

WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

February 21, 2011

Mid-Season Update

by Mark Russo

It's hard to believe that we are halfway through our 2011 season! We've had three competitions so far - all local - and now we enter the second half of our season with only four team competitions remaining. The first three were open-formatted meets where we attended as a team but competed as individuals. These gave us a good opportunity to get practice in front of judges without having mistakes cost us a valuable team score. I would say that we are more ready now to compete as a team and less prone to make any large mistakes.

The team lost two valuable members this January as two all-arounders, sophomore Bobby Miller and freshman Kyle Farmer, have left the squad and we do not have all-around replacements. For now, we try to patch the holes and come up with a solution from our specialists. Though we will be able to field four routines on each event for a team score, some of the replacement routines lack full difficulty. The guys are rallying to be competitive and training diligently. I'm very happy with how we've come together as a team going through this difficult transition. Sam Softich, now in his third year on the team, leads the Purple and Gold with strong routines on floor, rings, and vault. So far this season he has been the highest scorer on those events. His parallel bars and high bar are improving as well, with upgraded dismounts on both. Jon Chapman recently torqued his

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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.



Sam Softich at Hec Ed

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knee in practice, but is recovering well and should add rings to his other five competitive events. These two gymnasts consistently show strong training habits and will lead us with successful routine completions. Jeramie Hardi and Peter Moser have also stepped up and are competing better with each meet so far. These four gymnasts comprise our traveling squad and will represent us at ASU and at Air Force in our upcoming road meets.

We have one more home competition this season, on March 4TH; it'll be UW vs. ASU, in conjunction with the UW women gymnasts competing against Michigan State. It is my hope that you, the fans, will come out and give us the needed energy to defeat ASU. We are also holding a tribute to Dr. Hughes after the competition, so all you alumni who have a connection to Coach, please come and shake hands with the Godfather of Husky Gymnastics! It should be a great evening of gymnastics and friends and the family that is Washington Gymnastics. I sincerely hope everyone that this reaches will attend.



Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky Alum Lew Landers

by Coach Eric Hughes

Lew Landers was born in Boise, Idaho in 1940 and moved to Washington at 12 years of age. He attended Renton High School, which was one of the two powers in the "new" sport of gymnastics for Washington high schools (the other was Highline High School). Lew was also a regular at George Lewis' downtown YMCA coed gymnastics program. He became one of the top two or three all-arounders in the state and captain of his high school team. Actually, Lew competed very regularly in ten events, as tumbling, trampoline, rope climb, and flying rings were also official gymnastics events in those days. The high bar was his favorite and probably his best event so he built one himself and practiced in his back yard.



Lew Accepting an award at UW

Lew was awarded a gymnastics scholarship and enrolled at the UW in the fall of 1959, only a few years after gymnastics became an intercollegiate sport at Washington, and became one of the backbones of the team for four years. He had to redshirt one year due to a broken back suffered in an automobile accident. Lew was voted Most Promising Freshman in '59 - '60 and then Outstanding Varsity Gymnast two years later when he was also elected captain for the following year. He was one of only two UW gymnasts who qualified for the NCAA Championships that year. He graduated in 1964.

Lew helped me with my Saturday morning children's gymnastics program for four years and was always willing to do some judging, participate in exhibitions, and help instruct at clinics. He was anxious to volunteer for any extra activity that had to do with gymnastics.

Recently, he told me that practicing new moves or

new combinations was his favorite thing in the sport, and recalled a related amusing incident. In his words, "A front somersault dismount off the high bar was something I was working on. It was a new and unusual dismount back then. Someone on another team was rumored to be using it so Eric told us to watch for the trick the day we were competing against them. I discovered in practice that if I held on too long, my legs would hit the bar. On this day *his* legs hit the bar, resulting in a back flip off the bar and even a reasonably good landing. The crowd let out a gasp and then a round of applause. No one was more astonished than the performer."

Most of Lew's professional life revolved around teaching gymnastics or supervising recreational programs largely for children with exceptional needs. This interest began while he was still at the UW and was hired to tutor several professors' children. Later, he spent three years as Recreation Director at Fircrest School and 37 more years in the same capacity at Echo Glen Children's Center just east of Seattle. He also taught part time for 14 years at Bellevue Community College

and seven years at Bellevue YMCA.

Besides gymnastics Lew has many interests including music, violin, hot glass blowing, drawing, and mineral collecting. I remember that while he was in college he spent considerable time hiking in the mountains collecting rocks. This apparently is still one of his major interests. He has one of the *world's* largest marbles collections. His future plans include helping to establish a public display of northwest mineral specimens. Crystal that he has collected lo-



Lew using his home-made high bar!

