

WMGF News

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June 28, 2005

Season Review

by Mark Russo

Another Husky gymnastics season has come and gone and here we stand in second place – a place we have grown accustomed to and uncomfortable with. Try as we might, we did not have the depth to overcome Arizona State in the five tries we had against them. They were the better team this year. We showed amazing skill and excellent technique, but when it came time to hit our routines we could not get it going. This does not slow us down, though; if anything it makes us hungrier for next season.

Our last few meets were great competitions. I thoroughly enjoyed the home meet we hosted against ASU and want to thank everyone for coming out and supporting the home team. We had our best performance of the season, highlighted by sophomore Sean Liner's impressive win in the all-around. Sean beat two seasoned all-arounders in teammate Jeff Crockett and ASU senior Paris Bland with a consistent and expressive display of his ability. Sean has been improving dramatically this season, increasing his all-around score an average of six points per meet – that's a full point per event! His amazing rate of improvement is a tribute to his consistency in accomplishing daily goals in practice. I commend him on this season and look forward to his gymnastics next year. Sean did well enough at Collegiate Nationals this year (third all-around) to garner All-American status. Congratulations, Sean!

Jeff Crockett also performed ad-

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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.



Ben MacColl on Floor

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mirably at Collegiate Nationals, finishing second in the all-around. He also won two individual events (pommel horse and high bar) and placed second on floor. His high bar routine electrified the crowd as he stuck his routine cold! It was the highlight of the meet. Jeff continues to train for USA Nationals, looking to qualify to this prestigious meet in June.

Also continuing to train for summer competitions is freshman Kevin Perkins. Kevin looks to qualify to USA's on rings, following the footsteps of Husky legend Jeff Johnson, who also is training for the same. Kevin did well at the home meet winning rings and vault with a nosebleed Kasamatsu. Kevin also placed well enough at Collegiate Nationals on these events to earn All-American status. Not bad at all for a freshman. Lookout – this guy is going to rock in the future!

It was a good year for Graham Gordon as well. Graham improved tremendously on pommel horse, floor, and high bar this year and was a consistent all-arounder as well for us, helping the team qualify to Collegiate Nationals. Graham also functions as the team representative to the WMGF Board of Directors, helping with many tasks that aid the team in various ways.

In his final year, graduate student Joel Hennig worked his tail off on floor and provided counting scores for the team on floor and occasionally on vault. He increased the difficulty of his floor routine and the scores really came through

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Season Review

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for him at our home meet. His monster-sized cheering section rooted him on to levels never before seen. Congratulations to Joel on becoming part of the team and on his new job in Houston where he will work for Continental Airlines!

Unfortunately, we must also say goodbye to Ben MacColl who wraps it up this season after a seven-year career on the Husky Gym Team. Ben did some of his best gymnastics this year, and I was grateful to see him suck it up and help the team on some events when he had not practiced much because of injury. Ben became a leader on our team. I really enjoy it when the older guys lead the young ones on the way we get things done. It shows me that they understand what

we are all about, and that they are prepared for the next step of their lives. Ben has had many great moments in his gymnastics career and I'm sure he will have many more as he begins the rest of his life. Good luck to you Ben, and thank you for being the person and gymnast you are!

Gymnastically, we improved this season. Our scores of mid-190's show a ten-point improvement over last year's averages. Now, once again, we will try to improve another ten points for next year. I have great hope for our team next year; the verbal commitments I have from gymnasts who want to join the team this fall leads me to believe that we will be even stronger than last year. Keep your hopes high and we will do our best to meet those expectations!



Your 2004-2005 Husky Men's Gymnastics Team

***Back row, left - right: Joel Hennig, Graham Gordon, Jeff Crockett.
Middle row: Ben MacColl, Sean Liner. Front: Kevin Perkins. Not shown: Joe Zhou***

Huskies Today: Jeff Crockett

by Jeff Crockett

When thinking about what I could do about gymnastics after high school, I didn't have many options. I had met Mark at previous meets and gymnastics camps before I graduated. He had informed me that I could be on the team even if I were to go to a nearby community college. One of the best guys on the team at the time had gone that route. This was very good news for me. I knew that I didn't have the grades to get into the UW, plus I would be coming from out of state. Out-of-state tuition at the UW is quite a bit more than in-state tuition, and way more than tuition at a community college.

This team was the only reasonable option I had to continue my gymnastics career. Being on this team means more than I can explain in words. I have been able to excel to an elite level. I have been able to make great life-long friends, and have



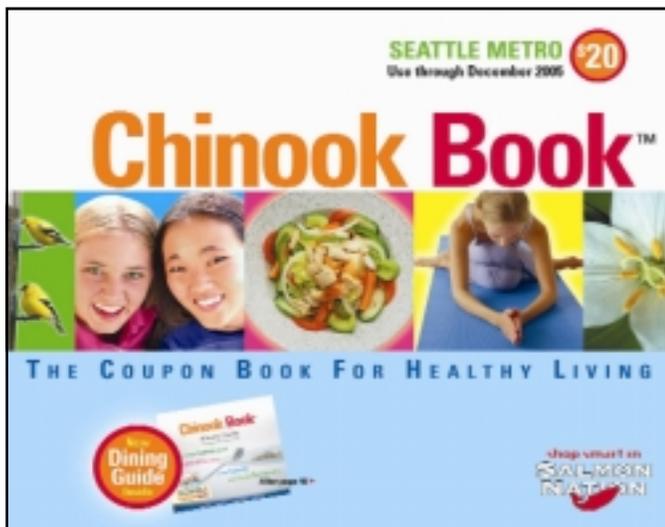
Jeff Crockett

been able to contribute to a great cause. If I had not had the option to come to Seattle and be on this team, I would have likely quit gymnastics.

