

# ◊ WMGF News ◊

www.wmgf.us

February 12, 2004

## Mid-Season Update

by Mark Russo

After three competitions, I have the unfortunate news that we are injured and unable to field a full team to date. With four more competitions, I'm uncertain as to whether we will be able to qualify to our collegiate Nationals. The injured include Ben MacColl (inflamed big toe joint), Scott Provence (bruised ribs), Graham Gordon (inflamed/bruised shoulder), and Ryan Chriswell (lower back pain). This adds up to 11 scores/routines per meet that are not being competed. Ouch! This is the first year that injuries have kept us from reaching our qualifying score. Though I am confident that we will get back at least seven of these 11 routines, I'm unsure as to how the team will score. At the very least, if we don't qualify as a team, we can still send individual qualifiers to nationals.

Our first competition of the season, the Washington Open, consisted of 250 age-group boys from around Region 2 and our team. This meet gets the season started for many gymnasts. We had just begun training routines at the time, so I was expecting some rough edges. This was the case with many of our performances, but there were some notable routines hit, as well. Most notably, Sean Liner's excellent High Bar set.

Our first away competition was at the the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. It's always cold

## 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.



*Husky Ben MacColl on Parallel Bars*

and dry there at this time of year. While our injuries kept us from being competitive as a team, there were good routines on Vault (Ryan Chriswell - nice laid-out Tsukahara), Pommel Horse (Stu Renz) and Parallel Bars (Ben MacColl).

Next, we headed to the first-ever Pacific Coast Classic, which was held near the end of January in Oakland, California. This competition began as a fundraising effort for the Men's Collegiate Gymnastics Foundation (a foundation organized much like the WMGF). It's great that our men's gymnastics community is finally doing something to ensure that gymnastics continues at a high level regardless of NCAA support. With

over 600 junior-level kids entered to compete at the Classic and five universities attending, it's off to great start. Highlights from our competition: Ben MacColl on Parallel Bars (the best routine I've seen Ben do!), Sean Liner on Floor Exercise, and Ryan Chriswell on High Bar.

We're all looking forward to having a healthy team for the rest of our season. We've got a lot of work to do, but these guys never stop working hard!

One final item: Please note that the date of our ONLY home collegiate meet this year will be on Sunday, March 21st, with competition beginning at 3:30pm. We hope to see you there!

## WMGF Board of Directors

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e-mail: [ossurkram@hotmail.com](mailto:ossurkram@hotmail.com)

## Meet the Freshmen

In our last newsletter, we featured bios by three of the team's incoming freshmen. Here are profiles of the remaining two "new guys" on the team.

### Joel Hennig

I was born in Colorado, but hail from the village of Little Chute, Wisconsin, where I spent most of my life. Little Chute is home of the world-renowned Great Wisconsin Cheese Festival. Little Chute and Simon's Cheese factory made history in 1988 by producing the world's largest cheese, Belle of Wisconsin – a 40,000-lb. World Record Mammoth Cheddar! While attending Little Chute High School, instead of competitive gymnastics I decided to run cross-country and track and field (hurdles and triple jump). I attended the University of Texas at Austin where I earned a Bachelor of Business Degree in Finance. While there, I decided to give gymnastics another shot and became the captain of the Longhorn Gymnastics Club. Hook 'em Horns! The Longhorn Gymnastics club competed in the NAIGC conference, which is the National Association of Intercollegiate Gymnastics Clubs. Some other schools that have clubs in the NAIGC include: Notre Dame, University of Illinois, University of Indiana, Syracuse, and many others.

I graduated from UT in 2001 and moved up to Seattle where I worked at The Boeing Company on the 777LR Airplane Program. I am currently in school earning my Masters Degree in Finance and hope to finish in early 2006. My best events are the Floor Exercise and Vault, which are what I will most likely be competing this year for the UW. I enjoy the Seattle music scene (especially punk) and volunteer at The Vera Project, which is a local, all-ages, not-for-profit music venue that is partially funded by the City of Seattle. My favorite bands are Pennywise, New Found Glory, MXPX, and Further Seems Forever. Oh, and my favorite movie is Jurassic Park (the original, of course).

### Joe Zhou

My name is Dejie Zhou. People usually call me Joe, which is my middle name. I was born in mainland China. I came to the United States when I was a junior in high school. I graduated from Chalmette High School in Louisiana and Shoreline Community College in Washington as an honor student. I transferred to the University of Washington afterward.

Besides gymnastics, I love ice-skating, skiing, and swimming. Before I came to the US, I had served on track teams for more than eight years. Among all the sports I have done so far, gymnastics is still my favorite sport since it makes me stronger, mentally and physically.



*Husky Scott Provenca on Pommel Horse*

## Our Support Comes In Many Forms

The Washington Men's Gymnastics team has been able to continue without funding from the UW athletic department for 23 years now. This would not be possible without the amazing network of support we have from the various people who have stayed involved with the program in one way or another. In addition to our many generous monetary donors, who provide us with a sizeable portion of our operating budget, there are many others who contribute their valuable time and effort to help see the team continue and thrive. We would like to highlight a few of them in this issue of our newsletter.

