

Lady Lions putting house in order for new season

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series previewing the 1980-81 women's gymnastics team.

By SHARON FINK
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Marshall Aveners uses a lot of metaphors when he talks. And one which the assistant coach of the women's gymnastics team has used likened the development of the 1980-81 Lady Lions to a house.

"We've spent more time on the foundation this year," he said. "So if you looked at our house right now, you probably wouldn't want to live in it. But if we can get the house built in time, we hope it'll be sturdy and won't fall down by the end of the season."

Head coach Judi Aveners, Marshall's wife, added to the image.

"We've really built a very solid, strong framework," she said emphatically. "But consequently we're in a skeleton situation right now. We've taken a little bit of a different tactic this year—we've delayed final preparations for the first meet until the last minute."

"We took three months of the preseason to work on fundamental skills and to try to better all our leopards and progressions and stuff like that. We've been working on our tricks up until now and leave our routine readiness to the very end," Marshall elaborated.

"Winter's closing in, and we have no room on yet," Marshall elaborated.

"I think it might cost us a little bit of something," Judi concluded. "But I think if we can put the house together, it's gonna stand up."

But whether it will stand on the top level of the winners' podium at the 1981 Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women national championships in April—in the person of the 10 gymnasts that are the defending national champion Lady Lions—is a question in only the very backs of their minds as the team prepares to open its season Saturday at Clarion State College.

The one thing the Aveners and the team are not doing is stressing trying to repeat as national champions for the second consecutive year. The team is fairly young and inexperienced, with three freshmen and two sophomores, and it did lose three of the best performers in Penn State women's gymnastics history, including Ann Carr, the most successful female gymnast ever to compete for the Lady Lions, to graduation.

"The team will have a whole new look," Marshall said. "The new personality of the team is definitely the major factor this year. We have a one-third turnover in personnel."

"Because the seniors of last year accounted for a large part of the scoring, they left a big hole in the lineup that will have to be filled. Whether it will be freshmen, I don't know. We'll see."

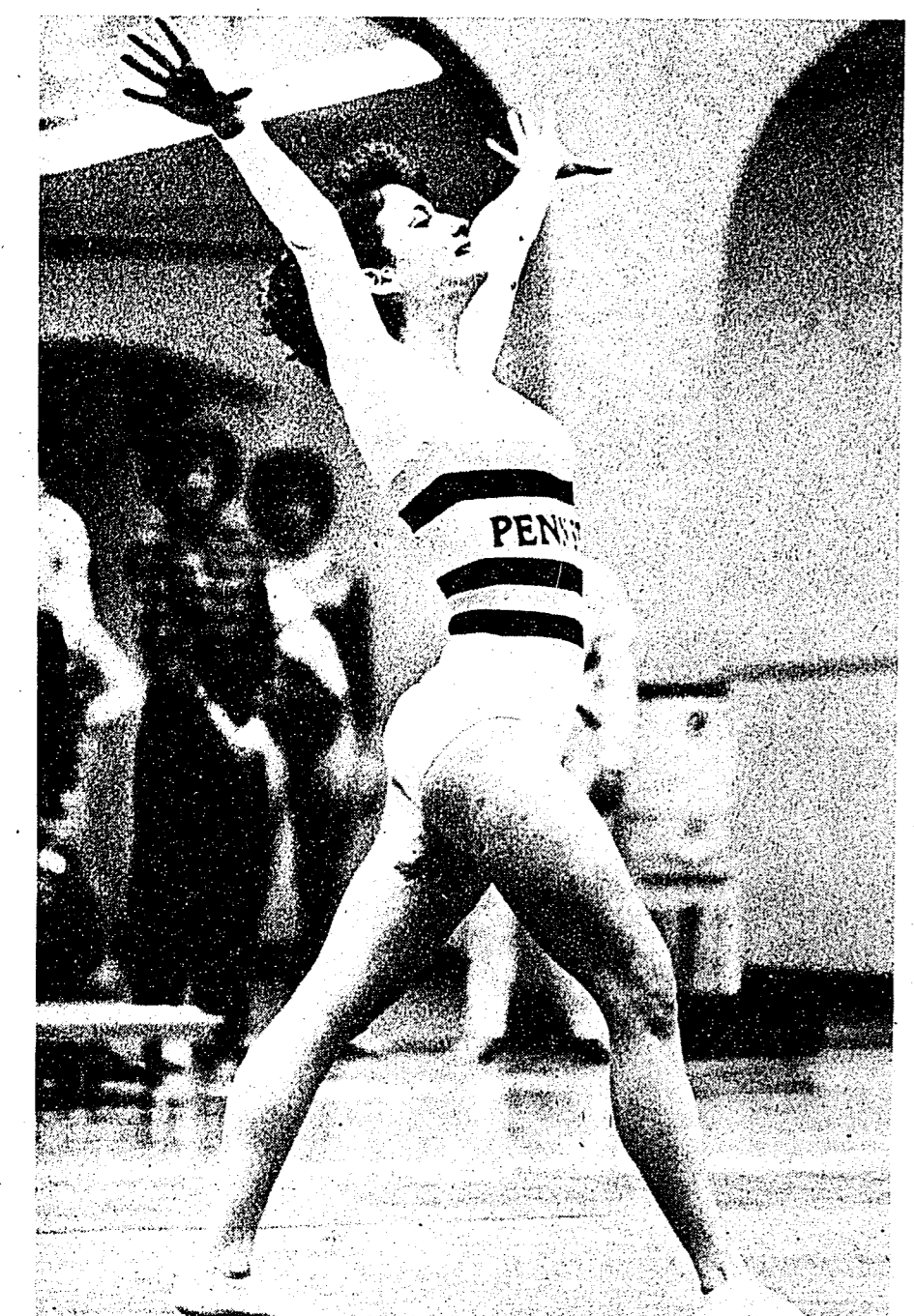
But the credentials of the freshmen are impressive and they're loaded with talent. Also, the returning experience is solid with two returning All-Americans and three seniors, and the desire and determination are there.

