

WMGF News

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March 4, 2016

Mid-Season Update

by Mark Russo

A season full of promise and ability opened for this year's team at the annual Washington Open on January 2nd and 3rd. With over 350 junior-level boys competing, our team did routines in front of the judges for the first time this season, and as the season has progressed we have steadily improved upon this performance.

Many of the team members went home for Christmas break and this always effects our performances as some of the guys come straight to the meet from vacation. We looked a little rusty at the Washington Open, but better than we have before. All in all, it was a good start to our season as most competed all the events they had been practicing this past fall and no one had any major accident or injury. It was a big fundraising event for us as well, supplementing your generous donations to fund our upcoming season's travel to competitions.

Travel we did next, beginning our competitive collegiate season in Colorado Springs at the Air Force Academy's Rocky Mountain Open on January 16th. At this meet we scored 392.25, a good start but not good enough to beat another team there. Our nearest competitive teams were the club teams from Oklahoma and Arizona State. Our team was led by sophomore Nathan Tsuji who has looked very professional so far this season. Nathan scored 80.35 in the all-around for a seventh-place finish out of 11 all-around competitors. Nathan performed consistently and with poise similar to last season. It was good to see him pick up where he left off last year. Our first event competition was vault and we showed nervousness. Of our six

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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.



Brandon Waller at UW

Photo credit: Jeff Crockett

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vaulters, three had major errors making this event score abnormally low for us. We spent the rest of the meet trying to make up for it. There were some good routines that re-sounded and motivated the team to try and make a comeback. Jacob Jarrett, first-year team member from Louisiana, brought our team back to life with his high-flying parallel bar routine. Sophomore Carl Meader had solid routines on high bar and pommels, and freshman Michael Sibley from Vancouver, B.C., hit an inspiring ring routine. We did not let our slow start affect us and we showed good resiliency in attempting to come back. This was our highest team score at the Rocky Mountain ever, but we still have a way to go to reach our potential.

Rocky Mountain Open

Team results:

Oklahoma	448.55
Air Force	424.70
Nebraska	420.30
Arizona State	403.65
Oklahoma Club	399.70
Washington	392.25

UW All-around:

7. Nathan Tsuji	80.35
9. Carl Meader	79.45

Two weeks later we made our way to sunny California for a tri-meet with Stanford and the club team from Southern California. Led by a strong performance by Carl Meader, we bettered our team score by nearly six points from the Rocky Mountain Open. Carl had very good routines on floor, pommels, parallel bars, and high bar. I am looking forward to what he can

(Continued on page 2)

Mid-Season Update

(Continued from page 1)

score when he hits routines on all events. Other strong routines were performed by junior Justin Rowen on vault, Michael Sibley on rings, and freshman Garrett Dee on floor. Our goal was to break the 400 team score total but that slipped away with our floor exercise routines where we hit only three of six routines. Floor is one of our highest-scoring events, so misses really affect our team total score. Along with vault, our floor routines have our highest start values or potential high scores, so it is essential that we do well on both these events. Our priority this February is to increase our start values slightly and then polish our routines to score high in March.

Stanford Open

Team results:		UW All-around:	
Stanford	435.10	2. Carl Meader	81.30
Washington	398.05	3. Nathan Tsuji	78.00
So. Cal United	355.10		

This represents our highest team score at the Stanford Open and shows good improvement. However, it is evident that we left some easy points out on the floor that would have lifted us over 400, and that we still are looking at the face of a mountain to get to Stanford's level. We need to reach the pass at 400 and then assess our climb to reach the summit levels.

The halfway point of our season occurred at the MAC Open in Portland, Oregon on February 14th where we competed in a dual meet against Arizona State. This

was our home meet for the year and good to finally get a meet in Portland where several current team members, Senior Brandon Waller and freshman Ben Fisher, are from. This was a spirited competition as the teams are closely ranked in ability. Again we started with a rough first event, floor exercise, where we had two major errors that affected our team score right off the bat and left us playing catch-up for the rest of the meet. But catch up we did, as by the fourth event we had reduced ASU's five point lead to 1.6. On our fifth event, parallel bars, our team came alive led by a virtuous performance by Carl Meader. Carl has recently upgraded his parallel bar routine and it electrifies our team when he performs it well. Meanwhile, Arizona State stumbled on high bar and with one rotation left, we had passed them for a lead of 1.6 going into the 6th and final event. For us, this would be high bar; for ASU, floor. We did our best with great routines by Ben and Carl, but our start values on high bar versus their start values on floor were not comparable. They performed relatively well – as did we – but this start value difference propelled them to victory. We'll get a second chance in two weeks as our second half of the season begins with a rematch at ASU.

