

◊ WMGBC News ◊

October 6, 1998

Season Preview

by Mark Russo

Greetings to you from Mark Russo, Head Coach, Husky Men's Gymnastics. I hope you all enjoyed the summer and early fall. It's time again to let all of you know how the team is doing and give you some insight into our upcoming season.

Our season finished in August with Jeff Johnson representing the UW at USA Senior Nationals in Indianapolis, Indiana. Jeff qualified for the meet on Rings, where he was scheduled to go head-to-head with nemesis Blaine Wilson, Olympian and defending US Senior Ring Champion. Well, compete they did, and when the dust settled, alone on the award stand in first place was Jeff Johnson, University of Washington, yahoo!! In second place, Blaine Wilson.

It was a great time to be a Husky and I was very proud of Jeff for how hard he trained for this competition. He deserves the title; Jeff did what he had been practicing in the gym every day, and in my nine years of coaching he is the first UW gymnast to win at this elite level. It has been a great opportunity for me to see someone so driven excel, and I am thankful that Jeff competed for this university.

With summer behind us, training for the coming season has resumed and Washington will be looking forward to the help we will receive from three incoming freshmen. From Portland, Oregon, Chris Swaim will join our team. I have heard only great things about Chris from his coach, Dave Klein of Metro Gymnastics Center. Chris will help us especially on Parallel Bars, and I look forward to working with him. Also, Aaron Cole from Lilac City Gymnastics in Spokane, under the coaching of Stoyan

WMGBC

The Washington Men's Gymnastics Booster Club is a non-profit organization that exists to assist the Men's Gymnastics Team at the



**Jeff Johnson
1998 National Champion,
Still Rings**

University of Washington.
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Katzarski, arrives to train with our team. I met Aaron at our Regional Development Camp that we hosted this summer. Aaron is quick, strong, and flexible. That equals a lot of potential. He is a quick learner and very eager to improve; watch for this guy this season. From Cascade Elite, Ben MacColl joins the program. Under the coaching of former Husky Gymnast Wayne Kerr, Ben has built a solid foundation of basics and will be an all-around gymnast on our team this year.

Returning to our team, Ryan Welborn will lead us in his third year. Ryan has Senior National Team potential and I honestly believe he will realize this potential. If he puts all his skills into routines...look out! He is a solid 54.0 all-rounder and will anchor our team this year.

Sophomores Evan Cabodi and Lance Bowie return, as well. Evan is coming off of a bad thumb injury from last season, but has trained hard and smartly this summer and looks very good in early training. Lance Bowie improved tremendously last year and will be our number two all-rounder this season.

Though it will be difficult to fill the shoes of Jeff Johnson (last year's Senior Athlete Award winner), the Huskies will scrap and fight to improve last year's level. Depth is an issue, so staying healthy is vital to our improvement as a team.

We will need your help. Please attend our home meets and cheer wildly; we need your voices! The following schedule (last page) is tentative, but we will keep you posted as the details are ironed out. Please plan to see us. We would love to see you in person.

Thank you for all your support!

Junior Ryan Welborn

Hello, my name is Ryan Welborn and I am a junior on the Men's Gymnastics Team. I have been asked on several occasions why I chose to come to the University of Washington; I thought I would share those reasons and comment on the incredible group of people that I have grown close to since joining the program.

For those of you who don't know me, I am from a small town in Northern Idaho and was coached by my mother for the majority of my gymnastics career prior to joining the Huskies. Throughout that time I competed as a junior elite in this region and I met coach Mark Russo at an early age. I knew of the gymnastics team at the University of Washington. I knew it was a program that had produced several high-level gymnasts, but lacked the funding that could attract the top junior athletes across the country by way of athletic scholarships.

When I was a senior in high school I began to search for a college that had the perfect balance of quality education and productive gymnastics. The UW's academic reputation spoke for itself but I wasn't certain that the gymnastics program was what I wanted. Those doubts were laid to rest when I visited Seattle and worked out with the team for a day. It was in that practice that I decided that the UW had the perfect balance I was looking for. In just one day, I realized what kind of program Coach Russo ran. For those of you who know him, you can testify that he is one of the most dedicated individuals in the sport of gymnastics. I saw that his practices were very organized, individualized, and, most decisively for me, goal-oriented. I will share with you a few of my goals while I am here at the university:

- 1) I want to be a part of a team that wins the Collegiate National Championship;
- 2) I want to be a leader of the best team ever coached by Mark;
- 3) I want to make the Senior National Team.

