

# China Cleans Up

## *Takes Top Two Spots At McDonald's International Mixed Pairs*

By Mike Botkin

**A** certain amount of satisfaction was gathered by the Chinese as they swept the top two places in the 1985 McDonald's International Mixed Pairs competition held in Chicago March 8.

The top two spots weren't the only things that were swept away after the competition. A large delegation of enthusiastic gymnastics fans from China, now living in the Chicago area, rushed the floor to get a closer glimpse of winners Li Ning and Yu Feng, sending security guards and television announcers scurrying.

The Rosemont Horizon was the site for this event which historically follows the McDonald's American Cup each year. Looking back through the history of this meet it was only right that gymnasts from a foreign country took top honors. Ever since its inception in 1979 when the winners were Michael Nikolay and Maxi Gnauck of the German Democratic Republic, Americans have won the event every

other year. Last year Olympians Jim Hartung and Julianne McNamara took the top spot so it stands to reason the Chinese would win.

It had to be termed as a disappointing meet for Mary Lou Retton and Tim Daggett. With the pressure of winning the American Cup behind them, the American stars looked lax in their efforts and wound up finishing fourth in front of the packed house. The two were in the thick of the title race until Retton suffered a fall during her usually outstanding floor exercise routine, resulting in an 8.750 score. Earlier she had given her team the lead with an outstanding vault for which she received a 9.900 score, the highest of the meet.

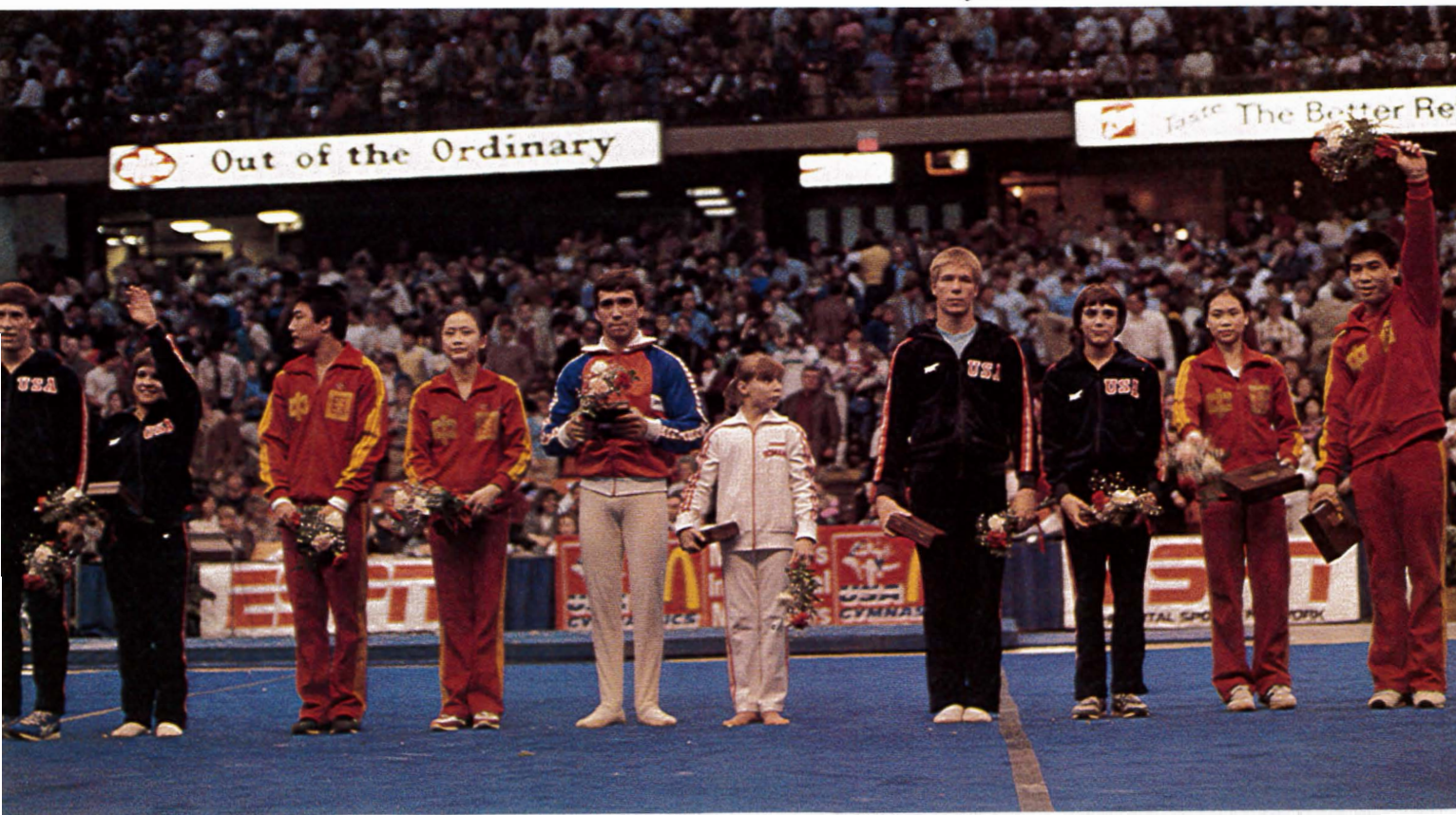
Daggett's performance was steady as his three scores added up to a total of 29.000. Marie Roethlisberger had the best all-around performance of any of the Americans as she turned in three solid routines on uneven bars (9.750), beam (9.650) and on floor (9.650). Her good floor routine avenged her American Cup routine in

which she fell during the preliminary round. Roethlisberger was teamed up with Dan Hayden who started out strong on rings (9.750) but faltered when he missed his double back catch on high bar (8.600) and had a shaky parallel bar routine (9.050) to put that team in fifth place.

