

Kenosha Unified Athletics – Hall of Fame Inductee – Class of 1991

Debbie Diskerud Hatanpa – 1981

Gymnastics was her game, and she was very, very good at it. So good, in fact, that she became the first Kenosha gymnast to win a state championship. Debbie did that when she won the balance beam, finished fourth in floor exercises, and fifth in all-around while leading Bradford to seventh place in the 1979 WIAA tournament. She placed in several events in 1980 at state, but passed up her senior year of prep competition to join the Salto Gymnastics club of Waukesha so she could improve her chances of earning a college scholarship.

Competing for Salto in the United States Gymnastics Federation senior division state meet, she won titles in the vault, beam, uneven bars, floor exercises, and all-around becoming Wisconsin's first gymnast to ever win a clean sweep at the state level. That qualified her for the USGF Midwest meet in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where she won the beam, placed 10th in floor exercises, and 12th in all-around.

As a high school performer, Debbie won two letters, two MVP awards, and served as team captain as a junior. The National High School Gymnastics Coaches' Association twice accorded her All-American honors. During her two year prep career, she won the all-around in all but three meets. Included were first-place finishes in the South Shore Conference, regional and sectional meets. She was a three year honor student and ranked in the upper 15% of her class.

Debbie earned a scholarship to Iowa State University, where she continued to excel in gymnastics. A four year letter winner, she served as captain for two years, was voted MVP honors twice, and earned academic All-American honors four times. She was the first Iowa State woman to qualify for the NCAA Division I regional gymnastics tournament.