

WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

December 7, 2017

Season Preview

by Giancarlo Mora

The new season is upon us and having finished close to first place in the last couple of Collegiate Nationals, we are motivated to improve ourselves in every aspect of the sport. However, it has been a wild off-season where we said goodbye not only to two of our great senior athletes, Justin Rowen and Max Soifer, but also to junior Nick Kano and sophomores Phil Chantler and Garrett Dee, whose routines contributed greatly to the team score in past seasons.

Returning athletes are Team Captain Nathan Tsuji, Carl Meader, Benjamin Fisher, Jacob Jarrett, Mike Sibley, Ben Bloom, Conner Petellin, Daniel Gordon, Quinn Damon, and Paul Friedman. They were joined this September by Alex Forcos from Snohomish WA, Zak Kuest from Marysville WA, Alex May from Highlands Ranch CO, and Kody Dominguez from Hilo HI.

Our competitive season kicks off on January 6th at the Washington Open, then just a week later we fly to Colorado Springs to face Air Force Academy (currently ranked 10th) and other teams like Oklahoma (currently ranked 1st), Ohio State (ranked 2nd). Competing in this venue one mile above sea level will be a big challenge, but it will help prepare us for Nationals which will also be held at the Air Force Academy. Our season will be rounded out with competitions at Stanford, ASU, and Cal. Please check out our full 2018 meet schedule on the last page or at <http://wmgf.us/schedule>.

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.



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As you know, we have been closing the gap to first place consistently at the Collegiate National Championships for the past couple of years. In 2015, there were 4.45 points between us and first place. 2016, 3 points. And 2017 only 2.4 points.

I believe that I will continue along the path that Coach Mark Russo began with his first 1989-90 season by trying to further close the gap to first place. I would be lying if I said that goal is not in my mind.

Although I cannot predict the future, here is what I can tell you now: first, it won't be easy. Having nine out of our 14 team members as freshmen and sophomores means we have a young team with a lot to learn. Second, I want to tell you that I am already very proud of this team and very proud of every single one of these guys because I know they will do everything to excel on the competition floor. The guys have been working very hard as one solid team since the beginning of September and I have good reason to believe that they will endure muscle fatigue and pain to improve no matter what.

These are the reasons why I can't wait to start the 2018 season with these guys on my side and you as fans and supporters of our team. Thank you!

- Giancarlo Mora
Washington Men's Gymnastics
Head Coach

Changing of the Guard

by Mark Russo

After 27 years, the Washington Men's Gymnastics team is changing the guard as Mark Russo takes on the role of Program Director to be in charge of fundraising and the development of a building that will be our permanent home. Stepping up to lead the team is former assistant coach Giancarlo Mora. Giancarlo becomes the 5th Head Coach in our team's 67-year history. Giancarlo will be assisted by former Husky great Jeff Crockett. We wanted to introduce these two amazing coaches to you with a few questions and answers.

Please give me a brief history of your coaching career.

Giancarlo: My first official job was at the Olympic center in Hannover, Germany, with the developmental program (juniors). Then after three years, I was promoted to coach the elite program (seniors). Through the German gymnastics federation, I was involved with several coaching clinics throughout Europe. I also had the privilege of working for Professor Li-Shi at the Sport University in Peking as part of a coaches exchange program between China and Germany. In 2008, I accepted an offer to work in Chicago at Lakeshore Academy as an assistant coach. After three years there, I took a coaching position in Colorado at Xtreme Altitude

and later became the head coach and team director. After parting ways, I moved to Washington, where I was fortunate to meet Jeff Crockett at Eastside Gymnastics (now Tech Gymnastics) and he helped connect me with Mark Russo. It has been really a great experience to learn about American college gymnastics and I am very honored to lead the team this year.

Jeff: I coached recreational gymnastics for a couple of years at Cascade Elite in Mountlake Terrace, Washington when I joined the UW Team in September of 2000. After knee surgery in 2006, I was the student assistant coach for the UW Men's team for three years. At the end of my competitive career I became the Boys Team Program Director at Eastside Gymnastics Academy in Woodinville, from 2009 to 2016. I then became the Boys Team Technical Director at Metropolitan Gymnastics for a year before accepting this position as Assistant Coach in August of 2017.

