

# A HISTORY OF UNITED STATES ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

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*Invited original research article*

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## **Abstract**

*“A History of United States Gymnastics,” by Abie Grossfeld, covers the development and accomplishments of U.S. gymnastics through the years, starting with the organizations and the individual pioneers who introduced and helped spread gymnastics across the U.S. The contributions, to U.S. gymnastics, of the various organizations – Turnvereins, Sokols, YMCAs, athletic clubs, colleges, and high schools - are explained. In addition are the roles that the NCAA and AAU had in U.S. gymnastics development. Presented are the nature of and the participation in the various past and present gymnastics events (apparatus). Listed are skills that were initially performed by U.S. gymnasts for each event, and the notable accomplishments of U.S. gymnastics luminaries. How American gymnasts fared in international competition, with special performances, through the years, starting with the 1904 Olympic Games up to the 2009 World Championships. Lists for U.S. gymnastics medal winners are provided for the U.S. Olympic Games, World Gymnastics Championships, World University Games and Pan American Games.*

**Keywords:** *artistic gymnastics, USA, history.*

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## **AMERICAN GYMNASTICS PIONEERS**

The history of gymnastics in the United States started with three followers of Friederich Ludwig Jahn, known as the father of German gymnastics. The three disciples that are credited with introducing gymnastics to the United States are Carl “Charles” Beck, Carl “Charles” Follen, who came to the U.S. from Germany in 1824, and Francis Lieber who arrived in 1827. Beck first developed Jahn’s gymnastics system at the Round Hill School in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he spent five years. Beck had Jahn’s book, “Deutsche Turnkunst” (German Artistic Gymnastics) translated into English. Then Follen, who was also a teacher at Round Hill School, became a member of Harvard University’s faculty in 1831, where he introduced Jahn’s system of physical

training. Beck was also active at Harvard University from 1832 to 1850. In 1826, Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut purchased gymnastics apparatus to be placed on the college campus. Simultaneously, brothers named Devight opened the New Haven Gymnasium where gymnastics exercises were practiced. In Amherst, Massachusetts, the Turnplatz (based on Jahn’s model) opened in 1828. Other schools and clubs soon followed Beck’s and Follen’s example (Metzner, 1989).

## **AMERICAN TURNVEREINS**

About 20 years after Follen, Beck and Lieber had developed their programs, the Turnverein or Turngemeinde (gymnastics societies) movement in America took hold. Through the efforts of German immigrant Fredrick Hecker, the

first Turnverein opened in Cincinnati in 1848. (U.S. President Howard Taft was a member of the Cincinnati Turnverein) (Old caricature drawing in the archives of the New York Turnverein now at International Gymnastics Camp, Stroudsburg, PA). The American Turnvereins were completely independent and did not have ties to the Turnvereins in Germany (Metzner, 1989). Then, Turner halls opened up in Boston and Philadelphia in 1849, in New York, St. Louis and other cities in 1850. By 1885, 89 cities had Turner clubs (Moore, 1941) and kept expanding so that by 1894, there were 317 Turner clubs with 40,000 members (Wright, 2005). Eventually, over 700 Turner clubs existed across the U.S. (Wright, 2005). Of the various nationality Turnvereins, German, as one would surmise, were the most common, followed by Swiss. New York City alone had several Turnverein clubs located in the boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn (which also had a Norwegian Turners), Queens, and the Bronx. Located just across the Hudson River from New York's Manhattan, in New Jersey were other Turnvereins, including the National (in Newark), the Elisabeth, Union Hill and the Swiss Turners of Hudson County in the Union City, where at least 15 U.S. Olympic men and women gymnasts had trained - Alfred Jochim (1924, '28, '32, '36), Herman Witzig (1928, '32), Frank Haubold (1928, '32, '36), Frank Cumiskey (1932, '36, '48), Marcel Gleyre (1932), Arthur Pitt (1936), Irma Haubold (1936), Ada Lunardon (1936), Helen Schifano (1948), Vincent D'Autorio (1948, '52), Dorothy Dalton (1948, '52), Doris Kirkman (1952), Donald "Don" Holder (1952), Fred Orlofsky (1960), and Greg Weiss (1964). Also, William "Bill" Taylor, a three times National pommel horse champion (1934, '35 and '41) and Robert Sears, a National parallel bars and vaulting champion (1947) – had represented the Swiss Turners. Up until the 1952 Olympics, most of the U.S. women Olympians and National Champions came from the Philadelphia Turners (Maloney, 1953). Some of the top women (and men) gymnasts also came from other Turners

clubs in different areas of the country - like Chicago, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Buffalo, Omaha, Milwaukee and Madison (Wisconsin), New York and Newark,. Over the years and up until just a few years ago, the number of American Turnvereins have dwindled so that approximately 60 Turner clubs, divided into 14 districts, with a total of 13,000 members were left (Wright, 2005).

### **AMERICAN SOKOLS**

The Sokol clubs were the Slavic version of the Germanic Turnvereins. The first Sokol in America was established in Saint Louis in 1865, just three years after Miroslav Tyrs founded the organization in Bohemia (Wikipedia, 2010). Soon Bohemian, Slovakian, Slovenian and Polish Sokols spread across the U.S. However, the Polish called themselves Falcons, which is the English translation for Sokols. Early prominent U.S. National champions and Olympians who came from the Sokols were: Frank Jirasek, Anton Jahoda, Anton Klar, Rudolph Hradecky, Frank Kriz, and Ladislava "Laddie" Bakanic, a (1948) woman Olympian. The U.S. Postal Department issued a stamp in 1965 to commemorate 100 years of Sokols in the U.S. (Wright, 2005).

### **COLLEGE (UNIVERSITY), HIGH SCHOOL AND YMCA GYMNASTICS**

After Beck and Follen, Dr. Dudley Sargent contributed apparatus training at Harvard University in 1879. Yale University soon followed suit and had gymnastics competitions (Moore, 1941; Wright, 2005). At least half of the "gymnastics" competitive events in the late 1800s and early 1900s were track and field events, which currently are retained in the American Turner and Sokol competitions. (Track and field events were part of the gymnastics all-around program in the early Olympic Games and up until the 1950 World Gymnastics Championships.)

Several universities, other than Harvard and Yale, initiated gymnastics programs in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The first Intercollegiate Gymnastics Championships was held at the University of Chicago (Illinois) in 1897, followed by an eastern competition at New York University in 1899. Then the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Gymnasts of America was formed in 1900 (Moore, 1941).

Collegiate competitive programs were initiated: at Oklahoma in 1902, at Minnesota in 1903, at Illinois in 1909, at California in 1912, and at Iowa in 1917. Illinois and Minnesota had remnants of gymnastics activities as early as 1889 and 1898 respectively. In 1927, the U.S. Military Academy met McGill University (Montreal) in what may have been the first U.S. intercollegiate international competition (Gymnastics Media Guides; A History of Gymnastics at the University of Minnesota, 1898-1950 ).

Early regional collegiate conference championships still being conducted today are the Big Ten in the mid-west (formerly called the Western Conference which was initiated as early as 1903), and the Eastern Intercollegiate Gymnastics League (EIGL, initiated in 1926) now being conducted as the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference (or ECAC - in the northeast) (Wright, 2005; Gymnastics Media Guides; Frederick, 2009).

The first institution that provided a formal gymnastics education was the Normal College of the American Gymnastics Union (a Turner related organization) - founded in 1866. It was initially a traveling institution, first settling in New York City, then moving to Chicago before moving to Milwaukee in 1875, under the leadership of George Brosius, and eventually it settled permanently in Indianapolis in 1907. The Normal College eventually became an extension of Indiana University (Wright, 2005; personal accounts).

Starting in 1868, the YMCAs established gymnasiums which were

equipped with apparatus that helped spread gymnastics, however, it was difficult to find competent teachers. To meet this need, Springfield College in Massachusetts opened a physical training department in 1887 and developed the needed physical education instructors for the YMCAs. Through the years, U. S. National champions and Olympians were developed through the YMCA programs, with the earliest National champions representing a YMCA being in 1886 (Moore, 1941).

Leopold F. Zwarg, who had immigrated to the U.S. around 1910, taught at the Philadelphia Turners before teaching in the Philadelphia public high school system. Dr. Zwarg organized the first public high school gymnastics league in the U.S. (in Philadelphia) in 1923. He had written a number of books including: "A Study of the History, Uses, and Values of Apparatus in Physical Education," "Apparatus Work for Boys and Girls," and "Apparatus and Tumbling Exercises" (Moore, 1941; Wright, 2005).

California organized one of the early official high school championships and had the overall strongest high school gymnastics program in the U.S. during the 1940s and the 1950s. Eventually, high schools in just about every state developed gymnastics programs. Illinois, Texas, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Ohio, Indiana, Florida, New Jersey and, New York were some of the states that had especially strong high school programs. While there were many states that had hundreds of boys' high school programs in the 1970s, as of 2010 boys' high school teams no longer exist in many states, with just a smattering of a few programs in several states. Girls' high school gymnastics was initiated years after the boys' and as of 2010, still have many (high school) programs across the USA (personal accounts).

Starting in the 1950s, most of the U.S. international men gymnasts had gone through the high school and college programs which had the resources of operating budgets, well equipped

gymnasiums, salaried professional coaches and therapists.

The major collegiate gymnastics competition in the U.S. is the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championships, which was initiated in 1938. In its peaks years, the 1960s, there were approximately 140 collegiate men's gymnastics teams. The number has continually fallen off so that as of 2010, there are only 17 collegiate men's varsity (eligible under NCAA jurisdiction to compete in official college-university championships and are financially supported by the colleges) gymnastics teams across the U.S. The collegiate women's gymnastics competition did not take hold until the late 1950s. The Association for Intercollegiate Athletic for Women (IAIW) became the first official national collegiate women's sports organization in the 1960s and was dissolved after the NCAA became the governing authority with their first women's gymnastics championships in 1982. Well over 100 college varsity women's gymnastics teams have dwindled so that as of 2010, there are 91 women's varsity college teams in the USA (12). However, there are number of men's and women's collegiate gymnastics non-varsity clubs (which are not fully supported financially by the college and not eligible for the NCAA Championships) across the country.

