

WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

March 12, 2010

Mid-Season Update

by Mark Russo

We began our competitive season early this year; at the invitation of Joanne Bowers, the UW Women's Gymnastics coach, we joined the Husky women's team on the main floor of Hec Ed Pavilion in December for their annual intrasquad. Normally we start training routines a bit later, but we did our routines as they were at the time and focused mainly on learning to be calm under competitive circumstances. Understandably, we had a lot of mistakes mostly due to nervousness. All the same, it was great to be on the main floor again where we've been unable to host a meet since 2006. Joanne has agreed to host a coed competition on the main floor next year and we are extremely excited about the possibilities. We very much appreciate the opportunity to compete alongside the UW women and look forward to bigger and better competitions in the future.

Next we held our traditional season opener, the Washington Open. This year we changed the format to be more spectator- and competitor-friendly, and by that I mean the competition was over in less than two hours! Many people commented on how much more enjoyable the meet was to watch, and it had a tremendously positive effect on the rest of the competition as well. In terms of our performance, we had a good meet as a team; even though we are light on depth, we can put up a respectable score. Bobby Miller, Sam Softich, and Jeramie Hardi contribute the bulk of our team score, while Jon

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.



Bobby Miller at Hec Ed

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Chapman leads us on high bar and parallel bars. Taylor Anthony is learning to compete with the team, and Kevin Smith is picking up events to compete on.

Our collegiate competition season began with the Rocky Mountain Open. An equipment move Friday night, an early Saturday flight, and an early Saturday competition combined to create a disaster of a performance on our part. I have learned that you just have to let some things go, throw them away, and move on. This applied to this meet, and not just for us; no one team looked very good and that is common at this time of year. Oklahoma won for the 11th consecutive time, followed by Nebraska, Air Force, ASU, and UW.

The following weekend we competed in Minnesota against the Golden Gophers and ASU, and had a much better experience. With plenty of rest, we improved our team score by 16 points, but it was not nearly enough to catch ASU or Minnesota. The highlight for us was high bar, where all the guys hit solid routines one right after the next. We finished the night with four solid vaults. After the competition we were treated to some Minnesota hospitality as they fed all the competitors, coaches, and fans a delicious meal. We socialized with the different teams and fans, and the whole experience was very much appreciated by all team members. Believe me, it's no small feat to feed the Dawgs to satisfaction after a competition. Minnesota got the job done!

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Season Review

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Sophomore Sam Softich attempted to qualify for a spot on the US National team at the Winter Cup in Las Vegas on Super Bowl weekend. Unfortunately, Sam was injured the week prior to the competition and was unable to compete his best events, floor and vault. Sam did a pretty good job on the other four events he swings, and gained some great experience. Sam isn't used to being injured, which of course is a good thing, so his recent injury has given him a chance to improve on his weaker events. I'm confident that he'll be back at full strength before the season is over.

We were also invited to compete in the Pacific Coast Classic, the premiere men's gymnastics competition on the West Coast. It was great to see some of the best gymnastics in the world performed there. The field of teams was impressive. 2009 NCAA champion Stanford, Cal, Iowa, ASU, UW, and a team of Japanese All-Stars. The competition was won by the all-stars from

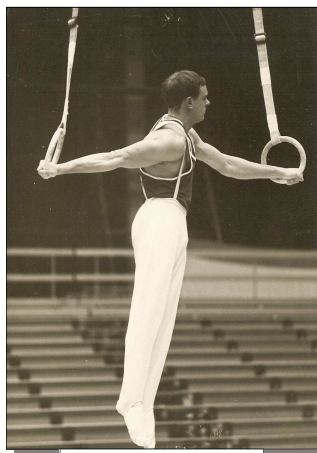
Japan who performed with great form and originality. I was impressed by one of the all-stars who did a kip to V-sit on rings. Wow, I had never seen that before! Our team was on the down rollercoaster and did not have a very good meet. We were led by Sam Softich who hit all four of the events he competed. I was also impressed with Kevin Smith's floor exercise routine. It was his first time in college competition and he showed good poise and a solid routine. All the while, he was calm and confident. Good performance, Kevin!

We still have more work to do to reach our best team effort in the competition arena. The guys are working hard to see that it happens. We have one more competition before our big meet, so I am hoping we put it together these next couple weeks in the gym and can show it at the competitions in Tucson (March 19 at University of Arizona) and at Colorado Springs (March 27 at Air Force).

—CORRECTION—

Due to a formatting error, our last newsletter inadvertently omitted the final few lines of the article on Husky alum Mike Flansaas.

Our apologies to Mike. Here is what you should have seen:



Mike Flansaas

"I'm looking forward to playing more golf, gardening, and coaching. I would also like to hear from all of the nasties of the past. My email and phone number are nevnorske@aol.com and 775-826-5931. Green lights, blue skies, and stick all your landings. Mike in Reno."

You can also view a corrected version of the entire newsletter at www.wmgf.us

Coed Competition and Informal Reunion

On December 11, 2009 a first occurred in the history of gymnastics at the UW. Joanne Bowers, the women's coach, who is very supportive of men's gymnastics invited the men to compete at the same time as the women's intrasquad meet. This meet opened the season for both teams. (Actually the men performed competitive routines but were not scored.)

