

WMGF News

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March 12, 2020

Mid-Season Update

by Head Coach Giancarlo Mora

Hello Husky fans, hello alumni, hello family.

HIGHLIGHTS

- High score at Springfield College
- Gymnast of the Week Award presented to freshman Luka Sisauri
- Washington representation at Winter Cup by Team Captain Ben Bloom

MID-SEASON REPORT

We started the season with a strong performance at the Washington Open scoring 382.050, in what it proved to be one of the most exciting men's collegiate gymnastics competitions we've had in Seattle in several years. This was not a meet for the faint of heart, scoring at the end of the meet a narrow 1.05 points behind first place. After such great start to the season, it was time to head on Jan 11th to the Rocky Mountain Open at Air Force where we competed on the same stage alongside the Universities of Oklahoma, Nebraska, Minnesota, and of course the host Air Force Academy. We knew that this was going to be a tough meet; not only because we were going to be measured against top-10 ranked teams, but also because back-to-back meets are difficult, and competing at 5,280 feet above sea level does not make it any easier. Nevertheless, the Huskies decided to fight to the end, scoring a solid 375.350.

But, injuries were going to take a toll on the team's performance

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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.



Freshman Luka Sisauri at WA Open

Photo credit: Cameron Oliva

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(366.400) on Feb 2nd at PAC 12. That is almost nine points lower than our previous meet, and over 15 points (!) lower than Washington Open's team score. However, if you know the Huskies the way I do, you know that this was nothing but the perfect opportunity to come together and show the gymnastics community what this pack is made of. The Huskies bounced back to score 375.550 points against 10th-ranked Minnesota on Feb 7th, and a robust – so far – **season high 382.900** points at Springfield College on Feb 16th regardless of injuries on back-to-back meets! What a team!

Individual performances stand out at this point in time, like the ones from freshman **Luka Sisauri** who had been putting top scores nationwide on pommel horse since the beginning of the season, causing media attention at CGA – Collegiate Gymnastics Association's website, week 7 review – and developing into "Gymnast of the Week Award" for week 7 presented by USAG for Luka's performance and hard work.

On Feb 20th we had Husky Team Captain **Ben Bloom** representing Washington at the, per invitation only, prestigious **Winter Cup Challenge**. Ben, who was drawn to present his routines right after **Sam Mikulak** (*Sam is ranked 7th worldwide in the all-around competition*), performed solid routines on floor and pommel horse, but missed the overall qualification for the 2nd day of competition. Nonetheless, we are

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very proud to count one of the best all-around gymnasts in the nation as one of our own!

FIVE UP FIVE COUNT

As you know, a team score is made out of the addition of five gymnast's scores on all six events. However, six gymnasts are allowed to compete per event and the lowest score is dropped from the math. This team score set-up goes on at all meets from the beginning of the season until mid-February at Winter Cup.

The Sun Devil Classic (SDC) at the end of February in Arizona has been traditionally the Huskies' 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 ability to keep nerves calm, as you can imagine. Keeping in mind that I am writing this letter on Feb 23rd, I am excited to see how we will score at this coming meet on Feb 29th, which will be the perfect rehearsal for Nationals; not only because this year's USAG Collegiate Nationals will be hosted by Arizona State University in Tempe, but also because the top five of the nine collegiate teams competing at the upcoming Nationals will come together on this weekend.

ONLINE LINKS

To read the latest Husky news, go to <http://wmgf.us/category/news-feed>

Visit our video gallery to review meets, interviews, and more under <http://media.wmgf.us>

To find weekly team updates, visit our Instagram and Facebook accounts under <https://www.instagram.com/washingtonmensgymnastics> and <https://www.facebook.com/washingtonmensgymnastics>

Go Dawgs!