#### **AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION**

The earliest administrative organization that regulated and governed gymnastics (and other sports) competitions, which brought the various U.S. organizations with gymnastics into a common open competition each year was the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). The AAU held its first National Gymnastics Championships (NAAU) in 1885, with parallel bars, horizontal bar, rings and Indian clubs; tumbling was added in 1886; rope climb in 1888; the all-around, side (pommel) horse and long horse (vaulting) in 1897; and free calisthenics (floor exercise) had its first national championships in 1921.

A team competition was added in 1914. The Swiss Turners of Hudson County, New Jersey for men and the Philadelphia Turners for women, won the most team titles over the years. Up until 1915, three optional exercises for each competitor on each apparatus were required, then it was reduced to two exercises. The international program, which allowed for just one compulsory and one optional exercise, was adopted in the U.S. after its gymnasts started entering international competition. Women first competed in the National AAU Championships in 1931 (Moore, 1941).

The AAU published an annual gymnastics handbook (1941 to 1966) (Moore, 1941; Maloney, 1953) featuring various articles, results of national and regional AAU, Turner, Sokol, college, and YMCA competitions across the country. Also, the AAU rules for competition, apparatus specifications, the national senior compulsory exercises, along with junior and novice level compulsories, were featured. As early as 1940, the AAU had committees in 41 district associations across the U.S. who organized competitions for senior, junior and novice level gymnasts in their region with each level's required compulsory and optional exercises (Moore, 1941).

From the first National Championships in 1885 and up until 1970, the AAU was the premier or elite U.S. National championships. It continued to be conducted after 1970 but was no longer the premier National championships (\*see later comments). Two-thousand ten (2010) marks the 125 year that the U.S. National gymnastics championships have been conducted (personal accounts).

#### **CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE TURNERS, SOKOLS, PRIVATE CLUBS, ATHLETIC CLUBS AND COLLEGES (UNIVERSITIES)**

In recent times, most of the Turner and Sokol halls have been closed down but, until fairly recently, gymnasts of stature have still been produced through these

organizations. For example, Jim Hartung (1980, 1984 Olympian) and Phil Cahoy (1980 Olympian) came through the Sokol Club in Omaha, Nebraska, and Paul and Morgan Hamm (2000, 2004 Olympians) came through the Swiss Turners in West Allis, Wisconsin.

The first privately owned gymnastics clubs in the U.S. started in the early 1950s. And, today there are literally many hundreds of clubs scattered in every part of the United States. Over the years, the best American girls-women gymnasts, who were usually pre-college age, have come from private gymnastics clubs. After their elite or international gymnastics careers, many women go on and compete (if they maintain their amateur status, having not received any money related to gymnastics performance and are eligible under NCAA rules) for the colleges that they attend. Since the women's college gymnastics difficulty requirements for competition have been much less stringent than the international (FIG) requirements, it became easier for international women gymnasts to be successful during their college gymnastics career.

In recent times while most of the U.S. elite men gymnasts have gotten their initial start at private clubs, they go on to college and continue their training and from there, go on and tryout for the various international teams. Therefore, unlike the women, the men use the FIG Code of Points (rules) in their college competition. Yes, some U.S. men gymnasts have come from private clubs directly onto the U.S. international teams (personal accounts). Also, athletic club programs have provided a good number of National Champions, starting with the first National AAU Championships in 1885 (Moore, 1941).

### **USA GYMNASTICS (USAG, FORMERLY USGF)**

Starting in the late 1950s, some college coaches rebelled against the AAU gymnastics officials, who had full control of the coach selection and other aspects of the

U.S. international program. The college coaches began to organize the United States Gymnastics Federation (USGF, later USAG). The USGF initiated their national championships in 1963. Since the AAU was the national governing body, gymnasts could only qualify for the U.S. Olympic, World Championship, and Pan American teams through the National AAU championships and trials. Most of the best U.S. gymnasts, men and women, did not take part in the USGF championships until 1970, when the USGF replaced the AAU as the national governing body. It was a good move in that the USGF's only concern was gymnastics. The AAU was an "umbrella" organization, governing a number of sports like fencing, boxing, wrestling, and some others, with its primary focus on track and field and swimming (personal accounts).

### **Events that were part of the earlier U.S. gymnastics competitions that are now contested separately**

Trampoline was developed in the United States, with the first recorded competition occurring in Dallas, Texas in 1946 and was won by American Skippy Browning (who went on and became the 1952 Olympic Springboard Diving Champion) (Copp). The first international trampoline competition was in the 1955 Pan American Games and was won by American Don Harper (who the following year won the silver medal in springboard diving at the 1956 Olympic Games). Trampoline was also contested as part of the gymnastics competition at the 1959 Pan American Games and was won by American Ron Munn, who performed a triple front salto (somersault), the first known triple salto in competition (personal accounts). American Dan Millman was the first world trampoline champion. In the early 1970s, trampoline competitions were separated from the gymnastics competitions (personal accounts).

Tumbling - Note: all the following tumbling skills mentioned were performed

(without springs) on hair mats or on grass. American Rowland Wolfe, who placed 1<sup>st</sup> in tumbling at the 1932 Olympic Games, performed a back salto with a double twist (2/1) as part of his routine (Viewed on movie films or youtube). Tumbling was contested in the gymnastics competition in both the 1955 and 1959 Pan American Games. Americans William "Bill" Roy won in 1955, and Harold "Hal" Holmes won in 1959, where Holmes performed a roundoff, flip flop (flic flac), back salto with a full twist (1/1), flip flop, back double salto - as one of his four tumbling passes. Holmes was a four time National tumbling champion. He also successfully performed a back double salto with a full twist ((Tsukahara) in 1962 (personal accounts; private DVD of Hal Holmes' tumbling career). In 1942 American Harold Zimmerman successfully performed a back salto with a triple twist (3/1) in the National AAU tumbling championships (14). In the 1953 National AAU Championships (in Chicago), Richard "Dick" Browning performed the following first tumbling pass - roundoff flip flop, back salto ½ twist, front handspring, front salto step out, roundoff flip flop, back double salto (11, 30). Browning was a four time National AAU tumbling Champion in his career. He was also famous for performing a back salto (off grass and a hair mat - without springs) over a high jump cross bar at 7 feet 5 inches in 1953 (personal accounts; viewed on movie films or youtube) (three years before the first track and field high jumper cleared 7 feet). (Dick's brother was Skippy Browning, the 1952 Olympic springboard diving champion.) In 1951, James "Corky" Sebbo performed the following pass in tumbling competition: roundoff, flip flop, back salto with 2½ (5/2) twist step out, roundoff flip flop, back salto with double twist (2/1) (personal accounts). Sebbo was a two-time National AAU tumbling champion. Tumbling was last contested in the NCAA Championships in 1964.

**Events that were part of the earlier U.S. gymnastics competitions but are no longer contested**

Rope Climb - From a sitting position on the floor using arms only, the "gymnast" climbed and touched a disc (with lamp black) 20 feet high (a little more than 6 meters). Although it is hard to believe, the world record was 2.8 seconds, first recorded by Don Perry, who matched this time a number of times. Perry won six National Championships and was never defeated in competition. Perry could make the 20 foot climb in six arm strokes and a reach which improved his time over the seven stroke climb, but the six stroke climb was not consistent in that he often missed touching the disc. In order to not lose, he mostly used seven strokes which was how he set the record of 2.8 seconds. Rope climb was contested in both the 1955 and 1959 Pan American Games. Don Perry won in 1955, and Garvin Smith won in 1959 - both men were timed in 2.9 seconds. Years after Perry had competed, two other rope climbers, Robert Manning and Paul Davis, had matched (once each) Perry's 2.8 seconds. This event was disbanded in the NAAU and NCAA Gymnastics Championships after 1962 (Amateur Athletic Union Gymnastics, 1960).

Indian Clubs - were twirled through a variety of intricate patterns (and not tossed), for a 4 minute routine - each minute was judged on a 2½ point basis. This was contested last in the U.S. National AAU Championships in 1953 (Amateur Athletic Union Gymnastics, 1960). Indian clubs were contested in the 1955 and 1959 Pan American Games, with Francisco Alvarez Jr. of Mexico, winning both times. (In the 1940s, Francisco Alvarez Sr. had traveled to the U.S. from Mexico and competed for a number of years in Indian clubs at the National AAU Championships.)

Swinging Rings - From the mid-1940s to 1951, swinging and still ring compulsory and optional exercises alternated yearly in the AAU competitions - one year the compulsory was still rings and

the optional was swinging rings, and the next year it was reversed. Then after 1951, swinging rings and still rings were separate events in the AAU competitions. In the NCAA and other college regional conference championships swinging rings were a separate event from still rings. The last NAAU and NCAA Championships in swinging ring for men was in 1962 and 1961 respectively. The women competed in swinging rings in the NAAU from 1933 to 1957 (Amateur Athletic Union Gymnastics Handbook, 1960). It should be noted that, in the U.S., while swinging rings were also referred to as flying rings, the flying rings (for men) in the records of the 1932 Olympic Games were not swinging rings but still rings. Perhaps, the still rings were referred to as flying was because they were not rigid (personal accounts).

Names and Abbreviations: Olympic Games (OG), World Gymnastics Championships (WC), World University Games or Universiade (WUG), Pan American Games (PAG), All-around (AA), floor exercise (FE), pommel horse (PH), still or stationary rings (R), vaulting (V), parallel bars (PB), horizontal bar (HB), uneven bars (UB), balance beam (BB), flying rings (FR), tumbling TU), trampoline (TR), Indian clubs (IC), rope climb (RC).

### **FIRST PERFORMANCE OF SKILLS (ELEMENTS) BY AMERICANS IN EACH OF THE ALL-AROUND EVENTS**

A good number of skills with names of gymnasts which are listed in the FIG Code of Points were not first performed in an Olympic Games or World Championships, while other skills are miscredited or credited to those who did not perform them first or even perform them. With that said, the following skills (elements) are offered as being performed by American gymnasts, perhaps, for the first time in an official competition of some stature.

