

As a varsity newcomer for the Hinsdale Central girls gymnastics team, freshman Margot Tye currently is the only one wearing last season's warmups with the name of a former competitor on the back.

"She's letting me borrow it," Tye joked. "It's because I'm the only freshman and I wasn't here last year. (Our new ones) haven't come in yet."

Otherwise, Tye hasn't needed long to make a name for herself. On Wednesday, she had her best meet so far in helping the Red Devils score a season high in a 130.20 to 126.05 loss at Glenbard West in their West Suburban Conference Silver Division dual opener.

Senior Alex Yager won vault (8.6), and Tye, junior Maddie Sesemann and sophomores Lindsey Riker and Jamie Sherlock also had top-three finishes.

The Red Devils easily surpassed their previous best of 124.40 Dec. 5 at home against Sandburg/Stagg. Their season-high team scores of 34.05 on vault and 30.50 on the uneven parallel bars well surpassed their previous bests of 32.30 and 28.10.

They swept 1-2-3 on vault with Yager, Tye (8.55) and Sherlock (8.5).

"We're improving each meet so that's good," Hinsdale Central coach Kim Estoque said. "Of course, we've got to clean up some more stuff and add a few more things. Right now, our goal is a 130."

Glenbard West, seventh at state last year, also had a season high despite returning sophomore all-arounders Amber Broucek, a 2013 state finalist on balance beam, and Sarah DeStefano only working two events each. Junior all-arounder Mackenzie O'Keefe, an all-state fourth on uneven bars in February, returned to club gymnastics this season.

The Red Devils continue to compete with five all-arounders as sophomore Elle Bergevin recovers from a back injury.

Riker (32.50) and Tye (31.50) both had season high totals above their varsity season bests of 31.90 and 30.00, respectively, for second and third behind Glenbard West sophomore Mia Connolly (32.80). Tye's all-around total was a varsity best by 1.5 points.

Tye's half-on, three-quarters off vault equaled her season-high score. She also set the tone for strong balance beam with a third-place, season-best 7.9 as the team's first competitor. Tye also was fourth on floor exercise (8.0) and had her first 7.0 on the uneven bars (7.05).

"I hope I get new skills because I want my routines to be more difficult and then I can get higher start values," Tye said. "Probably (my highlight is) that I stuck my beam routine. At the Red and White Meet (exhibition, I stayed on), but that's all."

The last competitor on beam, Riker was second (8.15) to Connolly (8.2) and tied for third on uneven bars (8.1) and tied for fifth on vault (8.4). Sesemann was second on floor (8.4) to Broucek (8.85) and fifth in all-around (30.45), followed by Yager (30.40) and Sherlock (29.60).

Even if Bergevin could compete, Estoque said all of her athletes would work as all-arounders. Silver dual meets allow for one exhibition routine per event that cannot count toward the team score.

"Even if I had six, all six would do all-around. I get to add that exhibition so I always tell them always be ready," Estoque said.

Other than the team warmups, the transition to varsity and high-school competition has gone well for Tye. She already knew most of her future teammates through club competition and summer workouts.

Tye most recently has competed in club with Action after previously attending the Balance Institute of Gymnastics.

"It's a lot more relaxed than club, but you still have meets, which is fun, and a lot of practice, but it's worth it," Tye said. "It's a lot more laid back. I expected them to be really hard on you, but they're actually really good

and understanding.”

So far, Tye said her biggest highlight has been on the freshman level. On Dec. 7, Tye won the all-around (32.275) and beam (7.95) at Oswego’s Freshman Invitational and also was second on vault (8.725) and floor (8.4).

”I think she’s done really well. I think she gets the understanding of team,” Estoque said. ”Some freshmen come in and have a hard time thinking about team. I think she’s doing pretty well with it so it’s good.”

-- by Bill Stone