

WMGF News

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March 10, 2006

Mid-Season Update

by Mark Russo

Halfway through this season it is great to report to you that we have indeed unseated Arizona State as the top collegiate club team in the country not just once but twice!!! Not only that but we have defeated the Air Force Academy twice as well!! It's a strange experience to be on this side of the coin, but I'm getting use to it and liking it much more than that other side. It's about time anyway, as we were often close but never made it happen. Why now? Well it is evident that we have had the strongest recruiting class come onto the team this season and it has given us strength and depth on events where we used to take serious competitive losses. Rings and pommel horse were the two events where we would just get lambasted by ASU; now they are much more in line with the rest of our events. Hallelujah!! Now, on to the specifics.

Our first team competition was the Rocky Mountain Open at the Air Force Academy in early January. Due to a conflict with our equipment-moving schedule, we only took a skeleton team of 4 gymnasts – all competing all-around – to take on the ASU army of 18 men. If we could beat them, it would definitely get into their heads the next time we were to meet with a full team on our side. Well, that's exactly what happened. Our four top all-arounders, Jeff Crockett, Sean Liner, Graham Gordon, and freshman Joe Lawrence, did a great job gaining an insurmountable lead after our first event, vault, and it was clear sailing after

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.



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that. Of course, it helped tremendously that each guy did great on vault (where both Sean and Jeff qualified to finals). The consistency continued throughout the meet and when all was said and done, Oklahoma stood atop the awards stand followed by Nebraska, Washington, ASU, and Air Force. It was a great time to be a Husky. For me, it was something I had worked for since ASU joined the club ranks – and finally attained. Winning has never been my primary motivation, but it was intensely satisfying. ASU was shocked! That was very evident as we walked from the gym. Individually, freshman Joe Lawrence led the Huskies in the all-around, followed by Crockett, Liner, and Gordon. Liner, Crockett, and Lawrence each made finals and performed well.

On Super Bowl weekend we traveled to Las Vegas for the Winter Cup/Black Jack National Invitational, where Jeff Crockett would attempt to qualify for the US National Team. Unfortunately, he did not qualify but he did win the New Skills Competition by performing his original gymnastics move, the "Crockett," which is now on our website for your viewing enjoyment. It's amazing that a human can do this much skill!! But Jeff is an amazin', trail blazin' gymnast!! (Sorry for the new word in the rhyme). The New Skills Competition was started to try to get US gymnasts to think of and practice skills that have never been done before. Las Vegas, being the entertainment lollapalooza that it is, was

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seen as the perfect place to showcase these new talents. The stage was set after the Winter Cup Finals with a raucous crowd of 1500 gymnastics fans, all of whom were ready to see some crazy Venice-Beach-like antics from the four performers. First up, a gymnast from Temple University performed a wrong-way eagle-grip giant to gienger connecting to wrong-way eagle-grip giant to double-back dismount. Weird and incredible at the same time. He scored 9.60. Next up on the pommel horse, a gymnast from Cal performed a 540 degree kehre on one hand. For those of you who know what this is...Yikes! Difficult, and difficult!! He scored 9.65. Next up was a gymnast from Oklahoma who performed a triffus—or full-twisting triple back dismount—off high bar! Wow! He did it well, scored a 9.90, and the crowd went crazy! Last up was our very own Jeff Crockett. Nervous...? You bet!! Ready...? You know it! There he went. Front giant, the tap, the release to a sky-high laid-out front flip with two full twists and REATCH!!! The crowd goes ballistic and Crock celebrates with a wildly energized crazed-man dance out on the floor! It was a spectacular moment and one I will never forget. Crock scored a perfect 10 and won a leather jacket for his accom-

plishment. Not only that, it was one of the greatest moments for Washington Gymnastics publicity.

More recently, the team competed in the Pacific Coast Classic in Oakland. This competition pitted the Huskies against Temple, ASU, Air Force, and Waseda University of Japan. Washington finished third behind Waseda and Temple, but again silenced ASU and Air Force. The team was led by the consistent performances of Junior Sean Liner, who only had a minor error on Floor out of all his six routines. Freshmen Brian James, Denis Berry, and Alex Paek were also key players, leading the Huskies to their highest team score of the season.

Upcoming are two competitions with our key western foes ASU and Air Force, as well as UCLA, which seeks to begin a rebirth as club program like us. Cal and Stanford will also be in attendance. The second competition is the Southwest Cup at ASU and if we defeat them on their home turf, much rejoicing will be had.

Please take note that our only dual meet home competition will be April 1st on Hec Ed's main floor. Competition begins at 7pm – and it's free!! Bring all your friends and come see an event that you don't get to see very often. We've got something to show you. A defeat of ASU!



