

The Current Scene

news and views for young niagarans

Peter Jedicke fears to tread where girl gymnasts twist, bend

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The second term of the year is now virtually over for the community known as Westlane, with exams beginning late next week and continuing until the winter holiday.

The only thing different about this set of exams is the rather unique timetable, based on daily periods, instead of made up specially, which has been implemented for grades 9-12. Grade 13s have their exams organized differently altogether, in some terribly complicated fashion. I'm sure.

I hate to write about nasty things like exams, so will review some sporting activities that took place during the past few months which I haven't yet written about. To begin with: the girls' gymnastic team.

Gymnastics is another one of those strange sports where physical perfection of the body seems to be the ultimate goal. Those of you who may have seen Olympic-quality gymnasts perform probably have a greater comprehension than I have of this, for gymnastics is one of the most boring activities I can think of.

But 12 girls at Westlane (at least) obviously disagree strongly with me. These are the members of the girls' gymnastic team, which participated earlier today in the SOSSA Zone 111 Gymnastics Meet at Welland Centennial School. Westlane was entered in three areas of competition — floor, beam, and bars — in two levels — novice and intermediate. To prepare for this meet, the girls have been practising in the mornings between 8:15 and 8:45 for the past few weeks, busily preparing presentations for the judges. Since there is no "league" play, all their efforts were put on the line at the one particular instance.

ing about the Egyptian goddess, Nut, who, according to legend, has her feet at one end of the world and her hands at the other, arching her back clear across the sky. Like I say, gymnasts have got to be Nuts. How they do it, I may never figure out.

Members of this unusual team at the intermediate level are: Joanne Downey and Joanne McIntosh do floor exercises; Heather Pullan and Vanessa Pitre perform on the balance beam; and Marilyn Pullan and Ann Milne work on the uneven (?) parallel bars. The novice floor entries are Rhonda Sutherland and Robin Wilson, with Lynn Hall, Marg Walsh and Una

McKenna involved with the beam, and Sandy Chipman on the bars.

By the way, I hope Una got her gym suit fixed.

The basketball seasons are now over. Only our midgets are still in active competition. Both Westlane and Stamford had identical records, so a coin toss decided first place. How absurd! With Stamford-Westlane rivalry what it is, and our midgets most definitely the better team, we fans screamed for a playoff. The fact that Westlane won the toss does little to make me happy — I wanted one more very important game to cheer at.

I dropped in on a few of these early morning practices to see how the girls were doing. After one look at some of the things they try, I lost interest in trying it myself, as I did not too long ago with hockey and (yck!) wrestling. I can't see myself in those body stockings, either. But my point is that when such back-bending and head-spinning moves are attempted, my cowardice ran rampant. I get queasy just watching the flying leaps off the beam, or the intricate twists of the floor exercises, or the inverted dismount off the uneven (?) parallel bars. And can you believe it? — all these shenanigans are performed supposedly in time to music. It's just too bad about the music itself. Someone ought to buy Miss Meikle a new needle for her scratchy record player. And the song is some perverted pianist banging out the chords for The Impossible Dream to what sounds strikingly like a Bongo beat. The Last Song it isn't, I assure you.

To do this sort of thing well, a girl has to have certain talents. One of them is flexibility. I remember read-

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