

# WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

June 12, 2026

## Season Review

by Coach Andrew Layman

This season started with a different kind of excitement. We had a strong group returning, a freshman class that immediately raised the bar, and a feeling in the gym that we were building toward something big. The expectations were high, and everyone leaned into it.

Preseason was one of the best we've had in years. The work ethic was there. The energy was there. Guys were locked in, pushing each other, and the culture felt tight. The only downside was losing Riley early with a back injury — but even from the sidelines, he was still leading, still present, still part of everything we were building.

### Intrasquad

Our intrasquad meet only reinforced that confidence. The freshmen looked great, the returners looked sharp, and everything seemed to be clicking. Then, on the last event, Connor — our freshman all-rounder — went down with a knee injury. It was a gut punch, but we kept moving. The season was long, and we knew we'd need everyone.

### Washington Open

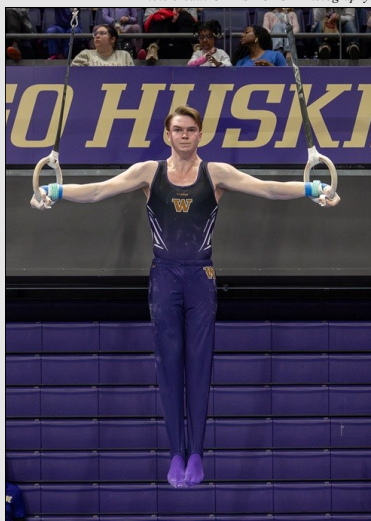
The Washington Open came next, and it was... chaos. Fun chaos, but chaos. The setup was insane, the crowd was loud, and we kicked off what would become a really strong year on pommel horse.

But the meet took a hard turn. Everett went down with a calf injury.

## 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.

Photo credit: CHRIS BURCH Photography



Drake Miesel at UW vs Bay Area

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And then Eli suffered one of the worst injuries we've ever seen. The whole arena went silent, and the team was shaken. And suddenly, with Eli, Everett, Riley, and Connor all out, 19 of our 30 lineup spots were gone almost overnight. It could've broken us. But instead, it forced everyone to step up.

### Next Era Invitational

Two weeks later, we were back on the floor against Rocky Mountain — not fully healthy, not fully prepared, but fully committed. The lineups were patched together, but the fight was there. Pommel horse was on fire again; after this meet we were the top PH team in the country. Guys were throwing routines they had barely trained and somehow making them work.

Then, because this season wasn't done testing us, Josh went down mid-meet with a torn ACL. Even so, the team kept pushing and pulled off the win.

### Co-Ed Dual Meet

That momentum carried into the Co-Ed Dual Meet with Bay Area — another wild one. After setting up the entire arena, we showed up to training day and found both Ben and Zacky sick with the flu. Zacky managed to sleep it off for the meet, but Ben showed up to the meet with a 101-degree fever.

And they both went out and competed like nothing was wrong. We didn't miss a routine until the fifth event. The whole team was locked in. It was one of those meets

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where everyone just decided we weren't losing. And we didn't — we squeaked out a one-tenth victory over the Bandits. It was also our first meet of the year where nobody got hurt, which felt like a miracle.

### Southwest Cup

With three home meets behind us, it was finally time to travel. The Southwest Cup was a grind — overnight flight, compete the same day, and a stacked field of competition. We had some bumps, especially on horse, but still finished 3rd behind Arizona and Iowa. Not our cleanest meet, but a solid showing considering everything we were dealing with.

### Silicon Valley Invite

Santa Clara came next, and it was a mixed bag. We started well. Connor came back on high bar and was able to dismount again. Everett returned on p-bars. Vault upgrades were being added and landed. Things were trending up.

And then horse happened.

It was rough. Really rough. We ended up losing to both Bay Area and Arizona. Not the night we wanted, but it lit a fire under the team heading into the postseason stretch

### All-Stars

Before Westerns, we had a great mid-season highlight: the All-Star Championships. For anyone unfamiliar, All-Stars takes the top five athletes on each event from every conference and brings them together for a West vs. East showdown. It's a tough field to qualify for, and it's always an honor to represent your conference on that stage.

This year, six Huskies earned All-Star spots:

- Ryan – Pommel Horse
- Zacky – Floor, Rings, High Bar
- Carter – Pommel Horse
- Adrian – Vault
- Drake – Rings, Parallel Bars
- Kelly – Floor, High Bar

And our guys made the most of it.

