

IG Kids Klub!

Shooting Star! Vitaliy Guimaraes

A U.S. junior who's making every tenth — and every day — count!



Vitaliy with coach Vladimir Artemev at 5280 Gymnastics in Wheat Ridge, Colorado

VITALIY Guimaraes made the most of his international debut by tying for silver on high bar at the RD761 International Junior Team Cup held in Texas in January. For 15-year-old Vitaliy, the competition reinforced the value of detail and endurance.

"What I learned from this meet is that every tenth counts, so it's really important to stick landings and be clean," says Vitaliy, who placed first all-around in the Junior Elite age 14 division at the 2015 U.S. Junior Olympic championships. "You have to do your routines to your full potential from beginning to end."

The 5-foot-6-inch Vitaliy is strong and steady on all six apparatuses, even on floor and vault, where the more compact gymnasts usually excel. "I guess because I can twist," he reasons. His long lines look great on pommel horse and parallel bars, for example,

but his height has its ups and downs.

"The benefit I have for being taller is I can get a better and longer swing on pommel horse," says Vitaliy, who trains at 5280 Gymnastics in Wheat Ridge, Colo. "The challenge is having to re-learn skills and taps on high bar, for release moves and dismounts."

Vitaliy says his coaches, **Vladimir Artemev** and **Irina Bendasova**, keep him proficient and adaptable. Vladimir, from Belarus, competed for the Soviet team and won the 1982 USSR Cup all-around title. Irina, Vladimir's wife, is a former gymnast from Russia. Vladimir's son,

Alexander (Sasha), was the 2006 U.S. champion and was a crucial part of the U.S. at the 2008 Olympics. As the final competitor in the team final, Artemev hit a clutch routine on pommel horse—his only routine of the meet—and helped the U.S. win the team bronze. He is also a coach at 5280.

"I attribute my consistency to my coaches," Vitaliy says. "They have a good plan throughout the competition season, making progress each meet by cleaning up my routines and working on separate skills that I have problems with."

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Vitaliy's unusual Russian-Brazilian name reflects his interesting roots. His mother, **Tatiana Kondratova**, comes from Voronezh, Russia, and competed for the Soviet team. She is a 5280 coach. His father, **Marcelo**, is a former gymnast and coach from Brazil.

"I think it's really cool to have parents from completely different countries," Vitaliy says. "I learned two different languages and two different cultures, and I also enjoy food from both countries."

This year, Vitaliy wants to raise his difficulty level, perform well at the J.O. championships and qualify for the P&G (U.S.) championships. His ultimate goals are to compete for an NCAA team and make it to the Olympics. To reach his potential, he is ready to make every day in the gym count.

"When training gets hard or in competitions, I try to visualize myself doing a routine, making every skill and making my routines," Vitaliy says. "I also try to think of what today could do for me in my future gymnastics."

—**John Crumlish**

Vitaliy's Vitals

Birthdate: May 18, 2000

Place of Birth: Dallas, Texas

Residence: Arvada, Colorado

Favorite Gymnasts: Alexander (Sasha) Artemev "because he always had amazing lines and great technique"; and Kohei Uchimura "because he's amazing to watch and he is always consistent."

Hobbies: Playing video games, listening to music; in summer he likes swimming, hiking and hanging out with friends on the lake; in winter he likes skiing and snow tubing