Sports Connection

Tampa Bay Rhythmics Host 2012 Olympian as Summer Camp Coach

Story and photos by Tamas Mondovics

Rhythmic Gymnastics National Champion and 2012 Olympian-Julie Zetlin, center, enjoys the company of Tampa Bay Rhythmics Gymnastic students at the conclusion of a week-long camp hosted by gym owner, Tyana Marlowe.

Tampa Bay Rhythmics gymnasts Pamela Tang, 16, left and Katya Marlowe, 17, right, pose for a photo with National Champion and 2012 Olympian-Julie Zetlin.

2012 Olympian-Julie Zetlin takes the lead as she coaches a summer camp hosted by Tampa Bay Rhythmics owner and head coach Tyana Marlowe. Zetlin's visit to the gym was a special treat for girls.

The Tampa Bay Rhythmics had no shortage of posting numerous success stories this season including the gym's 2013 U.S. Rhythmic National Championships appearance, which brought together a wide range of amazing talent to a one-of-a-kind of competition.

Led by owner and head coach, Tyana Marlowe, Tampa Bay Rhythmics, located at 6542 Krycul Ave. in Riverview, brings together gymnasts from FishHawk, Bloomingdale, Valrico, Brandon, Riverview and other nearby communities and was proud to take along 18 gymnasts to the successful competition.

While proud of the results, Marlowe had one more special treat for her students in the form of a week-long summer camp supported and co-coached by Rhythmic Gymnastics National Champion and 2012 Olympian-Julie Zetlin.

"We are just delighted to have Julie with us," Marlowe said. "Her presence is an inspiration and a huge motivator for the girls to see an Olympian in person, especially Julie, who had to work so hard and sacrifice so much to reach her goals in the sport."

Zetlin, 23, a veteran elite rhythmic gymnast who currently lives in Los Angeles, CA., began her career at the age of four and spent the next 17 years working tirelessly to become better and better; a commitment that was rewarded with a wild-card berth to compete at the 2012 Summer Games in London, England.

"Competing in the Olympics was an unbelievable experience for more than one reason," Zetlin said. "It was a wonderful reward for me personally, but it was also a way to promote the sport that I love."

Seventeen-year-old rhythmic gymnast Katya Marlowe of Bloomingdale, who currently ranked 22 in the nation, couldn't agree more as she talked about her joy of spending a week with her role model.

"Julie has been my idol and my inspiration to work hard and to become an elite gymnast," Katya said. "Having her here and to train with us is like a dream come true for me."

Due to a recent injury, Katya had to sit out this year's nationals, but the Strawberry Crest High School IB student is determined to earn her top elite status and to be ready for the next season sporting her strength of jumping and handling.

Katya also works and trains alongside 16-year-old first-year, level 10, elite gymnast, Pamela Tang, who finished this year's U.S. Rhythmic National Championship just shy of the top 12.

For more information about Tampa Bay Rhythmics, please contact Tyana Marlowe at 741-2TBR (2827) or visit www.tampabayrhythmics.com.

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