

WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

December 16, 2003

Season Preview

by Mark Russo

The strongest recruiting class in many years! That is how I would sum up this coming season's potential. It has been nine years since a strong recruiting class has joined the team and I am extremely thankful for this year's six new team members! Wow! That's a whole team! I still can't believe it. Last summer, Husky Jeff Crockett (leading All-around performer) decided to really go on his Mormon mission this time, and he really did it by landing in Tokyo, Japan. Good luck to Jeff! It is sad for the Huskies, though. Jeff was our strongest performer and will be sorely missed. Stepping in to fill Jeff's shoes will be four freshmen, all from Washington State. Two of the freshmen won scholarships from the Washington Men's Gymnastics Foundation.

Stewart Renz, freshman from Spokane, was awarded the \$1500 newly created WMGF scholarship! Stu, as he likes to be called and spelled, is a solid gymnastics citizen. He has good basics and fundamentals to go with a strong work ethic. As Stu's strength comes on, I look for him to be one our key gymnasts. High Bar is his best event and I look forward to teaching him some amazing stuff!

Sean Liner won the Dr. Eric Hughes Scholarship. This scholarship, set up by Dr. Hughes, awarded \$1500 to Sean who matriculates to UW as one the most highly qualified student athletes on the team. Sean came up through Cascade Elite's

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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.



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gymnastics program and was originally coached by John Shiveley. Through his upper levels of age group competition, Darius Campbell and Wayne Kerr trained him. Sean is a crucial member of the team; he has four strong events and is close on a fifth. Look for Sean to break into the Elite ranks in two years!

Ryan Chriswell is a freshman from the Kitsap Peninsula. He trained with Ed Friedman at Mile High Gymnastics. Ryan has very explosive power and good form. His joints are bothering him a bit so we are going easy on training right now. I'm hoping his joints feel better soon because this guy can do some serious gymnastics. He will help the team on those events his body allows and I'm very excited to see his ability on display there.

The fourth freshman is Jesse Nevin. Jesse, like Sean, is also from CEG. Jesse is coming back to gymnastics after taking two years off. Jesse has all the tools to be a great gymnast, good basics, uncanny air awareness, and lots of courage to do the big moves. If all goes well for him, I really feel he can make Elite level also.

Also, out of the clear blue sky, two more gymnasts appeared. Joe Zhou joined the team in the spring of 2003 as a beginning level gymnast. Joe has learned much already and is a great addition to the team because of his great work ethic. Joel Hennig was voluntarily coaching Seattle U's women's club program at CEG when he noticed our

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Husky History: Don Smith

by Mel Cooley

I shared the gym with Don Smith at the end of his college competitive career and in speaking with him on writing this piece I learned that a few of us [older gymnasts] haven't entirely changed – thank goodness. Don is still a humble and modest guy who remains true to his life's passions, gymnastics, and art. And it is rare to come across someone that sincerely honors those of us who have had the pleasure of knowing him.

Don Smith has had a lifelong interest in gymnastics. His father introduced him to the sport. As a junior high schooler, he took classes through Kirkland Parks and Recreation, taught by Bill Crow and Dave Nakanishi. Since 1972, Don has been a proud charter member of the Sammamish High School Boy's Gymnastics Team. He was a rebel in his time – having started the program by petitioning school administration to equip the gym and hire Jerry Penny as coach. Like many of us, Don enjoyed giving back to the gymnastics community. As a college athlete, he taught youth classes on Mercer Island, for Bellevue Parks and Recreation,

and assisted Dr. Hughes' UW Saturday morning extension program. Unlike many, he traveled Europe after completing college and taught tumbling in Denmark. Channeling his wonderful sense of humor through a constructive outlet, Don also performed as a circus acrobat and clown. Fondly, some of us recall how difficult it was to concentrate on daily workouts without laughing at Don's latest wisecrack. Still, he would say that his daily efforts to obtain new stunts, and spotting others as they attempted new tricks were his greatest accomplishments, but we hold a different view. Don was a strong and consistent athlete, and a warm, thoughtful friend.

