

Deep in their hearts, gymnasts knew they had talent for 3d straight state

by Paul Omi
gymnastics coach

This column is a special way of saying thanks. Thanks to a team whose pride and determination led them to something no other team in Illinois high school gymnastics history has ever accomplished — a third straight state crown.

Thanks to a marvelous group of parents whose support and sacrifice throughout the whole year has been tremendous. And thanks to a dedicated coaching staff, Neil Krupicka and Harrison Bull, through whose efforts we would not be where we are today.

From the very beginning this senior team has lived with doubt in their minds that they were not a typical Hinsdale team. As freshmen they lost the two invitational meets they were in. As sophomores they came in third to a strong Arlington squad at the Wheaton Central Invitational. And as seniors they had to live under the shadows of a national championship Hinsdale team.

Only one man was back from that squad, Ted Marcy, but the others were all unproven. That they were able to sustain themselves, come back for more, and be able to stand the pressures of the competition, is a story that was repeated time and time again this season.

Our first dual meet of the season, at Prospect, was the initial test of the quality and my own baptism into head coaching. There was a lot of tension and apprehension. On the Prospect-bound bus many thoughts entered my mind. Here it was, the beginning, the start. The many hundreds of hours that we had spent in preparation were past. Were the things that I did right? Was my own organization of the team going to help or hurt? Were the juniors that would be working tonight be able to stand the varsity competition without faltering? Were the seniors going to be able to carry the responsibility of leadership on this team?

Right from the start, things looked bad. The bus driver took a wrong turn. I was battling a 102 degree temperature, but was determined not to miss my first dual meet as head coach. We arrived late and had to hurry through the warm-ups. What a start.

The sophomore competition began and ended quickly. Relying on consistency, the sophomores breezed to their 73rd straight dual meet win. One down — one to go.

Free exercise opened well. Both Shephard and Lytle scored 7.55 to lead the scoring. Ted Marcy opened the defense of this state gymnastics title with a phenomenal 9.50 and from then on the outcome was never in doubt. Final score: Hinsdale — 129.49, Prospect — 85.43. Ok, we won, but was our performance good enough to take us to another state title? No.

So it was back to the gym. Happy that we had won but doubting whether we would be able to do so in March.

Next, Homewood — Flossmoor in our own gym. Score: Hinsdale 124.46, HF 104.46. Again the doubts were raised as to our team power. A slip in score by four points with the Evanston Invitational coming up. No Hinsdale team had ever won the Evanston meet and this was going to be a big test for us. We needed this meet. . . . And we got it!

Steve Schutt — All-Around Champion, Ted Marcy — Side horse Champion Hinsdale.

94.56, Arlington 90.50, Evanston 87.21. A great meet, a great Hinsdale win.

Now we had it — momentum, confidence, PRIDE. If we could just keep it going.

Next objective — to break 130 points and to beat Arlington for the second time in two weeks.

And we did it — At Riverside-Brookfield for the former and a heart-stopping clutch performance on high bar by Steve Schutt to win the Maine East Invitational. This team was rolling now, improving as it went.

A set back occurred about this time. Doug Shokes, one of our outstanding parallel bar men was hit by personal tragedy, compounded by illness to himself which kept him out of action. He came back, but only through a magnificent effort and sacrifice on his part.

The rest of the season reads like a story book. By the end of January we were consistently in the 140s with our big confrontation with Arlington on Feb. 11. Warming up the week before, the team almost went to 150 against LaGrange, falling short by a mere .06 of a point. And not forgetting our sophomores, they were doing the job too by winning their 83d straight, and capturing the Wheaton Invitational.

The week-end of Feb. 11-12 will long be remembered by me. We had been pointing for the Arlington meet since early in the season. This was the big confrontation in a rivalry which extended back to 1969.

The final score: HT 146.49, Arlington 143.

Not only did we win at Arlington but the very next night came back to Hinsdale in our last dual meet of the season beating Proviso West and setting a national high school scoring mark of 154.43. The highest score by any high school team in the nation. And this from a "weak" Hinsdale team.

On to the championships. Starting with the conference, we blew the others out of the gym, winning by more than double the score of second-place Glenbard West.

The sophomores won their conference meet, almost tripling the score of second-place Glenbard.

And with the end of the sophomore season their record stood at 85 straight dual meet wins — longest winning streak in the school's athletic program — and a seventh straight conference championship.

Now total efforts were geared to the varsity team. At the District meet only a lapse by Tom Mayfield on the still rings kept us from qualifying everyone through the Districts. I was terribly disappointed for Tom since he is a senior and will not be able to compete for us again.

