Gymnastics championships here

By Paul J. Barry

Tomorrow the biggest athletic event of the year at MIT will take place, the New England Collegiate Gymnastics Championships. One hundred and seventeen gymnasts from thirteen schools will compete for individual and team awards. Preliminary competition runs from 11 am to 4:30 pm, with team and all round awards at 7 pm and final competition at 7:30 pm. It will take place in the Armory, and programs and refreshments will be available.

Admission is one dollar.

The meet will consist of the six individual gymnastic events, all around, and team competition in two divisions. Division I will include Springfield College, the University of Massachusetts, and Southern Connecticut State College. Division II will include Boston College, Dartmouth, New Hampshire, Bridgport, Plymouth State, Maine, and Harvard. (The order used above was random. It was a prediction of the finishing order.) The two divisions are entirely separate as far as scoring is concerned, but there will be both in the events at about the same time.

Because of the large number of competitors in the prelims, two events will be run simultaneously. Floor Exercise (the one where they run around gracefully) and Vaulting (handstands and stuff) and horizontal bar (the dangerous and exciting event) will take place at the same time.

The team competition will be decided during the prelims. This involves summing up the top three scores for each team on each event. Also, all the around titles will be decided by taking an individual's total score on all six events in the prelims. Trophies will be awarded in each division for the top three gymnasts and top five all around gymnasts.

The other function of the prelims is to provide the top five gymnasts in each division on each event for the finals. At night they will throw a second section on the event, and the combined score from the prelims and finals will determine the final placings. The top three will get trophies.

The finals are the most exciting and enjoyable part of the meet to watch. There is only one other aspect of the meet that may be interesting to some of the MIT community: the computer. The computer will then be able to provide averages, placings, all around and team scores as fast as they are needed on the floor.

One other aspect of the meet will be the team's best rebounder this year. As a matter of fact that they are being paid to play on the playing fields at MIT, not the school" sports attitude, where the approach to the pure "high school" setting is by a ball club around," remarked O'Brien about the nucleus of his varsity b-ball coach.

"Ray White is an excellent defensive ballplayer. He has great potential," O'Brien said of his one returning back court starter. He went on to explain that the lack of experience up front will force the Engineers to play the fast break and percentage basketball, running and shooting.

O'Brien has been with the Institute since 1969 as varsity b-ball coach as well as assistant basketball coach. His diamond squads have a combined 34-62 record. In addition, O'Brien is Associate Professor of Physical Education and supervisor of the recreational program for MIT's summertime Project Interphase.

When asked how he felt about athletics in general at MIT, O'Brien said that he felt himself part of the academic community. He is not in favor of athletic meritizing or athletic scholarships for the Institute, and he says that the lack of scholarship is the only approach to the pure "high school" setting.

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