Ryan placed 2nd on pommel horse, and Kelly finished 5th on floor, both earning podium finishes in a meet packed with the best gymnasts from across the country.

It was a proud moment for the program and a reminder of the individual firepower we had even in the middle of a chaotic season.

### Western Championships

By the time Westerns rolled around, Riley was finally back, and that alone changed the energy. We started a little slow on floor, but then came back on pommel horse — and we finally hit 5 for 5 again. It felt like the rotation we'd been chasing all year.

From there, the momentum just kept building. We finished 3rd as a team and had big individual moments:

- Carter – 4th on PH
- Ben – 5th on PH
- Ryan – 6th on PH
- Zacky – Bronze on Rings

It finally felt like everything was coming together at the right time.

### National Championships

And then came Nationals — the meet we'd been waiting for. We had two goals:

Break 300

Get back on the podium

We took risks. Big ones. And they paid off.

The energy was unreal. Every event felt like the team was feeding off each other. In my six years on this team, I've never experienced a Nationals like this one.

We hit a 301.1 and climbed our way back onto the podium finishing 3rd in the nation.

We also had six All-Americans from five guys:

- Ryan – 4th on PH
- Carter – 5th on PH
- Adrian – 3rd on VT
- Everett – 4th on PB
- Zacky – 2nd on SR and 6th in the AA

It was the perfect ending to a season that tested us in every possible way.

### Looking Back

This year wasn't smooth. It wasn't easy. But it was one of the most meaningful seasons we've had. We lost over half of our entire lineup in a few weeks. We rebuilt on the fly. We had meets where everything went wrong, and meets where everything clicked. And through all of it, the team stayed together.

That's what made this group special.

We didn't just survive the season — we grew through it. And we finished as one of the top teams in the country.

**GO DAWGS!**



# Changing of the Guard: Welcome to **Head Coach Brody Lusk**

By Perry Lightfoot

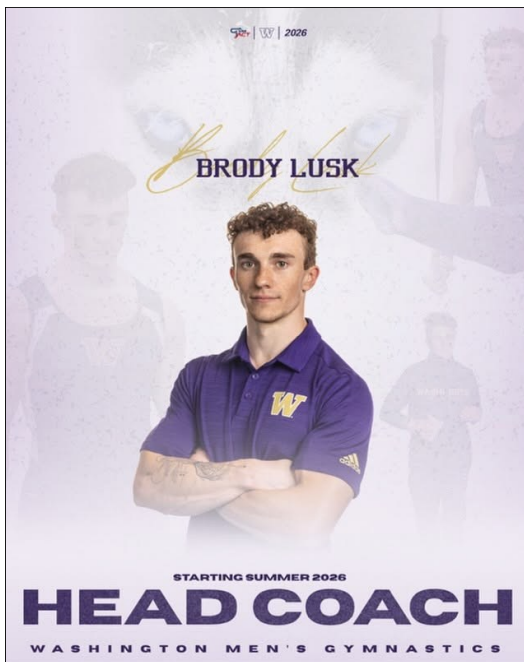
We are excited to officially announce Brody Lusk as the next Head Coach of the University of Washington Men’s Gymnastics Team.

A decorated junior athlete out of Spokane, Washington, Brody continued his career as a four-year member of the University of Washington Men’s Gymnastics Team, earning Letterwinner honors all four years. His impact extended far beyond competition, as he was named team captain during both his junior and senior seasons. This recognition was a direct reflection of his exceptional leadership—his ability to lead by example, hold teammates to a high standard, and foster a culture of accountability and unity within the program.

Brody brings a deep passion for the sport and a commitment to developing people to the highest standards. His leadership reflects a strong foundation of integrity, truth, work ethic, perseverance, dedication, desire, and reciprocity—core values that steer our program. He is deeply invested in the growth of student-athletes not only as competitors, but as individuals, and we are confident his vision will continue to elevate our program and strengthen its culture.

He has already begun transitioning into this position and we look forward to supporting him as he leads the team into its next chapter.

We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to Andrew Layman and Trevor Ruggeri for stepping in this season as our co-head coaches. Their leadership, resilience, and commitment guided the team through a period of uncertainty and uncharted waters. We wish



them both the best as they continue to grow their careers and set off on new adventures.

We are pleased to share that Bob Young will remain on staff as Assistant Coach.

*Being a life-long gymnast, four-year Washington Men’s Gymnastics Team member, and former captain, Brody’s experience and familiarity with the team and program will be invaluable. His proven work ethic will transfer into his new role as a leader of the team. I look forward to working with him and watching him lead this team into the future. I know he is excited and dedicated. Go Dawgs! - Assistant Coach Bob Young*

Please join us in welcoming Brody back to the Washington Gymnastics family and in supporting him as he takes on this exciting new role.

