High School Cardinals senior boys' hockey team won't be returning from the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association AAA playdowns in Mississauga with the gold medals this time.

But they might not come back empty-handed either.

The Cardinals, who won the Ontario championship two years ago, were playing St. Joseph's (Mississauga) in the bronze-medal game late yesterday afternoon at the Hershey Centre. A score was not available at press deadline.

In Friday morning's semifinals, fourth-ranked Brother Andre lost 4-2 to top-rated Mount Carmel Crusaders (Mississauga).

"We felt that was the gold-medal game," said Brother Andre head coach Dave Turner. The other two semi-finalists, St. Joseph's and Thomas More (Hamilton) were ranked 14th and 18th, respectively.

Brother Andre led 2-1 in the semifinal before allowing three straight goals, including two in the final four minutes of the game. Scott Badali had both goals for the Markham school.

After gaining a split in first-day action Tuesday, Brother Andre had to

win its final two pool play games on Wednesday. They did just that, winning over the St. Joseph's Jaguars (Barrie) 5-0 and the fifth-seeded Sir James Dunn Eagles (Sault Ste. Marie) 3-2 to clinch top spot in their bracket.

In Thursday's quarter-final, the Cardinals received a stellar netminding effort from Jerry Brens to blank the 11th-seeded A.B. Lucas Vikings (London) 2-0.

In their victory over the Jaguars, the Cardinals received two goals from Chris Fiore and singles from Ryan Bonnell, Brandon Fitzgibbon and Connor Treacy. Geoff Griffiths posted the shutout.

Badali staked the Cardinals to a 1-0 lead in the first period against the Eagles before surrendering two goals within 62 seconds to trail 2-1.

But the Cardinals responded with two goals just 15 seconds apart by Andrew Wallman and Kevin Hill to take a 3-2 lead after one frame. Backed by strong goaltending from Brens, the Cardinals shut the door on the Eagles for the remainder of the game.

Against the Vikings, a power-play goal by Badali put the Cardinals ahead 1-0 after one period.

After a scoreless second period, the Cardinals iced the game on a goal by Treacy with about eight minutes left in regulation time.

"We don't give anybody anything and we try to limit our turnovers in the neutral zone," Turner said after Thursday's win.

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Stouffville advances to final

SPORTS DIGEST

The Stouffville minor novice Clippers advanced to the York-Simcoe minor hockey

finals after capturing its best-of-five semi-final series over Vaughan that was capped off with a 3-2 overtime victory on Wednesday. Curtis Crago, Brett Hembruff and Steven Tait each scored once for the Clippers.

The Clippers will now face East Gwillimbury this weekend.

Girls in sync at Winter Games

The Markham Synchro Club's 15-20 team came up with a bronze-medal winning performance in a six-entry

field at the recent 2002 Ontario Winter Games in Guelph.

Team members included Lurissa Kelland, Kelly McKay, Melissa Dermody, Danielle Hoey, Christianne Celotti, Kendra Jacobs and Meaghan Tait.

In duet results, the tandem of McKay and Hoey finished fourth while Kelland and Dermody were sixth.

In figures competition, Kelland had the highest score among Markham entrants with a 10th-place effort. McKay followed in 11th, Dermody was 13th, Hoey, 16th, Celotti, 18th, Jacobs, 20th and Tait, 25th.

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