

CAT SCRATCHES

May 2012
Vol. 14, #6

The Newsletter of The University of Arizona GymCats

Dear Friends, Alumni & Boosters,

April 7 As always, we were very pleased and honored to have taken the University of Arizona into the postseason. This time would be the 26th consecutive year. Only 36 teams now remain competing and the fight would be to be one of the final 12. We were the #3 seed in the West Regional hosted by the University of Washington. We would be joined by Alabama (1), LSU (2), Washington (4), Iowa (5), and Central Michigan (6). It would be a tough meet as the Regionals always are, but I really believe that this year's team has what it takes to advance on to the final competition. Of course, even a single error would derail any team's hopes so we had to focus and keep competing just as we had for the final meets in March. Our rotation would be Bye - Bars - Beam - Bye - Floor - Vault which would be great if we got through the first half without a fall.

We arrived at the workout in the competition arena full of confidence and ready to go. We were forced to leave Kristin back in Tucson for this meet so I would have to decide on a new floor line-up but I expected things to go pretty smooth. For the first three quarters of the workout, things went very well with no drama but vaulting gave us our usual difficulties as all of the vaulters struggled a bit to get things going. Actually, those types of problems had been pretty regular for us this season and we just focused on what we could adjust and relied on the belief that we would make more progress in the actual meet warm-up. All-in-all, things went well and we were ready for the meet.

During warm-up on meet day, everything went as expected on bars, beam and floor. Vault on the other hand, really didn't get much better from the previous day. This was the first time I really had to just go with my gut on who should compete and hope I was right. But after our first bye, we marched to bars ready to finally compete after a long 2 weeks. The bar line-up was the standard line-up we had used at the end of the season: Britnie, Allie, Molly, Becca, Aubree, and Katie. Britnie did a great job handling the pressure of getting us off strong as she hit for a 9.7. Unfortunately, it didn't go that well for Allie. Whether it was nerves or adrenaline, she missed her release move and finished for a 9.025. I wasn't expecting this and reminded the remaining four athletes to just ignore the situation and swing like always. Molly did just that as she hit a great set that received a conservative 9.775. Next up was Becca and a routine that none of us will forget. As she went to mount the bars, Becca missed placing her hands on the low bar and tumbled to the ground. She was unhurt but the same couldn't be said for our event score. She finished her

routine quite well but her 8.975 stung. Aubree and Katie both hit their routines for a 9.775 and 9.825 respectively to finish our rotation. With an event score of 48.1, I pulled the team aside and we came together as group to not feel self-pity, but to rise to the occasion and see what we could do in the remaining three events.

Beam was up immediately so it would be a real test of the character of this team. I honestly believed we would run the table because that was what this team had done all year. The beam line-up was our usual: Allie, Jordan, Aubree, Britnie, Molly, and Katie. Allie of course, had just fallen but mounted the beam with the resolve of someone other than a freshman. She did a fine job of redeeming herself and scored a 9.7. Jordan then stepped up had hit her first routine of the day for a 9.675 and Aubree then hit for her second 9.775. Britnie then hit a really great set for a 9.8 and we were rolling. Molly hit another great set for a 9.825 and Katie finished up our beam work with a sensational 9.9. Our event score was a 49.0 and a great comeback from the disappointment of bars. We were back feeling like ourselves and we marched to the locker room to wait until our floor rotation.

After watching 2 weeks of training and especially the 2 days in Seattle, I decided to insert Mykle in the floor line-up and the order would be: Allie, Mykle, Molly, Becca, Katie, and Aubree. Allie once again did a fine job leading off and scored another 9.7 to get us started. Mykle hit her routine but stepped out of bounds on her first pass and received a 9.55. Molly came back with a good routine and a 9.725. Becca was up next and had a ferocity in her expression the let everyone know that she was not letting the bar routine affect her. She hit one of her best floor routines of the season for a 9.85. Katie came up next and hit for a 9.75. Aubree then hit our last floor routine and received our second 9.85. Floor had been scored very tightly all meet and I was pretty pleased with the scores we were able to muster. Our event score was a 48.875 and we prepared for our last event of the meet.

