

2001 IHSAA Girls Gymnastics State Finals

Final Results

March 17, 2001, Perry Meridian High School, Indianapolis

HOMESTEAD WINS RECORD SIXTH GYMNASTICS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP; COLUMBUS EAST'S NICOLE HOWE WINS ALL-AROUND

Homestead gymnasts won an individual state championship and had three top five individual finishers as the Spartans won their record sixth state championship at the 29th Annual IHSAA Gymnastics State Finals on Saturday (March 17) at Perry Meridian High School in Indianapolis.

Freshman Allyson Zipse won the floor exercise competition with a score of 9.775 and placed fourth in the vault to lead Homestead, which captured the top prize for the second time in three years. Homestead's 111.825 points edged first-time state finalist Lawrence Central with 111.075 points. Fort Wayne Bishop Dwenger finished third (110.600) and defending state champion Chesterton was fourth (109.900).

Also placing in the top five in individual competition for Homestead was senior Shellen Goltz, last year's all-around state champion, who finished second in the uneven bars. Goltz placed fifth in this year's all-around.

In winning the state title, Homestead broke a tie with Valparaiso for most championships by a school. All six of the school's state titles -- 1983, 1984, 1985, 1996, 1999, 2001 -- have come in girls gymnastics.

Sophomore Nicole Howe of Columbus East earned the all-around championship with a total of 38.425 points after finishing as the runner-up a year ago to Goltz. Howe, won the balance beam competition with 9.625 points, placed second in the vault at 9.7 and took third in the uneven bars at 9.55. She had won the uneven bars state championship last year with a 9.575.

Rounding out the top five of the all-around was senior Leigh Ann Kennedy of Lawrence Central (37.850), senior Elizabeth Trahin of Fort Wayne Bishop Dwenger (37.575), senior Meghan Peacock of Lawrence Central (37.550) and Goltz (37.475).

In her first-ever appearance at the state meet, Peacock claimed the state championship in the vault with a score of 9.85. Also winning a state title was sophomore Lauren West of Chesterton who scored a 9.6 in the uneven bars.

All four of last year's individual state champions failed to repeat. Besides Howe's performance in the uneven bars, senior Elizabeth Minix of Fort Wayne Bishop Dwenger finished third in the vault, while junior Lisa Diederich of Crown Point was 12th in the floor exercise and Goltz finished 17th in the balance beam.

MERRILLVILLE'S KATIE DYER WINS BALL MENTAL ATTITUDE AWARD

Katie Dyer of Merrillville High School was selected as the recipient of the Mildred M. Ball Mental Attitude Award by the IHSAA Executive Committee.

Dyer, a four-year member of the gymnastics squad at Merrillville helped the Pirates to a fifth-place team finish in this year's meet.

Besides gymnastics, she has lettered in track and is the two-time defending regional champion in the 300 hurdles. She also has been involved with the school cheerleading squad.

Carrying a 3.97 GPA (4.0 scale) and ranking seventh in her senior class of 467 students, Dyer also is involved in numerous school activities. She serves as part of the student government and is a member of Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), the French Club as well as the National Honor Society. She also has played the cello with the school orchestra for three years. She plans to study pre-medicine at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

The award is named in the honor of former IHSAA assistant commissioner Mildred M. Ball, who served the association from 1977 until her retirement in 1997. It is presented to the outstanding senior participant in the state gymnastics meet who best demonstrates mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA's corporate partner, presented a \$1,000 scholarship to Merrillville High School in the name of Dyer.

Team Results

1. Homestead, 111.825
2. Lawrence Central, 111.075
3. Fort Wayne Bishop Dwenger, 110.600
4. Chesterton, 109.900
5. Merrillville, 109.450
6. Columbus East, 106.500
7. Columbus North, 105.025
8. Plainfield, 103.875

Individual Champions

All-Around -- Nicole Howe, sophomore, Columbus East, 38.425.

Uneven Bars -- Lauren West, sophomore, Chesterton, 9.6.

Balance Beam -- Nicole Howe, sophomore, Columbus East, 9.625.

Vault -- Meghan Peacock, senior, Lawrence Central, 9.85.

Floor Exercise -- Allyson Zipse, freshman, Homestead, 9.775.