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*Grand Traverse Bay*

# GYMNASTICS

Northern Michigan's Premiere Gymnastics Center

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## News Release

submitted by  
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## GALTON, WISNIEWSKI WIN NATIONALS!

(Kissimmee, FL) When Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics coach Jennifer Van Deirse saw one of the top rated competitors in the nation fall on bars, she whispered to her protégé, Olyvia Galton, "There's your open door, Via." Galton responded, "I know."

The first-year Level 9 gymnast backed up her words the same way she had done all season long – with a strong, steady, consistent performance. At nationals, however, she also needed some alert coaching combined with the final event performance of her life.

"Via" had qualified for nationals by winning her five-state regional championship all-around without capturing either gold or silver medals on any individual event. Strong, steady, consistent scoring on all four of the USA Gymnastics Women's JO (Junior Olympic) events was enough to earn her regional all-around gold. That, and more, would be needed to win all-around gold at nationals.

Galton's road to gold was not without drama. The day began for the Leland tenth grader with a 17<sup>th</sup>-place vault score of 9.175. Her "open door" came on bars, where she scored a 9.475, good enough for fifth-place on that event, but still well off the all-around medal pace.

And then came beam. And then came the drama.

Galton stuck a beautiful, strong beam routine which flashed on the screen as a 9.450 when coaches Jennifer and Gina Van Deirse noticed a quirk from the four-judge panel. Two of the judges mistakenly awarded a start value of 9.90, while the other two judges correctly recorded Galton's beam start value as 10.0. The coaches quickly petitioned the meet referee, who then helped file an official inquiry form. According to the meet referee, the mistaken judges claimed, "As soon as the next girl saluted [the official start of a routine], we knew we'd made a mistake," but without an official inquiry, they could do nothing about it at that time.

Following the inquiry, the correction came swiftly, and Galton's beam score was increased by five one-hundredths of a point. Half of a tenth is a miniscule amount, but one that was to make all the difference. Galton finished with a second-place silver medal for her floor routine.

She had earned a silver medal at nationals, and she had moved all the way up from 17<sup>th</sup> place to fifth place in the all-around scoring with only the floor exercise to go, but her dream of a national championship was not

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going to come with just another strong, steady, consistent performance. She needed to pull off the best floor routine of her career.

And that's exactly what she did. Galton's competitive spirit kicked in, and she scored a first-place championship 9.575 on floor, lifting her all-around total to 37.725.

Coach Gina Van Deinse explained, "Olyvia is definitely known at our gym as one of our strongest competitors. Give her a challenge and she'll always rise to the occasion." Van Deinse went on to admit, "But we honestly didn't think she could overcome the fifth-place deficit she faced going in the last event. We just didn't see that coming."

Yet Galton's floor exercise was just enough to catapult her into first place all-around. She stood atop the podium thanks to just five hundredths of a point, the exact amount that had been petitioned for, and the exact amount by which she edged past second and third place competitors from prestigious Orlando Metro Gymnastics and Elite Gymnastics Academy in Massachusetts.

Both Galton and teammate Avery Wisniewski earned an additional gold medal for their contributions to the Region 5 team scoring. The team result was perhaps more predictable, however, as Region 5 (consisting of teams from Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Kentucky) is perennially one of the top in the nation.

Wisniewski had competed in the USAG "junior" division the day before Galton's "senior" division event. The Traverse City eighth-grader started the competition with a similar 17<sup>th</sup> place vault, followed by a 9.525 bars routine, earning her fourth-place on that event, just outside the medal count. After finishing 23<sup>rd</sup> on beam, Wisniewski took a page out of Galton's book with a very strong 9.550 floor exercise, the second highest score in her division, to be followed by a gold team medal after all of the scores were tallied.

Level 9 nationals completed the 2018 – 2019 season for all Grand Traverse Bay competitors. The gymnasts will continue to train throughout the summer out of the old MC Sports building in Traverse City and resume competition in the Fall.

"We still have a young team," concluded coach Jennifer. "It's hard to image, but next year may be even more successful than this year."

For more information about Grand Traverse Bay Gymnastics, contact Betsy Van Deinse at 929-2869 or visit [www.gtbaygymnastics.com](http://www.gtbaygymnastics.com).

<b>Level 9 Nationals Scoreline</b>	<b>Vault<sup>Place</sup></b>	<b>Bars<sup>Place</sup></b>	<b>Beam<sup>Place</sup></b>	<b>Floor<sup>Place</sup></b>	<b>All-Around<sup>Place</sup></b>
Olyvia Galton – L9 Sr	9.175 <sup>17</sup>	9.475 <sup>5</sup>	9.500 <sup>2</sup>	9.575 <sup>1</sup>	37.725 <sup>1</sup>
Avery Wisniewski – L9 Jr	9.125 <sup>17</sup>	9.525 <sup>4</sup>	8.550 <sup>23</sup>	9.550 <sup>3</sup>	36.750 <sup>10</sup>



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