

Woodland, Calif. – MPSF Executive Director, Al Beard today announced the 2008 MPSF Men's Gymnast and Coaches of the Year honorees as voted by the Federation's head men's gymnastics coaches.

## **2008 MPSF Men's Gymnast of the Year**



**JONATHAN HORTON** - Senior, Oklahoma - Anaheim Hills, CA - Mater Dei HS  
Senior Jonathan Horton claimed his third consecutive MPSF Gymnast of the Year Award after winning the conference all-around title for the third time in four years with a score of 90.500. The Houston, Texas, native also won the conference rings title for the fourth time with a 16.000 and tied for third on vault (16.100) and was fourth on floor (15.500) as the Sooners won the league crown for the fourth straight season. Horton finished the 2008 season with a team-best 15 individual event titles which included three all-around wins and was a three-time MPSF Gymnast of the Week. He is a finalist for the Nissen-Emery Award and was recently honored at the New York Athletic Club as one of five finalists for the AAU James E. Sullivan Award given to the nation's top amateur athlete.

During his career in Norman, Horton has distinguished himself as the most-decorated collegiate gymnast in program history. With five career individual NCAA titles and 15 career All-America honors, the senior co-captain owns the school records previously held by two-time Olympic gold-medalist Bart Conner. A three-time team captain, Horton has been a part of two national championship teams (2005, 2006) and a national runner-up (2007). At the 2007 NCAA Championships he won individual national titles on floor and high bar and tied his own program record with five All-America honors (AA, FX, SR, V, HB). In addition to his prowess on the college level, Horton has become a mainstay for the U.S. Senior National Team. A member of two U.S. World Championship Teams, Horton propelled himself onto the international scene with a fourth-place all-around finish at the 2007 Worlds, missing the bronze medal by just 0.2 points. His performance during the competition catapulted the U.S. squad to a fourth-place team finish and an automatic berth in the 2008 Olympic Games. Horton became just the fourth American men's gymnast to record a top-four all-around finish at the World Championships and the first since 2004 Olympic gold-medalist Paul Hamm took the title in 2003.

## **2008 MPSF Men's Gymnastics Co-Coaches of the Year**



**BARRY WEINER** - 17th year - University of California

Earning his fifth MPSF Coach of the Year award, Weiner is credited with developing the University of California men's gymnastics program into one of the nation's finest. He led the Golden Bears to national championships in 1997 and 1998 and has produced a total of eight Top 5 national finishes, including a fifth place finish in 2006, and 11 NCAA individual championships in his sixteen previous seasons at Cal. The ninth-eleventh individual championships produced during Weiner's regime were achieved by current senior Tim McNeill, who earned two NCAA titles on pommel horse and one on parallel bars. The results of Weiner's hard work and dedication first paid dividends in '97 when he was named National Coach of the Year after leading the Bears to a perfect 17-0 regular season and the team's first NCAA team title since 1975. Weiner then outdid himself the next year, as Cal swept through the entire '98 season without a loss en route to its second-consecutive team championship. Following that season, Weiner was named Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Coach of the Year for the third time (he won the award for the fourth time in 2004) and National Coach of the Year for the second straight campaign. Including the 16-1 overall record of 2004, Weiner's career record stands at an impressive 243-83-1 (.743) over the last sixteen years. A native of Philadelphia, he earned a bachelor of science degree from Temple in 1970 where he was at two-time MVP gymnast and NCAA event finalist for the Owls. Weiner served on the U.S. Olympic men's gymnastics coaching staff in 2000.



**MARK WILLIAMS** - 9th Year - University of Oklahoma

A four-time National Coach of the Year, Oklahoma head coach Mark Williams earns his eighth MPSF honor in nine years after leading the Sooners to the program's 17<sup>th</sup> conference title and ninth MPSF crown in the last 10 years. During his tenure, Oklahoma has lost to conference rivals only three times. Williams' 2008 squad has compiled an impressive 18-1 record and a No. 2 national ranking. Now in his ninth season as head coach of the Sooners, Williams has led the Sooners to four NCAA Championships and three runner-up finishes in the last seven years. Since taking over the program in 2000, Williams' teams have finished lower than second at the NCAA Championships only once, a fourth-place showing in his first season and compiled a record of 213-18 (.922). During that span Oklahoma gymnasts have accounted for 81 All-America honors and 11 individual national titles. Three different gymnasts – Daniel Furney (2003), Jonathan Horton (2006) and Taqiy Abdullah-Simmons (2007) have won the all-around national championship under Williams. In 27 years as a gymnastics coach, Williams has guided gymnasts to the Olympic, World Championship, Pan American Games and World University Games teams. He was head coach of the 2006 U.S. World Championship Team and was an assistant coach on the fourth-place 2007 Worlds squad. Williams was a Big Eight champion and All-American at the University of Nebraska where he completed his bachelor's degree in secondary education/English before earning a master's degree in journalism at Oklahoma.

- MPSF -