

King crowned gymnastics champion



Broadmoor Elementary School fifth-grader Olivia King recently captured an all-around gymnastics state championship. King, a level 7 gymnast, has qualified for the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic regional meet in May.

Photos courtesy of Pixel Perfect-Photography

By day, Olivia King is just a normal fifth-grader at Broadmoor Elementary School, but by night, she is something different.

Olivia spends her evenings, not at home like a lot of other kids her age, but at Diamond Academy, where she practices with her gymnastics teammates. It is there the 11-year-old spends 19 hours a week working hard on her craft.

Whether it be the bars, balance beam, floor exercise or the vault, Olivia seems to do it all and she does it well.

“I wouldn’t be able to function without gymnastics,” Olivia said. “It does get tiring especially when I have homework to do when I get home, but my teachers have always been very supportive of my schedule. I wouldn’t change a thing, I look forward to going to practice every day.”

All the practice seemed to pay off in late March when she competed in the Kansas State Championships in Overland Park.

It was there where Olivia was crowned an all-around state champion as a USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic level 7 gymnast. Her score of 37.9 earned top marks and she was also strong in the individual events.

She won the floor exercise with a score of 9.675 and then finished runner up on the balance beam (9.65), bars (9.3) and vault (9.275).



Louisburg's Olivia King goes through her routine on the bars during the March 27 state championship in Overland Park.

“I was really excited that I won,” Olivia said. “I knew I had some really tough competition. I was watching the scores of my top competitor and on my last event, I knew what score I needed to win. It was a goal of mine to win state.”

Olivia will now compete in the Region 3 meet that consists of qualifiers from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arkansas and Wyoming. The meet will be held May 1 to 3 in Estes Park, Colo.

The meet in May will just be another step in what has been a successful season as a level 7 gymnast.

In her first meet of the year, Olivia competed in the Kansas Judges Cup and won the all-around competition with a 37.75. The top six all-around scores from all age groups in level 7 were selected to represent Team Kansas at the National Judges Cup in Montgomery, Ala., and Olivia was the top qualifier for nationals.

She traveled to the Buckeye Classic in Columbus, Ohio, and was second in the all-around competition and also took first place on the balance beam. Olivia and her family also made trips to San Diego for the California Classic and the SuperStar Meet in Oklahoma, where she finished third in the all-around competitions. She also won the floor exercise at SuperStar with a 9.8.

Olivia would then go on to become an all-around champion at the Diamond Jewels Invitational and the Pink Ribbon Classic.

All those meets have prepared her for what is to come in May at the regional competition.

“My goal is to win,” she said. “It is a great accomplishment to qualify for regionals and I’m very excited to compete. I know it will be tough with the best of Texas and Oklahoma being there as those states are like the powerhouse of gymnastics, but I figure if I’m going to go, I might as well

try to win it.”