But for right now the goal is maintaining a healthy team and building that solid foundation.

"We're strong," junior Marcy Levine said. "We've lost weight, and we've worked really hard. We've stayed healthy. We've had some problems with weight and sickness, but most important, we got strength."

And senior captain Pat Spisak said compared to other years, this year's team has developed at a faster pace.

"Right now, compared to other years, we're ahead of schedule," she said.



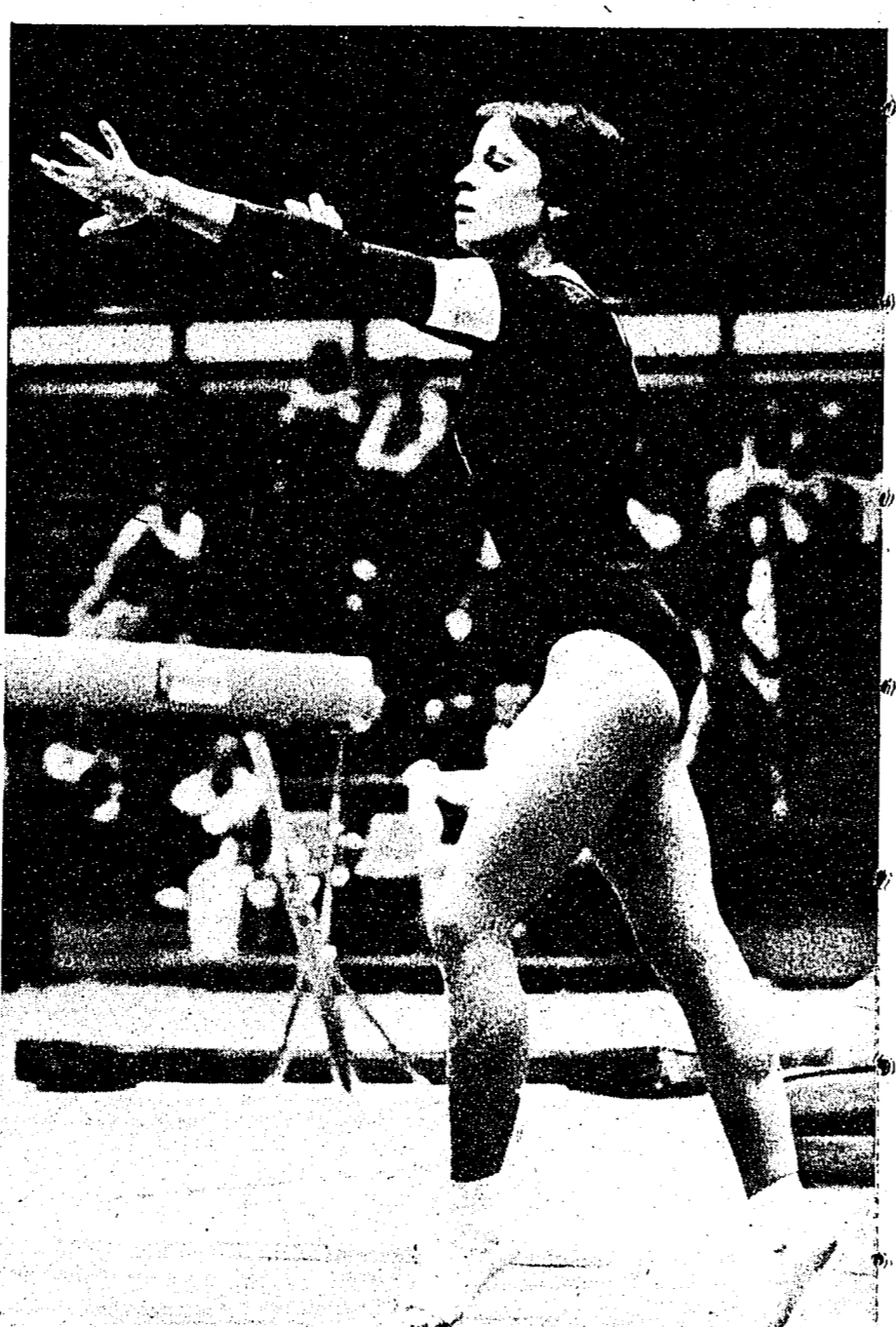
Marcy Levine, All-American last year in floor exercise and all-around, will be joined by...

