

Synchro swimmers repeat as provincial champs

By PAM SERKOWNEY

You could say they won it by a flamingo half-twist.

It might have been the Catalina reverse or the eiffelwalkover. In any event, it was certainly the figures that clinched the OWIAA banner for York synchronized swimmers last weekend.

A joint effort in the three categories of figures pushed the Yeowomen past U of T on the final day of competition. The host York team settled for a share of the provincial title. York and Queen's both posted a total of 59 points. Toronto stalled at 56 points after leading the competition for most of the weekend.

"I knew it was going to be really tight, no question," said York coach Pat Murray. "It shows how much of a team effort it was to get the overall title."

Veteran Cathy Clark finished her university synchro career with a second place finish all round. She placed second in senior figures, solo, and team routine. In fact, Clark's performance was surpassed only by that of her roommate, U of T's Nancy Jackson. Jackson took three gold medals and earned the Sea Queen trophy for outstanding swimmer.

Friday night's solo event became a dogfight between the meet's top

swimmers. Jackson edged Clark by a slim .36 margin.

"I was disappointed in Cathy's solo marks," said Murray. "She had a strong solo and I think she should have won . . . but there's not much you can do."

York's Elizabeth Martha was third in the B solo category.

On Saturday York's duet pair of Alexandra Kehrer and Shannon Matthews finished a strong second behind Queen's. The margin of victory was again less than one point.

U of T's Blues squeaked by the Yeowomen in the team routine. Toronto scored 74.12 points to York's 74.08. Queen's finished third.

Ironically it was missed move in the team routine that cost Toronto last year's title. This time the Yeowomen had the bad luck, erring on an important lift. "It was major error and probably cost us," said Murray. "We had a good routine and overall, we swam well."

It took Sunday's figures competition to decide the overall title. Clark's second second place in senior figures, along with several placings in the intermediate category put points on the board for York. Prior to the novice figures, however, Toronto was still holding on to the lead with 56 points. Queen's followed with 53 points and York was right behind with 52.

"I knew we had to swim really well because the results from intermediate were in," said York's Sandy Sauve. Sauve edged teammate Janice Craig for third place in novice. Amy Micks also swam to a top ten finish for the Yeowomen.

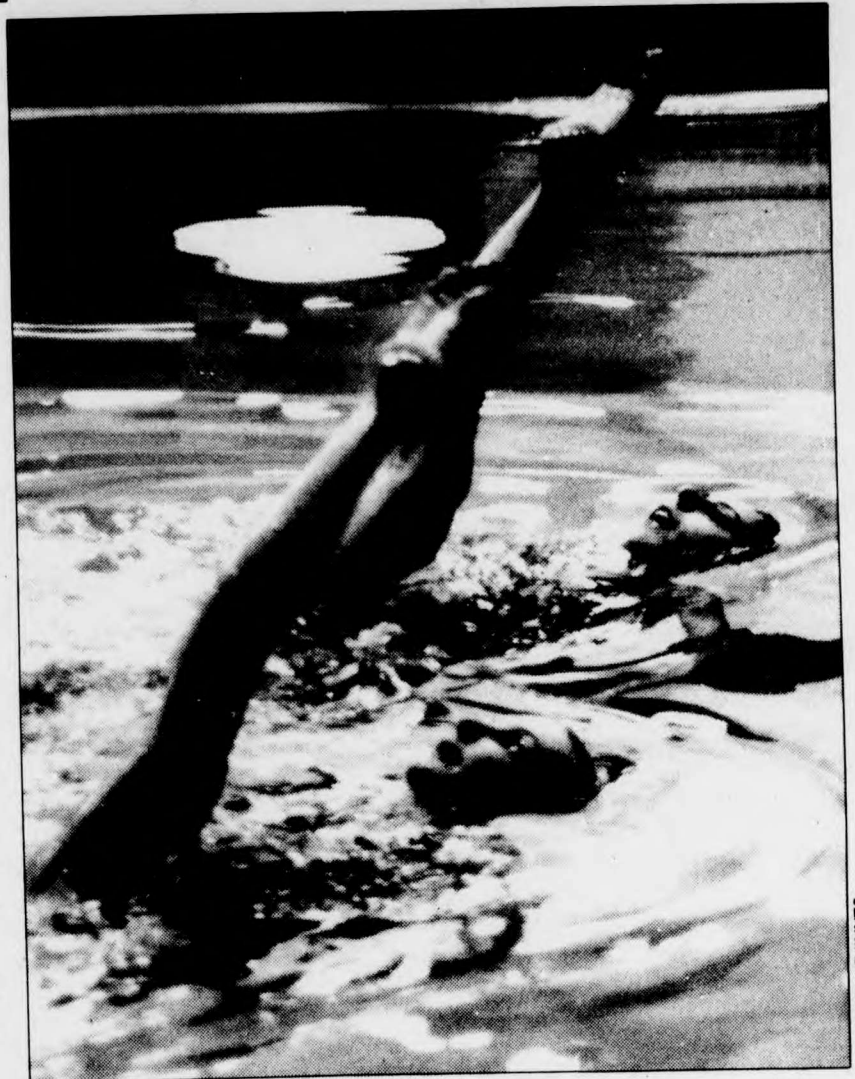
The points from the novice figures lifted York into a tie with Queen's for the overall title titles. York's Clark, Murtha, and Matthews were chosen as OWIAA All Stars.