Huang Qun and Yang Yueshan tried to keep pace with their fellow countrymen but the consistency of Li and Yu proved to be too much as they placed second with a 57.400 total.

Two of the more popular gymnasts during their stay for the American Cup and Mixed Pairs were teamed together as Daniela Silivas of Romania and Laurent Barbieri of France combined for a third place showing. Brazil's gymnasts came back after not making the finals in the American

*(Below) To the victors go the spoils. The winners of the 1985 McDonald's International Mixed Pairs take a bow during the awards ceremony. From the right they are Yu Feng and Li Ning of China (first place), Dan Hayden and Marie Roethlisberger, USA (fifth place), Laurent Barbieri of France and Daniela Silivas of Romania (third place), Yang Yueshan and Huang Qun of China (second place) and Tim Daggett and Mary Lou Retton, USA (fourth place). (photos by Mike Botkin © 1985)*



Cup to put together a sixth place finish. Tatiana Figueiredo and Gerson Klippel Gnoatto got through two of the three rounds before they were eliminated to place sixth.

Other gymnasts that were paired together, in their order of finish were: Miho Shinoda and Koji Sotomura of Japan (7); Krisztina Bartalfi and Jenő Paprika of Hungary (8); Camelia Voinea of Romania and Stoitcho Gotchev of Bulgaria (9); Iveta Polokova of Czechoslovakia and Haruyasu Taguchi of Japan (10); Christina McDonald and Curtis Hibbert of Canada (11); Giulia Volpi and Boris Preti of Italy (12); Sabrina Mar and Brian Meeker of the USA (13); Sally Larner of Great

Britain and Jozsef Kakuk of Hungary (14); Isabella Von Lospichl and Manfred Wittner of the Federal Republic of Germany (15) and Natalie Seiler and Marco Piatti of Switzerland (16).

**T**he end of the meet brought the end to an illustrious gymnastics career. Brian Meeker, 24, who has been on the national team for the past five years, announced he will be retiring from competitive gymnastics. Meeker, who received a standing ovation from the sellout crowd at the Rosemont Horizon when his retirement was announced, is going to

spend more time in pursuit of a degree in medicine.

Some of the accomplishments of his career which began in 1972 are a sixth place finish all-around in the 1983 Friendship Cup in Thailand, an eighth place all-around finish in the 1984 Hong Kong Invitational, a 10th place all-around finish at the 1984 Olympic Trials and a second place all-around finish in the 1983 National Sports Festival.

*(Below) Brian Meeker performs his high bar routine during his final meet. Meeker, who was paired with Sabrina Mar, officially retired from competitive gymnastics after the conclusion of the McDonald's International Mixed Pairs competition.*

## 1985 McDonald's International Mixed Pairs Results

1985 INTERNATIONAL  
MIXED PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIPS  
03-06-1985  
Chicago, IL

PLACE	FEMALE	MALE	TEAMS	SCORE
1	YU FENG	/LI NING	CHN-CHN	57.850
2	HUANG QUN	/YANG YUESHAN	CHN-CHN	57.400
3	DANIELA SILIVAS	/LAURENT BARBIERI	ROM-FRA	57.100
4	MARY LOU RETTON	/TIM DAGGETT	USA-USA	57.050
5	MARIE ROETHLISBERGER	/DAN HAYDEN	USA-USA	56.450
6	TATIANA FIGUEIREDO	/GERSON KLIPPEL GNOATTO	BRA-BRA	37.450
7	MIHO SHINODA	/KOJI SOTOMURA	JPN-JPN	37.300
8	KRISZTINA BARTALFI	/JENO PAPRIKA	HUN-HUN	37.000
9	CAMELIA VOINEA	/STOITCHO GOTCHEV	ROM-BUL	36.900
10	IVETA POLOKOVA	/HARUYASU TAGUCHI	TCH-JPN	36.650
11	CHRISTINA McDONALD	/CURTIS HIBBERT	CAN-CAN	18.500
12	GIULIA VOLPI	/BORIS PRETI	ITA-ITA	18.250
13	SABRINA MAR	/BRIAN MEEKER	USA-USA	18.100
14	SALLY LARNER	/JOZSEF KAKUK	GBR-HUN	18.050
15	ISABELLA VON LOSPICHL	/MANFRED WITTNER	FRG-FRG	17.850
16	NATALIE SEILER	/MARCO PIATTI	SUI-SUI	17.550