After both days of workout, I decided on the line-up of: Shana, Molly, Amber, Mykle, Jordan, and Aubree. Shana did a fine job getting us going as she received a 9.7 for her vault. Molly stepped up next and finished off her meet with a 9.725. Amber then stepped up and saluted. Amber had not had a good previous 2 days and I was hoping that she would forget it all and just do what came naturally. I couldn't have been more pleased when she hit a really great vault, by far the best vault in days for her, for a 9.775. The team was now very excited and it was just a matter of finishing up with the final three performances. Mykle saluted next and hit a great vault for a 9.85. Jordan then hit her best vault of the season for a 9.9 and Aubree closed out our meet with a great vault and a 9.85. Our event score was a 49.175 and I was very proud of how the team had comeback after the rough start.

This meet was very bittersweet. I was not expecting at all to count a fall in this meet. This team had competed so well all year and we had counted a fall on bars on once during the entire season (the debacle in Tempe). When the final results were announced, we had finished 4th behind Alabama, LSU, Washington, and in front of Iowa and Central Michigan. Our team score was a 195.075. It was unfortunate but there was nothing we could do. We were all a little distraught but individually we had done well so that lessened the sting. Aubree had had a good meet and she ended up 3rd in the All-Around, tied for 5th on Vault and tied for 3rd on Floor. Jordan finished tied for 2nd and Mykle tied for 5th on Vault. Molly tied for 5th and Katie tied for the victory on Beam.

And Becca had tied with Aubree for 3rd on Floor. With these results, both Aubree and Katie advance on to the National Championships in Duluth, GA but the rub was that Jordan and Becca both missed by .025.

As a team, it was a rough way to finish our year. This was certainly the best team that we have had in the past few years and they had fought and competed so hard this year that I personally, am not ready to stop competing with them. Our RQS on bars was over a 49 and had we just scored our RQS, we would have advanced. That will haunt me for a while. Our record was 18-8. If you told me that we would lose Deanna and barely have Kristin and still do as well as we did, I probably would not have believed you. But putting that all behind, I am exceptionally proud and excited that both Aubree and Katie will take the Arizona name into nationals. I know they will represent the program and the university with class and first-class performances. They have both been ranked nationally all year and certainly deserve to compete among the best. On to Georgia...

Arizona @ NCAA Regionals					
	Bars	Beam	Floor	Vault	AA
Becca	8.975		9.85		
Aubree	9.775	9.775	9.85	9.85	39.25
Mykle			9.55	9.85	
Allie	9.025	9.7	9.7		
Britnie	9.7	9.8			
Katie	9.825	9.9	9.75		
Ellen					
Molly	9.775	9.825	9.725	9.725	39.05
Shana				9.7	
Jordan		9.675		9.9	
Amber				9.775	

April 20 After a very early morning flight on Wednesday, we arrived in Duluth, GA for the NCAA Championships. Both Aubree and Katie had trained well over the previous week and a half and we were all confident of a good meet. Aubree would rotate with Utah and her rotation would be: Floor, Vault, Bye, Bars, Beam, Bye. Katie would be competing in the third rotation on Beam following the LSU team. Practice day went very well and all looked good for Friday and the competition.

Katie was just going to rotate with Aubree and Utah until it was time for her to compete. Utah was very welcoming to both girls which I very much appreciate. It can sometimes be a little intimidating to be out there without your team. There truly can be strength in numbers. Starting off on floor, Aubree hit a good routine. She had a few tiny mistakes but overall a good set. She received a 9.825 from the judges. Moving to vault, Utah hit one of the best rounds of vaults we had ever seen in a rotation. Aubree had been vaulting extremely well in workout and it just a matter of translating to the meet. Aubree's competition vault was also very good. She took a hop on the landing and received a 9.8. On the bye, we all rotated over to the beam for Katie's routine. Since Regionals, she had put back in extra difficulty that we had taken out in the regular season for consistency. For this meet it was an "All-

In” mentality. Katie had seemingly been ready for this moment for weeks. She stepped up and hit a great set and scored a 9.9. Great job. Now it was a rush back to bars for Aubree’s third event. On bars, Aubree had also been great in training. In the meet though, she came up short on her giant $1\frac{1}{1}$ and had to improvise with a giant $\frac{1}{2}$ but then continued and hit the rest of her routine. Her quick ability to adjust allowed her to salvage a score of 9.6. Pretty good all things considered. She quickly put it behind her. When it was her turn, Aubree rose to the occasion and hit a great routine for her best score of the meet, a 9.85. Aubree’s and Katie’s meet was over and Aubree’s All-Around was a 39.075.