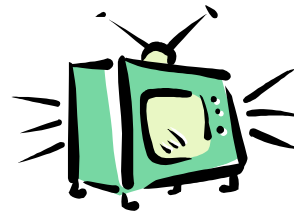
Aside from word-of-mouth, this newsletter is the main vehicle for disseminating information about the program. However, thanks to the efforts of Husky alumnus **Kevin Beder**, we've received more wide-spread publicity. Kevin worked to establish a relationship with a local television sports broadcaster, Michael King (of KING-TV), which has resulted in at least two televised interview/feature segments. He also was able to publish articles about the team in two issues of the widely-circulated *Big "W" Alumni Club News* publication. After that, he and Dr. Hughes collaborated to get the UW Daily to feature a story on the men's team—coverage that hasn't been provided in that medium for some time. Publicity and promotion are invaluable, and we are very fortunate to be able to get it arranged (for free!) by the selfless efforts of one of our most fervent supporters.

Members of the WMGF Board have also gone the extra mile for us. For the last two years, **Rod Minaker** has single-handedly launched our annual raffles and managed to get all the prizes donated. **Terry Vanderpham** has greatly helped our fund-raising efforts by masterminding concession sales at various local gymnastics meets. She also worked to get many items donated for the day-of-meet raffles at competitions we've hosted, and made several

media contacts in further efforts at outside publicity. **Paul Roggenkamp** is our tireless announcer at home meets, and has used his connections in area mall management to explore opportunities for the team to perform exhibitions. **Peter Sawyer, Jeff Johnson, and Daniel Luna** all contribute a significant amount of time and effort raising money and providing exposure for the program by running the WMGF's electronic scoring systems at area meets hosted by local gyms. **Mel Cooley, Dave Nakanishi,** and others who provide for many WMGF activities and help run the meets we host are doing a significant part to keep the program going strong.

There is one other person who has contributed more time and effort than everyone else put together: **Dr. Eric Hughes**. Let's just say he's done pretty much all of the above and more. We wouldn't be here without him.

Thanks to all! Such efforts and contributions help greatly and are truly appreciated.



*Editor's Note: We hope to have links on our web site to the stories in the above mentioned publications soon. Keep an eye on it: [www.wmgf.us](http://www.wmgf.us)*

## *The Illinois Connection*

By Dr. Eric Hughes

During my 28 years of coaching I had ten gymnasts from the state of Illinois – more than from any other state (more of my assistant coaches also came from Illinois than from any other state, including Washington.) California was second with nine and Oregon third with four. If you count foreign countries as states there were five from Norway, four from Japan, and three from both Sweden and Germany. A total of 20 foreign gymnasts came to Washington over the years, the rest coming from Finland, Canada, Denmark, and South Africa. I hope my memory has served me correctly on all these figures. If not, blame it on age – 80 on my last birthday.

Back to the Illinois connection: Why so many from that state? During most of my coaching years the two “hot beds” of gymnastics in the U.S. were the Chicago suburbs and the greater L.A. area. I made recruiting trips to these two areas almost every year. It was easier for me to recruit in Illinois than in most states because I had been a gymnast at Illinois and some of my teammates had become high school coaches there. In a recent phone conversation with Yoshi Hayasaki, he informed me that there are still 55 high school teams in the Chicago suburb area so it is probably THE hotbed in the country now. As a sidelight, I went to Japan to recruit Yoshi, and he became the best gymnast ever at Washington, winning two NCAA all-around titles and many individual events. Yoshi has been head coach at Illinois for many years now.

Bob Hall was my first Illinois recruit and the best. He reached second in the nation in the all-around and made the U.S. national team. You probably read about, and saw a photo of Bob in this Newsletter a little over a year ago. We were very sad to report that Bob had passed away at the age of 59. The others from Illinois, in order of appearance at Washington, were Ron Boyd, Norm Ewald, Bill Carpenter, Tom O'Donnell, Jay Clark, Steve Heard, Jim Grey, Steve Sos-

man, and John Maseng. Please let me know if I have missed anyone. Besides Bob, the only all-arounders were Ron Boyd and Jim Grey. Norm, Jay, Steve Heard, and John were specialists on pommel horse, Tom and Steve Sosman on rings, and Bill on horizontal bar.

I was stimulated to write about the “Illinois Connection” after visiting with Bill Carpenter and his family in Boulder, Colorado recently. Did some of your ears ring? We sure talked about many of you, not only those from Illinois, and hashed around old times. Bill is an attorney and doing very well. Before Bob passed away I saw him regularly and talked on the phone often. Occasionally, I have seen Jay Clark and John Maseng. It is disappointing that I haven't heard from the rest of you since I retired. How about doing something about that? Please give me a call at 206/632-2151 or email me at [gymcankay@hotmail.com](mailto:gymcankay@hotmail.com). Jim Grey and Steve Sosman don't even appear on our mailing list anymore. If anyone knows how to contact them please let me know.



THANK YOU!

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

**WMGF**  
**5529 27th Ave. N.E.**  
**Seattle, WA 98105**

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

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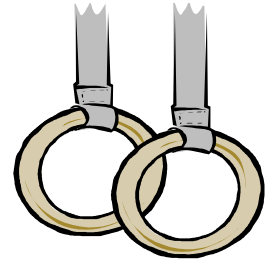
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### *UW vs. ASU Home Meet Rescheduled*

Due to a facilities conflict, we've had to reschedule our home meet with ASU. The date has been changed to **SUNDAY, MARCH 21, AT 3:30PM**. Please come and cheer on the 2003-2004 Husky Men's Gymnastics Team!



*Husky Senior Ben MacColl flying high above the High Bar at the US Air Force Academy for the Rocky Mountain Open*

WMGF  
5529 27th Ave. N.E.  
Seattle, WA 98105



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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 21 - 3:30pm</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, or check our web site: [www.wmgf.us](http://www.wmgf.us)