Don's artwork fed our collective heart and soul. We felt a genuine sense of pride turning out each day in the presence of his mural paintings that adorned the gym. The murals provided a fitting backdrop at home meets, and embodied what was truly great about UW gymnastics – we cared for and supported each other. Don's blue and white watercolor painting of a gymnast holding a perfect handstand on the parallel bars, or his rendering of the "old gym" invoked

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Season Preview

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team and decided to join. Joel had some competitive experience at the University of Texas where he was an undergraduate. Floor exercise is his best event and he will compete on that event for the team.

The team's balance of power remains in the upper classes. Scott Provence is coming off of a dynamite freshman year and will be the key member of this year's team. Scott is the team leader as he trains with a vigor and enthusiasm that is infectious to his teammates. His strength is just beginning to affect his gymnastics and this will help him through last year's small difficulties. Pommel Horse is his best event and that makes me smile!

Ben MacColl and Aaron Cole are the veterans. Their commitment and dedication to the team are second to none. Because of their age, they will be helping the team where and when needed. Later in the season, these two will play vital roles.

Graham Gordon and Jeff Fausz played crucial roles last year with Graham becoming an All-Arounder by season's end. Jeff looks to stay

healthier this season and compete on the Floor. Graham will most likely compete on five events and pick up the sixth if needed.

Our weakest event remains pommel horse. We will be challenged to get four scores without a fall. Floor looks to be our strongest, with high bar a close second. I am cautiously optimistic this season that we can be competitive with the middle echelon of NCAA programs. Our second meet in January will give us a good idea of where we stand.

We will potentially be attending two new competitions this season. One is the Pacific Coast Classic on January 24 in Oakland, California. This is a fundraising meet to support collegiate programs throughout the country. For the other, Minnesota is hosting a similar type of event near the end of February.

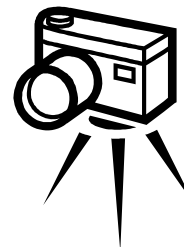
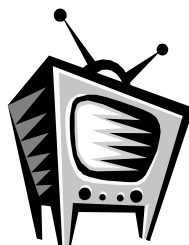
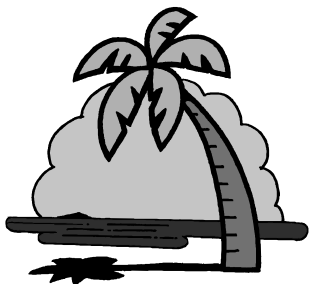
Our home meet is scheduled for March 27th, 2004 @ 7:30pm. Please come out to see the team and all the hard work we've been doing!

2003 WMGF RAFFLE

Tickets are now available for our 2003 raffle!

The drawing will be held on **Wednesday, December 31, 2003.**

First Prize:	One-week stay at Coral Baja Resort, Mexico
Second Prize:	5-inch Black & White TV/CD Player Combo
Third Prize:	Sonicare™ Toothbrush
Fourth Prize:	Argus™ Digital Camera



Tickets are \$5 each – all proceeds directly benefit Washington Men's Gymnastics

For tickets: contact **Rod Minaker** at **800-722-3487 ext. 2686**,
e-mail ossurkram@hotmail.com, or request tickets with the donation form on the following page.

Husky History

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a deep spiritual connection that remains with many of us to this day.

Don Smith lives in the Skagit Valley with his wife Cherie and two sons, Orion and Sy. He is the Senior Designer for Small Planet Foods, and continues to actively support gymnastics by teaching tumbling skills to elementary and middle school children. He still creates murals painting as a freelance artist (see www.wmgf.us). Don Smith's many wonderful traits and talents have had a positive influence on all of us, and we would like to remind him that he is held in the highest esteem.



Don in front of one of his more recent projects - a mural for the Sedro-Woolley Farmer's Market.

Meet the Freshmen

We asked the incoming freshmen to provide brief bios to introduce themselves to their Husky Gymnastics fans. Here are profiles of three of the latest additions to the team.