MAC Open vs. Arizona State

Team Results		UW All-around:	
Arizona State	402.05	1. Carl Meader	79.75
Washington	394.75	2. Nathan Tsuji	79.60

Your 2015-2016 Husky Gymnastics Team



Front-back: Michael Sibley, Jacob Jarrett, Brandon Waller, Garrett Dee, Phil Chantler, Carl Meader, Ben Fisher, Max Soifer (Not pictured: Nick Kano, Aaron Moss, Nathan Tsuji, Justin Rowen)

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Meet the Coach: An Interview with **Giancarlo Mora**

By Mark Russo

We are privileged to welcome our new Assistant Coach Giancarlo Mora to the Husky Gymnastics family! Giancarlo is right in the thick of his first season with us, with hopefully many more ahead.



Where you were born and raised, and what is your background with the German National training program?

I was born in Portoviejo, Ecuador, then I moved to Hannover, Germany with my family when I was five years old. When I was seven, my PE teacher asked me to go and try out for the German National training program at the Hannover Olympic Center (I guess I was a standout in my class during our gymnastics training at school). I made it, however I don't recall this time as being anything special; it was just the life I had. But it was once I moved to the Olympic Center dorms at age 11 that things really began to gravitate around gymnastics: living at the dorms, going to international junior competitions and camps, was a wonderful experience. I was asked to transition to coaching for the Federation once I reached my "ceiling." I became one of the junior coaches working with the developmental program at the Hannover Olympic Center in 2003.

What inspires you to coach on a daily basis?

I love gymnastics with my heart and soul – so to be a coach and be involved in the sport every day is fantastic. Furthermore, I believe the education gymnastics gives to the human being's character at a young age is invaluable and as a coach I recognize I play an important part of it.

Why move to Seattle?

Why not? The Pacific Northwest has everything a person could ask for. I think it is one of the best places in the whole world, and I am not kidding – I've seen a few! It also happens to be an ideal location for family life as my wife's family is from Vancouver, Canada.

What is your long term goal or dream with gymnastics?

I love teaching elite gymnastics at every level, from the pre-team to college. I truly love them all. So it would be a truly wonderful thing to eventually be able to put all those levels under one roof.

Who inspired you to start doing gymnastics when you were young?

Well to start gymnastics in Germany is a given, it's a mandatory requirement, but once I started and found



Spotting Michael Sibley at the Washington Open

my place in the Olympic Center, I looked up to Andreas Aguilar and his wonderful attention to detail in his gymnastics. Ralph Buechner and Sven Tippelt were also great inspirations for me, as well as the Soviets of the time looking outside.

Later on another gymnast really got my attention: It was Jeff Crockett with his innovative high bar release move and I actually remember wondering who his coach was. Isn't it funny how small our gymnastics world is?

What is your perception of the current team?

It's positive. I'm very excited to work with them. They come together fantastically and have lots of energy. I am truly honored to work with them and their head coach Mark Russo.

I competed in college in a club system too, so it is great because when I am working with the guys there are moments when I feel like I am back in time and I am next in line to go on the equipment. Their gymnastics gets me really excited.

Outside of gymnastics, what are your interests?

Did I say gymnastics already? Besides gymnastics, I enjoy spending time with my lovely wife and my three-year-old daughter. I love to learn about other cultures – trying new foods, languages, and traveling.

Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky Alum **Gary Fox**

by Gary Fox

My, how fast time passes! The year was 1968. It seems like yesterday that I became a student athlete at the UW. The only thing that was really familiar to me entering the UW was Hec Ed Pavillion, which was home away from home for most of us, either receiving instruction through Dr. Hughes' Extension Classes as youths, or instructing in them while in our competitive years. I also instructed at the West Seattle YMCA during high school and four years at the UW.

