

WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

May 3, 2019

Season Review

by Giancarlo Mora

The last couple of weeks have been both busy and exciting as you can imagine; but it is now that I am finding a quiet moment to share with you the culmination of such a great season.

The 2018-19 season was a growing one and the work that all of these guys put in, both inside and outside the gym, was incredible; and that work is not finished yet.

After scoring last season consistently in the 50's on pommel Horse and high bar, we knew that we wanted to invest a lot of time and effort to improve these scores. I'm proud to say that we did so – without neglecting our strongest tumbling events. Vault remained at place 16 in the national rankings and a very proud ranking of 14 (!) on floor exercise can give you an idea of these guys' hard work.

And that hard work paid off. The Huskies scored above 60 points at four meets on pommel horse and three times on high bar this past season. See table below.

At USAG Collegiate Nationals at Navy (Annapolis, MD) we claimed the second place title. In addition, we qualified four gymnasts for Event Finals. Senior Nathan Tsuji and sopho-

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.



Michael Sloat at UW vs Cal

WMGF Board of Directors

Officers

Rick & Michele Chapman. Co-Presidents
 Joel Hennig..... Vice President
 Mark Russo..... Program Chief
 Peter Sawyer..... Secretary
 Daniel Luna..... Treasurer
 Graham Smith-Gordon.... Press Secretary
 Ben Fisher..... Team Liaison
 Nathan Tsuji Team Liaison

Members-at-Large

Paul Roggenkamp Kevin Beder
 Dave Nakanishi Ronald Maybruck
 Mace Brady Jon Chapman
 Jennifer Umemoto Mike Sibley
 Eugene Burton-Breazeal

Newsletter Editor..... Daniel Luna

E-mail: team@wmgf.us

Web: www.wmgf.us

more Kody Dominguez on FX, and juniors Conner Petellin and Ben Bloom qualified themselves for PH (!) and HB (!) respectively. Nathan Tsuji came back with All-American titles on FX and in the AA.

Further, Nathan Tsuji was elected by all collegiate coaches to be the winner of the very first Naseeruddin-Natalie Award, aka the N2 Award. The N2 Award was born out of the need to recognize the accomplishments of an outstanding senior collegiate gymnast. These amazing athletes are ineligible for consideration for the NCAA's Nissen-Emery award due simply to the fact that they are not members of a varsity-level program. In addition to honoring athletic achievement, the N2 Award recognizes sportsmanship, community service, and leadership or overcoming an adversity while maintaining outstanding performance. Congratulations, Nathan!

It is always hard to see our seniors depart. Although we know that gymnastics will remain part of their lives for a long time, we will greatly miss Nathan Tsuji and Ben Fisher at the end of this season. We wish them well in their coming endeavors, knowing that once a Husky, always a Husky.

Rank	Event	5-Jan	19-Jan	2-Feb	23-Feb	10-Mar	23-Mar	29-Mar
14	FX	64.15	64.25	67.25	62.85	68.05	67.35	65.25
17	PH	60.25	55.45	56.35	60.55	62.50	60.60	58.45
17	SR	61.80	60.25	64.30	62.25	66.25	63.40	59.05
16	VT	67.80	68.50	66.85	66.05	68.55	67.05	67.10
17	PB	62.80	63.45	63.45	63.60	65.65	61.85	62.45
17	HB	59.50	58.25	58.60	60.65	62.30	58.50	62.30
17	TEAM	376.30	370.15	376.80	375.95	393.30	378.75	374.60

Where Are They Now? An interview with Husky alum Jeff Robinson

by Mark Russo

I recently had the chance to catch up with Jeff Robinson, U.S. Army (Retired), while he was on the road for work. Jeff was on the team from 1981 through the PAC-10 Championship in March, 1986. He redshirted during the 1982-83 season to attend the U.S. Army Intelligence Officer Basic Course at Fort Huachuca, AZ. Like many of us, Jeff did not have much background in gymnastics until he joined the team. Then he became a big part of everything that it is to be a Husky. Jeff resides in Tucson, AZ nowadays. Here is how he got there.