At the sectional meet I could tell we were in for a rough time when our best free-ex men went down to 7.7 and 7.25 scores after scoring consistently in the 8's all season. For the first time since 1969 Hinsdale would not be represented in floor competition at the state meet. Our boys hit their routines, but judging was very critical.

The best way to describe the preliminary competition at the state meet is to say it is organized confusion. There are 176 gymnasts representing more than 50 high schools. The all-around competition is decided during the preliminary sessions and individual specialists are vying for berths in the top 10 to compete in the finals.

After some quick calculations that night,

we headed into the finals with this knowledge. We had nine positions going into the finals as opposed to Arlington's seven. There was still a mathematical chance of Arlington winning this meet if we did poorly. And with this in mind, a State Championship at stake, we arrived for final competition.

Going on the side horse competition, Curt Rodgers was up first. He looked a bit shaky on his mount, but appeared to gain control. Just as he was finishing his dismount, however, he leaned forward and off he came, flat on his back.

Getting up quickly, he gained his composure and styled out to the judges as he is trained to do. No matter what happens during the routine a Hinsdale gymnast stands and faces the judge with pride. I am proud of Curt for not letting his disappointment show as he walked back to the benches.

Next up was Ted Marcy. Side horse is probably the most difficult event to master of all the gymnastic apparatus. The chances of breaking on this event is extremely great. The gymnast must have total concentration to hold his balance while in continuous movement. I was apprehensive as Ted mounted. I knew what dedication and effort this young man had put into this event and what pressure there was on him to repeat as state champion. And he came through in style — a 9.75, the highest score ever recorded by a high school gymnast and a fitting climax to a spectacular interscholastic career.

On parallel bars, all three of our men made it to the finals. Wes Gill, Doug Shokes and Steve Schutt. Next on the still rings, Doug Wood and Bob Holland both did a fine job to make it to the finals. Erwin and Schutt finished the all-around competition and now it was a matter of waiting to see where they would finish.

With Wes Gill narrowly missing a state championship our parallel bars contingent placed 3-4-6 to provide the strongest event showing by any team at the state finals.

And finally the last event — still rings competition.

A bit shaky on his handstands, but still a good job by Doug Wood for a 6th place. Followed by Bob Holland who did an excellent job to finish 9th in the tough event.

Glenbard West's Roskam just nosed out Schutt by .15 to capture the All-around title. As we had feared, Schutt's break on side-horse had hurt him. Kim Erwin had done a fantastic job hitting all five routines in the grueling all-around competition, ending up ninth in the state.

There was only the team presentation to make now and proudly the Hinsdale team mounted the victory stand to claim first place in a tough state meet competition. These guys had worked; and worked hard for this championship and happily were rewarded for a good effort. My congratulations to them.

Prospects for next year look good. Though we are losing a fine senior team, we should be bolstered by a strong junior squad.

I will not say where they will place because I don't want to jinx them. Enough said, and thank you for this opportunity to explain the anatomy of this year's Hinsdale gymnastics team.



Wes Gill holds parallel bars position en route to state third-place finish.



Steve Schutt appears to be applying whammy, but actually he's awaiting judges permission to go ahead with routine. He was second in all-around in state and was third on high bar and tied for sixth on parallel bars.

It took dedication, long hours and pride!

Lilyans
106 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

Travelers Market
18 W. First St.
Hinsdale

R & R Coffee Shop
Chestnut & Madison St.
Hinsdale

Hinsdale Furriers
33 E. First St.
Hinsdale

Papenhausen Cleaners
10 E. Hinsdale Ave.
Hinsdale

Hearthstone Realtors
118 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

York Barber Shop
724 N. York Rd.
Hinsdale

Conn TV Sales & Service
11 S. Lincoln St.
Hinsdale

Holm & Assoc. Realtors
102 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

Major's of Hinsdale
23 W. First St.
Hinsdale

Hof Cleaners
2 W. First St.
Hinsdale

Rich Port Realtor
28 W. Hinsdale Ave.
Hinsdale



This thing isn't over yet. Central coach Paul Omi (right) and some of his gymnasts skeptically view state-meet proceedings at Prospect.

All-Americans

All-Americans? Certainly. Hinsdale Central had 17 All-American efforts, including five by Tom Beyer with a sixth still pending. Here is a breakdown of these special times:

Tom Beyer (5) — 100, 200 and 400 freestyles; 100 butterfly; 400 free relay (200 individual medley possible).

Glenn Disosway (3) — 50 freestyle; 200 medley relay; 400 free.