When the results were finalized for our session, Katie had finished tied for second on beam. This meant she would compete on Sunday in the Individual Event Finals as well as earning the honor of being named 1st Team All-American. Aubree had finished 13th in the All-Around. Both of them had done a great job and represented the university and our program with honor. I am very proud of both of them.

April 22 The last time we had an athlete in the individual finals was 2007 when Karin Wurm qualified on floor. Of course, we were all very excited that Katie had qualified this year. She certainly deserved it, getting there the “hard” way. She had to win the Regional, and then had to outscore almost everyone in her session without the support of a team. She had done a great job so far and if the story ended here, it would have been a great one. But wait, there was still one more routine and I was very confident that she would show herself well and make us all very proud. After a very relaxed open warm-up and a pretty good Vault and Bars finals, it was time for Beam and Floor. Katie was up 10th so she would be up 4th in the second flight, a very good draw. The first six routines were all very good, the lowest score being a 9.85. It was an exciting time but also calming time as her turn grew close. When it was Katie’s time to salute, it was like a flashback of all of her 4 years came to mind. And this was what it was all for. And just like she had so many times with that huge smile, she attacked the event, hit an incredible set, and received a huge applause from the entire arena. She had made many fans with her unique style of beam. When the score came up, we were all very pleased – a 9.8875. And after all was said and done, she finished a well deserved 3rd place on Beam at the NCAA Championships. So not only is she our newest All-American, she was also our newest NCAA Medalist.

It was such a great site to see Katie up on the awards stand. Aubree and Katie had represented the program in such a great way that simple words cannot say how proud of them I am. For Aubree, a taste of what I know will be a repeat trip next year (hopefully with everyone else). She will take this experience and use it to have a fantastic senior campaign. And for Katie, the script just got better as she finishes her career with a dream year. I am not letting her get away though as she will become part of the staff next season. All in all, a great weekend and a great last meet.



And then... We returned to Tucson immediately that evening after finals. Aubree and Katie had a lot of school work to catch up on and the annual C.A.T.S. Banquet was the following evening. It turned out to be another great night for the program.

Britnie was honored for her work on the SAAC committee. She was also honored as a Golden Eagle Academic Champion for her 4.0 GPA over last year. Even though she will roll her eyes at me: Way to go Brit! Next, Becca was honored as having single-handedly performed more community service hours than any other athlete in the department: over 130 hours. Way to go Bec! Then, the team won the Directors Cup for Community Service. This was the 7th year in a row and the 8th year overall. This is an award that the team totally takes on themselves as their own goal. They do the work, the organization, everything. I have very little to nothing to do with it. Not a single workout or weight session is ever missed or compromised. I know the team was sweating it out this year as so many teams in the department do such a great job at giving back to the community. So congrats to the team, they earned it.

And finally, in a very exciting and unexpected announcement, Katie was the co-recipient of this year's Ruby Award. This is the highest honor the department bestows on a female athlete here at the U of A and it is obviously huge. We have had only two other gymnasts nominated (Heidi Hornbeek & Karin Wurm) and had only one other winner (Heidi). I am very proud that another member of our program has been recognized in this way.

The Newest GymCat While our post season was going on, the fact that we are always building for the future never escapes us. I am very happy to announce that we have completed our freshman class for next year with the addition of Krishna Yemany from Toronto, Ontario. Krishna is a Senior High Performance athlete in Canada and will bring a lot of high level ability to the team. In addition to Shelby Edwards, Jessie Sisler, and Lexi Mills, I expect this to be a very formidable and potent freshman class that will have a big impact next year.



Finally I really am proud of this team. It was a very good team and we had a very good year. Our final record was 18-8. We even had a very good Regional meet, we just had a bad 2 ½ minutes. As a coach, maybe the losses always linger longer than the successes but I am determined to try and not let that be the case with this season. We obviously had our fair share of individual honors. I want to thank all of you who faithfully support the team and please know that the athletes appreciate you more than you will probably ever know. Have a great summer and we will see you next year!