What have you been up to since your time on the team?

I retired as a Colonel from the Army on March 1, 2013 at the age of 49. I spent 30 years, 9 months and 17 days serving our country as a reservist, National Guard soldier, and active-duty Intelligence Officer. When I retired, I put everything into storage and just started driving. I ended up in Phoenix, AZ at an insurance claims association Christmas party and was offered a job in Tucson. I eventually ended up handling commercial property claims for Liberty Mutual. My territory includes Arizona, South of Phoenix, Southern New Mexico including Las Cruces and Alamogordo, and El Paso, Texas. I work from home when not on the road; it keeps me occupied until I decide not to work anymore. To this day, I think of my time on the team a lot. It was an awesome experience and prepared me to be successful in life; to always strive to do the best you can in each role you are assigned.



What would you say is the most important thing you have learned in your time in service of the country?

If you have a pail of water and put your hand in it, you affect all the water that is around your hand. When you pull your hand out, the water goes back to the way it was prior to putting your hand in. Life is like this. Each of us has the ability to affect what is around us when we are in any given situation. It is up to us as individuals to decide how we are going to affect those around us. For me, I have always tried to be the best I can be in every role I was assigned. Some days I did better at it than others, but positive attitude and determination were key no matter how bad things got. Hopefully I left every situation a little better than when I arrived.

How has your life been influenced by your time on the team?

Gymnastics is an individual sport but as a member of a team, you are an integral part of that unit. One year, Coach Jim Holt gave us each a carabiner and stated that like carabiners, we are individual units; but when put together, we are a strong chain. In the military and in life in general, we are all individuals. It is what we do as individuals that contributes to the success of the team, community, country, and family.

Tell us a memorable moment from your time on the team.

The blizzard on the January drive to Eastern Montana University in Billings, where the state patrol closed I-90 in Missoula and forced all cars off the road. Most cars stopped at the first place they could, which was a jam-packed 7-11 store. From there, the team sent out scouts in pairs, so as to not get lost in the blizzard, to look for a hotel to stay the night. Another memorable road trip moment was the team van driven by Rob Lunke getting pulled over by the state patrol at a rest area. The officer had Rob pour out the beers we had – and he did so accidentally on the officer's shoe. Not good!

And finally, when the team was at Stanford. All the guys were off-campus exploring Stanford's Ave area and stopped for ice cream at Baskin-Robbins 31 Flavors. When they finished, I suggested that everyone line up in front of the counter and do a handstand. The door was open so I started calling cadence and the team, as one unit, started marching on their hands out the door, turned right, and continued down the street.

How do you feel about the team now?

The organization has grown beyond anything we could have imagined back in the early 1980's. I don't think someone like me, with no formal gymnastics training, could walk on to the team today and be able to start competing. With the dedication of those that have built the organization, and our future gymnastics alumni, I see the UW becoming a powerhouse in gymnastics at the Olympic level, like UCLA was back in the early 1980's.

