

Extreme Gymnastics School Stacks Up At State Championship Competition

Seventh Overall Out of 52 Schools

Extreme Gymnastics of Cedar Run announced last week that two of its students took top spots at the Jersey Optional Gymnastics Association's annual state championship meet earlier this month.

Thirteen-year-old Rachel Franz of Lanoka Harbor and 9-year-old Gabby Conforti of Manahawkin won three first-place state championship titles, Franz in uneven bars and all-around, Conforti in vault. The school itself finished seventh out of 52 competing New Jersey gymnastics schools.

Each year the Garden State's top gymnasts face off at the Edison-based JOGA's three-day competition. This year more than 360 athletes from more than 50 schools participated.

Representing Extreme were eight local gymnasts, competing for Levels 5 and 6 teams. Seven of those eight girls placed on the podium, earning a combined total of 13 "Top 9" medals, plus three first-place medals.

On the Level 6 team, Conforti earned three career-high scores, in the all-around, floor and balance beam. Her state championship win was in the vault. Also competing on the Level 6 squad were Meg Lucas, Gabriella Deo and Laura Thoms, accounting for three "Top 9" medals and three personal bests.

Franz, the school's top scorer at Level 5, came to states with a lot of focus and determination after an injury ruined her season last year. She won two state championships for bars and all-around, with a team high total score of 31.675. She also took fifth and second place honors respectively for her vault and floor routines.

The Level 5 team placed seventh overall, thanks to the contributing scores of Kelsey Hemenway, Olivia Lattanzi and Allina Dev-



Supplied Photographs

GIRL POWER: (Above) Rachel Franz, 13, of Lanoka Harbor and Gabby Conforti, 9, of Manahawkin, are first-place finishers. Franz defied the odds by rebounding from a back injury last year that might have ended her gymnastics career.

ane, who added three more Top 9 awards.

With the achievements of Conforti and Franz at this year's JOGA competition, Extreme owner and head coach Kim Lisowski has now coached 50 state champions in her career. Lisowski also sits on the JOGA board as coaches' representative. —V.L.