**FE:** 1. Joe Kotys, Bob Stout and Abie Grossfeld were the only gymnasts to perform a back salto with a full (360 degree) twist in FE in the OG - 1948, 1952 and 1956 respectively (personal accounts). (After 1956 gymnasts from other countries began using the back full twist salto.) 2. An Endo or a back piked flip flop performed by Abie Grossfeld in the 1953 U.S. National (AAU) Championships. 3. A Tong Fei or butterfly full (1/1) twist performed by William "Bill" Roy in the 1954 NAAU Championships. 4. A back double tuck salto performed by Jamile Ashmore in the 1962 NAAU Championships (April). (Note: A Bulgarian gymnast attempted the back double salto in the 1962 World Championships (in October or November) and crashed, as I remember, his face hitting first and, thus, was not successfully completed. 5 & 6. A dive roll with a full (1/1) and in 1965, and a back dive roll with a 3/2 twists in 1966 by Frank Schmitz in the NCAA Championships of those years. 7. A dive full twist front handspring (or walkover) and back 3/2 twist handspring by Jim Hartung in 1978 World Championships. 8. A jump back 1/2 twist and 3/2 salto (Arabian 1 3/4 salto) by Dan Millman in 1966. Note: The U.S. first instituted a floor exercise area with springs for competition in 1978.

**PH:** 1. William "Bill" Taylor performed a 360 reverse stockli in the 1941 NAAU Championships.

**R:** 1. A Li Ning or rearward hang front uprise performed by Al Klein in 1949 NAAU Championships. 2. A Nakayama or back lever to cross by Todd DiNicolain the 1948 Metropolitan Senior Gymnastics Championships. 3. A maltese or swallow performed by Leonard Harris and Watts in 1948 and 1954 NAAU Championships respectively. 4. A whippet (Honma) was performed by John "Jack" Miles and Jack Sharp on swinging rings in the NCAA Championships in 1949 and/or 1950 (30). 5. A back double salto dismount by Jamile Ashmore in the 1955 Pan American team trials. 6. A back salto 1/1 twist dismount by Abie Grossfeld in 1957 in NAAU Championships. 7 & 8. A back kip to

maltese, and maltese press to planch by Carl "Bill" Wolfe in 1962 NAAU Championships. 9. A kip to V hold by Phil Cahoy 1981 World Championships. Note: What is listed as a Pineda may not have been performed by (Tony) Pineda at all but was performed by numerous U.S. gymnasts in the 1940's. 10. Jim Amerine, for example, performed a held front lever, pull with straight body to a held cross, then lower to held back lever pull to a held cross (Nakayama) in the 1965 North American Championships (personal accounts, viewed on movie films or youtube)

V: A Tsukahara was performed by Harold "Hal" Shaw throughout the 1966-1967 college gymnastics season, including the National Collegiate Championships (NCAA). Shaw also performed it in pike position.

PB: 1. A Diomidov was performed by Warren Wakerlin in 1962 Midwest Open Gymnastics Championship. 2. A Gatson 1 was first performed by Marshall Nelson in the 1997 NCAA Championships. 3. An article with sequence photos of a 1/1 twist stutz to support (Carminucci to support) or "Waddell" appeared in the June 1980 International Gymnast magazine but was performed by Bill Waddell during the 1974-75 collegiate gymnastics competition season and in the 1975 NCAA Championships. 4. The straddled (Stalder) shoot handstand on one rail by Tim Daggett in the 1981 World Championships. 5. From a stand, reach under bars, grasp far rail, jump to an immediate (early) stoop (pike) in back seat circle to V support position on one rail, and the front salto 3/2 twist dismount by Phil Cahoy in 1978 World Championships. 6. In the 1970s, Healy, a high school or junior college gymnast in Illinois, was lowered and held in separate positions by a spotter in four or five still photos (portrayed in a U.S. publication), reversing a Diomidov. There is no account of him ever doing it in competition or that he could actually do the "Healy." He proceeded to name this skill after himself. However, consider that the Healy was referred to as a heli-twirl as it appeared in an article in the November 1979

issue of the International Gymnast magazine (describing methods of how to learn the skill).

HB: 1. Harold "Hal" Lewis who performed the following skills in the 1949 and/or 1950 NAAU Championships: A front giant hop to double elgrip; a Steinemann (German giant) to a back seat circle piked pull out to a free front support; and the free hip flyaway (hecht) dismount. 2. The Endo was performed by William "Bill" Sims in 1958 U.S. intercollegiate competition and Midwest Open Championships. 3. The Andrianov or back triple salto dismount was performed by Mark Davis in the 1971 NAAU Championships. 4. Kurt Thomas performed from a back giant stoop (pike) in to free back seat circle casting (or lifting) through dorsal handstand and swing through a dorsal hang.

### *Notable accomplishments of U.S. gymnastics luminaries*

#### MEN

Roy E. Moore (born 1875, died 1957) is regarded as the "father" of American gymnastics, and coached-managed three U.S. Olympic teams – 1920, 1924 and 1928. Mr. Moore was the Chairman of both the U.S. Olympic and National AAU Gymnastics Committees, which he served for over 35 years. He was the first American to serve as an FIG officer, being the Vice President until his death. As a competitor, he represented the New York Turnverein and won five NAAU Championships on PH (1907, '08, '09, '12 and '13) (Moore, 1941; Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook, 1957).

Frank Kriz was a product of the Bohemian Sokol of New York, and the first American to compete in three OG (1920, '24 and '28). Kriz won V in the 1924 Olympic Games and, thus, became the first American gymnast (discarding the all American 1904 second "Olympic" competition) to win a true Olympic Gold medal (see statement under 1924 above).

Alfred “Al” Jochim was the only American to compete in four OG in gymnastics (1924, ‘28, ‘32, ‘36). He won two silver medals - for V and for team in the 1932 Games. In the 1936 OG, Jochim was honored by carrying the American flag in the opening ceremony, leading the U.S. delegation into the stadium. Further, Jochim won the most men’s National (AAU) gymnastics championships, at 35 titles, in U.S. history which included seven AA titles (between 1925 and 1934).

George Wheeler, who was on the 1936 Olympic team, had improved tremendously after 1936 and won 25 National titles in five consecutive years (1937-‘41), which included five consecutive AA, FE, V, and PB titles. Then, he went into the Navy in World War II, and ended his gymnastics career.

Frank Cumiskey competed in the 1932, ‘36 and ‘48 OG, and won a total of 24 National titles, including 5 all-around titles. He won National titles spanning 17 years – the first title was for PH in 1932 and the last title was for HB in 1948. He took a leave of absence from the National Championships for four years (1938 to 1941). In 1948, a few weeks before he turned 36 years old, he placed 6<sup>th</sup> in PH at the OG (three Finns tied for first). He is also credited with starting the U.S. National Gymnastics Judging Association.

Edward Hennig, from the German Turnverein in Cleveland, tied for first on HB and IC in the 1904 OG, and was also the NAAU Champion. He competed until 1951, a span of 47 years, having won 13 National Indian Club titles, the last at age 71.

Makoto “Mako” Sakamoto competed in two OG (1964, ‘72) and two WC 1966, ‘70). He is the only U.S. male gymnast to win all seven national titles in one championships (1965). He won a total of 27 U.S. National championships (ranks second in U.S. National men’s titles, including six AA titles (between 1963 and 1970). As a 17 year old, he placed 20<sup>th</sup> in AA in the 1964 OG. He also placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA in the 1965 WUG, and 12<sup>th</sup> in AA in the 1970 WC.

Peter Kormann became America’s first Olympic individual gymnastics medalist in 44 years (since 1932) winning the bronze medal in FE in 1976, where he tied Nikolai Andrianov for the highest score in finals, at 9.8, and moved from 6<sup>th</sup> (actually 10<sup>th</sup> place, because of the two gymnasts per country rule) to 3<sup>rd</sup> place. (Note: The FIG rules that followed with non-accumulated scores or “new life,” Kormann would have been co-Olympic Champion.)

Kurt Thomas, America’s first men’s World gymnastics champion when he placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE in 1978. And, in 1979 WC he again won FE and added the HB. He also placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, PH, and PB – winning 5 individual medals, plus the team bronze, for a total of 6 medals.

Bart Conner was the first American man to win gold medals (PB) in both the WC (1979) and the OG (1984). He qualified for three OG (1976, ‘80 and ‘84) and four WC (1978, ‘79, ‘81 and ‘83).

Peter Vidmar, Olympic PH champion, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA (losing first by .025 points - 1984).

Mitch Gaylord, In 1984 OG, won three individual medals (2<sup>nd</sup> V, 3<sup>rd</sup> R and PB) plus the team gold – for a total of 4 medals.

Trent Dimas, Olympic HB champion (1992).

Paul Hamm won the AA at both the World Championships (2003) and the OG (2004) – the only American to do so. He competed in two OG (2000 and ‘04) and three WC (2000-‘03). He broke a bone in his hand just before the 2008 OG.

John Roethlisberger was the most prolific U.S. competitor for the combined WC and OG. He competed in three OG (1992, ‘96 and ‘00) and six WC (1991, two in ‘94 - separate individual and team WC, ‘95, ‘97, and ‘99). He also won four U.S. National AA championships (between 1990 and 1995).

Blain Wilson competed in three OG and four WC, and won five consecutive U.S. National AA elite championships (1996-2000).

Sean Townsend, 2001 WC placed 1<sup>st</sup> PB.

#### WOMEN

Helen Schifano (Sjursen) placed second in V at the 1948 OG (where Olympic medals were not awarded to women for individual events). The U.S. women, in the 1948 OG, won its first Olympic gymnastics team medal, placing third.

Clara Schroth (Lomady), 1948 and 1952 Olympian, won the most U.S. National (AAU) Championships, at 38 titles, which included a U.S. record 10 consecutive National BB titles. She also won six AA titles. Note: Prior to 1952, an AA woman gymnast had extra events – FR (although FR remained an event until 1957) and even PBs - besides the tradition four events contested in present day championships. Therefore, female AA gymnasts could win seven medals (including the AA) in a single championships (Maloney, 1953)

Muriel Davis Grossfeld was the first American woman gymnast to compete in three OG (1956, 60, 64). She won the second most official U.S. National women's titles at 17, which included a U.S. record of 8 National FE titles (Amateur Athletic Union Official 1965-1966 Gymnastics Guide and handbook).

Cathy Rigby won America's first medal in the WC when she took the silver medal on BB in 1970 (in the beautiful city of Ljubljana).

