

## Whelan finishes just outside of medal contention in gymnastics



**By Jake Courtepatte**

It was an "always the bridesmaid, never the bride" moment for Carmen Whelan when she finished in seventh place on Monday night in the ribbon portion of rhythmic gymnastics at the Pan Am Games in Toronto.

The Aurora native finished with a score of 14.402. Her Thornhill teammate, Patricia Bezzoubenko, barely missed the medals with a score of 15.300, with a duo of Americans taking the gold and silver positions.

Whelan finished just shy of a medal score in all four rhythmic gymnastics events, coming closest in individual ball with a fourth place finish, her score just 0.4 points shy of the bronze. She finished fifth in hoop competition and seventh in the clubs.

Despite missing out on the medals, in which Canada is sweeping up by the dozens in this year's Games, Whelan is grateful for the experience and ready to move on.

"It was my first Pan Am Games and I am still young," said the 16-year old. "I'm happy with my performance, and there's a lot left in the future."

The score in rhythmic gymnastics is judged out of 20. Ten points are assigned to level of difficulty of the routine and the other half is judged based on the execution.

A senior level gymnast with the Silhouettes of York Rhythmic Gymnastics Club in Newmarket, Whelan placed second overall at the Elite Canada National Rhythmic Gymnastics competition in Winnipeg in March.

Her second place finish was an important step in qualifying for the Toronto Pan Am Games this year, the next step being a silver at the Canadian National Championships in May.

But this, the largest multi-sport event in Canadian history, was the ultimate stage in Whelan's young career, and one she'll never forget.

"It's something I can always keep in my mind, my first Pan-Am Games. Being only 16 I'm hoping it's just a start."

Whelan entered the Games as the number-two Canadian woman behind Bezzoubenko for the individual competition held at the Toronto Coliseum. Bezzoubenko went on to win the bronze medal in the individual all-around program.

To keep up with the Canadians at the Pan Am Games, running until this Sunday, visit [www.to2015.org](http://www.to2015.org).