

November 2014

THE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Hello Everyone,

We hope you are doing well and getting into the swing of a new season of rhythmic gymnastics.

If you are planning to attend the **2015 USAIGC/IAIGC World Championships** in Orlando, Florida, on June 26, 2015, it will be held at the Orlando Sports Center (6700 Kingspointe Pkwy, Orlando FL 32819 - www.orlandosportscenter.com).

The meet-and-greet party on June 25th will be held at the Liki Tiki (Bali Blvd. in Winter Garden - www.likitiki.com). The **USAIGC/ IAIGC** Committee will be staying here. This is a great resort with affordable prices. Unfortunately we were not able to block out the rooms, so if you plan on staying here go to the hotel website or hotels.com and book your rooms as soon as possible. However, there are many wonderful hotels in the area. Some nearby options are hotels on International Drive which is only a few miles from the sports center. No matter where you stay, everyone will have access to the meet-and-greet.

The **USAIGC/IAIGC World Championship** entry forms will go out in February 2015. If you have an idea of an approximate number of gymnasts attending please let us know.

Rhythmic Illusions from Middletown, NJ, will be hosting the event. We are planning to have additional vendors attending with T-shirts, photography, etc.

By now all clubs should have received the new 2014-2015 Code Of Points. Please review and if you have any questions please contact us through the **USAIGC/IAIGC** rhythmic gymnastics committee email at usaigcrhythmic@yahoo.com. Skill judging sheets will follow shortly. Thank you for your patience.

If you have a gymnast, coach, or club owner you would like to highlight in our e-newsletter please send us a picture and a short bio and we will put it in our monthly e-newsletter.

Adrienne Coleman
USAIGC/IAIGC Rhythmic Gymnastics Director

WELCOME - FEDAK FAMILY



The Fedak girls are new to rhythmic gymnastics: Mary Kate, Sarah, Christianna and Kathryn. Their mother Kate has been a great help to Rhythmic Illusions. She teaches ballet to our gymnasts.

When we asked Kate what she thought of the program so far, her reply was, "The girls had participated in competitive Irish step dance and have transitioned to rhythmic gymnastics through Rhythmic Illusions in New Jersey with tremendous enthusiasm. Mary Kate, my oldest, will incorporate her Irish dance steps into her rhythmic floor routine. We have found the class to be very professional and well skilled. Miss Adrienne and Miss Lauren both encourage virtue and individual growth and success. The girls have learned so many new skills since they have joined just a few months ago. The greatest blessing has been for me to be given the opportunity to teach ballet to the gymnasts."

The four girls range from **USAIGC/IAIGC** Copper Level up through the Silver Level, and their dance background has certainly helped them rapidly learn new skills in the sport.

The girls - as well as the whole family plan on attending the **USAIGC/IAIGC World Championships** in Orlando, Florida, in June.

Welcome to the Fedak Family!

FROM GYMNAST TO HEAD COACH

As of this October, I have been a rhythmic gymnast for 16 years; the first 6 were mainly me focusing on my skills as an athlete. As a young gymnast, I only had myself to worry about. If I didn't practice, then I only had myself to blame. 10 of these 16 years had also been devoted to coaching, and only now do I realize how much of my perspective has shifted. I am now a "coach/gymnast," which is someone who coaches but also still practices the sport. Juggling both and keeping them of high quality is not easy, but doing so lends a completely unique perspective.

Being a "coach/gymnast" has completely changed the way I do gymnastics, and the way I teach it. It is a life lesson that can only be learned through experience; none of my university years in a Teacher Education program gave me the same clarity as when I am right there on the carpet with my gymnast students, watching them either struggle or succeed in a gymnastic skill. I can tell when they are frustrated enough to need a break, or why a particular skill is driving them crazy, simply because I have been in their shoes myself. I know when to be strict and when to back down in a way that is perhaps more intuitive because much of the time I feel the same way that the gymnasts feel.

I understand exactly why learning that first back walkover is scary - trying to kick over before your hands hit the floor results in the same crashes for them as it did for me all those years ago. I sympathize why they can't hold up their leg in a high side extension with one hand, because I remember when my leg flexibility was better than my arm strength was. That first high toss of the clubs and double forward roll is petrifying, because after all, no one wants the impact of club-on-forehead.

One of the trickiest aspects of being a coach who still participates in gymnastics is the surreal moment when you have gymnasts who, you suddenly realize, are better than you in something. I will never forget the moment when I realized that I was coaching a gymnast who had become far more advanced than I was, as her teacher. There was a slight panic (*How on earth will I teach new skills to someone who already accomplished everything in my bag of tricks?*) - replaced by determination (*I better learn everything about this sport that I don't know yet, and FAST.*) - to an incredible sense of pride (*this gymnast is on this carpet, in this gym, practicing this routine, because of what I have taught her.*).

When the students surpass the teacher, then you know that you're on the right track. I want every single one of our team's 88 gymnasts to be better than I have ever been as an athlete. I know that if I accomplish that

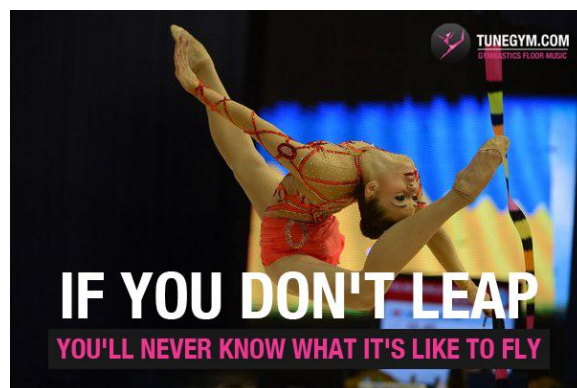
goal, by using my own accomplishments as a benchmark, then I have done my job as a coach.

It isn't easy - it often means studying difficult skills that I have never done myself, breaking them down into manageable pieces, and then figuring out how to best explain to a gymnast an element that was far beyond my own capabilities as an athlete. But every time they learn such a skill, every time they get that look of pride on their faces for finally getting it, then I know that I must have done something right.

I am very proud to be called a "coach/gymnast"!



Lauren Coleman



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FACEBOOK PAGE**

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