Marcia Frederick won America's first women's WC title when she placed 1<sup>st</sup> on UB in 1978.

Mary Lou Retton won America's first Olympic AA title in 1984, 2<sup>nd</sup> V, 3<sup>rd</sup> UB & FE. Won 5 medals in the 1984 OG – the most of any athlete.

Julianne McNamara placed 1<sup>st</sup> UB and 2<sup>nd</sup> FE in the 1984 OG, and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB in the 1981 WC.

Kim Zmeskal won America's first WC all-around title in 1991, 3<sup>rd</sup> FE; 1992 WC 1<sup>st</sup> BB & FE; winning a total of 4 WC individual medals.

Shannon Miller became the America's first two time World AA Champion - 1993 and 1994. Also, 2<sup>nd</sup> UB in 1991 WC; 2<sup>nd</sup> AA & BB and 3<sup>rd</sup> UB & FE in 1992 Olympics; 1<sup>st</sup> UB & FE in 1993 WC; 1<sup>st</sup> BB in 1994 WC; 1<sup>st</sup> BB 1996 Olympics (won a total of 5 Olympic and 6 WC individual medals).

Courtney Kupets, 2002 WC 1<sup>st</sup> UB.

Ashley Postell, 2002 WC 1<sup>st</sup> BB.

Carly Patterson, 2004 OG 1st AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> BB; 2003 WC 2<sup>nd</sup> AA.

Chellsie Memmel, 2005 WC 1st AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> UB & BB; 2003 WC 1<sup>st</sup>tie UB.

Hollie Vise, 2005 WC 1<sup>st</sup>tie UB

Shawn Johnson, 2007 WC 1<sup>st</sup> AA & FE; 1<sup>st</sup> BB, 2008 OG 1<sup>st</sup> BB, 2<sup>nd</sup> AA & FE. She won 4 medals for each.

Anastasia "Nastia" Liukin, 2008 OG 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> UB & BB, 3<sup>rd</sup> FE (won 5 medals); 2005 WC 1<sup>st</sup> UB, 2<sup>nd</sup> AA & FE; 2006 WC 2<sup>nd</sup> UB; 2007 WC 1<sup>st</sup> BB & 2<sup>nd</sup> UB.

Bridget Sloan, 2009 WC 1<sup>st</sup> AA.

Kayla Williams, 2009 WC 1<sup>st</sup> V.

### HOW AMERICAN GYMNASTS FARED IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION, INCLUDING SOME SPECIAL PERFORMANCES, THROUGH THE YEARS

#### 1904 Olympic Games (in St. Louis)

The first Olympic Games (in St. Louis) in which U.S. gymnasts took part was in 1904. First, some background: Since the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (akin to a World's Fair) was being held in St. Louis in 1904 with James Edward Sullivan being the Chief of Physical Culture, sporting events were held each day of the Exposition, which lasted six months. Sullivan insisted that every event be labeled Olympic. Therefore, a problem with the 1904 OG was to decide which events were truly Olympic caliber - which meant that the events were open to the best amateur athletes of all countries to compete on equal terms. Also, a number of events were not eliminated because only Americans took part - this was commonplace in 1904 with the second

Olympic gymnastics competition, as later explained, being an example (Mallon, 1999).

The total number of all-around (AA) gymnastics competitors were 112 from the USA, five from Germany, one from Austria, and one from Switzerland, and two U.S. one event specialists (Herman Glass who placed 1<sup>st</sup> on R, and Ralph Wilson who placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in Indian clubs (IC) for a total of 121 competitors representing just four nations. It should be noted that some of the "American" gymnasts representing the various Turnvereins may have been of foreign nationality, but with records not available, their actual nationality was not determined. One American gymnast Max Emmerich competed both in gymnastics and the separate sport of track and field (athletics) (Mallon, 1999).

There were two different and independent Olympic gymnastics competitions separated in time by almost four months - and both were credited as Olympic competitions (4). The first competition, Turnverein gymnastics, considered of true Olympic caliber, was contested on July 1-2 on the field of the Olympic Stadium, and consisted of the following events: horizontal bar (HB), parallel bars (PB), side horse (PH) and long horse (V), 100 yard run, shot put and long jump. Two compulsory and one optional exercise(s) were performed on PH, V, PB and HB. The records indicate that there were 12 different exercises in the gymnastics competition (Mallon, 1999).

Three sets of medals were awarded for the different parts of the competition: all the events together (apparatus and track and field), for just the apparatus events, and for just the track and field events (all as part of Turnverein gymnastics, which was separate from the sport of track and field competition). In the combined event – apparatus and track and field – the medalists, in this first Olympic competition, were: 1<sup>st</sup> Julius Lenhart from Austria; 2<sup>nd</sup> Wilhelm Weber from Germany; 3<sup>rd</sup> Adolf Spinnler from Switzerland. The best Americans placed 6<sup>th</sup> (Otto Steffen -

although he may have been a German citizen living in the USA) (16,17); 8<sup>th</sup> (John Bissinger); and 10<sup>th</sup> (William Merz). American Anton Heida who won the second competition in October (noted later) placed 18<sup>th</sup>. The medalists for just the gymnastics apparatus part of the competition were all Europeans: 1<sup>st</sup> Adolf Spinnler, 2<sup>nd</sup> Julius Lenhart, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wilhelm Weber. The best Americans, Otto Steffen placed 6<sup>th</sup>, George Eyser placed 10<sup>th</sup>, and Anton Heida placed 12<sup>th</sup>. The medalists for just the track and field (gymnastics) events were all Americans: 1<sup>st</sup> Max Emmerich, 2<sup>nd</sup> John Grieb, and 3<sup>rd</sup> William Merz (Mallon, 1999).

Summarizing the first gymnastics competition held on July 1-2, which consisted of 112 Americans and 7 Europeans, the Americans won no gymnastics apparatus medals or the apparatus combined with track and field medals. They only won medals (gold, silver and bronze) for just the track & field (gymnastics) events.

Also contested was a team competition which consisted of thirteen (13) American Turnvereins from different U.S. cities. The results, with apparatus work being weighted more than the track & field events, were as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Philadelphia; 2<sup>nd</sup> New York; 3<sup>rd</sup> Central, Chicago; 4<sup>th</sup> Concordia, St. Louis; 5<sup>th</sup> South

St. Louis; 6<sup>th</sup> Norwegier, Brooklyn, NY; 7<sup>th</sup> Vorwarts, Chicago; 8<sup>th</sup> Davenport, Iowa; 9<sup>th</sup> LeSalle, Chicago; 10<sup>th</sup> Passaic, New Jersey; 11<sup>th</sup> Milwaukee; 12<sup>th</sup> Socialer, Detroit; and 13<sup>th</sup> Vorwarts, Cleveland (4). Note: Julius Lenhart, an Austrian citizen, competed for the winning Philadelphia Turngemeinde team (Mallon, 1999; Cumiskey, 1984).

The separate second gymnastics competition was not truly Olympic in nature in that gymnasts from only one country, with just a total of 10 competitors (five AA and five specialists) took part(17) and, thus, should have been considered, at best, of marginal Olympic caliber That competition was held on October 28 and 29, was referred to as Swedish gymnastics, consisting of only apparatus work. Events

contested were the AA, PH, R, V, PB, HB, RC and IC (Mallon, 1999). Therefore, this one competition determined the National champions and a separate set of "Olympic champions."

Results of the (U.S.) gymnasts were: Anton Heida, 1st AA, PH, V (tied), and HB, 2<sup>nd</sup> PB, thus, winning four individual gold and 1 silver medal(s); George Eyser, 1<sup>st</sup> in V (tied) and RC; 2<sup>nd</sup> AA, PH, and PB – won 3 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze medal(s); William Merz won 1 silver and 4 bronze medal(s); Edward Hennig 1<sup>st</sup> on HB and IC - won 2 gold medals; John Grieb won 1 gold and 1 silver medal; Charles Klause won 1 silver and 1 bronze medal, and John Duha, who was the youngest gymnastics medalist at 16 years of age, won 2 bronze medals (Mallon, 1999).

All the medals (gold, silver and bronze) in this second competition were won by Americans - no surprise - since athletes from other countries were not in the competition. Note: Both sets of Olympic results (from the July and the October competitions) are not usually displayed in publications listing Olympic Champions (personal accounts).

George Eyser, in these 1904 OG, was the oldest gymnastics medalist at age 32. He had lost a leg as a result of a train accident when he was a child, had a wooden leg and, amazingly, tied for first in vaulting. Eyser, who was excellent on the gymnastics apparatus could, understandably, not do well in the track and field events (Mallon, 1999; Wallechinsky, 2004).

Also, contested in August, 1904 in St. Louis, was a non-Olympic event - the YMCA Gymnastics Championships. The gymnastics events contested were the AA, PH, V, PB, and HB. In addition, there was a team championships consisting of high jump, marching calisthenics and apparatus, basketball and a relay race (Mallon, 1999).

#### 1905 – 1919

The U.S. did not take part in the 1908 and 1912 Olympic Games in gymnastics . Between 1905 and 1919, gymnasts representing various Turner clubs

won at least twice as many U.S. National individual championships than the gymnasts that represented the Sokols, YMCAs, athletic clubs, and universities (Moore, 1941).

#### 1920 Olympic Games (in Antwerp)

The Americans did not participate internationally again until the 1920 OG, where just four gymnasts represented the U.S. The U.S. gymnasts competed in the combined individual event (AA). Frank Kriz, the highest American in the AA placed 10<sup>th</sup> (out of 25 competitors). The U.S. gymnasts came from the New York Turners, Norwegian Turners (Brooklyn), Philadelphia Turners, and Los Angeles Athletic Club. The teams from other countries (all European) vying for the Olympic team competition had from 16 to 26 gymnasts on their teams (Mallon & Bijkerk, 2003).

#### 1924 Olympic Games (in Paris)

The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. Frank Kriz, from the Bohemian Sokol in New York, won vaulting and, aside from the all American 1904 Olympic second gymnastics competition, became in 1924 America's first true Olympic Gymnastics Champion. Kriz placed 6<sup>th</sup> in RC, 8<sup>th</sup> on PH, and 19<sup>th</sup> AA, the highest place among the Americans. Max Wanderer placed 5<sup>th</sup> in V.