This event turned out to be an informal reunion for many former Husky men gymnasts. Seventeen "old-timers," many with their wives and kids, showed up and sat together to watch the meet and socialize. And, of

course, coach Russo and former coach Hughes were there. Some attended because they read the schedule in the fall newsletter. Others were phoned to remind them. Attendees were: Don Bird, Eugene Burton-Breazeal, Gordy and Kevin Bylin, Mel Cooley, Bill Hawthorn, Lew Landers, Jim Lang, Mark Oliver, Cam Oliva, Shawn Skerrett, Mac Smith, Pete Smith, Bob Tanac, Mickey Vergillo, Steve Wejmar, and Mark Curtis. If someone has been omitted please excuse us as it was difficult to get an accurate count.

Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky Alum Yoshi Hayasaki

by Dr. Eric Hughes

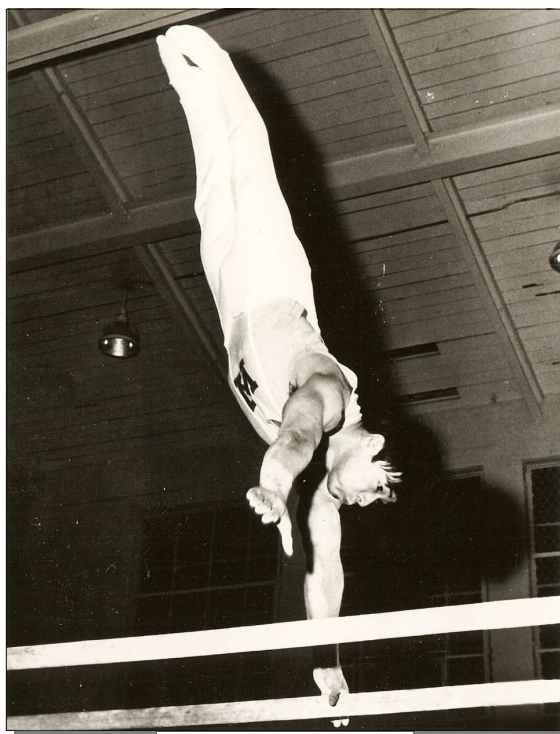
There have been many outstanding Husky gymnasts over the years, but if I had to pick the very best it would be Yoshi Hayasaki. He won four national all-around and many national individual event titles.

But let's start with the beginning of his story. My family and I were in Japan for five months at the time of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. I thought why not try to recruit a high school gymnast while there as Japan was the international power in gymnastics at the time. I mailed 25 letters, translated into Japanese, received eight replies and had three gymnasts come to the UW – Hide Umeshita, Sho Fukushima, and Yoshi.

Yoshi came to the U.S. in the summer of 1965. He took a cargo ship from Japan, a voyage that lasted eleven days. He lived with the Elmer Johnson family and attended Issaquah High School for a year to study English, then enrolled at the UW in the fall of 1966. He graduated in 1971 with a degree in Physical Education.

It would take several newsletters to list all of Yoshi's accomplishments while at the UW. Here are some of the most important ones. In 1967, he won the National Amateur Athletic Union all-around and parallel bar titles and the next year the U.S. Gymnastics Federation all-around, rings, p-bar and high bar titles. For you younger readers, the AAU was the national governing body for many years until the USGF took over in 1968, so these were the top open meets in the country. In 1970, he won the NCAA all-around and high bar titles and then repeated as all-around champion in 1971 while also taking the p-bar title.

Yoshi was selected as the most promising freshman and as the outstanding varsity gymnast each year until he graduated. He was also elected team captain for two seasons. Yoshi was twice named UW Athlete of the Year for all sports and was a nominee for the Post Intelligencer Man of the Year award. And of course, he has been inducted into the Husky Hall of Fame.



Yoshi in his UW days

Some quotes from one of Yoshi's emails:

- *"I have so many good memories from the UW. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Eric Hughes for bringing me to the U.S. Without this opportunity, my journey for the past 40 some years would have been totally different. I enjoyed association with people like Bob Hall, Gunter Bohrmann, Jim David, Mike and Dale Flansaa, Dale Shirley, Eigil Flaathen, Gary Finne,*

Steve and Mike Lovell, Rick Fonceca, John Anthony, Sergio and Linda Luna, and Joyce Tanac Schroeder to name a few. I also cherish the times I spent with my UW teammates like Bruce Brinton, Chuck Sanders, Bo Bennett, Ron Hunter, Charlie Peters, Mauno Nissinen, Sho Fukushima, and Hide Umeshita."

- *"After winning the USA all-around championship in 1967, I applied for U.S. citizenship with the help of Eric and a Washington State Senator in order to represent the U.S. in the 1968 Mexico Olympics. A month after I applied I received a draft notice to report for a physical. Whether I was lucky or unlucky I don't know, but I tore my Achilles tendon before*

the physical exam and failed the test. I did not have to go to the war in Vietnam but my dream of competing in the Olympics died at the same time."