Awards & Honors

Aubree Cristello	Pac-12 Gymnast of the Week for March 16
Aubree Cristello	1 st Team All- Conference – All-Around
Katie Matusik	1 st Team All-Conference – Balance Beam
Molly Quirk	2 nd Team All-Conference – All-Around
Shana Sangston	1 st Team Academic All-Conference
Britnie Jones	2 nd Team Academic All-Conference
Aubree Cristello	2 nd Team Academic All-Conference
Molly Quirk	Academic All-Conference Honorable Mention
Becca Cardenas	Academic All-Conference Honorable Mention
Jordan Williams	Academic All-Conference Honorable Mention
Jordan Williams	2 nd Place Vault – NCAA Regionals
Mykle Douglas	5 th Place Vault – NCAA Regionals
Aubree Cristello	5 th Place Vault – NCAA Regionals
Katie Matusik	1 st Place Beam – NCAA Regionals
Molly Quirk	5 th Place Beam – NCAA Regionals
Becca Cardenas	3 rd Place Floor – NCAA Regionals
Aubree Cristello	3 rd Place Floor – NCAA Regionals
Aubree Cristello	3 rd Place All-Around – NCAA Regionals
Katie Matusik	1 st Team All-American – Balance Beam
Katie Matusik	3 rd Place Balance Beam – NCAA Championships
Katie Matusik	University of Arizona Ruby Award
Becca Cardenas	Scholastic All-American
Aubree Cristello	Scholastic All-American
Barbara Donaldson	Scholastic All-American
Britnie Jones	Scholastic All-American

Katie Matusik

Scholastic All-American

Shana Sangston

Scholastic All-American

Incoming GymCats One of our incoming freshman for next year, Shelby Edwards had a very good showing at the USAG JO National Championships. Even though she was dealing with an injury that prevented her training to her fullest, she managed to win the national title in vault. She also finished 4th on beam and 8th in the all-around (counting a fall). She certainly had a great season this past year and I know the GymCat faithful will really enjoy cheering on Shelby and the rest of our newest family members next year!

Alumni Sightings **Becky (Bowers) Greene** and her family stopped by the gym to say hello. She had not been back on campus for a while and she looks great. She is expecting her fourth child in the fall. **Jessica (Marshall) Hart** and **Alli (Hay) Coker** were both in Seattle to watch the team compete. Jessica's family is doing well and Alli is expecting her first child. We ran into **Nikki Beyschau** at the USAG JO National Championships where she was coaching her athletes.

Boosters I want to thank everyone who has donated to the program already this year. It really means a great deal to a program such as ours. If you haven't signed up yet, there is still time. You can print out the flyer off of our Facebook page and mail it in. Thank you in advance to those who have already sent in a pledge and those who are intending to in the near future.

Cyberspace Hopefully you have been keeping up with the team via our Facebook page (**University of Arizona Gymnastics**) and Official website (www.arizonawildcats.com/gymnastics). Valery Meusburger (our SID) has been able to send real time tweets via Twitter (**AZGymnastics**) during our meets. And remember, if you can't come to the meets, we webcast the meet live.

As always, the newsletter will be on our main website. The archives of the old newsletters reside at (www.u.arizona.edu/~ryden/gym.html). An entire segment of GymCat supporters receive this newsletter electronically. Please contact me if you would like to be put on that list.

Until Next Year...

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the final "l".



2013 SCHEDULE

<u>DAY/DATE</u>	<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>SITE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
SUN / JAN 6	CALIFORNIA	BERKELEY, CA	TBD
FRI / JAN 11	STANFORD ILLINOIS SAN JOSE ST.	TUCSON*	7:00 PM
SAT / JAN 19	TEXAS WOMAN'S BYU	DENTON, TX	TBD
FRI / JAN 25	UTAH	TUCSON*	7:00 PM
FRI / FEB 1	WASHINGTON	SEATTLE, WA	7:00 PM
FRI / FEB 8	CHICAGO STYLE ARIZONA PITTSBURGH TEXAS WOMAN'S ILLINOIS ST.	CHICAGO, IL	7:00 PM
FRI / FEB 15	NEBRASKA	TUCSON*	7:00 PM
FRI / FEB 22	OREGON ST.	CORVALLIS, OR	7:00 PM
FRI / MAR 1	ASU	TUCSON*	7:00 PM
FRI / MAR 8	OKLAHOMA	NORMAN, OK	7:00 PM
FRI / MAR 15	MISSOURI	TUCSON*	7:00 PM
SAT / MAR 23	PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIPS	CORVALLIS, OR	TBD
SAT / APR 6	NCAA REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	TBA	6:00 PM
FRI – SUN / APR 20-22	NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS	LOS ANGELES, CA	1:00 / 7:00

**All Home Meets in McKale Center*