*My journey started in Washington as a competitive gymnast and has grown into a career centered around coaching, leadership, and helping athletes become the best version of themselves. Gymnastics has shaped so much of who I am. It taught me discipline, resilience, confidence, and how powerful it can be to have coaches who believe in you. Having the opportunity to coach at the collegiate level, especially for the program I worked my whole career to compete for, is truly an honor. As the new Head Coach at WMGF, my goal is to create an environment where athletes feel supported, challenged, and excited to improve, while also building strong fundamentals, confidence, and a love for the sport that lasts beyond the gym. - Incoming Head Coach Brody Lusk*

## Washington Men’s Gymnastics Head Coaches

### **Founding &**

**Club Era:** 1950 - 1954 Dr. Eric Hughes

**Varsity Era:** 1954 - 1978 Dr. Eric Hughes  
1978 - 1980 Dick Foxal

**Self-funded Era:** 1980 - 1989

1989 - 2017 Jim Holt  
2017 - 2021 Mark Russo  
2021 - 2023 Giancarlo Mora  
2023 - 2025 Jeff Crockett  
2025 - 2026 Eli Richardson  
2026 - Andrew Layman & Trevor Ruggeri  
Brody Lusk

# UW Men's Gymnastics Class of 2026

## *Thoughts from our Departing Seniors*



**Drew Allen**



**Carter Hawthorne**



**Drake Miesel**



**Zachary Murray**

### ***What is your major?***

Drew: Physiology

Carter: Computer Science

Drake: Bioengineering

Zack: Mechanical Engineering



### ***What is the most important thing you've learned from being on the team?***

Drew: The most important thing I learned from being on this team is that growth takes time. Some of my biggest improvements did not happen overnight. They came from years of showing up to practice, trusting the process, and continuing to put in the work even when progress was not immediately visible. Being part of this team taught me the value of consistency, discipline, and patience.

Carter: The most important thing I've learned from being on the team is that every moment, good or bad, is better when shared with friends.

Drake: An optimistic perspective is the most important thing the team has taught me. Even when you're exhausted at practice or a move, the team still finds ways to make it fun. We've learned to smile through adversity together, and that's extremely valuable.

Zack: The most important thing I have learned from being on the team is how to push through the lows we have in life to ultimately reach some of the greatest things you can accomplish. Not just with goals and achievements, but friends, amazing experiences, and growth in both gymnastics and as a person. The team taught me how to fight for our goals through tough times to ultimately reach a reward that everyone benefits from, encouraging a "we" rather than an "I" point of view. This one team, one dream mentality was another thing I learned from being on the team. Especially, how do you unite 20 different people toward a reward that they won't benefit from for months? However, when you and everyone around you eventually reach this mentality, it creates an environment that I have experienced nowhere else, and seeing the effects of our hard work in such a tight-knit community has made memories I will keep for life.

### ***What is a favorite memory from your time with the team?***

Drew: Honestly, my favorite memories are not any single routine or score. They are the moments spent with teammates before and after practice, traveling to meets, and competing together throughout the season. That said, the 2026 National Championships was the best competition I have ever been a part of. The energy, the atmosphere, and sharing that experience with my teammates is something I will remember for the rest of my life. Those moments are what made my time on this team so meaningful.

Carter: One of my favorite memories from my time with the team was winning pommel horse at Nationals my junior year. I was last up, last event, and I knew the team was counting on me. It came as quite a surprise that I did so well, and I truly don't think I could've tried so hard if it wasn't to make everyone proud.

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- Drake: I have accumulated countless priceless memories throughout my time on this team, and one of my favorites is Nationals 2024 in Daytona Beach. That was the most packed weekend full of hilarious, shocking, and surreal memories that I will always cherish.
- Zack: It's quite hard to pick a specific memory from my time on the team as you can imagine, but my routine on rings this past Nationals specifically sticks out. Rings is an event that I have spent the most time developing and one that I wanted to be great at the most, and being able to both experience my best routine on rings ever and seeing my teammates celebrating was a moment of pure bliss. Then seeing how that generated great momentum for what I would call our best meet during my time on the team, for a great finish back on the podium, was a moment nothing short of extraordinary. Additionally, seeing other people's hard work pay off for a great routine, All-American or not, are moments I found myself the most excited and happy, especially at a meet like Nationals where we have many of those moments. Being able to see my teammates struggle and persevere throughout the year to be able to achieve their goals was often more satisfying and amazing than achieving my own because of this.