- *"Eric probably missed a chance to win the NCAA team championship in 1969 when I ruptured my Achilles for the second time. It was undoubtedly the best team assembled in the history of UW and we could have won the national title handedly if I had stayed healthy."*

- *"Two of the greatest trips I took while at Washington were sponsored by the State Department. One was a tour of Southeast Asia in 1968 and the other of South America in 1970."*

- *"I have a lovely wife, Lisa, who is a certified clinical therapist and a daughter, Mia, who is nine years old and an avid golfer. I have two older children, Erika, a*

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Who Are These Huskies, Anyway? Meet Taylor Anthony

By Mark Russo



Taylor Anthony is a first-year team member who started in the junior program at Mt. Baker Gymnastics coached by Husky alum Gordy Bylin. Taylor is an interesting mix of humor and young adulthood. Sometimes he is lost in the teenage angst of indecision and feelings about girls. Often he is hiding behind you in his stance that is a combination of dancing grebe (diving, swimming birds related to loons – no surprise there) and Groucho Marx. It is difficult to keep a straight face around Taylor and his antics; he does keep the mood light and interesting.

For Taylor, this season is about getting all five requirements on five events, and a somersaulting vault. Right now I would say floor is his best event,



but I can see pommel horse potential in his future. Taylor also loves to snowboard... and the coach in me cringes at the thought because his knees are already hurting with previous injuries from speeding down mountains. Keeping him healthy for the next four years is my challenge.

Taylor is your classic young adult male: Pants too low, shirt too low, shoes that make him look like a praying mantis; funny in the gym, serious game face on competition day; steak for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It's all good to him.

As teams assemble, they are always different and never predictable. Taylor adds good chemistry to the team and will be a solid part of our team score in the future while he develops his gymnastics at a healthy pace today.



Where Are These Huskies, Anyway?



We have lost contact with the following alumni:

- ⇒ Jack Biehl, 1958
- ⇒ Joseph Carchedi, 1974
- ⇒ James Conforti, 1986
- ⇒ John Deininger, 1970
- ⇒ Darrel DePue, 1966
- ⇒ Steven Eddie, 1970

Please let Coach Hughes know if you have any contact information, even if it is only the town in which they now live.

gymcankay@hotmail.com
206-632-2151

Yoshi Hayasaki

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professor at the University of California/Irvine and Casey, the youngest executive chef on the Norwegian Cruise Line in Hawaii, and a step-daughter, Megan, who is a junior honor student in communications at the University of Illinois/Chicago."

Yoshi left Washington for the University of Illinois in 1971 and earned his M.S. in Teaching in 1973. He became assistant gymnastics coach that year and took over as head coach in 1974, a position he held until retiring last year. He has an outstanding

coaching record at Illinois. His teams won the Big 10 team championship six times and the NCAAs in 1989. (He jokingly brought this to my attention a few years back that winning the NCAAs was something I had not been able to accomplish at Washington.) He had 12 NCAA individual champions and 95 All-Americans. Yoshi coached three Olympians, was Olympic coach in 1988 and has coached the World Games and World University Games teams three times. Yoshi has also served as Chair of the NCAA Rules Committee.

THANK YOU!

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

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5529 27th Ave NE
Seattle, WA 98105

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

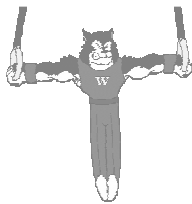
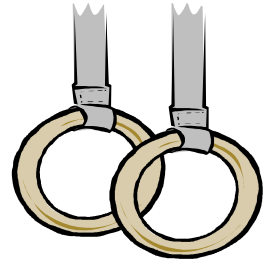
\$2,000 ___ \$1,000 ___ \$200 ___ \$100 ___ \$500 ___ other ___

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

Name and Address:
(only if different from the mailing label on the opposite side of this page)

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Comments: _____



Please join us for the 2010
**Washington Men's Gymnastics
Team Banquet**

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

*A chance to get together with friends
from many eras of Husky Gymnastics*

HOLD THE DATE!

Date: Sunday, May 23

Time: 1:00 to 4:00 pm

University of Washington

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

RSVP to: *team@wmgf.us*

For more information, contact Mark Russo

Phone: 206-524-9480

WMGF
5529 27th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105



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March 12, 2010

Washington Men's Gymnastics

2009-2010 Meet Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>December 11</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Intrasquad with UW Women's Team</i>	<i>Bank of America Arena, Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 9</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Washington Open</i>	<i>Hec -Ed Pavilion Addition, Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 16</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Rocky Mountain Open</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>January 23</i>	<i>1:00pm</i>	<i>Minnesota/ASU/Calgary</i>	<i>University of Minnesota Minneapolis, MN</i>
<i>February 4</i>		<i>Winter Cup/Black Jack Championship</i>	<i>Sport Center of Las Vegas Las Vegas, NV</i>
<i>February 20</i>	<i>2:00pm</i>	<i>Pacific Coast Classic</i>	<i>Oakland Convention Center Oakland, CA</i>
<i>March 19</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>ASU and Air Force</i>	<i>University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ</i>
<i>March 26,27</i>		<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy Colorado Springs, CO</i>

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