

WMGF News

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December 9, 2016

Season Preview

by Mark Russo

This new season is a very important one as the team will host two important competitions in 2017. Both competitions occur in March; our dual meet against Cal on March 11th (a combination meet with the UW women's team) and USA Gymnastics Collegiate Nationals on March 24th and 25th that we are hosting at Everett Community College. This championship meet brings together the best collegiate club teams in the nation and invites four other funded teams for a two-day competition. It really is a spectacle of men's gymnastics, so please plan to attend.

Our team has improved again this off-season as we gained five new freshmen after losing graduates Brandon Waller and Aaron Moss. Led by Ben Bloom, an all-rounder from the Bay Area in California, this freshman class will strengthen last year's weak events – pommel horse and high bar. Ben has good basics and some high-level skills on all events. He will be a valuable part of the team right from the start. Conner Petellin is from Coeur D'Alene Idaho; this freshman brings excellent pommel horse swing and skill to one of our toughest-scoring events. He did well in our region as a junior gymnast, and with the addition of a couple more skills on other events will make the lineup on several apparatus for the team.

From the gym where we train, Cascade Elite Gymnastics in Mountlake Terrace, two freshman gymnasts have joined our team: Quinn Damon and Daniel Gordon. Both of these young men are steadily improving and should be in the competitive lineup this season on several events.

WMGF

The Washington Men's Gymnastics Foundation is a non-profit organization that exists to assist the Men's Gymnastics Team at the University of Washington.



Carl Meader at Washington Open

Photo credit: Jeff Crockett

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As they improve and pick up more difficult skills, they will be able to compete for a spot on all events. They both have good swing basics and this will help them advance as their strength increases.

Another local freshman, Paul Friedman, also began training with our team. This year, it looks like Paul can train with us three days per week. He is adjusting his class schedule to be able to be at gym for all scheduled practices. Paul is from Mile High Gymnastics over on the Kitsap Peninsula.

As I mentioned above, last year pommel horse and high bar were our weakest events. We specifically recruited gymnasts to help on those events and believe that these new guys on the team will help us on those events and more. Talent-wise, we are better than we were a year ago, and though the rules of gymnastics have become harder, we hope to score the same as we did last year. Our top score was 403.70. The challenge we now face is keeping up with the rule changes implemented after this past year's Olympic Games. The main impact this time around effectively means that the same performance from last season will score half a point lower, per routine, in 2017. Half a point may not seem like much, but it has a pretty dramatic effect when the team score is determined by five routines on six different events (0.5 x 5 x 6 = 15 points). Our team score will hopefully overcome these 15 points to be where it was last year. This season I fully expect better performances than last year; however, the scores may not indicate this, which is very frustrating from a coach's standpoint. Our sport

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Season Preview

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keeps getting more difficult. The rules consistently change. Basically, the mountain of gymnastics gets bigger and taller, while everyone still has to start at the same trailhead. Please understand when I say that although our score will be lower, at least at the beginning of the season, we really are a better team this year, with more skill, better depth, and good preparation.

This year's team is being led by the third- and fourth-year team members. Combined, they are a very strong group of gymnasts. Their health is paramount to our success. Recently, both Max Soifer and Justin Rowen have had injury setbacks, but they are overcoming them and will be ready for our season in mid-January. With their dedication and tremendous work ethic, they both represent what our program is about very well.

Third-year members Nathan Tsuji, Carl Meader, and Nick Kano contribute the bulk of our team score. These guys have the difficulty, and now need the consistency to push the team over the top to victory. They are the engine of our team. Second-year team members Garrett Dee, Jacob Jarrett, Michael Sibley, Ben Fisher, and Phil Chantler give us the depth needed with winning routines as well. This group has improved quite a bit this past spring and fall. This is the year for these gymnasts to emerge and become the engine of the team next year.

We have improved our ability and have the experience needed to understand any competitive situation. We have upped the challenge to ourselves to be champions this year. In front of our fans, we want to show you what all our work is about, to make Washington the best collegiate team in the country!

*Happy Holidays from your 2016-2017
Husky Gymnastics Team*



Assistant Coach Giancarlo Mora, Paul Friedman, Garrett Dee, Justin Rowen, Quinn Damon, Nathan Tsuji, Phil Chantler, Conner Petellin, Max Soifer, Nick Kano, Ben Fisher, Carl Meader, Jacob Jarrett, Ben Bloom, Michael Sibley, Daniel Gordon, Coach Mark Russo

Meet the Freshmen

by Max Soifer

This year we gained a class of five freshmen. This is another very talented class that will raise the level of gymnastics on the team. In addition to their gymnastics skills these guys also have unique and interesting personalities. We had the opportunity to catch up with a couple of this year's freshmen and ask them some questions so that you can get to know them better. Here's what they have to say!

Quinn Damon

Where are you going to school and what are you studying?

I'm going to UW and I'm studying Math and Science.

What is your greatest gymnastics accomplishment?

