

ATHLETE FOCUS



ASHLEY
Priess

By Luan Peszek

Ashley Priess, 15, trains at Cincinnati Gymnastics Academy with her coach Mary Lee Tracy. Ashley took first all-around for the second consecutive year at the 2005 U.S. Classic, held in Virginia Beach, July 23. She also won bars and took second on floor.

She said, "It was awesome to win. I've been training really hard for this so I'm glad my work paid off."

Regarding her routines at the U.S. Classic, Ashley said, "On bars I changed my

release move around so I had a slightly new bar routine, but everything else was the same that I've been doing. I'll do the same routines at Visa Championships."

The Priess family moved from Chicago to Cincinnati in 2001 so Ashley's sister Courtney could train at the elite level at CGA. At the time, Ashley was a Level 10 gymnast.

Ashley said, "My dad commuted on the weekends for about a year but then he switched jobs and moved to Cincinnati. Now, my sister will be a freshman at the University of Alabama and I'm the elite here at CGA."

Ashley was the bronze medal all-around winner at the 2004 Pacific Alliance and also won the silver medal on bars. She did the European Tour this year, traveling to England and Switzerland. "I competed bars, beam and floor," said Ashley. "It was a lot of fun."

At last year's Visa Championships, Ashley was fourth in the all-around among the juniors and the bronze medalist on floor.

She's looking forward to competing in the 2005 Visa Championships in Indianapolis because it's close to home and lots of her relatives and friends are planning to come and watch.

