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Grand Traverse Bay

GYMNASTICS

News Release

submitted by
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Northern Michigan's Premiere Gymnastics Center

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Hawkins, Lahti, Tucker Win “Chicago Style”

(Chicago, IL) – Six full gymnasiums were set up under one roof encompassing 170,000 square feet at Chicago's Navy Pier this past weekend. Despite the size, the venue was packed with 3,700 Junior Olympic gymnasts from 124 clubs – clubs from Florida to California, clubs from Maine to Texas, and clubs from The Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, and the United Arab Emirates. Amid all of that talent was Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics.

The team made its presence known on this world-record-setting international stage.

The Level 3 team of Lilah Groves, Brooklyn Swift, Delanie Bisbee, Izzy Brooks, Kianna LeBreck, Skylar Hawkins and Adeline and Maeve Carlson started the meet on the right foot by placing second in the all-around scoring. Hawkins and Maeve Carlson led the way by finishing first and second all-around, respectively. Carlson won a first-place gold medal for her beam routine, while Hawkins won gold medal event championships on vault and floor to earn her individual all-around first place, and lead the team to a second place banner in the process.

The meet ended even more successfully than it had begun, as the Level 6 competitors from Traverse City individually swept first through fourth place all-around. When 11-year-old Sophia Tucker had sealed gold-medal individual event championships on bars, beam, and floor, she was still chased by teammates Kelsey Saxton, Katie Frank, and Ava Hodges for the all-around gold medal. Tucker managed to distance herself by turning in a 9.175 vault to complete the rare four-gold individual sweep.

Saxton finished with bronze medals on each individual event and in second place on the podium all-around, while Frank finished second on bars and beam to place third all-around. Hodges won a silver medal for her floor routine to earn a fourth-place all-around finish, and complete the 1, 2, 3, 4 sweep for the Level 6 team.

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“Where Grace Abounds”

Avery Lahti also competed at Level 6 for the Grand Traverse Bay team, but in a higher age bracket. Lahti claimed the third individual all-around gold-medal event championship of the weekend for the team behind a gold medal performance on floor and a second-place bars routine.

“At an event of this magnitude, you have to be happy even finishing in the top ten,” said coach Gina Van Deinse, adding, “so we were elated to come away with three all-around individual championships.” Sister and co-coach Jennifer Van Deinse added, “There are so many accomplishments for these girls to be proud of – Sophia’s [Tucker] four-gold sweep, the Level 6 team all-around 1, 2, 3, 4 finish, and more. And to do it at this level of competition is very exciting, especially with states and regionals coming up.”

Level 7, 8, and 9 teams also competed at the Chicago meet. Montana Timmer led the Level 7 team with a second-place silver medal all-around and bronze medals on vault and floor. Jayla Ristow finished fifth all-around, and Maya Carraczo turned in a fourth-place floor performance. At Level 8 Norah Galton captured third place on floor and Dahlia Evans ended in sixth place on bars. Olyvia Galton won a silver medal for her Level 9 beam routine, followed by a third place Level 9 bronze medal on floor for Avery Wisniewski.

The Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics teams next compete at the Tulip City Invitational in Holland, MI February 15 – 17, and then complete their regular season at the Clover Classic Meet in Ypsilanti Mar 8 – 10 before heading into state, regional, and national post-season championships. For more information about Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics, go to www.gtbaygymnastics.com, or contact Betsy Van Deinse at 929-2869.



LEFT: Sophia Tucker wins four gold medals at the IGI “Chicago Style” meet.

RIGHT: Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics Level 6 team members sweep first through fourth place all-around to earn a team championship banner. Shown are Sophia Tucker (first), Kelsey Saxton (second), Katie Frank (third), and Ava Hodges (fourth). Avery Lahti (not pictured) also won the individual all-around championship at her age level.