My gymnastic career started at the age of 12, when my sister's boyfriend, Les Little, who was a gymnast and pole vaulter at West Seattle High School took me to a meet. Les' mentor was Les Driscoll, who was the gymnastic coach at West Seattle, and who was also a member of the UW Gymnastics Team in the 1950s. Coach Driscoll, ultimately, became my coach as well, both in gymnastics and as a pole vaulter.

I found my way to the Downtown Seattle YMCA. My Dad would drive me whenever he could, and if he couldn't, I'd take the bus from West Seattle. I can remember how much in awe I was when I met Jack Henderson, George Lewis, Dale and Mike Flansaas, Gary Finne, and many other gymnasts of that time. Because the YMCA was quite a distance from my house, Dad built me four pieces of equipment that I could practice on. He forged a set of rings from 1 inch pipe and hung them from the chestnut tree in our back yard; a steel side horse fashioned from a 100 gallon water tank, into which he welded a set of pommels and supports; a high bar that had 6 x 6 posts and side supports and had no give whatsoever; and a set of parallel bars out of pipe and standards. It was pretty crude equipment, but I was able to learn the basics, although the rings were what I gravitated to, and ultimately became my best event in high school and at the UW. I varsity-lettered my junior and senior years by placing well enough on the rings and parallel bars throughout the seasons.

I couldn't have attended the UW at any better time than from 1968 to 1972. I was able to learn and compete with some of the finest gymnasts of our time, Yoshi Hayasaki, Hide Umeshita, Tomi Ozora, Sho Fukushima, Kanati Allen, Bo Bennet, Ron Hunter, and many others too numerous to mention. I do remember my first day of practice, when Coach Hughes introduced Gunter Bohrmann as the freshman coach. I had no idea what a taskmaster he was. He was a coach one could love and hate all at the same time. Three hours of practice, and then it was off for strength training and running of the

Hec Ed stairs. I thought my career was over the first day of practice! But it did get better. Over the years following graduation, Gunter and I became very close friends, with him even riding with me on police duty. Gunter, as well as Coach Hughes, instilled in us a certain discipline and respect, the idea of competing for the good of the team, and not just one's self. As team members, we were all part of a bigger family, which not only included the current team, but many alumni who supported our team in any way they could. The Greater Seattle Gym Club was one such family comprised of all these individuals, which gave exhibitions wherever they could. One of my fondest memories of these exhibitions was with Chuck Draper, as my clown routine partner, a routine that had been passed down through many generations of gymnasts, starting with Coach Hughes.

I started my law enforcement career by attending the



Seattle Police Department Academy in the summer of 1970, between my sophomore and junior year. This program allowed me to graduate with my major in Business Administration in 1972, while working part time as a uniformed officer for the department. After graduation, I had a law enforcement partner who got me involved in power lifting. I went from a 150 pound gymnast, to a 200 pound power lifter. After a couple of years, the

knees, shoulders and other parts of the body began to break down, so I converted to body building. I competed for several years and got tired of competing against others who were using steroids. So, I built a gym in my house, and to this day, still work out five days a week.

In November of 2008, I retired from law enforcement with 38 years of police service. I worked for three different agencies; Seattle, Tukwila, and Kent Police departments. During those first 20 years of service, I accomplished all the goals I had set for myself. I worked patrol for several years and then transferred to motorcycles. I got tired of riding in the rain and foul Pacific Northwest weather, and was then promoted to detective, and ultimately became the supervisor of that unit in Tukwila. I became an expert in Crimes Against Persons (assaults, sexual assaults, kidnapping, homicides, etc). While working for Tukwila, I was accepted at the FBI Sniper School and became the sniper on the Tukwila SWAT team. After two years in that position, I became the SWAT Commander which I held for six years. I was the Range Master, Firearms Instructor, as well as Defensive Tactics officer. I spent a year in narcotics and then

(Continued on page 6)



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Mark K. Oliver
President & Founder - Senior Investment Advisor

Where Are They Now: Gary Fox

(Continued from page 4)

another year in deep cover investigating motorcycle gangs.

