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## High schools: Breeding grounds for university gymnastics



Yeowoman Marilee Boles competed in last year's high school invitational.

### Rose Crawford

The third edition of York's High School Invitational Girls Gymnastics meet once again gave a unique competitive experience to more than 150 gymnasts from sixteen high schools across southern Ontario.

The importance of meets such as last weekend's York Invitational lies beyond that of the final results.

According to Yeowomen head coach Natasa Bajin, a meet like this is very beneficial to both high school and university gymnastics.

Within the Ontario high school system there aren't many opportunities for competition except for the OFSAA qualifying meets and the OFSAA finals and Bajin states, "This meet gives the kids a chance to compete before their finals and for those who don't qualify it gives them an extra incentive to keep on training. It's pretty difficult to keep on training if there are no opportunities to compete."

Bajin also extends an invitation to all coaches and gymnasts to come to York and take advantage of the facilities here and of her expertise if and when they need to.

She feels that this meet is a very important instrument for recruitment.

"It gives the kids a chance to come and see York and there's always the possibility that some will come here."

The high school invitational has already paid off in terms of recruitment. Two of this year's Yeowomen gymnasts, Marilee

Boles and Cindy Jansen, were competitors in last year's invitational. Furthermore, at least two competitors in this year's meet expressed interest in attending York in the future.

Sheryl Boucher, the senior all-around champion is presently only a grade ten student at Ottawa's Sir John A. Macdonald. When asked what her plans were for the near future she did state that she plans to attend university and York is a definite possibility.

Linda Kunashko, a grade thirteen student at Burnhamthorpe Collegiate finished third in the senior competition and already has planned to enroll at York in the fall. During the past few months, Kunashko has trained at York once a week, making good use of the facilities here.

Eventhough the recruiting seems to be working, Bajin speaks strongly against it.

"They told me I have to recruit, but I don't agree with that at all. I believe my job is to teach and coach."

"I don't believe in recruiting kids who are already top calibre gymnasts like Sherry Heise at McMaster (Heise was a national 3 level gymnast before she enrolled at McMaster) because then I have nothing to offer them."

"I would rather coach a gymnast who's starting from scratch and see her do well after I've coached her for a while."

Bajin said that right now practically every coach does some recruiting and she has no choice

but to do the same.

"There are allowances within the budget for recruiting," Bajin said. "That means that if I want to go out of town to meet or look at an athlete, those expenses are taken care of."

High school gymnastics provides an important base for university programs, eventhough there has been a great boom in club gymnastics over the past few years. Bajin believes that, "By the time club kids get to university age, they are already sick of competing. By that time they're into judging or coaching."

**Notes:** Three members of the York Yeowomen gymnastics team are headed for Calgary this weekend to compete in the CIAU gymnastics championships. Out of the top thirty-six gymnasts from across Canada, Laurie McGibbon, Marilee Boles and Linda Stella are ranked fourth, thirteenth and twenty-eighth respectively.

For McGibbon, who finished fourth over all in last year's championships, this is her third trip to the nationals. For Boles and Stella, this will be their debut performance. Good Luck!!

## FLASH! A York first Barb Whibbs named All-Canadian

### Jules 'Sparky' Xavier

Excalibur has learned in an exclusive interview that Yeowoman Barb Whibbs has been named to the All-Canadian basketball team for 1980-81.



The announcement was made by York's Co-ordinator of Women's Athletics Mary Lyons hours before the selections were released in Guelph at the CIAU dinner and awards banquet.

Further details will follow in next week's issue.

You read it here first in Excalibur.

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