What does coaching at Washington mean to you?

Giancarlo: Coaching for the Washington Men's team is a wonderful new chapter for me. It is the first time I am working with college gymnastics which is, in my opinion, the most difficult competition schedule because the guys have to peak so many times in a short time frame. I don't know of any other league in the world that

(Continued on page 3)

*Happy Holidays from your 2017-2018
Husky Gymnastics Team*



*(Back): Alex May, Ben Bloom, Paul Friedman, Alexander Forcos, Conner Petellin, Nathan Tsuji, Quinn Damon, Asst. Coach Jeff Crockett
(Front): Jacob Jarrett, Zak Kuest, Ben Fisher, Carl Meader, Kody Dominguez, Daniel Gordon, Mike Sibley, Coach Giancarlo Mora*

Changing of the Guard (Continued from page 2)

has this. All the competitions are compressed into three months. It is the atmosphere that the guys bring to the gym every day— it's the energy. I really enjoy competition and I admire the challenge of preparation and precise work to get the guys ready to peak for such a compact season.

Jeff: Coaching at Washington means that I will now be pouring my heart and soul into the very program that has paved the way for my own competitive and coaching careers to blossom. It means I will be working hard to get the best out of these young men. It means I get to continue doing what I love, every day.

What are your reasons for choosing coaching as a career?

Giancarlo: I did not choose coaching; coaching chose me. I was taught to be one. It was an easy transition from gymnast to coach. My coaches saw that I had a passion for gymnastics and helped me find a path to stay involved with the sport for the long haul. After a trip to Ecuador as a teenager, where my training turned into coaching, I was committed. I enrolled in the gymnastics coaching program at the University of Hannover. After I graduated, I did have to make a choice because I have a second degree, but I love gymnastics. Coaching is what my heart tells me to do.

Jeff: While I was on the team I slowly started to realize how well I understood the physics of the sport. I started to enjoy helping my teammates get better, and I really enjoyed trying to learn how to communicate to each of my teammates. I also saw how Mark's influence, as a coach, affected me personally. I finally started to understand all of the life lessons that gymnastics teaches. All of this coupled with the fact that gymnastics is, and has been, my life, led me to want to not only help create world-class gymnasts, but to help these athletes grow into world-class people in the process. I knew for sure that I wanted to coach for the rest of my life before I left the team in 2009 to direct a Boys Team myself.

What motivates you on a daily basis?

Giancarlo: When I walk into the gym I have the sense that I can be better today than I was yesterday. I don't think I have reached my full potential of how I can transmit my knowledge to my students and I don't know if I ever will, but I know there is always room to improve. I know the moment I don't have this drive within me, I think I would be coaching without a goal and that scares me. As long as I have a path, which for me is being better than I was the day before, it makes it so interesting for me as a coach.

Jeff: I am motivated by the personal relationships developed each day through my participation in this sport. I'm motivated by the daunting task of keeping this team climbing the ladder of success, but the thing that motivates me the most is that now I get to help carry on the legacy that the late Dr. Hughes began back in 1950, and that Mark Russo continues to this day.

How do you want to impact the team? What do you bring to the team?

Giancarlo: I want to be able to bring all my knowledge and all my experience that I have from these different countries together. I really want to carry on Mark's tradition by continuing his work of making this team a successful and stand-out club team in the nation. I want us to be one of the best teams in the nation. Why not the best team in the nation?