Washington Open 2020

Photo credit: Cameron Oliva

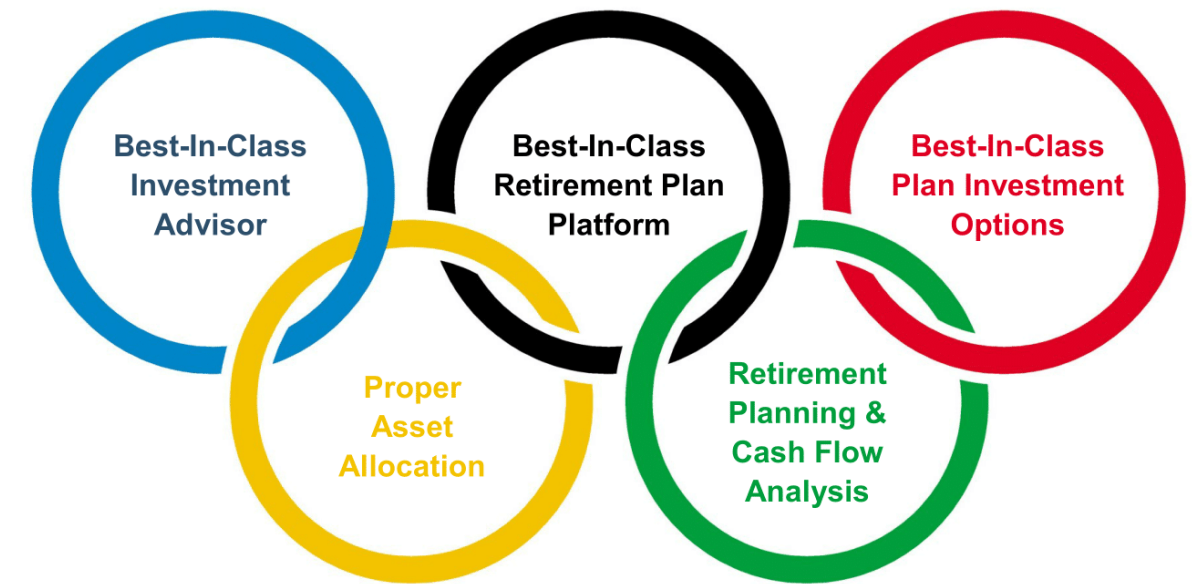


*Back: Assistant Coach Jeff Crockett, Kyle Hendren, Jacob Jarrett, Jared Danek, Luka Sisauri, Alex May, Ben Bloom, Conner Petellin, Adam Kerwin, Perry Lightfoot, Alex Forcos, Head Coach Giancarlo Mora
Front: Connor Pattison, Jameel Ali, Oscar Hemmert, Joseph Mischke, Daniel Gordon, Parker Calomiris, Michael Sloat*



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Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky alum Tony Yonemitsu

by Mark Russo

I recently interviewed former Husky gymnast Tony Yonemitsu (1982 - 86). Tony was our first really talented recruit on the club team after losing funding from the University. He played a big role in helping the team gain respect and hope for the future years to come. As well as being a dedicated husband, father, and King County paramedic for the last 27 years (recently retired), Tony is also a close friend. He and I have been fishing and mushroom hunting, as well as trading gardening advice, over that time period as well. He continues to support the team with generous donations and is always part of the circle of friends from his years on the team. We were lucky to get Tony on the team; he could have gone to a funded NCAA program but we are forever grateful he chose UW! Here is what he had to say.

My brief status update: I am newly retired as of June last year, mostly because I know you need someone to fish with! Nancy and I have been married 29 years now. Our daughter Marisa is 23 and son Mitchell is 20.

I retired from King County Medic One after nearly 27 years of medicine in the streets as a paramedic. The challenges of this job were at times difficult, and the level of expectation of the King County Paramedics was very high. My coworkers held each other to a level of skill that made King County one of the best places in the world to survive a cardiac arrest. The calm from our group was expected when families were experiencing the worst day of their lives. The ability to multitask was a skill learned very quickly, praise was not needed to be heard, and you knew if you did your work correctly. It was plain and simple: get the job done. The County was one of the best places I could have imagined to practice medicine for. One of the most influential people I have had the honor to be trained by was Dr. Michael Copass. He was in charge of training Seattle and King County paramedics during many of my years there. He expected nothing but our best to serve the citizens of the County.

