

Section 1 gymnasts in new position

Big names are gone, leaving leadership of sport up for grabs

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Change is afoot on the landscape of Section 1 gymnastics for the upcoming season.

Gone are the big names of the sport, and Nanuet senior Taylor Redmond, Yorktown junior Kasey Genovese and Clarkstown North senior Diona Straub are just some of the girls who will try to step up and keep Section 1 tops in the state.



A look at teams to watch and players to watch. 3C

"It's definitely a change for me to be the 'elder statesperson' of the Section 1 girls," Straub said. "I thought the day would never come. It's exciting that I am finally the oldest one, and will finally be the captain of Clarkstown.

"At the same time, it's kind of emotional because it's my last season. I can't wait to go out there and do my best to finish off my high school gymnastics career, and hopefully go to states to help give Section 1 another ... title."

For many of the girls it will be a passing of the torch, in the sense

that the top seniors who graduated last year, including Section 1 all-around champion Danielle Bonner and state all-around champion Jillian Hudson, have competed alongside this year's hopefuls for most of their lives because of club gymnastics.

"I'm going to miss competing with Dani this year," Genovese said. "She was always very helpful and cheered every one on no matter what. She was a great leader and an even better team member and I miss her a lot."

It's going to be a transition season for four-time defending Section 1 team champion Tappan Zee, which

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Hope Tralli, left, of Croton and Kasey Genovese of Yorktown pose at Dynamic Gymnastics in Mohegan Lake.

GYMNASTICS: A changing of the guard

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will try to add to its success without the three girls who helped bring the program to the heights it enjoys today.

"It is definitely going to be different without the upper-class to look up to," Dutchies sophomore Kaylie McGivney said. "Jill, Candace (Young) and Maegan (Butler) held Tappan Zee together, and led us to all our victories."

A few of the other girls who will look to step into the spotlight this year include Clarkstown South junior Olivia Blachno, Somers junior

Stephanie Lombardo, Suffern sophomores Blair and Abbey Croce, and McGivney.

"I know there are still a lot of really good gymnasts from other schools so the bar is still set high," Lombardo said. "Maybe I'll be able to strive for placing in the all-around but I have more hope for vault again."

There will also be some new, young faces who will be looking to make a name for themselves this year, including Mounties seventh-grader Alexa Calandra.

Mahopac coach and Sec-

tion 1 coordinator Vin Collins knows this season will have a different feel to but he said he is excited.

"Section 1 gymnastics it seems is always in a transition with regard to the gymnasts," Collins said. "We have some of the best gymnasts in the state competing in Section 1; when one or two accomplished gymnasts graduate there has always been a gymnast who has taken their place, so to speak. We look to be successful as a section at the state tournament once again."

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Vin Collins, Mahopac coach and section coordinator



Photos by Joe Laresse/The Journal News
Kasey Genovese, left, of Yorktown and Hope Tralli of Croton work on the beam at Dynamic Gymnastics in Mohegan Lake. Genovese finished fourth in the all-around at last season's Section 1 championships. Tralli is coming off an injury that sidelined her a year ago.

SEASON AT A GLANCE