

## **Top Talent come together for annual Gymnastics Championships**

The best of local talent in gymnastics gathered in the recently extended Ellan Vannin Gym Club on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October for the annual IOM Championships. Competitors were required to compete on all four apparatus, showing a range of tumbles and twists and elements of flexibility so the day was set to be an exciting event.

The morning started with the Novice competitions which brought together a large number of our youngest gymnasts on the Island. Some real growing talent was seen in this group as the elements performed showed flexibility and key basic moves. The title of IOM Champion Pre Novice eventually went to Ciara Bell of EVGC who delivered a great performance throughout.

Next up was the Junior Novice competition, which also saw a good turnout. These young gymnasts showed some additional moves of growing difficulty and provided a good show for the audience. The competition was fairly tight in this group but the skills and performance of India Trimble from MGCE secured her the title of IOM Champion for this category with the Silver overall medal jointly picked up by Enya Beattie also of MGCE and Rachel Palmer of EVGC..

Displaying some additional artistic flare of more difficult flicks and elements of flexibility, the competitors of the Senior Novice competition provided further thrills. Having led on Vault and Bars, Hannah Darnhill of MGCE went on to take the Championship title for this category, with Amber Sibbald of MGCE taking the overall Silver medal and Olivia Dale-Beeton of EVGC finishing in overall Bronze position.

The Intermediate Championship showed a range of talent as the gymnasts were required to perform more difficult elements on Bars and a range of Floor twists and tumbles and increased acrobatic elements on Beam. Holding on to her title for 2010, Ciara Wilders of EVGC went on to take the Championship title again this year having delivered a steady performance on all four pieces. Not far behind in her finishing score was Lauren Kerruish of MGCE who performed particularly well on Beam and Floor, and finished in Silver position overall, followed by Iona Cheetham of EVGC taking the overall Bronze medal after delivering the top performance on Bars.

The afternoon's event saw the Performance gymnasts of the Island take part in the full IOM Championships. The 9 and under category involved the top four local talents compete for the title, each displaying the required elements of this level and delivering top quality routines. After a close competition, the event was won by Madison Nicol of EVGC, who was crowned IOM Champion, having achieved the top score on Bars, Beam and Floor, followed by a close Silver position going to Eve Wilcher of MGCE who led on Vault and took silver on the remaining three pieces. Ella Keynon of MGCE delivered a steady performance throughout the competition to take the overall Bronze medal position.

The next age group continued to increase the quality and standard of gymnastics, as the Girls 11 and under category provided further thrills in the delivery of more difficult elements on all four pieces. This level of gymnastics begins to see our gymnasts linking rotations on Floor and aerial moves on Beam. Chloe Donnelly performed tidy and quality performances all round and took the overall title of IOM Champion. Sinead Hands of EVGC followed to take the overall Silver position, having achieved the individual Gold on Floor and Chloe Macdonald also of EVGC taking the Bronze, just 0.5 behind her fellow gymnast after a Gold on Beam.

With a number of injuries amongst the gymnasts in the Girls 13 and under competition, and with the absence of last year's Champion Tara Donnelly, who was unable to compete due to

injury, the title could have gone to a number of the competitors. In the end, the top performance and difficulty factor of the moves performed by Kaitlin Kneen was enough to secure her the overall title of IOM Champion for this age group, after achieving joint first on Vault, and individual Gold on Bars and Floor. Having delivered equally thrilling moves and a quality performance on the day, Emily Dale-Beeton also of EVGC went on to take the Silver medal overall, having also achieved joint Gold on Vault and the individual Gold on Beam. Ciara Goddard of MGCE secured the Bronze medal overall having achieved the individual bronze medals on three of the apparatus.

Working to the same FIG code were the competitors of the Girls 15 and under competition, all of MGCE. They too performed some high level moves and challenged each other strongly on each piece. Rebecca Johnson did manage to maintain focus and deliver her routines to take the top spot and the Championship title for the second year running with Holly Black delivering a steady performance throughout and in particular leading on Beam to take Silver overall followed by Nicol Burns finishing in overall Bronze position, after achieving top spot on Floor.

The final competition of the day involved the Girls over 15 and saw two of the Islands senior gymnasts compete for the top spot. Rhyanne Hancock of EVGC and Grace Harrison of MGCE battled neck and neck throughout the competition, each achieving Gold on two of the pieces. In the end, her performance on Beam was enough to give Grace the extra point or so needed to finish in the top spot and award her the Championship title, with Rhyanne taking the overall Silver position in this event.

The highlight of the Girls' Championships are the overall titles awarded to the top scorers of the competition from age 13 upwards. Emily Dale-Beeton took the Women's Beam Championship title having achieved the highest score on this piece and jointly shared the Vault Championship title with Kaitlin Kneen, having both received a score of 12.9. The day did however belong to Kaitlin in the end who went on to clinch the Women's Championship titles on Bars and Floor and finally the overall Women's Championship title, having delivered a great performance overall and achieving the top score of the day.

Well done to all the competitors on the day. Many thanks go to Margaret Kelly of the CGA and Jon Burgess and Martin Barnett of Zurich International Life, sponsors of the sport on the IOM, who presented the awards on the day .