

SportsWest

MIKE REISS

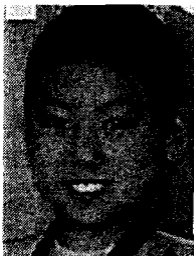
Newton's Wang wins US gymnastics title

Newton's **Julia Wang** had made it through the hard part, competing in the 2006 National Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships in Virginia last month.

The 10-year-old Wang won the level 4/5 championship.

The only time her knees shook was when she accepted her medal.

"I felt like I was going to fall off the podium," Wang said. "I was really excited."



JULIA WANG

Wang competed in the Child C division (ages 10-11), winning the all-around title with 21.7 points and capturing first place in the rope event. The success didn't surprise her coach, **Varduhi Nahapetyan**.

"She's very strong, very smart, and very easy to work with," said Nahapetyan, a former national champion from Armenia. "If you give her a program, she'll have no problem doing it. She's a very special girl."

Wang first tried rhythmic gymnastics when she was 7 but stopped briefly after her coach left the country. She has been coached by Nahapetyan for the last year and a half, practicing at the New England Sports Academy in Westwood.

Competitors in rhythmic gymnastics perform exercises using balls, clubs, hoops, ribbons, and ropes.

Wang, the daughter of **Frank Wang** and **Lujia Tang**, said her favorite is the rope event.