Russ Meyer (2) — 100 backstroke; 200 medley relay (100 free possible).

Greg Scott (2) — 100 butterfly; 200 medley relay.

Mike Capek (2) — 100 breaststroke; 200 medley relay.

Tom Crema (1) — 400 free.

George Congreve (1) — 400 free relay (100 free possible).

Roger Kodat (1) — 400 free relay (100 butterfly possible).



Flying off high bar and into third place in state is Central's Steve Schuff. Assistant coach Paul Krupicka prepares to assist in case of trouble.

Top coach--again

Central coach Don Watson was named Illinois Swim Coach of the Year — again — by the Illinois Swimming assn. at the organization's annual 7-Up Bottlers of Illinois banquet Monday at the Chicago Athletic club. He was given a trophy for the fourth straight year he has been honored.

The top three swimming finalists in state competition and among Hinsdale's season accomplishments were the following:

1 — National interscholastic 200-yard medley relay record of 1:35.7 (Russ Meyer :25.0, Mike Capek :27.5, Greg Scott :22.5, Glen Disosway :20.7).

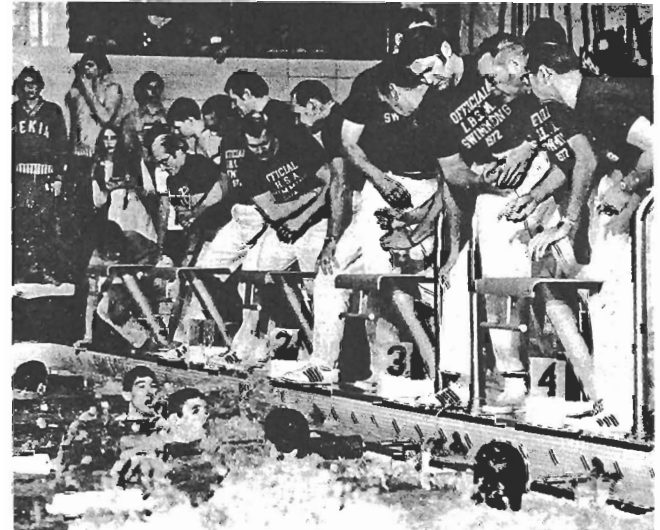
2 — Defeat of St. Xavier of Cincinnati (Ohio state champ).

3 — Freshmen undefeated season — dual meets and Invitational.

4 — Fresh-Soph undefeated season—Conference Champs.

5 — Varsity dual, Invitational, Conference, District, State Championships.

6 — Varsity seventh State Championship; sixth consecutive State Championship (ties Lane Tech Record 1938-1943); Dual Record wins — 88 consecutive — 1965; Won 12 of 12 District Championships; Won 7 of 7 Conference Championships



T-shirted officials catch exact moment of state 50-yard freestyle, won by Central's Glenn Disosway (far left, facing camera).

Ticket confusion

Administrators of the new Class AA basketball tournament will scrutinize the ticket situation as a result of more than 2,000 Elite Eight tickets returned unsold. Among them were 482 from Hinsdale Central.

"We'd have been tickled to death to sell our allotment," said Central athletic director Harvey Dickinson. "I thought our administration did an excellent job. They didn't really know how many they would be able to sell, so they had to limit them to one per person."

"In fact, it was a lousy financial tournament all around. Our Sectional attendance (3 games) was down 3,000. Even the natural rivalries, like Downers North and South, didn't help."

Crane returned the most tickets, 925 out of 1,900, to Assembly hall in Champaign. Evanston brought back 646 and then came Hinsdale. The only school that sold its complete allotment was East Aurora.

"We're just going to have to re-educate the public that tickets are available for this," said University of Illinois assistant athletic director Jim Flynn, no relation to Central's all-area guard of the same name.

Congratulations on a fine season!

Fuller's Service Center Inc.
102 W. Chicago Ave.
Hinsdale

First United Realtors
30 E. Hinsdale Ave.
Hinsdale

Joanell Mangan
36 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

A. E. Fossier Realty Co.
112 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

Thorsen Realtors
16 E. Hinsdale Ave.
Hinsdale

Prestige Porsche-Audi Inc.
300 E. Ogden Ave.
Hinsdale

Kramer Foods
Grant Square Shopping Center
Hinsdale

Schweidler & Mewherter
8 E. First St.
Hinsdale

The Squire Shop
120 S. Washington St.
Hinsdale

Koshgarian Rug Kleaners Inc.
248 E. Ogden Ave.
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Pat Davis Realtor
101 S. Washington St.
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Jack Loftus Ford
7501 S. Kingery
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