Your 2005-2006 Husky Men's Gymnastics Team

Left - right: Coach Mark Russo, Jeff Crockett, Joe Lawrence, Christian Stefonesku, Sean Liner, Graham Gordon, Denis Berry, Alex Paek, Brian James, Kevin Perkins.

The First Great Husky Gymnast

by Dr. Eric Hughes

Bill Crow was born in Seattle in 1937, attended Seattle schools and the U of W from 1956 to 60. He is now a healthy and active 68-year-old living in Kirkland.

In the spring of 1951, about six months after I was hired at the U of W, I started a boys gymnastic program on Saturday mornings through the UW Extension Department. Only five boys enrolled the first quarter but it only took a few quarters for the number to grow to the 100 we had first hoped to get. One of the original five was a thirteen-year-old named Bill Crow.

It was immediately apparent that this youngster had considerable gymnastic talent. As the children's program grew I hired assistants from my P.E. majors class and also took a chance on Bill even though he was only 13 years old. It turned out that he was a natural teacher.

In those days it was acceptable to invite non-students to take part in recreational activities on campus so I soon had Bill coming to my adult gymnastic club, which had been established in the fall of 1950. Bill and a couple of other talented youngsters from the Extension program also became regular members of an exhibition gymnastic group established to promote the sport around the state.

Bill was soon competing in Amateur Athletic Union (the National Governing Body in the fifties) competitions in our state and in British Columbia. Seattle high schools did not have gymnastic teams in the early fifties so his only training was through the U of W Extension program. By the time Bill was ready for college in 1956 the first U of W gymnastic team had been funded as a varsity sport

the year before. Bill joined the team in its second year and was the star as a freshman and for his entire college career.

After completing his eligibility in gymnastics he transferred to EWSC and got his BA in Education in 1966. In 1964 he married Carolyn Sue Eden. Bill and Carolyn are still very active in sports such as weight lifting, racquetball, hiking, skiing, and windsurfing.

Bill has pursued a variety of careers. He was a teacher and coach in the Lake Washington School District for 21 years, a commercial fisherman in Alaska, a real estate agent, and he ran an adult care facility. One of the stars on one of his Lake Washington gymnastic teams was Dave Nakanishi who later became an outstanding performer at the U of W. Dave is still active in Husky gymnastics as President of the WMGF.

While at the U of Dub Bill competed in the all round but was especially good in trampoline and tumbling which were two of the ten gymnastic events at the time. (The other two were flying rings and rope climb). The biggest west coast meet of the day was the Pacific Coast Invitational. In his senior year Bill won both the long horse and tumbling in this meet. He was named

Outstanding Frosh in 1956 and Most Valuable Gymnast in 1958 and '60. (He red-shirted in 1959).

After graduation in 1961 he competed in the National AAU meet and placed fourth in both flying rings and tumbling.



Bill Crow today. Still in great shape!

UW vs. ASU

Men's Gymnastics Competition



April 1st

7:00 pm

Hec Ed Pavilion



Free Admission



Come and see some Olympic caliber gymnastics. A show of great strength and power you can't see anywhere else in Washington.

Go to our website for more information.

www.wmgf.us

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. NE
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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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Join us for a
SPECIAL HOSTED RECEPTION
prior to the UW vs. ASU dual meet!

Hosted by:



Catch up with other Husky Alumni and fans of Washington Men's Gymnastics before the Huskies go up against the Sun Devils!

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

Saturday, April 1
6 - 7pm

Hec Edmundson Pavilion, Room 143 (Northeast corner of the main floor level)

WMGF
5529 27th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105



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March 10, 2006

Washington Men's Gymnastics

2006 Meet Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>January 7</i>	<i>Washington Open, University of Washington</i>	<i>Hec -Ed Pavilion Addition, Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 13</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open, US Air Force Academy</i>	<i>Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>January 21</i>	<i>Stanford Invitational</i>	<i>Stanford, CA</i>
<i>February 4</i>	<i>Winter Cup/Black Jack Invitational</i>	<i>Las Vegas, NV</i>
<i>February 25</i>	<i>Pacific Coast Classic</i>	<i>Oakland, CA</i>
<i>March 2</i>	<i>Peter Vidmar Invitational</i>	<i>Los Angeles, CA</i>
<i>March 5</i>	<i>Southwest Cup</i>	<i>Tempe, AZ</i>
<i>April 1</i>	<i>Arizona State University vs. University of Washington</i>	<i>Hec -Ed Pavilion Seattle, WA</i>
<i>April 13</i>	<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>Ithaca, NY</i>

Please contact Mark Russo for any updates: 206-524-9480 or team@wmgf.us