Statistical Service for Women's Gymnastics ranked the Lady Lions second in the country behind Utah, the second place finisher at last year's nationals. But Marshall said the team didn't even care enough to tear up the polls before it threw them on the floor—that's how much attention the Lady Lions payed to them.

But that's just one more thing that will make this season interesting and challenging for the Lady Lions.

"We have a lot of unknowns and a very tough schedule," Marshall said. "It's the type of year, if we play our cards very right, if the girls really adopt a good, professional attitude and if we get every bit of our share of luck, we could get through the season very well."

"On the other hand, it won't take much for us to fall off that tightrope that we're on. The last thing any team can guarantee is victory, but I can guarantee a heckuva good fight. They're a proud bunch, and they love competing for Penn State."



Margie Foster, All-American last year in all-around, floor exercise and bars, in an attempt to defend the Lady Lions' national championship.

DePaul still No. 1 in cage poll

NEW YORK (AP) — DePaul, Kentucky, UCLA and Maryland retained the top four spots in The Associated Press college basketball poll yesterday.

DePaul, which rolled to easy victories over Gonzaga and Santa Clara last week, collected 32 of 58 first place votes from a nationwide panel of sports writers and broadcasters. The Blue Demons, 3-0, received 1,128 points by 24 points for the nation's top spot.

UCLA (4) 1,062
Kentucky (2) 967
Maryland (1) 851
Oregon State (1) 847
Indiana (1) 789
Ohio State 627
Notre Dame 539
North Carolina 527
Louisiana State 459
Texas A&M 449
Wake Forest 439
Missouri 398
Arizona State 385
Iowa 382
Arkansas 323
Michigan 322
Brigham Young 281
Syracuse 241

Indiana slipped to No. 7 with 769 points, while Ohio State, Notre Dame and North Carolina rounded out the Top 10. The Buckeyes collected 621 points in the balloting. The Irish, who were ranked 13th last week, received 539 points — 12 more than the Tar Heels, who also were ranked 10th last week, but were surprised by Wake Forest in the finals of the Big Four tournament last weekend.

But the biggest surprise continued to be the slumping Cardinals of Louisville, who dropped to 0-3 — and out of the Top 20 — following its most recent losses to Tulsa and Oklahoma State.

Louisiana State headed the Second 10 and was followed by Texas A&M, Wake Forest, Missouri, Arizona State, Iowa, Arkansas, Michigan, Brigham Young, and Syracuse.

Ramsay top attraction at squash clinic

Gail Ramsay, four-time national women's collegiate squash champion, will lend instruction and compete in the Penn State Squash Clinic from 2 to 4 p.m. today at White Building.

The clinic, held in Room 133, features an hour of instruction and will be followed by three matches on the squash courts. It was coordinated by Dick Penck, assistant professor in physical education.

Ramsay, a University graduate and currently the sixth-ranked female squash player in the world, will demonstrate strategies involved in serving and returning serves.

State and regional competitors Dave Miller and Jody Landis will also demonstrate shot positioning, the volley and half-volley.

Penck said those attending will be able to ask questions and make comments during that portion of the clinic.

"It's a good opportunity for people to pick up some information on the sport while, in Gail Ramsay, getting a chance to see one of the best women in the world compete," he said.

After the instructional hour, Ramsay will play Miller, who Penck called "one of the best players on campus."

"I imagine a lot of people have heard of Gail and what she's accomplished, but I don't think many have actually seen her play," Penck said. "The clinic will be able to see her play under conditions where she's really going to have to work."

Aside from the Ramsay-Miller match, Landis will go against Tom Sonni, president of Penn State Squash Club, and Bart Browning, faculty advisor of the squash club will play Roy Otawo.

—By Justin Catanoso

Top twenty

The Top Twenty teams in the Associated Press college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, this season's records and total points.

20-18-1 (1-0-0) 1,128
1. DePaul (22)
2. Kentucky (20)
3. UCLA (4)
4. Maryland (1)
5. Oregon State (1)
6. Virginia (1)
7. Indiana (1)
8. Ohio State
9. Notre Dame
10. North Carolina
11. Louisiana State
12. Texas A&M
13. Wake Forest
14. Missouri
15. Arizona State
16. Iowa
17. Arkansas
18. Michigan
19. Brigham Young
20. Syracuse

the daily scoreboard

NFL American Conference East, West, Central, National Conference East, West, Central, Thursday's Games, Sunday's Games, NBA Eastern Conference Atlantic Division, Midwest Division, Pacific Division, Western Conference Midwest Division, Pacific Division, Sunday's Games, IM racquetball, Entries for women's intramural racquetball and squash tournaments will be accepted today and tomorrow from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and on Thursday until noon. Entries should be submitted in Room 4, IM Building. All undergraduate and graduate students as well as University personnel are eligible to participate.

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