"I think we were tense because we had finished first at the ranking meet. We're not usually as pressured," said Sauve. Her third place finish was a personal best. "It felt good to finally contribute some points," she said.

Coach Murray also stressed the joint effort of the York swimmers. "Everyone put points up," said Murray. "There wasn't anyone who didn't contribute."

Queen's coach Nicole Scheidl was clearly ending her rookie coaching season on a high note. "I'm quite pleased that we tied," said Scheidl, a York synchro alumna. "Our duet came first and team was so close, only one point between the top teams. It really came to figures and we swam well."

Murray was also content to share the glory. "With Nicole having swam here for three years . . . I don't mind sharing."



JENNIFER CRANE

CAN-CAN, SYNCHRO STYLE: York's Alexandra Kehrer and Shannon Matthews get a leg up on their routine. The duet swam to second place. York tied Queen's for the OWIAA overall title.

Hockey women miss playoffs

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York's next matchup was against Guelph on Valentine's Day on home ice. This game offered a chance at redemption.

York pushed off to a slow start against Guelph. Time and again Guelph advanced with the puck, to the delight of the imported Gryphon cheering crew. Only the quickly reacting York defence and superb goaltending by Dyana Curran kept York in the game.

Curran faced 16 shots this first period on her way to a shutout.

After the game Adams praised Curran's play.

"She played one of her best games today, pulling up with extra effort, especially in the first period."

The Yeowomen came alive in the second period. The York defence moved like clockwork. Guelph on the attack was no match for the York defenders, who moved in quickly to neutralize the puck.

The York offence finally swung into gear. In the second period York went on the offensive, outshooting Guelph 9 to 6. Unfortunately, like a math equation, the two defences cancelled out each other's offences. The result was a stalemate that produced intense action as both sides scrambled for every chance.

York finally broke open this scoreless match in the third period. At 10:16 McCollum, assisted by Murray, laced one into the Gryphon's net.

The last 10 minutes were run at a punishing pace as Guelph sought revenge. Several times the Gryphons made excellent charges, only to be stopped short by the one-two combo of York's defence and Curran on goal.

The Yeowomen stayed on top to post a 1-0 victory.

York coach Deb Maybury was pleased with her team's performance.

"They played very well," Maybury said. "They never gave up. They

came up equal to the challenge."

For several players, the win was a fitting end to a bittersweet season. McCollum, Kim Downard, Karen Downard, and Curran are not coming back next year.

"We didn't make it to the playoffs this year," McCollum said. "A lot of us are veterans on the team and it feels good to go out on a high note."

The season may be over for the team, but the Yeowomen have several more game to play.

"We have a game against Faculty coming up," explained Maybury. "As well, we're going down to Boston to play some clubs down there. We wanted to go up against some of their schools, but they're in the playoffs right now."

Next year is a different issue altogether. The depletion of the ranks by the departure of some key players is a serious concern. Hopefully, Maybury and Adams will find new talent to replace them and continue to build the team.

Second place for gymnasts

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nastics, that combine power, strength and speed, and are enhanced by the beauty of grace, flexibility and coordination. In University level gymnastics however, it takes more than these attributes to produce a successful team.

The Yeowomen gymnastics team receives no funding from the University and all money must be raised on their own. Last year, the women possessed one of the strongest teams but were unable to travel to the National championships due to insufficient funds. This year the team plans to travel to Calgary for the Calgary Cup (unofficial National Championships) but first must raise enough money. The gymnasts raise money on their own time by selling lottery tickets, organizing high school meets. The difficulties for the gymnasts in doing well in school,

training five days a week and collecting money becomes evidently apparent.

An additional obstacle the team must endure is training without a 40 X 40 floor. The gymnasts can only practice on a strip of floor instead of the full-size they must compete on. The team must travel to four different clubs — The Markham Gym Club, Steeles West Gym Club, Newmarket Gymnastics Academy and Toronto Gymnastics International to receive proper training facilities.

The team does, however, have one of the best coaching staffs in the country which includes their own therapist and Boris Bajin — the National women's coach for 15 years.

For the future, the women are training hard and doing fund raising in order to compete in the championships in Calgary this March.

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