MIT gymnasts shine in first season meets

By Catherine Rocchio

The MIT women's gymnastics team opened its season last Wednesday against one of the strongest teams in Division III, Bridgewater State. In spite of the strong individual performances by all team members, the young MIT team was overcome by the depth of the Bridgewater team; the final score was Bridgewater 134.85, MIT 118.10.

However, the talent of the MIT team shone through as they overwhelmingly defeated the US Coast Guard Academy and the City College of New York on their first away meet the following Saturday. MIT led off against Bridgewater State on vaulting with Rachel McCarthy '90 taking third place with a score of 8.05 and Allison Arnold '90 claiming second with a beautiful 1 1/2 twisting vault for a score of 8.2. Also turning in strong vaulting performances were Charlene Grant '90 and Anne Wandtke '91.

The uneven parallel bars again showed MIT's competitive edge as Arnold took first place with a bar routine that included two handsprings on the high bar for a score of 7.65. The last performance of the night was a dynamic floor exercise by McCarthy that included a full somersault, claiming second place for her and a score of 7.4.

On Saturday, the team travelled to New Haven to face the USCGA and the CCNY. Determined to show a good performance for the first away meet of the season, the MIT women never looked back until they had claimed practically all of the top places in every event. McCarthy, Arnold, and Grant took the second, third, and fourth places in the vaulting event with scores of 8.4, 8.0, and 7.35 respectively. Andy Pfeiffer '90 also turned in a strong performance with a clean handspring vault.

MIT continued its strong showing as Arnold, Catherine Rocchio '89, and McCarthy took the top three places in the uneven bars. McCarthy and Arnold showed their competitive experience in the balance beam event, taking first and second places. Debbie Ellingson '91 and Grant also contributed strong supporting routines. MIT completed its domination of the tournament on the floor exercise, as McCarthy took first place with a strong tumbling routine. Rocchio and Arnold each supported with graceful dances to tie up second and fifth place.

Overall, MIT soared to a huge margin of victory with the final MIT score being 110.95 over USCGA's 87.3 and CCNY's 69.0.

The MIT women are home today facing Rhode Island College, and both the men's and women's varsity teams will meet the University of Vermont at home this Saturday.

(Editor's note: Catherine Rocchio '89 is co-captain of the women's gymnastics team.)

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