

# WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

March 8, 2019

## Mid-Season Update

by Giancarlo Mora

Hello Husky fans, hello family!

We started the season with a strong performance at the Washington Open scoring 376.300, just 3.75 points behind first place, where we won two events in the overall competition (floor and vault). After such a great start to the season, it was time to head on Jan 19th to the Windy City Invitational in Chicago to have the opportunity to compete on the same stage with the University of Illinois at Chicago, to once and for all get clarity on the rankings. At this matchup, not only did the Huskies finish victorious in head-to-head competition (12.900 points ahead) between our team (370.150) and UIC (357.250), we also finished ahead of 10th ranked Iowa on vault, 68.500 to 67.050! The Conference of Champions was our next stop; PAC-12 came along on Feb 2nd with a season-high score so far of 376.800 points for our team.

### FIVE UP FIVE COUNT

As you know, a team score is made up of the addition of five gymnast's scores on all six events. However, six gymnasts are allowed to compete on every event at the beginning of the season, where the lowest score on each event is dropped from the math.

The Sun Devil Classic, on the last weekend of February, has traditionally been our first meet of the season with the five-up-five count format, and not having that one joker per event plays an important role in the

## 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.



Freshman Oscar Hemmert

Photo credit: Cameron Oliva

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ability to keep nerves calm. On Feb 23rd we came in second in our GymACT conference, scoring 375.950 points. In addition, team captain Nathan Tsuji brought home the floor title (13.800) and the Gymnast of the Week Award. Other honorable mentions include pommel horse second places from Tsuji and freshman Jared Danek (12.800); second and third place on parallel bars by Michael Sibley (13.150) and Jacob Jarrett (12.950) respectively; and freshman Oscar Hemmert's second place on high bar. In addition, the Huskies won rings and parallel bars in the overall competition.

The team is looking forward to Nationals to have the opportunity to compete on the same stage with Springfield College, whose team is currently ranked one place ahead of us. Although one meet might not be enough to upset the rankings, the Huskies are looking forward once again to set things clear once and for all between our teams' scores.

We will face Air Force on March 23rd in our preparation for Nationals, and on Sunday, March 10th Cal Berkeley (rank 10) will be visiting us at the Alaska Airlines Arena on UW Campus. This promises to be one of the most exciting meets of the season and we hope you can be there showing your support.

Go Dawgs!



# Senior Perspective: An interview with Team Captain Nathan Tsuji

by Jeff Crockett

## Why did you choose to join the Washington Men's Gymnastics Team ?

I wanted to continue my career as a gymnast but didn't want the restrictions and limitations of an NCAA team. This team allowed me to compete while pursuing my interest in becoming a performance artist. Finishing up my fifth year now, I couldn't be happier with my decision. .



## What did you expect from your experience here on the team, and have those expectations been met ?

I honestly wasn't sure what to expect, I had been a "single" gymnast my whole life and was excited to have the chance to train with a team. My expectations were exceeded, the support and camaraderie is like nothing I had ever experienced. Nothing compares to training with a group of like-minded, motivated teammates.

## How has the team changed since your freshman year ?

Almost everything has changed from my freshman year. We started out with seven guys traveling to compete, now we have increased to training 17 guys. Mark was the one and only coach my freshman year. My sophomore year Giancarlo was introduced, and now he is head coach with Jeff as assistant coach. The training schedule and how line-ups are determined have also changed. I have enjoyed all these changes and still get to yell at Mark when he comes into the gym to work out, so it's been a very positive experience even with all the changes.

## What is your most memorable experience during your time on the team ?

I think my most memorable experience on the team was missing our flight to ASU, hopping on another one, only having 20 minutes to warm up all-around, and then posting up the highest team score in UW history!

## What does it mean to be a senior athlete ?

As a senior athlete, I feel like I have more responsibility to make sure the underclassmen can benefit from the experience I've had on the team. It also is really fun because at this point, I pretty much know what's going on in the season and can more easily get into the groove of competition.

I also feel the responsibility to help my teammates communicate with the coaches and bring their thoughts and feelings forward when they might be hesitant to do so otherwise.

## What would be the most important piece of advice you could give an incoming freshman?

Take vitamin D! These years are going to go by fast, but treat each year as if it's the only one you'll get, because you don't ever really know if you'll make it to next season.