#### 1928 Olympic Games (in Amsterdam)

The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. The top U.S. gymnast in the AA was Alfred Jochim in 36<sup>th</sup> place. At least three members of the 1928 Olympic team came from the New York Turners. Frank Haubold, one of the 1928 Olympians, once told me that the same pommel horse, in which I and others were training on in 1958 at the Union City (NJ) Swiss Turners, was brought to the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam for training. It still had the same leather cover and that was a very used PH over those 30 years, especially when considering all the Olympians that had come from that club. "The leather must have come from a very healthy animal."

1932 Olympic Games (in Los Angeles)

Due to the world (financial) depression and the great distance to travel from Europe to the U.S., just 46 athletes representing six countries took part in gymnastics at the 1932 OG. The U.S. men's gymnastics team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> out of five teams. Also, 24 gymnasts competed in the AA, with the U.S. gymnasts placing 6<sup>th</sup> (Frank Haubold), 7<sup>th</sup> (Frederick Meyer), 9<sup>th</sup> (Alfred Jochim), and 10<sup>th</sup> (Frank Cumiskey). Further, the maximum number of gymnasts that competed for medals in each of the AA events was 14 for R and PB, 12 for HB, 10 for PH, and 9 for V. The special events (non-AA) TU, IC and RC had totals of 4, 4 and 5 competitors respectively, which translated to only one, one and two competitors in these events that did not win an Olympic medal. The U.S. gymnasts place finishes and/or won the following individual medals: Frank Haubold, Frank Cumiskey and Alfred Jochim placed 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> on PH respectively; Alfred Jochim, Ed Carmichael and Marcel Gleyre placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in V respectively; U.S. Rings specialists placed 1<sup>st</sup> (George Gulack, former FIG Executive Committee), 2<sup>nd</sup> (Bill Denton), and 4<sup>th</sup> (Richard Bishop); Dallas Bixler, a specialist, placed 1<sup>st</sup> on HB; TU specialists placed 1<sup>st</sup> (Rowland Wolfe), 2<sup>nd</sup> (Edwin Gross) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (William Hermann); RC specialists placed 1<sup>st</sup> (Raymond Bass), 2<sup>nd</sup> (William Galbraith) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (Thomas Connolly); IC specialist placed 1<sup>st</sup> (George Roth), 2<sup>nd</sup> (Philip Erenberg) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (William Kuhlemeier) (The Games of the X<sup>th</sup> Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report, 1933).

1936 Olympic Games (in Berlin)

The U.S. women gymnasts first took part in the OG in 1936, with their team placing 5<sup>th</sup>. U.S. gymnast Connie Caruccio (Lenz) placed 3<sup>rd</sup> on UB, 4<sup>th</sup> in AA and BB (15), however individual event or AA medals were not awarded to women. The U.S. men's team placed 10<sup>th</sup>. The top U.S. gymnast in the AA was Frank Cumiskey who placed 48<sup>th</sup>.

1947 International Competition between the Czech and the U.S. men (in New York City)

Before 1947, the elite level American gymnasts only had one international gymnastics competition every four years - the Olympic Games. In 1947, the Czech men's team came to the United States and

competed against the American team in the New York Sokol Hall, which was the first U.S. international dual gymnastics meet. The 1936 Olympic rings champions Alois Hudec won the AA, with the American gymnasts, Paul Fina and Edward "Ed" Scrobe taking 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The Czechs beat the Americans by 3.7 points. William "Bill" Roetzheim, who years later served on the FIG Technical Committee, competed in his first international competition (as did the other U.S. gymnasts, except for Arthur Pitt who had competed in the 1936 OG). Roetzheim, just 18 years old, finished 11<sup>th</sup> (out of 12) in the AA (Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook, 1948)

1948 Olympic Games (in London)

The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. The top U.S. gymnast in the AA was Ed Scrobe, placing 44<sup>th</sup>. In these Games, Frank Cumiskey (1932, '36 and '48 Olympian), a month before turning 36 years old, received the 4<sup>th</sup> highest score on PH but since three Finns tied for first, and two Italians were next, Cumiskey finished 6<sup>th</sup>. The women's team won America's first team medal, placing 3<sup>rd</sup>. U.S. gymnast Helen Schifano (Sjursen) placed second in V, but medals were not awarded to women for individual events. She was the U.S. high scorer in the AA, placing 14<sup>th</sup>.

1950 (in Japan)

In 1950, three American men traveled to Japan and competed against three Japanese gymnasts in two competitions. The legendary gymnast Masao Takemoto placed 1<sup>st</sup> AA in both competitions. The American gymnasts - Ed Scrobe, Bill Roetzheim and Joseph "Joe" Kotys - occupied the next three AA places

in both competitions, followed by the other two Japanese gymnasts. The U.S. won the team competition by 22.2 points (22). In the years that followed, as is common gymnastics knowledge, the Japanese men gymnasts markedly improved, becoming the world's best by 1960. The next dual competition in Japan between these two nations would not occur until 33 years later, in 1983 (personal accounts).

#### 1951 Pan American Games (in Buenos Aires)

The first PAG were held in Buenos Aires in 1951. The U.S. had just one entry in the gymnastics competition, Bill Roetzheim, who financed his own trip, and won the AA (Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook 1952; Bushnell, 1952).

#### 1952 Olympic Games (in Helsinki)

(Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook, 1951) The U.S. men's team placed 8<sup>th</sup>. The top U.S. gymnast in the AA was Ed Scrobe who placed 30<sup>th</sup>. American Robert "Bob" Stout received the highest optional FE score of 9.85 (but competed in compulsory exercises at 8 AM and received scores of 9.9, 9.5, 9.1, 9.0 for an average of 9.3) (Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook, 1953) and tied for 7<sup>th</sup> place (Bushnell, 1952). The U.S. women's team placed 15<sup>th</sup>. Marion Barone was the top U.S. AA gymnast in 64<sup>th</sup> place (Amateur Athletic Union of the United States Gymnastics Yearbook, 1953).

#### 1954 World Championships (in Rome)

In 1954, two American gymnasts competed in the World Championships – Charles Simms and John "Jack" Beckner (who was injured, spraining his wrist, during the compulsory HB exercise, and had to withdraw from the competition). Charles Simms placed 89<sup>th</sup> in AA.

#### 1955 Pan American Games (in Mexico City)

The first full U.S. national gymnastics team (men) that was sent to a

foreign country, other than the Olympic Games, was to Mexico City at the PAG in 1955. The U.S. men totally dominated the competition winning all the gymnastics events (including TU, TR, and RC) except for IC where the U.S. placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. U.S. gymnasts occupied the top five places in the AA. Jack Beckner placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the AA, FE, PH and PB tie. Richard Beckner (Jack's brother) tied for 1<sup>st</sup> on PB, and R. Joe Kotys won V. Also, the U.S. gymnasts placed in the top three in five of the six AA events, winning a total of 11 of 12 gold medals, and 20 out of 21 possible medals for the "Olympic" AA events (Amateur Athletic Union Official Gymnastics Yearbook, 1956).

#### 1956 Olympic Games (in Melbourne)

The U.S. men's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Of the six competing members of the 1956 Olympic team, five were from Los Angeles and one from New York City. The highest American in the AA was Jack Beckner who placed 17<sup>th</sup>. He also placed 7<sup>th</sup> in both vaulting and horizontal bar.

The U.S. women's team placed 9<sup>th</sup>, and Sandra Ruddick was the top U.S. AA gymnast in 51<sup>st</sup> place.

#### 1958 World Championships (in Moscow)

1958 marked the first time a full U.S. team (men) took part in the World Gymnastics Championships (in Moscow). The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>, and Jack Beckner was the top AA gymnast at 28<sup>th</sup>. Art Shurlock had tied for 6<sup>th</sup> place (in the qualifying round of the team and AA competition) on PH but did not compete in the six men PH finals due to the tie breaking rule. After the WC, the U.S. team (men) traveled to Finland and had a dual meet out doors with the Finns in Jyuvaskula (it was very cold) (personal accounts).

#### 1959 Pan American Games (in Chicago)

The U.S. men's team, as in the previous PAG, totally dominated the competition winning all the events except IC, plus the top three places in the AA and in three of the six events - with a total of 11

gold medals, and 18 out of 21 possible medals for the “Olympic” AA events. Jack Beckner placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the AA, V and PB. Abie Grossfeld placed first on in FE, R (tie), HB, 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, 3<sup>rd</sup> on TR and TU, winning a total of 7 medals with 4 golds (including the team gold). Jamile “Jay” Ashmore tied for 1<sup>st</sup> on R. Greg Weiss placed 1<sup>st</sup> on PH. Other than the Olympic Games, the first U.S. women’s international gymnastics team competition occurred in the 1959 PAG (Chicago), which they won. However, Ernestine Russell of Canada won 4 gold medals which included the AA. Theresa Montefusco placed 1<sup>st</sup> on BB and 2<sup>nd</sup> FE. Betty Maycock placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, UB and V.

#### 1960 Olympic Game (in Rome)

The U.S. men’s team competed both days - compulsory and optional exercises - in the first session, starting at 8 AM, and finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place (4<sup>th</sup> in compulsories and 7<sup>th</sup> in optionals). Larry Banner finished highest in AA among the U.S. gymnasts in 21<sup>st</sup> place. The U.S. women’s team placed 9<sup>th</sup>, with Gail Sontegrath being the top AA gymnast in 28<sup>th</sup> place.

#### 1961 European Tour, plus other international competitions

In January, the Soviet National men’s and women’s teams toured the U.S. and had dual meets – the men at Pennsylvania State University and the women at West Chester State College in Pennsylvania. Months later, the Japanese National men’s and women’s team visited the U.S. and entered the NAAU Championships (the rule was that any amateur in the world could compete in the NAAU Championships). The Japanese men won all the events, and their women won all but FE, which was won by Muriel Grossfeld. The U.S. National men’s and women’s team toured Europe and competed in Prague against the Czech team who won, in Moscow against the Soviet team who won, and in Warsaw against the Polish team whose men lost and their women won. In Moscow’s Luzhniki Arena, the U.S. team

members met and shook hands with Yuri Gagarin and Gherman Titov (the first two men to travel in space) – who were special guests at the competition.

