

Oakville Gymnastics hosts acrobatics qualifier Sunday



Oakville Gymnastics hosts acrobatics qualifier Sunday. Oakville acrobats Tessa Chiricosta and Jack McGarr will compete in this Sunday's provincial level qualifier at the Oakville Gymnastics Centre. The qualifier is the first of its kind in Canada. *Photograph courtesy of Andrew Patrick*

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Oakville acrobatic gymnasts are in the midst of training and preparing for Canada's first provincial-level acrobatic gymnastics competition to be held at the Oakville Gymnastics Club on December 18, 2011.

Officially known as the 1st Ontario Cup, this qualifying event will play host to 80 acrobats with representation from Quebec, Alberta and Ontario (30 of which are from Oakville).

They have been training under the leadership of Program Director, Don Holmes since Canada officially launched the acrobatic discipline in 2009.

As a result of this competition, qualified acrobats will advance to the first Provincial Championships in May of 2012, marking an important milestone in Canada's development of this new gymnastic discipline.

Four of the local gymnasts are elite level acrobats: Tessa Chiricosta, Jack McGarr, Jamie Patrick and Cory Marsh are experienced international athletes, competing at the 2010 World Acrobatic Championships in Poland as well as in Maryland last year.

They are also preparing to compete at the 2011 Acrobatic and Tumbling British Open Tournament later this month in England with their sights set to represent Canada for a second time as they attempt to qualify for the 2012 World Championships scheduled for April in Florida.

While Quebec, home of world renowned Cirque du Soleil, had the first acrobatic presence at the world level in 2007, Ontario is at the forefront of officially developing this sport in Canada with the Oakville Gymnastics Club striving to be the hub of acrobatic gymnastics in Canada.

Leading the way, Ontario also plans to host the first National Championships in 2014.

Using each other as the apparatus, acrobatics is a spectacular sport that is a cross between traditional gymnastics and circus acrobatics.

Performing to music, intricate balances are performed on partners, combined with exciting multiple somersaults and twists with partners being pitched and caught.

It is a delight for spectators to witness the gymnasts skilled in feats of balance, agility and strength.

The event takes place on December 18 all day at the Oakville Gymnastics Club within the Glen Abbey Recreation Center at 1415 Third Line, Oakville.

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