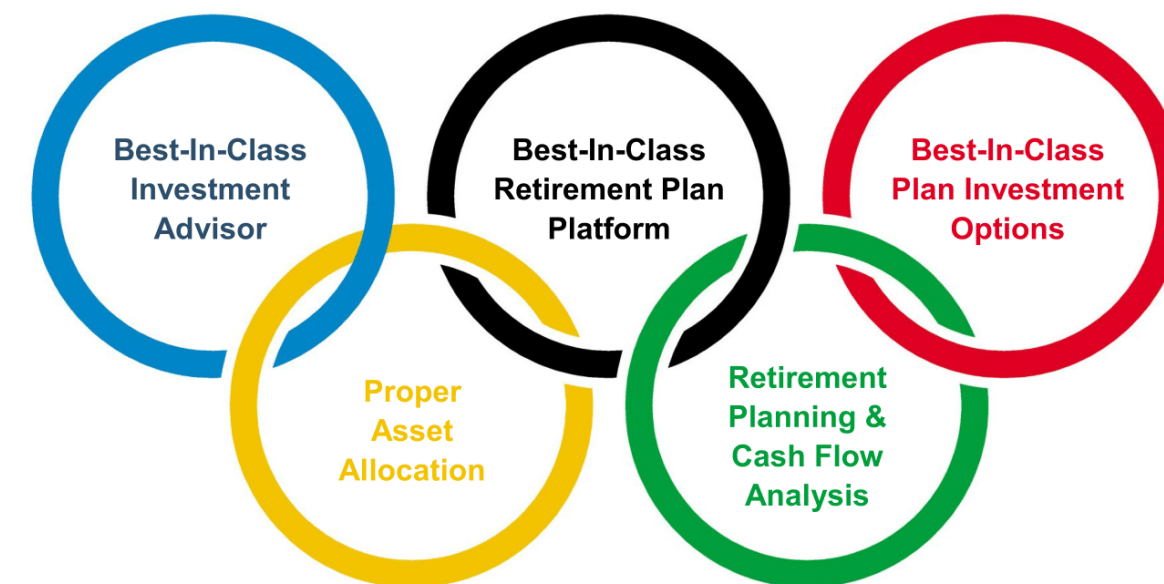


Jeff has two sons, Corey and Bryan. Bryan, his youngest, is pictured here twice. One is from his basic training graduation and the other after he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant with his dad and dad's girlfriend. Jeff stays active playing softball several times a week and vintage baseball on Saturdays. He likes to read books by author David Baldacci and enjoys being outdoors year-round in Tucson. Jeff can be reached at Colonel1731@yahoo.com.



Oliver Capital Management, Inc.
COMPREHENSIVE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

How does your 401(k) plan stack up?



Contact Mark K. Oliver for a personalized review of your 401(k) plan

Oliver Capital Management, Inc.

TWO UNION SQUARE
601 Union Street - 42nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98101
Phone: 206.652.3500
mko@olivercapital.com
www.olivercapital.com



Mark K. Oliver

President & Founder - Senior Wealth Advisor

Copyright © 2003 - 2016 Oliver Capital Management, Inc.

Meet the Team: Departing Senior Ben Fisher

by Jeff Crockett

Why did you choose Washington when considering schools for your future?

My main reason for coming here, aside from the fact that it was fairly close to home, had to be the connections I'd already created with the Washington Men's Gymnastics team throughout my JO career. I knew of Mark Russo and Jeff Crockett from the time I was a Level 4 at Oregon Gymnastics Academy since they both would come down for our annual northwest gymnastics training camp. I also saw the growth of the Washington team competing at the Washington Open every year. By the time I was in high school, looking for potential teams to continue my career, Washington was at the top of the list.

Most memorable moment from your years on the team?

Throughout my four years on the team I had plenty of memorable moments, but none stand out more than having the chance to watch and train with some of the best gymnasts in the world. During my sophomore year on the team we flew to Tsukuba, Japan, where we stayed for a little over a week. We had a chance to experience the culture, create friendships, train with a local team, see some sights, and cheer for some of the best gymnasts in the world at a high-level competition. At one point during the meet, Kōhei Uchimura was competing on pommel horse. As soon as he saluted for his routine the entire stadium, full of a few thousand viewers, fell silent out of respect. It wasn't like in America where people say "a hush fell over the crowd," this was something entirely different that I don't think I'll have another chance to experience in my lifetime. In a stadium that would have been reserved for a sport like basketball in the U.S., the moment the best in the world starts a pommel routine, you could've heard a pin drop. The routine lasted less than a minute, the only sound being the rhythmic beat of Uchimura's hands on the horse, but it felt like a year by the time he finished his dismount. Once he was done it was like a spell had lifted and everyone went back to cheering, ending a moment that gives me chills to this day.

How have your experiences helped prepare you for the next phase of your life?

My time on the team has prepared me for the next phase of my life in several ways. While I'd already gained some time management skills during my early experience with gymnastics, I definitely had to refine those skills during my college career, in an effort to manage jobs, equipment moves, workouts, homework, classes, and a social life. During equipment moves specifically, I gained management and project planning skills that I know I will use daily in the jobs I'll be pursuing with my degree in business. One of the more important experiences that I know will improve the next phase of my life is all the friendships I've made and people I've met throughout the last four years, both in and outside of the gym.