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Nathan at the 2019 Washington Open

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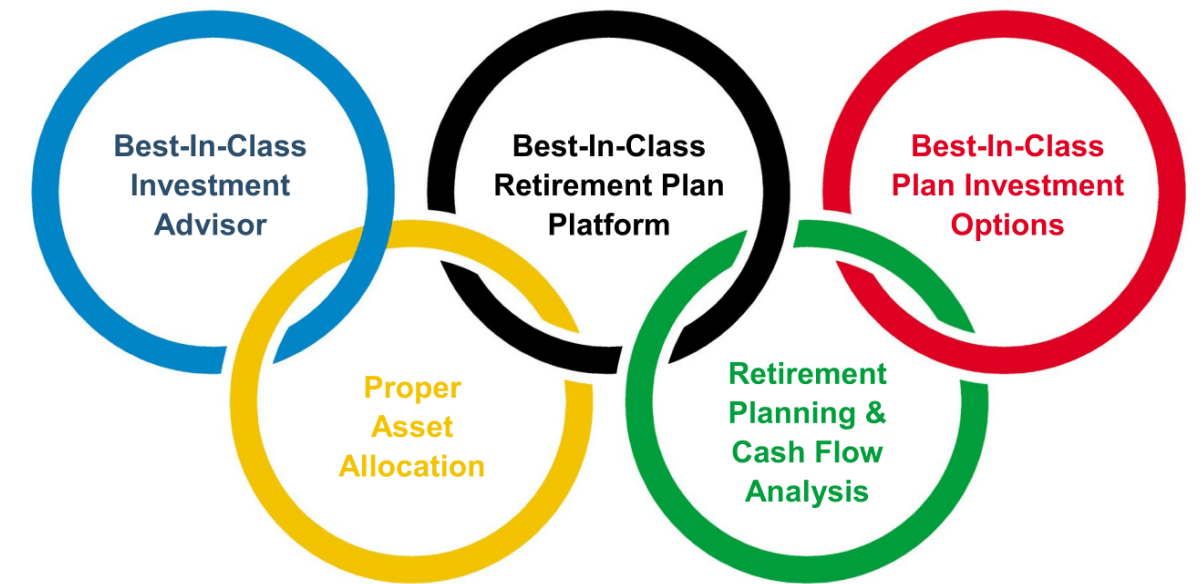


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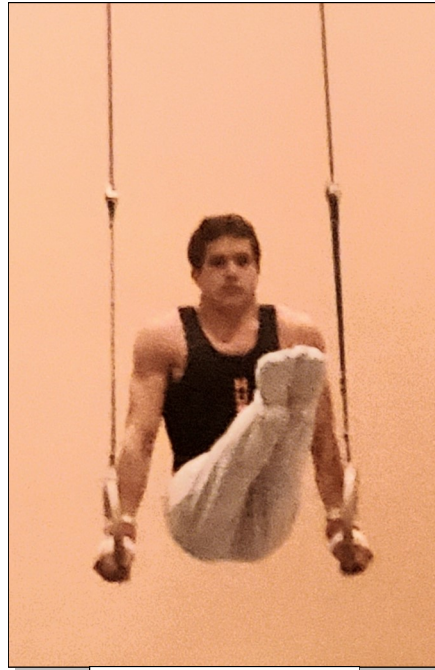
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# Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky alum Mac Smith

by Mark Russo

I recently caught up with teammate and 1980-85 Husky Gymnastics Team Captain Mac Smith. Mac was the leader of our team in many ways. His freshman year saw the last team to be funded by the UW Athletic Department. Then the infamous program cut happened, but Mac stayed with the team. He set up home for us as a club sport in the Intramural Activities Department of the UW and was absolutely the most dedicated, hard-working, and influential team member during those first five years of self-funded teams. It is with great respect and admiration that I can say without a doubt that Mac changed my life for the better by convincing me to join the team back in 1980. Who he was during those years on the team is who he continues to be: a leader, a hard worker, and a humble friend willing to help all who need. Thank you Mac for your continued support of the team!