#### 1962 World Championships (in Prague)

The U.S. men’s team placed 6<sup>th</sup> (13<sup>th</sup> in compulsories and 3<sup>rd</sup> in optionals). Don Tonry was the top U.S. AA gymnast at 21<sup>st</sup>. Just after the WC, the U.S. men’s and women’s team traveled from Prague to Berlin and had a dual meet with the Germans. The first U.S. women’s team to compete in the WC was in 1962 (Prague). Their team placed 8<sup>th</sup>, with Muriel Grossfeld being the top AA gymnast in 31<sup>st</sup> place.

#### 1963 Pan American Games (in Sao Paulo)

Both U.S. men’s and women’s team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Don Tonry placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PB and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. Jay Ashmore placed 1<sup>st</sup> in R. Garland “Gar” O’Quinn placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PH. Abie Grossfeld placed 1<sup>st</sup> in HB and 2<sup>nd</sup> in R. Doris Fuchs placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, UB and BB. Avis Tieber placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and 2<sup>nd</sup> in V.

Dale McClements placed 1<sup>st</sup> in V, 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA and UB.

#### 1964 Olympic Games (in Tokyo), and dual meet with the Czechs

The U.S. men’s team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. American Rusty Mitchell performed the first back double salto in FE in the OG. Makoto Sakamoto, age 17, was the top U.S. gymnast in the AA at 20<sup>th</sup> place. The U.S. women’s team placed 9<sup>th</sup>, and Dale McClements was the top AA gymnast in 34<sup>th</sup> place. The Czech men’s and women’s teams met the Americans in dual meets in the U.S. and won.

#### 1965 World University Games or Universiade (in Budapest), the World Gymnastsrada, and a competition in England

In March, three U.S. men and women National team members traveled to London and competed against the British National team gymnasts in Wembley Arena – both U.S. men and women won their

respectively competitions. The U.S. national men's and women's team took part in the World Gymnastrada in Vienna. From Vienna American Makoto Sakamoto traveled to Budapest to compete in the WUG. He placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA. Akinori Nakayama (Japan) placed 1<sup>st</sup>, and the great Slovenian gymnast Miroslav Cerar placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### 1966 World Championships (in Dortmund)

Just prior to traveling to Germany for the WC, the U.S. men's team had a dual meet against the Norwegian team in Sandefjord. The American team won the competition.

At the WC, both the U.S. men's and women's teams placed 6<sup>th</sup>. The men were just two tenths (.2) behind the 5<sup>th</sup> place Poles, and eight tenths (.8) behind the 4<sup>th</sup> place Czechs. Makoto Sakamoto was the top American in the AA who placed 16<sup>th</sup>.

In the women's competition, the audience sensed that American Doris Fuchs-Brause was underscored for her UB optional exercise at 9.866, when compared to the 9.9 and higher scores that the Soviet and Czech women gymnasts had received for their uneven bars in the session before the Americans. The audience rebelled by whistling and jeering so loud that the competition could not be continued for over an hour. Her score was not changed (personal accounts). Fuchs-Brause placed the highest among the Americans in AA in 27<sup>th</sup> place.

#### 1967 Pan American Games (in Winnipeg), and World University Games (in Tokyo)

PAG - The U.S. men's and women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Fred Roethlisberger placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, PB (tie) and 2<sup>nd</sup> on R (tie). Richard Loyd tied for 1<sup>st</sup> in PB. Mark Cohn placed 1<sup>st</sup> on PH and tied 2<sup>nd</sup> in R. Linda Metheny placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, V, FE, and 2<sup>nd</sup> on UB. Joyce Tanac placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, and Marie Walther placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA and V. Kim Chace placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE. Donna Schaezner placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. WUG – Linda Metheny tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA.

#### 1968 Olympic Games (in Mexico City)

The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. The top place American finisher in the OG AA was David Thor, placing 24<sup>th</sup>. Thor also tied with four other gymnasts for 4<sup>th</sup> on PH in the qualifying competition but due to the tie breaking rule, he did not compete in the six men event finals. The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Cathy Rigby, as the U.S. high scorer in AA, placed 16<sup>th</sup>. Linda Metheny became the first American to qualify for an apparatus finals, in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in BB. She finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place after event finals.

#### 1970 World Championships (in Ljubljana), and the World University Games (in Turin)

WC - The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. In the men's competition Makoto Sakamoto was the U.S. top AA male gymnast in 12<sup>th</sup> place. Cathy Rigby won America's first medal in the WC – silver on BB, and was the top U.S. AA finisher in 15<sup>th</sup> place. The U. S. women's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. Joan Moore, another prominent U.S. gymnast, placed 21<sup>st</sup> in AA. Just after the WC, the U.S. team traveled to Zurich for a dual meet with the Swiss. WUG – The U.S. men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### 1971 World Cup (in Miami), the International USSR Cup (in Moscow), and the Pan American Games (in Cali)

World Cup - U.S. gymnast John Crosby placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and V. International USSR Cup - Crosby tied for first place in FE with Olympic Champion Akinori Nakayama. PAG - John Crosby won the maximum of 8 medals, which included among his top three places, 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and R, 2<sup>nd</sup> in PB and 3<sup>rd</sup> AA. John Ellas placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PBs. The U.S. U. men's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Roxanne Pierce placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, UB and V. Linda Metheny placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA and UB. Kim Chace placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB, 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE and 3<sup>rd</sup> AA.

#### 1972 Olympic Games (in Munich)

The U.S. men's team placed 10<sup>th</sup>. Makoto Sakamoto, the best U.S. gymnast

competed with a torn bicep, which occurred three weeks prior to competition in the OG, which very much hurt the team's placing (personal accounts). Steve Hug had the top U.S. AA finish in 31<sup>st</sup> place. The U.S. women's team placed 4<sup>th</sup>. Cathy Rigby was the top U.S. AA finisher in 10<sup>th</sup> place. Joan Moore performed the first back salto with double twist in FE (along with Soviet gymnast Lyudmila Turischeva) in the OG (personal accounts).

1974 World Championships (in Varna), and the International USSR Cup (in Moscow)

WC - U.S. men's team tied for 7<sup>th</sup> place. Wayne Young was the highest American in AA at 25<sup>th</sup> place, with Steve Hug placing 26<sup>th</sup>. U.S. women placed 7<sup>th</sup>. Joan Moore-Rice, the highest American in AA, placed 18<sup>th</sup>. International USSR Cup – John Crosby placed 1<sup>st</sup> (for the second time) in FE.

1975 Pan American Games (in Mexico City)

The U.S. men's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Peter Kormann placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE. Kurt Thomas placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in PH and V. Gene Whelan 2<sup>nd</sup> in PB. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>.

1976 Olympic Games (in Montreal), and International Champions-All (in London)

The U.S. men's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. U.S. gymnast Peter Kormann placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE marking the first U.S. gymnast who won an individual medal in the OG since 1932 or in 44 years, and he placed 15<sup>th</sup> in AA. Wayne Young had the top U.S. AA finish in 12<sup>th</sup> place. The women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>, with Kim Chace had the top U.S. AA finish in 14<sup>th</sup> place. American Peter Kormann placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA in the International Champions-All Cup.

1978 World Championships (in Strasburg)

The men's team placed 4<sup>th</sup>. Kurt Thomas won America's first men's WC gold medal - in FE. He also had the top U.S. finish in the AA at 6<sup>th</sup> place. Bart Conner placed 9<sup>th</sup> in AA, and 5<sup>th</sup> on PBs and 7<sup>th</sup> on

PH. The U.S. women's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. Marcia Frederick won America's first women's WC gold medal - for UB (she was the first competitor in UB event finals). American Kathy Johnson was 3<sup>rd</sup> on FE, and 8<sup>th</sup> in AA, and Rhonda Schwandt placed 4<sup>th</sup> in V (tied for the highest score in finals), and 9<sup>th</sup> in AA.

1979 World Championships (in Fort Worth), Pan American Games (in San Juan), and World University Games (in Mexico City)

WC - U. S. men's team won its first WC team medal, placing 3<sup>rd</sup>. Kurt Thomas won two gold medals - FE and HB. He also placed second in AA, PH, and PB – for a total of 6 medals. Bart Conner placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PB, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in V, and 5<sup>th</sup> in AA and FE. Jim Hartung placed 9<sup>th</sup> in AA. The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Christa Canary was 5<sup>th</sup> in V. Leslie Pyfer placed 12<sup>th</sup> in AA, and 8<sup>th</sup> in FE. PAG - No U.S. teams entered. Jeanne Creek placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, Jackie Cassello placed 1<sup>st</sup> in V and 2<sup>nd</sup> in BB. Heidi Anderson placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE WUG – The U.S. women's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.

1981 World Championships (in Moscow)

The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. Peter Vidmar placed 4<sup>th</sup> in PH and HB. Bart Conner, Peter Vidmar and Jim Hartung placed 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> in AA respectively. The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Julianne McNamara placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB. Tracee Talavera placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB. Kathy Johnson, the U.S. highest place in AA, placed 15<sup>th</sup>.

1982 (in Gainesville, Florida)

The U.S. men's gymnastics team defeated the Soviet Union's team for the first time (in a dual meet).

1982 DTB Pokal (in Germany)

The U.S. men's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>, beating the DDR (East Germany), perhaps, for the first time.

1983 World Championships (in Budapest), Pan American Games (in Caracas), and World University Games (in Edmonton)

WC - The U.S. men's team placed 4<sup>th</sup>. The American AA places were Mitch Gaylord 8<sup>th</sup>, Peter Vidmar 9<sup>th</sup> and Bart Conner 11<sup>th</sup>. Conner was also 5<sup>th</sup> in FE, 7<sup>th</sup> in PH, and 6<sup>th</sup> in PB.

The U.S. women's team placed 7<sup>th</sup>. The U.S. highest finish in AA was Kathy Johnson in 11<sup>th</sup> place, and finished 8<sup>th</sup> in FE. McNamara was the next best finish in AA in 16<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 7<sup>th</sup> in UB.