Tell us about your experience as Athlete Representative for both the WMGF Board and the USA Gymnastics Collegiate National Board.

During the 2016-17 season I was elected Collegiate Athlete Representative for the USA Gymnastics Collegiate National

Board, in part due to my contributions as an athlete representative for the Washington gymnastics team on the WMGF Board in the months prior, while helping to set up collegiate nationals since we were hosting that season. I honestly felt like I made more of a difference in the gymnastics community on the WMGF Board than I did as the collegiate athlete rep. for USAG. As collegiate athlete rep. I felt like USAG created the position not because they valued my opinion but because they needed an excuse in case someone complained about not having representation. Sure I was designated to "represent" the teams, and reelected the following year because of the "great job" I'd done the year prior, but I didn't know what each team actually wanted any more than the coaches of each team did, who were already at every meeting I was expected to attend. It was nice to feel like I had the power to make change, but it wasn't anything compared to my position as athlete rep. on the WMGF Board. At that table people valued my opinion, knew who I was, and my voice made changes. Changes that affected not only the our gymnastics team, but the gymnastics community as a whole. The same can't be said of the USAG Collegiate National Board.



What is a piece of advice you would give incoming freshmen?

Your experience on this team is what you make of it, and that all comes down to communication. Let the coaches know where you're at mentally and physically as often as you can. If you don't feel like you should be on a specific event or doing a specific skill, you're not going to improve on that event or that skill, and the coaches need to know that. If you're injured or you think you might be, let the coaches know, because a lot of the stuff you're expected to do on a daily basis might make it worse. It's not just communication with coaches either. Make sure you're communicating with the team as well. If you don't like how you're being treated or how someone is acting, discuss it with them or with your captains so changes can be made. Being on the Washington Men's Gymnastics Team can be an amazing experience, but only if you do the work to make it truly amazing. Which includes communicating.

How do you plan to stay connected to the gymnastics world after you leave the team?

I doubt staying connected to the gymnastics world after I leave will be all that difficult. Gymnastics creates bonds that last a lifetime, and once you're a part of the community, it's honestly difficult to leave. I still plan on coming in to work out with the team as often as I can, and I'll definitely try to come to as many Board meetings as possible. If nothing else, staying up-to-date with the team through social media has gotten easier just in the four years I was on the team, and I think it will be even better as time goes on. I may be leaving the sport of gymnastics, but I'll never leave the family gymnastics has given me.

THANK YOU!

To contribute, please clip and send this portion of the newsletter to:

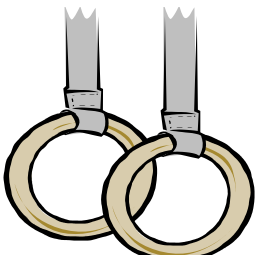
WMGF
5529 27th Ave NE
Seattle, WA 98105

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to WMGF in the amount of:

\$2,000 \$1,000 \$200 \$100 \$500 Other

Name and Address:
(if different from the label on the back of this page)

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____



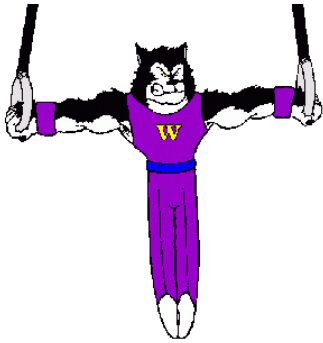
You can also donate through **PayPal** on our web site: www.wmgf.us

Comments: _____



This year's Huskies at our home meet against Cal

WMGF
5529 27th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105



In This Issue...

Season Review, Where Are They Now, and more...

May 3, 2019



Please join us for the 2019
Washington Men's Gymnastics
Team Banquet

Season re-cap! Slide Show! Dinner! Dessert!

HOLD THE DATE!

Date: Sunday, 5/12/2019

Time: 12:00pm

University of Washington
Waterfront Activities Center (*just*
south of Husky Stadium)

Contact e-mail: team@wmgf.us