(Continued on page 4)



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Mark K. Oliver as a Husky gymnast (1989 - 1993)

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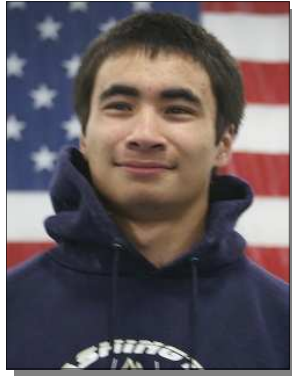
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Meet the Team

by Eugene Burton-Breazeal and Shannalyn West

Layton Oka

18 years old from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Layton started gymnastics when he was nine years old – first at Lake City Gymnastics in Kellogg, Idaho but he spent most of his early career at Funtastics Gymnastics in Coeur d'Alene before joining the Washington Men's Team. Layton's favorite event at this moment in time is the horizontal bar. Teammates agree that favorite events and best events tend to change like the weather based on personal health and individual progressive training accomplishments. This year Layton feels best prepared to compete on the floor exercise.



Layton also enjoys many activities outside of gymnastics, such as skiing, wake-boarding, and kite-boarding.

In getting to know more about Layton, how else better to describe a growing collegiate athlete than by asking about his favorite foods? Layton loves to “make a good breakfast burrito!” On holidays, Layton looks forward to going home to visit family, friends, and some good home-cooked food! When asked what his favorite Thanksgiving food is, he emphatically stated that he is looking forward to his “Uncle's stuffing! It's really good!”

Greg Steward

Born in Edmonds, Washington, Greg grew up a few miles north in Lynnwood, Washington. Greg started gymnastics in 1998, when he was just 6 years old, at Cascade Elite Gymnastics. He continued at CEG until 2005. As a lot of youth do, he “burned out” on gymnastics, and did not see himself coming back to the sport. However, after five years away from gymnastics, he wanted to get back into the sport, and he felt this program was the perfect avenue for him. Greg is excited to be back in the gym and is hoping to put up some good scores this season on the floor exercise, but also potentially the vault.



Greg enjoys giving back and volunteering in the community as well. Last summer, he traveled on a mission trip to Honduras for two weeks where he helped build a house and volunteered at a local medical clinic and school.

On holidays, Greg looks forward to visiting with family and eating his Mother's green bean casserole! In asking what activities he looks forward to on breaks, Greg replied, “I've never been skiing or snowboarding, and I'm bad at wake-boarding.”

Lew Landers

(Continued from page 2)

cally will be the basis of this museum.

Mr. Lew Landers, now 71 years old, has six children and twelve grandkids. It is hard for me to comprehend that some of my young gymnasts are now over 70. Actually, there is one (no name mentioned) over 80. Wow! I hope I have contributed something worthwhile to their lives.



THANK YOU!

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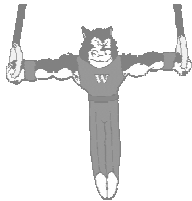
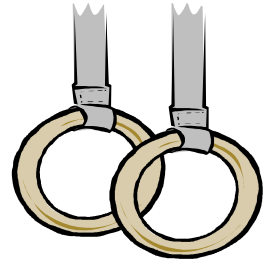
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UW MEN AT HOME vs. ASU

with
UW WOMEN
vs.
Michigan State



**HOLD THE DATE!
FRIDAY MARCH 4**

**Date: Friday, March 4
Time: 7:00 pm
University of Washington
Hec Edmundson Pavilion**

**Come cheer on the Huskies - both men and women!
Reconnect with alumni!
Party for Dr. Hughes after the competition!**

WMGF
5529 27th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105



In This Issue...

Mid-Season Update, Where Are They Now, and more...

February 21, 2011

Washington Men's Gymnastics

2010-2011 Meet Schedule

(local meets in bold)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>December 5</i>	<i>3:00pm</i>	<i>Intrasquad with UW Women's Team</i>	<i>Hec Ed Pavilion Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 1</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Washington Open</i>	<i>Hec Ed Pavilion Addition Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 30</i>		<i>Flipout Challenge</i>	<i>St. Martin's College, Olympia, WA</i>
<i>February 19</i>		<i>at ASU</i>	<i>University of Phoenix Stadium Phoenix, AZ</i>
<i>March 4</i>	<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>vs. ASU, with UW Women vs. Michigan State</i>	<i>Hec Ed Pavilion Seattle, WA</i>
<i>March 20</i>	<i>1:00pm</i>	<i>at Air Force with ASU</i>	<i>US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO</i>
<i>March 25, 26</i>		<i>Collegiate Nationals</i>	<i>Springfield College, Springfield, MA</i>

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