Even though I am not attending a major university, I get to compete with Division I schools. I don't see my situation as an athletic advantage at all; I take the same level of classes as my teammates at UW, which will eventually lead me into a university. Right now I'm working on my Associate Degree in Arts so I can transfer to the UW to major in graphic arts. I see myself at the same level as all other college athletes.

From what I have seen of the past, this team and the spirit in which it has survived for the past 25 years have only been strengthened by allowing community college members to take part. I am very grateful that I have been able to continue doing gymnastics at a very high level, and with a group of guys that all have one thing in common: they love gymnastics.

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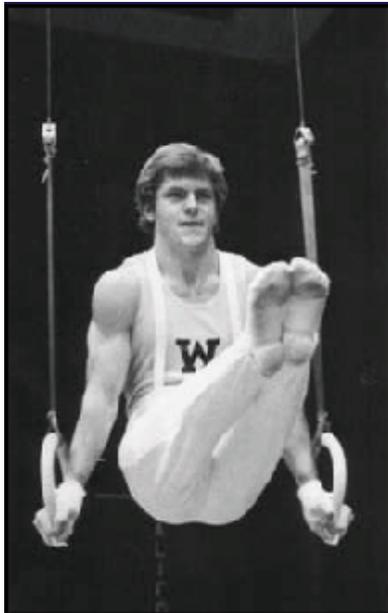
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Husky History: Steve Wejmar

by Coach Eric Hughes

The ultimate goal for most college student athletes is to win a national championship and become a "first team" All-American in the process. One who fulfilled such a dream is former Husky student athlete Steve Wejmar. His stellar career in gymnastics began by winning the State of Washington All-Around Championship while at Kent-Meridian High School, where he was coached by another Husky gymnast great, Günter Bohrmann. Wejmar was an outstanding all-around performer during his three years as a Husky, winning this premier event for Washington in many of the meets and competitions he entered. His excellent all-around ability was even overshadowed by his unbelievable talent as a vaulter. Wejmar did not approach vaulting like other gymnasts, instead, he flew from take-off to landing, covering a greater distance than anyone else in the country. As a sophomore, he won the Pac-10 Conference vault championship and then went on to win the



Steve on rings

NCAA vault championship, meriting the customary selection of being a "first team" All-American in men's gymnastics. As a junior, Wejmar was even better! Early in the season he shattered the Huskies' highest score for vaulting and then broke his own and the school's all-time record several times later in the season. He easily repeated as conference champion and was favored to win the national championship again.

Unfortunately, Wejmar was forced to withdraw from school following the winter quarter due to family considerations, and therefore was ineligible to compete that spring. Imagine how I especially, his Husky coach, felt with an athlete of his caliber, very likely to repeat as the national champion, and I could not even enter him in the competition! Since his nationally prominent competition period at Washington, Wejmar met his life partner, Susie, and together they have raised two fine boys.

He currently works for a specialty book publishing company, and enjoys camping with two of his former Husky teammates, Bert and Gordy Bylin, in addition to playing his guitar.

Huskies Today: Joel Hennig

by Joel Hennig

It all started back in 1997. That's right folks; I entered the University of Texas at Austin as a wee freshman. I learned that UT had a club gymnastics team and decided to join. I hadn't competed in many years, but being a club team meant that they invited people at all levels to compete. We competed in the National Association of Intercollegiate Gymnastics Clubs, or NAIGC. The motto for this association was "For the love of the sport". This was definitely the case, as people of all levels competed at nationals. There were guys that were former Class I gymnasts as well as those that had never competed. It was a great experience. After I graduated, I moved up to Seattle to work for Boeing. Two years after I graduated from UT, I decided to start a master's program at Seattle University. I was excited to



Joel Hennig

find out that SU had a gymnastics club as well. However, much to my dismay, no one wanted to compete. While not competing was disappointing, I decided to join anyway and work out because I missed gymnastics. One of our first practices was at Cascade Elite Gymnastics

(CEG), where I noticed a bunch of other college kids working out – the UW Gymnastics club. I talked to the coach and asked if I could work out and he said sure. I was really excited because I hadn't really worked out in a long time, so I couldn't wait to get back into training. I learned that the team worked out about twenty-five hours every week. This workout schedule was a little more rigorous than the eight hours per week we worked out at UT! Luckily Mark was really flexible because with work, I wasn't able to get to workout until about 4 pm.

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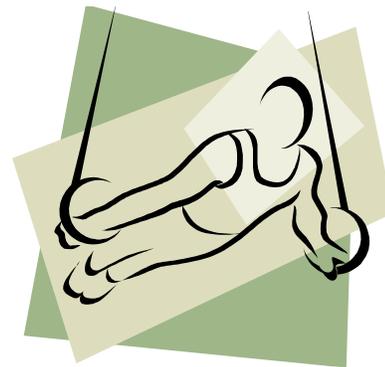
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Huskies Today

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The experience I had on the UW team was completely different than it was with the UT club. First of all, at UW we competed at a much higher level than at UT. Secondly, the team traveled a lot more and had to do a lot of fundraising to pay for those meets. We were always moving equipment or laying port-a-floor. It was a lot more work to be a part of the team at UW and a much greater commitment, which makes the team a lot closer. The discipline really unites the team; you know that everyone wants to be on the team because we all work so hard for the opportunity. There is a mutual respect for everyone on the team and that is evident in everything we do. I am very grateful for the opportunity I have been given; even though I was in grad school at another university, I was still able to compete at a Division I level. I know that I will take this experience, and these friends, with me for the rest of my life!



Huskies In The News

Check out the King County Journal's web site for a recent article about Günter Bohrmann!

www.kingcountyjournal.com/sited/story/html/210585

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