### *What was your favorite fundraising activity, and why?*

- Drew: Selling raffle tickets at meets. It may sound simple, but it taught me a lot about talking to people, handling rejection, and representing the team. It gave me the opportunity to meet all kinds of people and become much more comfortable starting conversations with strangers. Over time, I also developed valuable sales skills and learned how to connect with people quickly and confidently.
- Carter: My favorite fundraising activity was setting up for the UW women's gymnastics competitions. Relatively quick, nearby, related to gymnastics, and there was oftentimes food. What's not to like?
- Drake: One of my first ever fundraisers was the pancake breakfast, my freshman year. I had not slept at all, and I came into it not exactly looking forward to it. Somehow, I ended up in a dunk tank, and I realized that these fundraisers (especially the not-laborious ones) are actually a fantastic way to make memories with the team.
- Zack: My favorite fundraising activity was ushering at the football games because it wasn't too taxing on the body, and now I can say that I have been to every UW home football game as well. Also being able to experience some of the crazy moments in the stadium with my teammates made for many great memories (like beating the Oregon Ducks twice at home in a year).

### *Do you think you've changed since you first joined the team? How so?*

- Drew: Definitely. The person joining the team as a freshman is very different from the person leaving as a senior. Over the last four years, gymnastics taught me the importance of staying disciplined, working hard even when things are difficult, and never quitting when things do not go your way. The team helped shape who I am today, and I am leaving with lessons and friendships that I will carry with me long after graduation.
- Carter: I'm definitely much more confident now than I was when I first joined the team. I have struggled with consistency my entire career, and it's been a long journey to accept the fact that I'm pretty decent at some things. I'd say confidence in the gym has translated to the rest of my life, as well, so it's been a positive change all around.
- Drake: Of course I've changed through my time on the team, although I've honestly probably changed the least of all the seniors. I believe that now, after four years on this team, I'm more confident in who I am, and more empathetic to those around me. This team has taught me to be understanding of people's struggles and concerns.
- Zack: I think I have changed a lot since being on the team, but mostly I have gained experiences and knowledge from the many moving parts that being on the team brings. From trying to manage moves to helping the coaches guide the team to our goals, all those moments have set me up with the knowledge and wisdom to take on pretty much anything in my next phase of life.

## Class of 2026

### *What's something you think the team could do differently to help it improve? Or something effective that it should continue doing?*

- Drew: I think the team should continue investing in its athletes beyond just practice and competition. I was fortunate to help start the nutrition program, and I hope it continues to grow in the years ahead. The team has made a lot of progress in supporting athlete recovery, nutrition, and overall well being, and I believe those efforts will only continue to improve. I am excited to see where the program goes from here.
- Carter: I can't stress enough how good the culture on the team is. I know without a doubt it's the best in GymACT, at a minimum, and if we can keep that up, I know the team will thrive in the future.
- Drake: There are plenty of ways the team could improve; I think the most obvious would be to change our fundraising approach away from manual labor, which would help prevent injuries and burnout. Also, something that's been very effective recently in cultivating a unified team culture is that most of the team lives together in one of two houses. It really turns the team into a family that way.
- Zack: Overall, just less equipment moves, but obviously to do that we need to keep pursuing other forms of fundraising which I think the team is currently working toward more than previous years. One thing I do think would help the team is a closer connection between the WMGF Board and team, but how to do that isn't easy. An idea I have is for any willing board members to take a team member under their wing to help them with their duties in the board. For example, assisting in the setup of meets or with how the team manages its budget, but it really could extend to the many duties board members have. I think this would encourage more alumni to join the board in the future, as well as help the team understand the many things the board does in the background. I also think this could potentially help the board with the many tasks it has while also giving team members valuable experience.

### *Any other parting thoughts?*

- Drew: It is hard to put into words what this team has meant to me. Many of the people I met here will be lifelong friends, and many of the lessons I learned here will stay with me forever. Through injuries, setbacks, successes, and everything in between, gymnastics taught me resilience, discipline, and the importance of never giving up. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have been part of this team and will always look back on these years with pride.
- Carter: The most important things to come out of this team aren't medals or trophies (although those are great), but the lifelong friendships we've built. I am incredibly grateful for people I've come to know through this journey.
- Drake: The reason gymnastics teams build such strong bonds is because what we do is extremely difficult. We suffer together and push each other toward greatness, which creates a sort of grit that isn't easy to come by. I'm proud of everyone I've been on this team with for showing and building that grit, and I'm excited to see where the future takes this team.
- Zack: Nah.