Mark and I talked of



these goals before I joined the team and it is now my intention to make them happen.

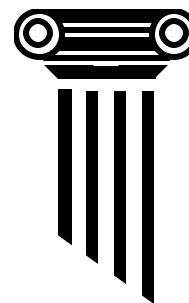
But what about the financial assistance for school, some may ask? I am fortunate enough to have a family that supports what I do and the goals I possess. Without their financial assistance, I know I could get by, just as many others have done in the past, but their help makes it so much easier to keep focused on the task at hand.

I am very proud to be a part of this program and count myself fortunate to know the people who make it work. Without funding from the UW Athletic Department, we work very hard to be able to travel to meets and compete against other schools. We usher Husky football games, move equipment for the Women's Gymnastics Team's home meets, and do a few other odd jobs around the university to raise the money that pays for our travel. The rest comes from donations from generous supporters such as yourselves. Our efforts are organized by a group of dedicated volunteers that take time out of their busy schedules to be on our Booster Club.

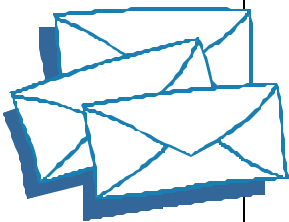
I am looking forward to the next competition season.

Although Jeff Johnson and Bud Lyonais have finished their collegiate gymnastics careers, we have added three new gymnasts to our squad. I will make no promises for next season save one; the Husky Men's Gymnastics Team will compete our hearts out and work our tails off to achieve our goals.

Thank you for your time and support.



"... in that practice...I decided that the UW had the perfect balance I was looking for."



Letters

Dear WMGBC,

I would like to write a couple of lines outlining what the gymnastics program at UW has done for my life. At first I thought, well, I could talk about the expected! You know... "My experience in the program has taught me perseverance, sacrifice, teamwork, hard work, etc., etc.". All that is true but wait, the UW Gymnastics program has had a much greater impact on my life. Yes, it has taught me the essential traits that are required to succeed at any given discipline. I guess you could learn that by participating in most sports.

However, being part of the program has allowed me the privilege to share a brief period of my life with an extremely

unique group of individuals. The friendships that I have developed along with the values that I have learned will last a lifetime. There is no greater treasure than that of true friendship and camaraderie. The original vision and spirit imparted by a handful of individuals back in the 70's when they found themselves without a funded gymnastics program at UW lives on today!

Ignacio Morales
1989-94 Husky gymnast

Editors note: As a UW gymnast, Iggy represented his home country of Bolivia at three World Championships, in '91, '93, and '94, and is now enjoying a successful career as an Industrial

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

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

Enclosed is my contribution to WMGBC in the amount of:

\$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ \$500 ___ \$1000 ___ other ___

Name and Address:

(only if different from the mailing label on the opposite side of this page)

e-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Comments:



Where Are We Going, And How Do We Intend To Get There?

*"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could*

Due to your generous support, we were able to meet last year's financial goals. Thanks to you, we now have the opportunity to make some important decisions about the Husky Men's Gymnastics program. We've come up with some goals we feel are critical to the survival of Men's Gymnastics at the University of Washington. We believe that these are the most important areas on which to concentrate:



COACHING

- Add an assistant coach to help with coaching, organizational tasks and activities, to free up the head coaching position to focus on goals set by the Board and the Head Coach
- Have a written plan for individual and team achievements

RECRUITING

- Have a 15-man team by end of 2000
- Have a recruiting packet available by end of September 1998
- Direct efforts at all potential recruits, nationwide

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



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- Help gymnasts obtain scholarships and grants by June of 1999

MEDIA

- Contact media before and after competitions, with prepared material
- Develop and update our website with pertinent information that the gymnastics community can benefit from

BOOSTER CLUB

- Develop standard operating procedures by September 1999
- Execute at least one non-traditional fund

*"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."*

1999 Meet Schedule*

January 2, 3	Washington Open	Seattle, Hec-Ed Pavilion Addition
February 6, 7	Blackjack Invitational/Winter Cup Challenge	Las Vegas, Nevada
February 27, 28	Arizona State	Phoenix, Arizona
March 20	Arizona State	Seattle, Hec-Ed Pavilion Addition
April 10, 11	USAG Collegiate and Club Nationals	Southern Connecticut State University
August 19-21	USA Senior National Championships	Sacramento, California

*Tentative! For more details, please contact Mark Russo at (206) 524-9480