My gymnastics career started in the 8th grade while attending Kent Parks and Recreation classes. There I was introduced to many of the older Kent Meridian gymnasts. I of course followed my brother Mike to classes, and eventually to the High School team. The Kent Meridian High School program was coached by fellow UW alum Günter Bohrmann, a very influential and excellent coach who expected nothing but our best effort. It was basically a college-level program in high school. Coach Bohrmann had progressions in line for every gymnast, index cards were the norm with skills and strength on each card... he managed our growth like no other coach I have had. His expectations were nothing less than a State Championship each year I attended. He coached numerous high

schoolers into All-Americans, with many going on to successful college gymnastics careers. Coach Bohrmann left me with many valuable life lessons.

My older brother Mike Yonemitsu was truly a role model for me of how hard work will yield success. He was a tireless gymnast, and I was often with him for his extra work in the gym (I had no choice - he was my ride home). Günter often had to tell him to stop so he could go home!

My college career started at the University of Washington in 1982 where I met the tireless core of the team: Mac Smith, Mark Russo, John Daley, and Matt Lyum. I started my career after these gents had kept the program alive; a thankless job of dealing with the IMA and other politics that I am forever grateful that they managed. Gymnastics at the U was difficult, as the coaching was not as structured as what I had experienced in high school - but with the help of UW alumni gymnasts like Kevin Bylin, and highly-energetic Cal gymnast Tim Slottow, we were able to gain some respect as the Program that Won't Die. Jim Holt managed many of the political issues with the UW while doing his best to coach us also. My teammates were very resilient, always teaching me to persevere, fostering an attitude of don't expect much but your efforts will be rewarded.

A memorable moment of mine was a team road trip to Montana which included staying in a house in Spokane. Matt Lyum had found the team a place to sleep before we continued on to Eastern Montana for a meet... imagine a gymnastics team showing up at some ungodly hour and camping out on your living room carpet. The owners of the house had to walk over and around us to go to work in the morning. Well, they were unbeknownst to me my future in-laws...! Yes, that was my wife's (Nancy) home in Spokane.

I am glad there is still a team that is continuing the gymnastics representing Washington, and that is growing. It is important for future generations to take up a very rewarding sport where you don't make millions, and don't have endorsements, but instead can be healthy for many years to come.

Alumni have done their best to continue being involved with their time and donations (which means I need to send my check in). I do feel it is important to remember and reflect on the difficulties of being a student athlete, but alumni support can and does help things be less difficult.

I do hope to see the team strive for more and continue to work hard as it will certainly pay off in life. To see the men's team return to being a top-tier national club team will definitely help introduce more to the sport.



THANK YOU!

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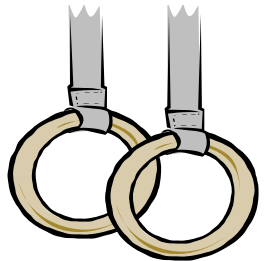
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Scenes from 2020 Washington Open



Oscar Hemmert



Alex May



Ben Bloom



Photo credits: Cameron Oliva

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In This Issue...

Season Preview, Alumni Update, and more...

March 12, 2020

Washington Men's Gymnastics 2019-2020 Meet Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>December 14</i>	<i>Purple vs. Gold Intrasquad</i>	<i>Cascade Elite Gymnastics Mountlake Terrace, WA</i>
<i>January 4</i>	<i>Washington Open, with ASU & NorCal</i>	<i>Marv Harshman Court Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 11</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open at USAF Academy, with Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma</i>	<i>Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>February 2</i>	<i>PAC-12 Invitational at Cal with Stanford & ASU</i>	<i>Berkeley, CA</i>
<i>February 7</i>	<i>at Minnesota</i>	<i>Maturi Pavilion, Minneapolis, MN</i>
<i>February 16</i>	<i>at Springfield College, with Temple</i>	<i>Springfield, MA</i>
<i>February 20-22</i>	<i>Winter Cup</i>	<i>Las Vegas, NV</i>
<i>February 29</i>	<i>at ASU with SoCal, University of Calgary</i>	<i>Chandler, AZ</i>
<i>March 27-28</i>	<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>Tempe, AZ</i>



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