PAG - The U.S. Women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Yumi Mordre placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. Lucy Wiener placed 1<sup>st</sup> in UB. Lisa Wittwer placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB.

WUG - The men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Jim Hartung placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in R, 3<sup>rd</sup> in PB and HB. Peter Vidmar placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in R.

1984 Olympic Games (in Los Angeles)

Although a number of nations boycotted the Olympic Games, the U.S. men's team won its first Olympic team gold medal beating the reigning World Champion Chinese team (by .6 points), who had defeated the Soviet Union's team eight months before in Europe. Peter Vidmar won the gold medal on PH (tying Li Ning) and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, losing to Koji Gushiken by 25 thousandths of one point or .025. Bart Conner won the gold medal in PB. Mitch Gaylord won three individual medals - 2<sup>nd</sup> V, 3<sup>rd</sup> R and PB, and introduced the Gaylord 2 in the HB (which is a release of the bar from back giant swings and executing a back one-and-a-half salto with a half twist over the bar and regrasping the bar). Tim Daggett placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in PH. The men won 3 gold medals and a total of 8 medals. The women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mary Lou Retton won America's first gold medal in AA. She also placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V, and 3<sup>rd</sup> on UB and FE, winning a total of 5 medals. Julianne McNamara placed 1<sup>st</sup> in UB. Kathy Johnson was 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB. The women had won 3 gold medals, for a total of 7 medals.

1985 World Championships (in Montreal)

The U.S. men's team placed 9<sup>th</sup> Scott Johnson was the top U.S. AA finish in 22<sup>nd</sup> place. The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Sabrina Mar was the top U.S. AA finish in 14<sup>th</sup> place, with Marie Roethlisberger placing 17<sup>th</sup>.

1987 Pan American Games (in Indianapolis)

The U.S. mens team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Scott Johnson placed first in AA, PB, R, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE, PH, V and HB, and he won a maximum total of 8 medals. Tim Daggett placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PH, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Sabrina Mar placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE and UB. Melissa Marlowe placed 1<sup>st</sup> in UB. Kristie Phillips placed 1<sup>st</sup> on FE and 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. Kelly Garrison placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB and 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA.

1988 Olympic Games (in Seoul)

The U.S. women's team placed 4<sup>th</sup> but would have placed 3<sup>rd</sup>, due to them receiving a .5 deduction because of the alternate gymnast (doing the duty of a coach) remained on the platform after removing the board for the UB compulsory mount. Not knowing what to do after the board was moved, the alternate gymnast was instructed to stay on the platform and kneel down which she did, well off to the side of the bars, not obstructing any view. Remaining on the platform violated a rule in the Technical Regulations and the team received a .5 deduction, imposed by the FIG Technical President Ellen Berger (of the DDR) and the U.S. team lost to the DDR by .2. (In over 50 years of being at world and Olympic competitions, this is the only time I have ever seen this rule imposed.) Phoebe Mills placed 3<sup>rd</sup> on BB, and Brandi Johnson placed highest among the American's in AA, in 10<sup>th</sup> place. The U.S. men's team competing in the first session both days, placed 11<sup>th</sup> (but 8<sup>th</sup> in Optionals). Charles Lakes was the top U.S. AA gymnast at 19<sup>th</sup> place (his lowest score in AA finals was 9.7, and highest score was 9.95 for HB).

1991 World Championships (in Indianapolis)

The U.S. women's team place 2<sup>nd</sup>, winning its first team medal in the WC. Kim Zmeskal won America's first AA gold medal in the WC. She also placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE, and 7<sup>th</sup> in V. Shannon Miller placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB, 4<sup>th</sup> in FE, 6<sup>th</sup> in AA and V. Betty Okino placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB, and 4<sup>th</sup> in AA. The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>, and Scott Keswick placed 10<sup>th</sup> in AA, and 4<sup>th</sup> in HB. Jarrod Hanks placed 16<sup>th</sup> in AA.

1991 Pan American Games (in Havana), World University Games (in Sheffield)

PAG - Mike Racanelli placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE. Bill Roth placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in HB. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Chelle Stack placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE. Stephanie Woods placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB. Hilliary Anderson placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB. Anne Woyernowski placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. WUG – The U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chari Knight placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB, Kristen Kenoyer placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE. Dominick Minicucci placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in PH.

1992 World Championships (in Paris – no team or AA)

Kim Zmeskal placed 1<sup>st</sup> on BB and FE. Betty Okino placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB, and 8<sup>th</sup> in BB. Kerri Strug placed 6<sup>th</sup> in V, and 7<sup>th</sup> in UB. Paul O'Neill placed 4<sup>th</sup> in R. Mark Sohn placed 7<sup>th</sup> in PH.

1992 Olympic Games (in Barcelona)

The U.S. men's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. American Trent Dimas competed his compulsory exercises during the first morning session, yet won, against the odds, the gold medal on HB. Scott Keswick had the highest U.S. finish in AA at 19<sup>th</sup>. Chris Waller placed 5<sup>th</sup> on PH. Jair Lynch placed 6<sup>th</sup> on PB. The U.S. women's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Shannon Miller won four individual medals - 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA and BB, and 3<sup>rd</sup> on UB and FE tie, and 6<sup>th</sup> in V. Kim Zmeskal placed 10<sup>th</sup> in AA, and 6<sup>th</sup> in FE, and 8<sup>th</sup> in V. Betty Okino placed 6<sup>th</sup> on BB, and 12<sup>th</sup> in AA.

1993 World Championships (in Birmingham – no team) and World University Games (in Buffalo)

WC - Shannon Miller won three gold medals – AA, UB, and FE. Kerri Strug placed 5<sup>th</sup> in AA and V, and 6<sup>th</sup> in FE. Dominique Dawes placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB and BB, and 4<sup>th</sup> in AA (placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in qualifying round). The U.S. women won 5 medals. Scott Keswick was the top U.S. AA male gymnast in 9<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 7<sup>th</sup> on R and HB. Chris Waller placed 6<sup>th</sup> on PH. WUG – The U.S. men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Scott Keswick placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in R. The U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tammy Marshall placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE. Hope Sheeley placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in V.

1994 World Championships (in Brisbane-individual & AA, and Dortmund-team)

The U.S. women's team place 2<sup>nd</sup>. Shannon Miller won gold in AA and BB, and 4<sup>th</sup> in FE. Dominique Dawes placed 5<sup>th</sup> in AA, 4<sup>th</sup> in UB, 6<sup>th</sup> on BB and FE. Amanda Borden placed 8<sup>th</sup> in UB. American Paul O'Neill place 2<sup>nd</sup> in R, who performed a stretched body Guczoghy, thus having it named for him. American Mark Sohn who had tied for 1<sup>st</sup> in PH in the qualifying round, placed 6<sup>th</sup> in finals, where he performed a 360 degree kehre and the skill (element) was, subsequently, named for him. The U.S. men's team placed 9<sup>th</sup>, with the two top AA places by Scott Keswick in 13<sup>th</sup>, and John Roethlisberger in 17<sup>th</sup>.

1995 World Championships (in Sabae), Pan American Games (in Mar del Plata, Arg), and World University Games (in Fukuoka)

WC - The U.S. women's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Dominique Moceanu had the top U.S. AA finish in 5<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in BB. Shannon Miller placed 12<sup>th</sup> in AA, 4<sup>th</sup> in BB, and 7<sup>th</sup> in UB. Kerri Strug placed 7<sup>th</sup> in AA. Jaycie Phelps placed 8<sup>th</sup> in UB. The U.S. men's team placed 9<sup>th</sup>. Blain Wilson had the U.S. highest place in AA in 25<sup>th</sup>. Mihai Bagiu placed 5<sup>th</sup> in PH. John Roethlisberger placed 8<sup>th</sup> in R. PAG – The U.S. men's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Bill Roth placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE, Mihai Bagiu placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in

PH, and John Roethlisberger placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA and R. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Shannon Miller placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, UB, FE, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. Amy Chow placed 1<sup>st</sup> in V, 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB and 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA. Amanda Borden placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE. WUG – The U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Karin Lichey placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. Heidi Hornbeek placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB and 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB.

#### 1996 World Championships (in San Juan – no team or AA)

Dominique Dawes placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB. Jaycie Phelps placed 7<sup>th</sup> in BB (3<sup>rd</sup> in the qualifying session), and 8<sup>th</sup> in UB. Chainey Umphrey placed 5<sup>th</sup> in HB. Chris LaMorte placed 7<sup>th</sup> in R (3<sup>rd</sup> in the qualifying competition).

#### 1996 Olympic Games (in Atlanta)

The women won America's first Olympic team gold medal. Shannon Miller won gold in BB.

Amy Chow tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> place on UB. Dominique Dawes placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE, 4<sup>th</sup> UB, and 6<sup>th</sup> in V. The highest U.S. woman in the AA was Shannon Miller at 8<sup>th</sup> place. Dominique Moceanu placed 9<sup>th</sup> in AA, 4<sup>th</sup> in FE and 6<sup>th</sup> in BB. The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. American Jair Lynch placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in PB. The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. American Jair Lynch placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in PB. The highest U.S. man in the AA was John Roethlisberger in 7<sup>th</sup> place. Blain Wilson placed 10<sup>th</sup> in AA, and tied for 7<sup>th</sup> in R.

#### 1997 World Championships (in Lausanne), and World University Games (in Catania)

WC – The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. Blaine Wilson was the highest U.S. AA gymnast in 10<sup>th</sup> place. The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Kristen Maloney was the highest U.S. AA gymnast in 13<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 7<sup>th</sup> in BB. Dominique Moceanu placed 14<sup>th</sup> in AA. Mohini Bhardwaj placed 5<sup>th</sup> in V. WUG – The U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Shannon Miller placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, Kathleen Shrieves placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB. Leah Brown placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in V.