Mac competing at Hec Ed

I'm currently a 20.5-year veteran at Amazon.com. Having started shipping packages to customers in the fulfillment centers back in 1998 during those early, chaotic years of the company's growth, now I and a team of 700 support global authors and publishers of all sizes sending us their content for millions of Kindle e-books and Print-on-Demand physical books.

I've stayed at Amazon for so many years because I learn every day - about how to innovate on behalf of customers, how to build for the long term, and how to assemble a team of people smarter than I who constantly challenge me to be better.

Thriving off this kind of constant daily challenge is what I got out of athletics my whole life, and it was never more prevalent than in gymnastics. I was a competitive swimmer at age five, but then in 9th grade I noticed my brother John doing this 'gymnastics thing' and I started Saturday classes with Dr. Hughes to learn the basics. I had zero natural talent, but kept grinding away at every challenge on every event. Dr. Hughes encouraged me before high school, Jim Lang and Mace Brady in high school, and Dick Foxal and Gordy and Kevin Bylin in college. They showed me that I could accomplish anything if I worked hard enough at it. It took me a year, but

I finally learned an iron cross for compulsories (a real one....no false grip!) as proof. This appreciation for the challenge of athletics led me to volunteer for the Special Olympics last year where I was wowed by the talent and perseverance of those athletes.

One of my most memorable challenges was when the club, as an entity in its first year, was hanging by a thread. We had gone away for a weekend meet and come back to find our equipment taken down and dumped out in the hall, replaced by women's equipment. We were being evicted without notice. The team and I made the decision to take the women's gear down and put ours back up; and I remember the angry stare-down with the women's coach at the next day's practice. We would not go without a fight was the message delivered, and the club remains to this day.

Besides the skills to take on challenge after challenge, the other life-long gift I've gotten out of gymnastics is the friendships. Many of us lived together, went to school together, and worked out together. We've tackled our individual and collective challenges together and still do. I know I could call on any one of my fellow teammates now if I needed help and they would come running. We see each other and it is like no time has passed. It is truly a gift.

And that is why I continue to contribute to the team: in the hopes that the young men following in the program that I and others helped start can experience those same life-altering events and make those same lifelong friendships, so that they too become sponsors - and that the men's gymnastics seed planted back in 1980 in the ashes of the great UW varsity program can live on for years to come.



# THANK YOU!

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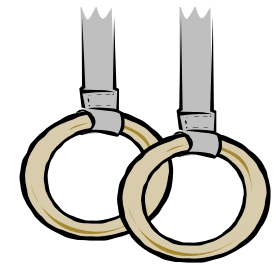
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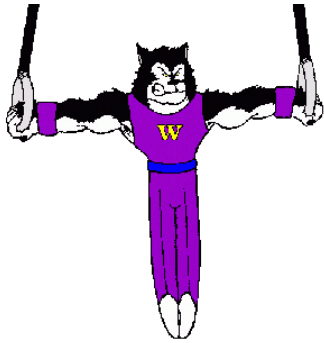
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Your 2018-2019 Huskies at this year's Washington Open

Photo credit: Cameron Oliva

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5529 27th Ave. NE  
Seattle, WA 98105



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

March 8, 2019

## Washington Men's Gymnastics 2018-2019 Meet Schedule

(local meets in bold)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>January 5</i>	<i>Washington Open, with ASU &amp; NorCal</i>	<i>Marv Harshman Court Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 19</i>	<i>Windy City Invitational at UIC with Illinois, Oklahoma, Ohio State, Iowa, Minnesota</i>	<i>UIC Pavilion Chicago, IL</i>
<i>February 2</i>	<i>PAC-12 Invitational at ASU with Cal, Stanford</i>	<i>Tempe, AZ</i>
<i>February 14-16</i>	<i>Winter Cup</i>	<i>South Point Hotel Casino Las Vegas, NV</i>
<i>February 23</i>	<i>Sun Devil Classic at ASU with SoCal</i>	<i>Rawhide at Wild Horse Pass Chandler, AZ</i>
<b><i>March 10 2:00pm</i></b>	<b><i>vs Cal</i></b> <i>Watch on Facebook livestream!</i>	<b><i>Hec Edmundson Pavilion Seattle, WA</i></b>
<i>March 29-30</i>	<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>US Naval Academy Annapolis, MD</i>

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