Sean Liner

I was born in Seattle on April 22nd 1985, and I haven't moved far. I have one brother named Devin who is three years younger than me. When I was in fifth grade we moved just north of Seattle to Shoreline. I started gymnastics as a four-year-old. When I turned eight, I began competitive gymnastics at Cascade Elite Gymnastics with John Shiveley as my coach. When I made it to Class 2 at age 14, Wayne Kerr and Darius Campbell began coaching me. I have competed at Nationals for the last three years, and have been awarded the National Academic All-American Recognition Award each time. I also won

a \$1500 scholarship from the Washington Men's Gymnastic Foundation. However, my gymnastics career has not been without its setbacks. I have broken both bones in my right arm and a bone in my right hand. I also spent most of last season out with a back injury. Right now though, I am healthy and looking forward to a great season as part of the Washington Men's Gymnastics Team.

Ryan Chriswell

My name is Ryan Chriswell and I am from Bremerton, Washington. My goal is to major in biology or microbiology and become a dentist, orthodontist, or radiologist. Other than gymnastics, I enjoy almost all other sports. I love to go wakeboarding and play indoor soccer. I also like European cars, movies, church, and hanging out with friends. My

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Your 2003-2004 Husky Men's Gymnastics Team

*Back row, left - right: Jeff Fausz, Joel Hennig, Stu Renz, Scott Provence.
Front Row: Sean Liner, Ben MacColl, Graham Gordon, Ryan Chriswell*

THANK YOU!

If you'd like to contribute, please clip and send this portion of the newsletter to:

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5529 27th Ave. N.E.
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Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution* to WMGF in the amount of:

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*Remember: if you wish to donate a stock or other security, please contact Dr. Hughes at (206) 632-2151 for details.

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Meet the Freshmen

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favorite movie is definitely Dumb and Dumber.

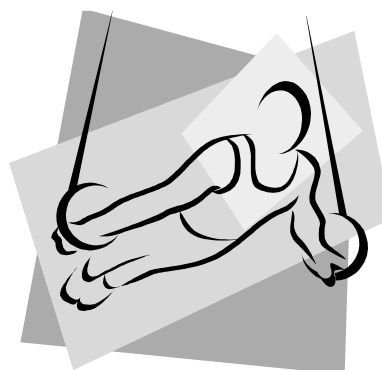
As for gymnastics, I started when I was ten years old and have taken some time off between then and now. I was coached by Ed Friedman and trained at Mile High gymnastics in Port Orchard, Washington.

Stewart Renz

I was born on February 9th, 1985 to my parents, Phil and Shelly Renz. I have three brothers and one sister. I started gymnastics when I was eight. Since then I have had three consistent coaches. Jason Baynes was my coach for the first three years of my gymnastics career. Mike Armstrong then coached me for three years. Finishing up the last two years of high school, Bud Lyonnais was my coach. If you passed first grade math, you'd see that that only adds up to eight years of gymnastics. For about two years, the men's gymnastics team I was on was left without a coach. We coached each other and helped out on spotting as much as possible.

In my gymnastics career, I have been invited to

compete at the Junior Nationals meet five times. Three of the years, I competed as part of the Region II men's team. Four of the years at Nationals, I received the All-American-Academic-Award. Gymnastics has taught me dedication and self-discipline, which has carried over into all aspects of my life.



WMGF
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Washington Men's Gymnastics

2004 Meet Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>January 3</i>	<i>Washington Open, University of Washington</i>	<i>Hec -Ed Pavilion Addition, Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 16, 17</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open, US Air Force Academy</i>	<i>Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>January 24</i>	<i>Pacific Coast Classic</i>	<i>Oakland, CA</i>
<i>February 6, 7</i>	<i>Winter Cup/Black Jack Invitational</i>	<i>Las Vegas, NV</i>
<i>February 14</i>	<i>Cardinal Open, Stanford University</i>	<i>Palo Alto, CA</i>
<i>February 21</i>	<i>Arizona State University</i>	<i>Tempe, AZ</i>
<i>February 28</i>	<i>Minnesota Invitational</i>	<i>Minneapolis, MN</i>
<i>March 27</i>	<i>Arizona State University, University of Washington</i>	<i>Hec -Ed Pavilion Addition, Seattle, WA</i>
<i>April 9, 10</i>	<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>Denton, TX</i>

Please contact Mark Russo for any updates: 206-524-9480 or ossurkram@hotmail.com