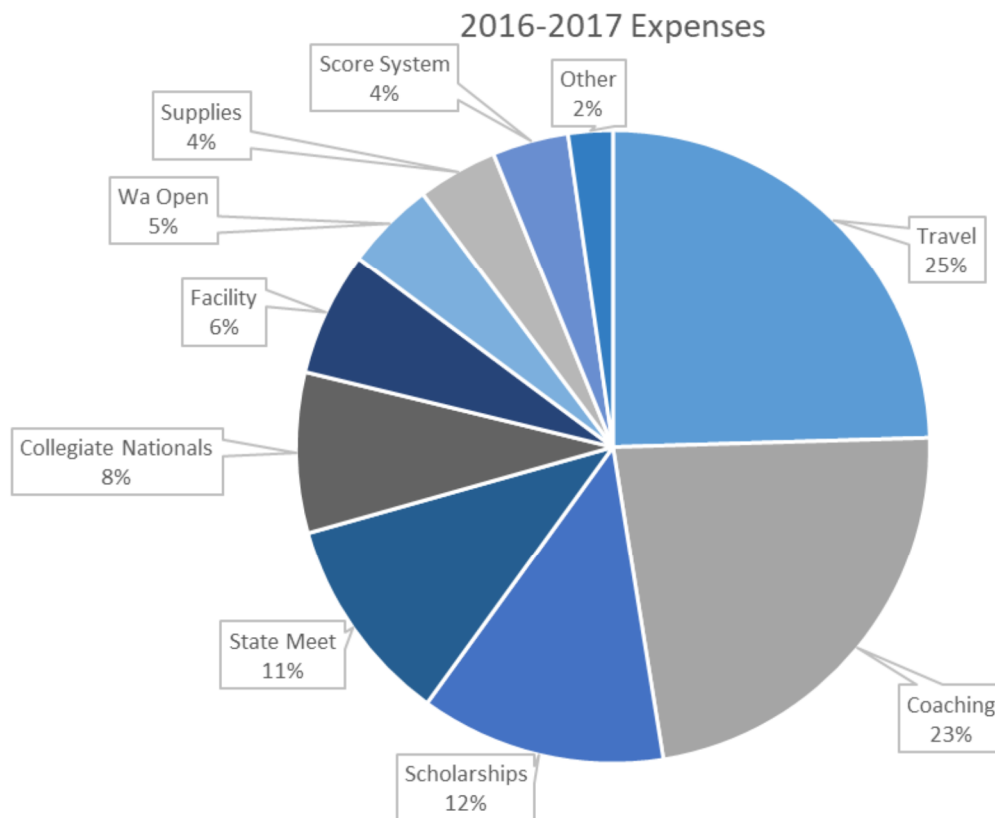
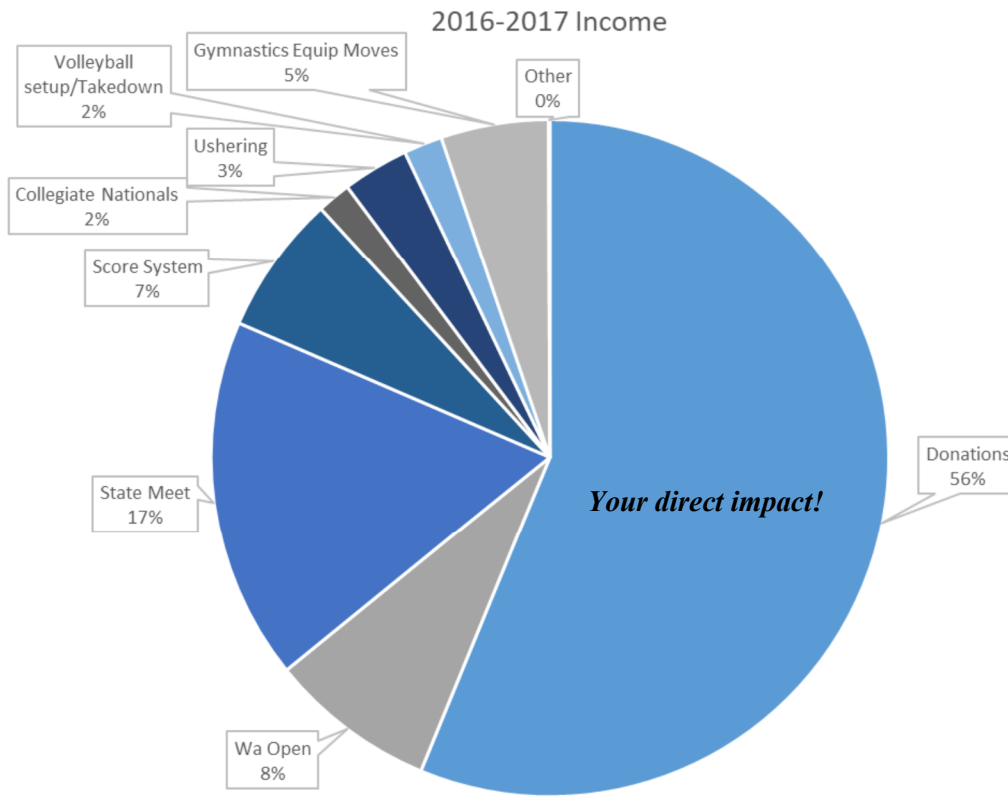
Jeff: I want to bring my recent coaching and training experiences from the Future Stars and Junior National Team programs, and the experiences I had as a UW Team Member, to help these athletes reach their full potential as gymnasts while balancing school, fundraising, and personal life.