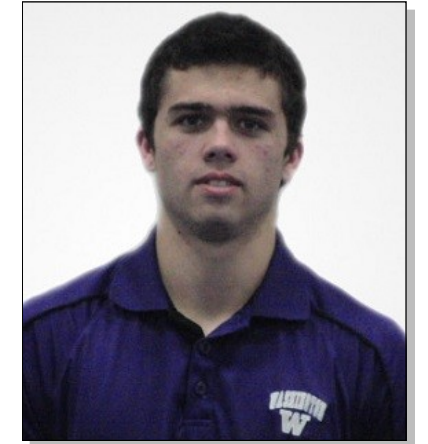
Qualifying to JO Nationals.

What is your best event and why?

Rings, because I am improving quickly on rings right now.

What is the best part about being on the UW men's gymnastics team?

We get to train more than I used to on my club team.



Ben Bloom

Where are you originally from, and why did you decide to join the UW Men's Gymnastics Team?

I'm originally from Mill Valley, California. I joined the team because I wanted to continue my gymnastics career as a member of a team, and the UW Men's Gymnastics Team seemed like a good fit.

What is your favorite skill?

Tkatchev on high bar.

What is your favorite pastime?

Video games, specifically League of Legends.

What is your favorite musical genre?

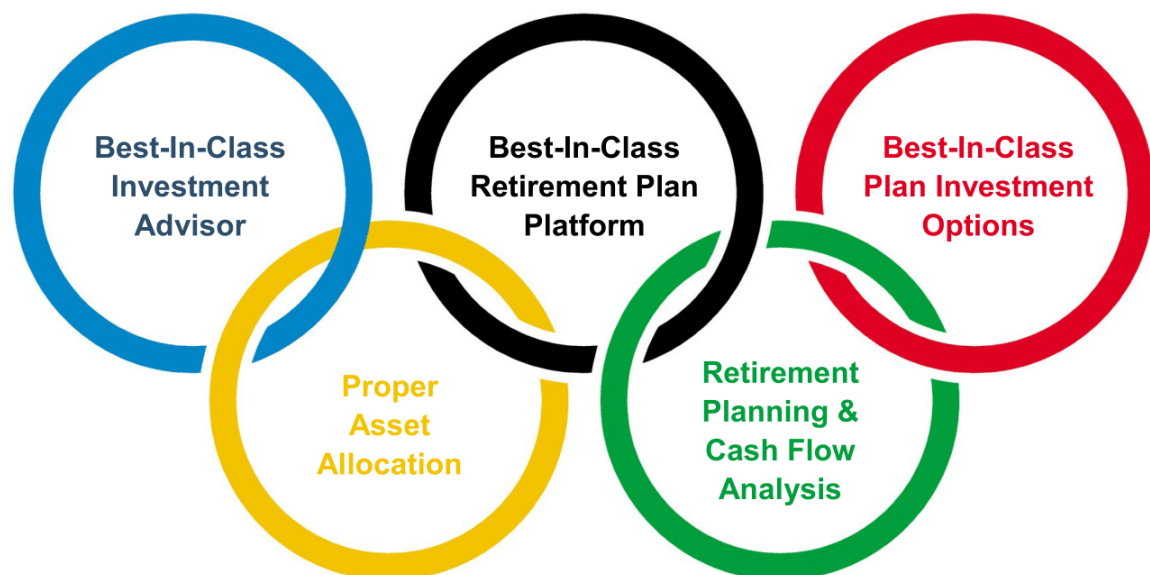
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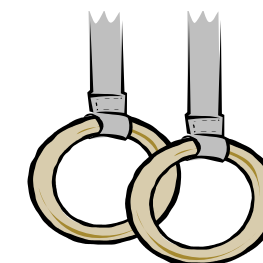
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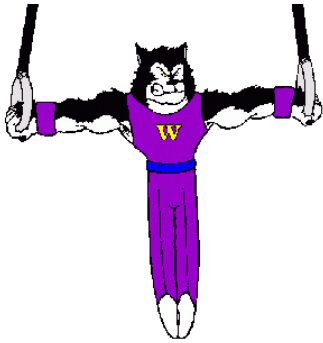


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Washington Men's Gymnastics

2016-2017 Meet Schedule

(local meets in bold)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
January 15	7:00pm	Washington Open 	Marv Harshman Court Seattle, WA
January 21	6:00pm	Stanford Open vs. Stanford, Cal, Southern California United	Burnham Pavilion, Stanford Univ. Stanford, CA
February 4	1:00pm	at Air Force, with Stanford	USAF Academy Colorado Springs, CO
February 17, 18	TBD	at Temple, with Springfield; also Winter Cup (individuals)	Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA Westgate Resort, Las Vegas, NV
February 25	7:00pm	at ASU, with So Cal United	Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass Chandler, AZ
March 11	7:00pm	vs. Cal, with UW Women 	Alaska Airlines Arena at Hec Ed Seattle, WA
March 24 March 25	2:00pm 7:00pm	USA Gymnastics Collegiate Nationals 	Everett Community College Everett, WA

Please contact Mark Russo for updates: 206-524-9480 or team@wmgf.us