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Local Gymnast Wows Crowd, Wins Two National Titles

COPPELL – Kalon Ludvigson, 18, from Plano, accomplished an almost unthinkable feat during the 2006 Trampoline & Tumbling National Championships – he won gold in the senior men’s division on the double-mini trampoline and tumbling events. An athlete has not won gold on two events in this championship since 1998.

The senior men’s tumbling was the most highly contested event of the competition. Even though Ludvigson was the youngest competitor in the finals, he was the athlete people were watching. This was Ludvigson’s first national championship since 2003 due to injuries in 2004 and 2005. He was the leader after the preliminary round, but in the finals during his first pass of two, Ludvigson took a devastating fall. He was down but definitely not out.

After a brief conference with his coach, Ludvigson agreed that in order to have a chance at the gold, he needed to throw a triple twisting double layout – a skill he had never even performed in competition. Ludvigson hit under pressure and received the highest score of the competition. He won his first national title.

Ludvigson was not favored to win the double-mini trampoline event but went into finals in fourth place battling it out for the top spot. During the finals, he topped the meet’s highest degree of difficulty launching him into first place. Immediately after Ludvigson’s scores proved he had won the national title, the judges thought a mistake had been made in scoring his opponent’s performance, so they awarded the title to his opponent. After Ludvigson’s coach protested the scores and a nail-biting review of the official video took place, the judges reversed their decision and crowned Ludvigson as the true national champion of the double-mini trampoline with a .2 lead over his opponent. He won his second national title.

“This was such an emotional roller coaster for me with my fall on tumbling and then the judges scoring dispute during the double-mini,” said Ludvigson. “I dug deep though in spite of all that and accomplished more than I even thought was possible.”

In addition to the two national titles, Ludvigson was awarded the Tyson Smith Scholarship Award – the highest level of scholarship given. The Tyson Smith Scholarship Award gives \$5,000 to the recipient to spend toward the school of his or her choice. The award is based on application, performance, and reputation.

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Ludvigson's teammates also made a great showing winning an additional two silver medals for the Elite team. Amy McDonald, 22, of McKinney, won the silver in senior women's tumbling, and Derek Stangel, 21, of Plano, won the silver in junior men's tumbling. Stangel also finished in fourth place during the senior men's double-mini trampoline event. With three medals in tow for tumbling, the Texas Dreams Gymnastics team won the gold in the Team Tumbling division giving them a total of three gold and two silver medals in Elite competition. In Level 10, Anna White, 16, of Coppell, took silver in tumbling, and Bethany Poole, 10, of Arlington, won a bronze medal on the double-mini trampoline.

"Kalon's performances showed his determination and heart making me one seriously proud coach," said coach Justen Millerbernd. "His talent has always been apparent, but when you apply skill and passion, you get amazing results. I'm extremely happy with how well all of our athletes competed."

Ludvigson was recently named as one of only four gymnasts in the country to represent the United States at the World Cup Trampoline & Tumbling event in Salzgitter, Germany. The World Cup will host 35 countries and will be held August 29 – September 3.

Ludvigson, White, and Poole all train approximately 12 hours a week at Texas Dreams Gymnastics in Coppell and are coached by Millerbernd.

About Trampoline & Tumbling Events

(Source: USA Gymnastics Trampoline & Tumbling)

Trampoline events involve athletes using trampolines that can propel them up to 30 feet in the air, during which they can perform single, double, and twisted somersaults. Tumbling utilizes elevated spring runways that enable athletes to jump at heights over 10 feet and execute a variety of acrobatic maneuvers. Double mini competition involves the athlete making a short run and leaping onto a small two-level trampoline. The athlete will then perform an aerial maneuver and dismount onto a landing mat.

About Texas Dreams Gymnastics and EveryBody Fits

Texas Dreams Gymnastics, which is directed by former All-Around World Champion and Olympic medalist Kim Zmeskal Burdette and her husband, National Team Coach Chris Burdette, is located in EveryBody Fits in Coppell, Texas. EveryBody Fits offers the finest artistic and athletic programs for the whole family including: Gymnastics, Dance, Cheerleading, Taekwondo, Fitness, Art, Acting, Sports Skills, and a Café. The first of its kind, EveryBody Fits is a uniquely-designed facility providing one place to enroll kids in a diverse set of programs while also allowing parents to focus on their own fitness or leisure desires. To learn more about this announcement or EveryBody Fits, visit our Web site at www.EveryBody-Fits.com or call 972-471-2345.

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