### *What's next for you?*

- Drew: After graduation, I will be pursuing a career in fitness and personal training. I am excited for the opportunity to help others build confidence, improve their health, and achieve goals they once thought were out of reach. While I am looking forward to this next chapter, the lessons, friendships, and experiences I gained through UW Gymnastics will always be a part of me. I will always be proud to have represented this team.
- Carter: I have a job as a software engineer, so I'll be around in Seattle for the time being. While I'm here, I'll keep training, so expect some cool things to come.
- Drake: I will be doing a one-year master of applied bioengineering program at UW, then going off into industry to hopefully design neural-interfacing products for people with nervous system injuries or disabilities.
- Zack: Next is to work at Bonneville Power Administration as a mechanical engineer and start thinking about what I want to do with my master's degree, specifically if I want to go into bioengineering and prosthetics.

## *In Memoriam: Pat McGunnigle, 1954-1958 UW Team*

*We are sorry to relay the news of the passing of one of our Huskies, Pat McGunnigle. Pat was also featured in a *Where Are They Now?* article in our May 2008 newsletter. You can read it (and all past newsletters) at <https://wmgf.us/newsletters>.*



*Pat and Beth McGunnigle*

Raymond "Pat" McGunnigle, a deeply devoted husband, father, educator, and coach, passed away peacefully on November 16, 2025 after a long, vibrant life defined by boundless energy, service, and a joyful spirit. Married for 54 beautiful years to his beloved wife, Pat leaves behind a profound legacy of leadership in the classroom, on the athletic field, and within his community.

Pat was born in Priest River, Idaho, in 1936. His early childhood unfolded against the backdrop of the Second World War. As the son of a United States Navy sailor, Pat lived in numerous cities across the country before his family finally settled in Bremerton, Washington. There, his mother contributed to the war effort as a war bride working in the local shipyards. Following the war's conclusion, the McGunnigle family relocated to Everett and later to Edmonds, where Pat spent his formative youth. It was during his school years in the Pacific Northwest that he discovered his lifelong passion for athletic competition, vigorously participating in both wrestling and boxing.

His athletic prowess reached a historic milestone at the University of Washington, where Pat proudly competed on the university's very first official gymnastics team in 1955. Pat was never one to stand still, and his early adult years were a whirlwind of diverse achieve-

ments. Following college, he answered the call to service by joining the United States Army. He continued his military dedication in the Army Reserves for a decade, during which time he learned to fly both fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters.

Driven by a deep investment in his community, Pat also stepped into the political arena, running an energetic campaign for public office that nearly upset the well-entrenched incumbent. He also advanced his education, completing his Master of Education degree. Because he kept himself so marvelously busy, Pat famously took his time to settle down; a trait that earned him a collection of warm, humorous stories that his family would fondly recount for decades.

Everything changed in 1971 when Pat met the love of his life, Beth. They married that same year, embarking on a remarkable 54-year journey of mutual devotion and partnership. Together, they raised three wonderful children: Rebekah, Patricia, and Jonathan.

Professionally, Pat poured his immense energy into molding the minds and characters of generations of young people. He taught across the entire spectrum of the sciences, including general science, biology, chemistry, and physics, as well as Advanced Placement (AP) biology and chemistry. He also taught algebra, and some PE classes.

Beyond the blackboard, Pat was a legendary coach. He mentored young gymnasts at Shoreline High School and coached wrestling at Butler Junior High, eventually coaching wrestling at Shoreline as well. His wrestling athletes formed a fiercely tight-knit brotherhood; a bond so enduring that his former crew routinely kept tabs on him and dropped by his home throughout the years to "check up" on their beloved coach.

When retirement finally arrived, Pat traded the gym and the classroom for the great outdoors, enthusiastically pursuing sail boating, cycling, and bow hunting. Though his final years brought physical limitations, Pat's character remained unshakeable. He met every challenge with a resilient, beautiful attitude, routinely bringing warmth, laughter, and lighthearted jokes to the doctors and nurses who cared for him.

As his family looks back on a life incredibly well-lived, his wife Beth shares a sentiment that comforts all who knew him: *"Pat always kept himself very busy, living a life full of purpose, adventure, and laughter. I feel very blessed to have had him for my husband."*

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In This Issue...

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June 12, 2026

# *THANK YOU*

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