In 1990, with my 20 years in, and not knowing whether I should retire or not, I was recruited by the Washington State Attorney General's Office to start a new unit called the Sexually Violent Predator Unit. I was commissioned as a Senior Investigator with the responsibility of investigating criminals, who had prior convictions for sexually violent offenses, to determine whether they could be charged under a civil commitment statute which believed they were more than likely to reoffend if allowed to remain free in society. Through that job, I also spent eight years teaching part-time curriculum to the recruits at the police academy at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center in Burien. Figuring I would do this job for a couple of years, and after 274 convictions, I woke up 18 years later and decided it was really time to retire, which I did.

During my years as a cop, I relate my success, and sanity, to having a wife, Kathy, and two wonderful children, Jennifer and Ryan, who kept me grounded and able to focus on the good things in life, as opposed to the negative I was always surrounded by in my job. Our family boated throughout the Gulf Islands and Puget Sound, and later gave up our boat for a trailer, which Kathy and I use to head for warmer climates during our cold winter months. We also have four grandchildren, ages four, six, eight and 10, three boys and a girl, whom we spend as much time with as we can.

During my police service I was recognized with sixty commendations, but only two awards that I cherish

deeply. The first is the Medal of Valor I received in 1975 for an officer involved shooting while employed with the Tukwila Police Department. The second, while employed by the Attorney General's office, Governor Locke awarded me the Governor's Recognition Award for my development of the Washington State Law Enforcement Medal of Honor Ceremony, in which we honor those officers killed in the line of duty each year, and honor those officers who have displayed exceptionally meritorious conduct. This program ultimately became nationally recognized and is now the model adopted by many national agencies.

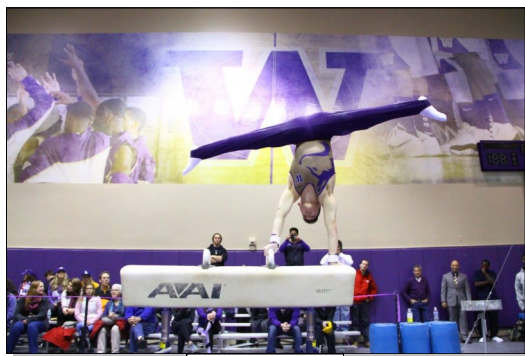
Even though I am officially retired, I still wear a uniform as a member of a non-profit organization called Behind the Badge Foundation, Line of Duty Death Response Team. In the event of an officer being killed in the line of duty, our team responds to the agency and assists them in providing family support and developing a memorial ceremony honoring that officer and his family. This position is probably the most rewarding of any I have been associated throughout my career.

Respect, dedication, support of others, being part of a family are all things learned from being a part of the outstanding program which was started by Coach Hughes and is continued by many others who have participated in this same environment. Though we don't see each other very often, and have lost a few of our teammates over the years, we will always be tethered by an ideal, started so many years ago by our Patriarch, Coach Eric Hughes.



Carl Meader

Scenes from 2016 Washington Open



Aaron Moss



Nathan Tsuji

Photos by Jeff Crockett

THANK YOU!

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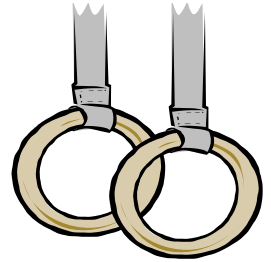
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In This Issue...


Mid-Season Update, Where Are They Now, and more...

March 4, 2016

Washington Men's Gymnastics

2015-2016 Meet Schedule

(local meets in bold)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>January 2</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Washington Open</i> 	<i>Marv Harshman Court Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 16</i>	<i>6:00pm</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>January 30</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Stanford Open</i>	<i>Burnham Pavilion, Stanford Univ. Stanford, CA</i>
<i>February 14</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>MAC Open vs. ASU</i>	<i>Multnomah Athletic Club Portland, OR</i>
<i>February 26</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>vs. ASU and So Cal United</i>	<i>Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass Chandler, AZ</i>
<i>March 13</i>	<i>12:00pm</i>	<i>vs. Cal and Army</i>	<i>UC Berkeley Berkeley, CA</i>
<i>March 25,26</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>Springfield College Springfield, MA</i>

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