What unique skills or traits do you bring to this job?

Giancarlo: I tend to be pretty outspoken; or at least, I like to speak out loudly. I am very competitive and I have a German need to stick to a schedule. I have always had an interest in technology and like to find ways to incorporate some new gadgets into the gym experience to be efficient. Sometimes I bring MuscleMilk to the team and they love it.

Jeff: Having been a member of this team, I feel I have a unique understanding of what is required of these young men, and the toll it can take. I'm also the Washington State Chairman for USA Gymnastics and a certified judge, so I can help the team stay connected and informed with the larger gymnastics community.

2017 Annual Report



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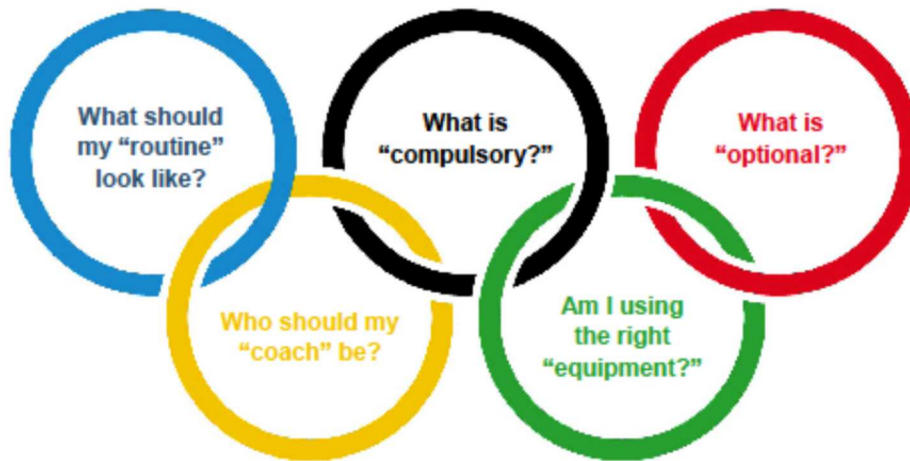
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Mark K. Oliver
President & Founder - Senior Wealth Advisor
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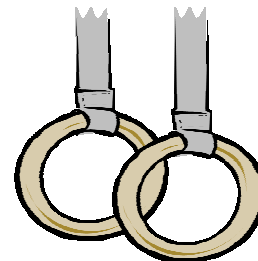
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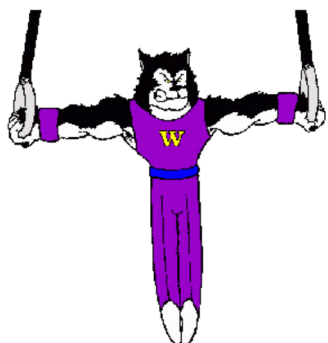
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December 7, 2017

2017-2018 Meet Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>January 7</i>	<i>7:30pm</i>	<i>Washington Open</i>	<i>Marv Harshman Court Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 13</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open At Air Force with ASU, Oklahoma, Ohio State, and Olympic Training Center</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>January 27</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Stanford Open at Stanford with Cal</i>	<i>Burnham Pavilion, Stanford Univ. Stanford, CA</i>
<i>February 10</i>	<i>4:00pm</i>	<i>Pac 12 Meet at Stanford with Cal and ASU</i>	<i>Burnham Pavilion, Stanford Univ. Stanford, CA</i>
<i>February 24</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>Sun Devil Classic at ASU with So Cal, Temple, and Oklahoma Club Team</i>	<i>Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass Chandler, AZ</i>
<i>March 10</i>		<i>tentative</i>	
<i>March 24</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>at Cal with ASU</i>	<i>Haas Pavilion University of California, Berkeley</i>
<i>March 30-31</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>USA Gymnastics Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, CO</i>