#### 1999 World Championships (in Tianjin), and Pan American Games (in Winnipeg)

WC – The U.S. women's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Elise Ray was the highest U.S. AA gymnast in 8<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 7<sup>th</sup> in UB. The U.S. men's team placed 6<sup>th</sup>. Blaine Wilson was the highest U.S. AA gymnast in 4<sup>th</sup> in place. PAG – The U.S. women's placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Morgan White placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA. The men's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### 2000 Olympic Games (in Sydney)

The U.S. women's team placed 4<sup>th</sup>. Elise Ray was the top U.S. woman AA finish in 13<sup>th</sup> place, and was 8<sup>th</sup> in BB. Amy Chow was 14<sup>th</sup> in AA. The U.S. men's team placed 5<sup>th</sup>. Blaine Wilson was the top U.S. AA finish in 6<sup>th</sup> place. Paul Hamm finished 8<sup>th</sup> in AA.

#### 2001 World Championships (in Ghent – no team)

The U.S. men's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sean Townsend placed 1<sup>st</sup> in PB, and 8<sup>th</sup> in AA. Paul Hamm was the U.S. top AA finish in 7<sup>th</sup> place. Steve McCain finished 4<sup>th</sup> in FE. The U.S. women's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Tasha Schwikert was the U.S. top AA finish in 6<sup>th</sup> place, and placed 5<sup>th</sup> in BB. Katie Heenan placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB. Tabitha Yim U.S. second best AA finish at 7<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> in FE. Mohini Bhardwaj was 7<sup>th</sup> in V.

#### 2002 World Championships (in Debrecen – no team or AA)

American Courtney Kupets placed 1<sup>st</sup> in UB. Ashley Postell placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB. Samantha Sheehan placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE. American Paul Hamm placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE.

#### 2003 World Championships (in Anaheim), and Pan American Games (in Santo Domingo)

WC – U.S. women's team won its first team WC. Americans Carly Patterson placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, and Chellsie Memmel and Holly Vise tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place in UB. The U.S. men's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Paul Hamm placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA and FE. PAG – U.S. men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. David Durante placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Chellsie Memmel placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA and UB, and 2<sup>nd</sup>

in BB. Nastia Liukin placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB, 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB, 3<sup>rd</sup> BB and FE. Tia Orlando placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE. Courtney McCool placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V.

#### 2004 Olympic Games (in Athens)

The U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Carly Patterson placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA and 2<sup>nd</sup> in BB. Annia Hatch placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. Terin Humphrey placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB. And, and Courtney Kupets placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB. The U.S. men's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Paul Hamm placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA and 2<sup>nd</sup> HB.

#### 2005 World Championships (in Melbourne – no team)

Chellsie Memmel placed 1<sup>st</sup> AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> UB and BB. Nastia Liukin placed 1<sup>st</sup> UB and BB, 2<sup>nd</sup> AA and FE. Alicia Sacramone placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE and 3<sup>rd</sup> in V. The U.S. women won all the first places or 4 gold medals and a total of 9 medals, more than twice that of the team with the second most medals.

#### 2006 World Championships (in Aarhus)

U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. American Jana Bieger placed 2<sup>nd</sup> AA and FE. Nastia Liukin placed 2<sup>nd</sup> UB. Alicia Sacramone placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. The U.S. women won 5 medals but no gold. The U.S. men's team placed 13<sup>th</sup>. Alexander Artemev placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in PH.

#### 2007 World Championships (in Stuttgart), Pan American Games (in Rio de Janeiro), and World University Games

WC - The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Shawn Johnson placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA and FE. Nastia Liukin placed 1<sup>st</sup> in BB and 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB. Alicia Sacramone placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in

FE and 3<sup>rd</sup> in V. The U. S. men's team placed 4<sup>th</sup>. Also, the men had three 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes on individual events - Jonathan Horton in AA, Guillermo Alvarez in FE, and Kevin Tan in R. PAG – The U.S. men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Justin Spring placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in PB. Sean Golden placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in R. Guillermo Alvarez placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE. The U.S. women's team placed 1<sup>st</sup>. Shawn Johnson placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, UB and BB, and 2<sup>nd</sup> in FE. Rebecca Bross placed 1<sup>st</sup> in FE, 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA. Nastia Liukin placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB and BB. Ivana Hong placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in AA. Amber Trani placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in V. WUG – Derek Helsby placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in PH.

#### 2008 Olympic Games (in Beijing)

U.S. women's team placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, and won a total of 8 medals. Nastia Liukin placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> in UB and BB and 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE. Shawn Johnson placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA and FE, 1<sup>st</sup> in BB, winning a total of 4 medals. The men's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Jonathan Horton placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in HB.

#### 2009 World Championships (in London – no team)

Americans Bridget Sloan placed 1<sup>st</sup> in AA, Rebecca Bross placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in AA, 3<sup>rd</sup> in UB and BB. Kayla Williams placed 1<sup>st</sup> in V. Ivana Hong placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in BB. Timothy McNeill placed the highest in AA among the U.S. men at 7<sup>th</sup> place, also placing 5<sup>th</sup> in PH.

The American HB finalists were Danell Leyva who placed 4<sup>th</sup>, and Jonathan Horton who placed 8<sup>th</sup>, and FE finalist Steven Legendre placed 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### U.S. Olympic and World Championships medalist places from 1932 (Wikipedia; Amateur Athletic Union Gymnastics Handbook, 1943)

1932 OG – 2<sup>nd</sup> place men's team, 1<sup>st</sup> R, HB, IC & RC (4 gold medals).

1948 OG – 3<sup>rd</sup> place women's team, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in women's V (but medal were awarded to women)

1976 OG – 3<sup>rd</sup> place in FE (men).

1979 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> place men, 7 individual medals (men).

1981 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> place in UB and BB (women).

- 1984 OG – 1<sup>st</sup> place men’s team, 1<sup>st</sup> PH & PB; 2<sup>nd</sup> AA & V; 3<sup>rd</sup> PH, R & PB (7 individual, including 2 gold, medals).
- 1984 OG – 2<sup>nd</sup> place women’s team. 1<sup>st</sup>, AA, UB; 2<sup>nd</sup> FE, V; 3<sup>rd</sup> UB, BB & FE, (6 individual, including 2 gold, medals).
- 1991 WC – 2<sup>nd</sup> place women’s team; 1<sup>st</sup> AA; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB; 3<sup>rd</sup> BB & FE.
- 1992 WC – 1<sup>st</sup> BB, FE; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB (women).
- 1992 OG – 3<sup>rd</sup> place women’s team; 2<sup>nd</sup> AA & BB; 3<sup>rd</sup> UB & FE (4 women’s individual medals). Men, 1<sup>st</sup> HB.
- 1993 WC – Women, 1<sup>st</sup> AA, UB & FE; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB & BB.
- 1994 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> place women’s team, 1<sup>st</sup> AA & BB; men 2<sup>nd</sup> R.
- 1995 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> place women’s team; 2<sup>nd</sup> BB.
- 1996 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> BB.
- 1996 OG – 1<sup>st</sup> place women’s team. 1<sup>st</sup> BB; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB; 3<sup>rd</sup> FE.
- 2001 WC – 2<sup>nd</sup> place men’s team; 1<sup>st</sup> PB.
- 2001 WC – 3<sup>rd</sup> place women’s team.
- 2003 WC – 1<sup>st</sup> place women’s team, 1<sup>st</sup> UB, 2<sup>nd</sup> AA.
- 2003 WC – 2<sup>nd</sup> place men’s team, 1<sup>st</sup> AA & FE.
- 2004 OG – 2<sup>nd</sup> place men’s team; 1<sup>st</sup> AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> HB. 2<sup>nd</sup> place women’s team; 1<sup>st</sup> AA, 2<sup>nd</sup> V, UB & BB.
- 2005 WC – 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> AA (women), UB, BB, & FE, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vault. (4 gold and 9 total medals).
- 2006 WC – 2<sup>nd</sup> place women’s team; 2<sup>nd</sup> AA, V, UB & FE. Men: 3<sup>rd</sup> PH.
- 2007 WC – 1<sup>st</sup> place women’s team; 1<sup>st</sup> AA, FE & BB; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB & FE; 3<sup>rd</sup> V.  
4<sup>th</sup> place men’s team, and 4<sup>th</sup> place in AA, FE & R.
- 2008 OG – 2<sup>nd</sup> place women’s team, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> AA (women), 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> on BB; 2<sup>nd</sup> UB; 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> in FE.  
3<sup>rd</sup> place men’s team, and 2<sup>nd</sup> on HB.
- 2009 WC – 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> AA (women), 1st V; 3<sup>rd</sup> UB & BB.

<u>U.S. Team Medals in OG and WC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Women: 1 <sup>st</sup> place – 1996, 2003, 2007	(3)
2 <sup>nd</sup> place – 1984, 1991, 2004, 2006, 2008	(5)
3 <sup>rd</sup> place – 1948, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2001	(6)
Men: 1 <sup>st</sup> place – 1984	(1)
2 <sup>nd</sup> place – 1932, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006	(5)
3 <sup>rd</sup> place – 1979, 2008	(2)

#### U. S. Women’s All-Around dominance (since 1984)

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: 1984, 1991, 1993, 1994, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009 (8 different women)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: ..... 1992, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 (plus 2 other women)

#### U.S. Team Medals in the PAG

- Women: 1<sup>st</sup> place - 1959, 1963, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1983, 1987, 1991, 1995, 2003, 2007 (11 total)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place - 1999
- Men: 1<sup>st</sup> place – 1955, 1959, 1963, 1967, 1975, 1987, 1995 (7 total)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – 1971, 1983, 1999
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – 2003, 2007

It took many years for the United States to establish itself as one of the world leader in artistic gymnastics. After the 1932 Olympic Games, which were sparsely attended, the U.S. men gymnasts did not win another Olympic team medal, which was gold, until 1984 or 52 years later; although they did win the bronze medal 47 years (after 1932) in the 1979 World Championships. The U.S. women gymnasts, who first competed in 1936 Olympic Games, won their first team medal in the 1948 Olympic Games. It took another 48 years before they would win their next team medal which was gold in the 1996 Olympic Games. Although the U.S. men gymnasts had a reputation of being innovative after World War II, they were looked down upon by a number of the European countries. The writer experienced firsthand that male Swiss gymnasts and Finnish gymnasts being insulted when the U.S. team first beat their teams (in Europe). Over the last decade or two the U.S. gymnasts have earned the respect of the world. The results speak for themselves.

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