



# Hollie Vise's Vision

By Luan Peszek

Hollie Vise began gymnastics when she was 3 and has had a vision ever since. Although she just turned 16 on Dec. 6 she has already compiled a large list of accomplishments in the sport. For starters, Hollie and her U.S. teammate Chellsie Memmel accomplished an amazing feat by tying for the gold medal on bars at the 2003 World Championships. The duo also helped their team to win the gold medal, the first ever for the U.S. at a World Championships. Hollie has four National Champion titles on her resume from both the junior and senior divisions since 2001. Hollie also gained international fame when she won the all-around at the 2002 Pacific Alliance Championships and won two bronze medals at the 2001 Goodwill Games at age 13.

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## We caught up with Hollie just before the holidays in December and this is what she had to say.

**Q** How does it feel knowing you are the World Champion on bars along with Chellsie Memmel?

**A** Winning the world title with Chellsie had to be one of the greatest feelings ever! I wanted to win bars so bad and I'm sure Chellsie did, too. But I never would have imagined that we would tie and bring home two gold medals for our country. It was so amazing! I remember waiting to see the rest of the scores after I went. So, everyone had gone except for Chellsie and I had the highest score so far. I knew that at least our country would keep the title no matter what. Then the score flashed and I think we were both stunned when we saw that we had tied. We ran and hugged each other! It was definitely a Kodak moment.

**Q** What was the best part of Anaheim and the World Championships? What was the worst part?

**A** The best part about World's was standing twice on the podium and listening to our national anthem. Our team worked so hard just for that moment and when we were standing up there we knew that it was all worth it! As for the worst part, I would have to say the teammates that we lost due to injury and sickness. Ashley, Courtney and Annia were part of our team and I wish they could have competed with us. They are all such talented gymnasts and I believe that they would have done an awesome job competing for our country at World's.

**Q** Tell us about the forgotten number on bars at World Championships. What happened?

**A** Wow, how will I ever forget about the lost number? It was my mistake. When we were in the warm up gym getting ready for the team competition everyone was starting to get the numbers on. I was letting the people that were competing vault get their numbers on first since they were in more of a hurry than me. Then once they got their numbers on I just forgot that I didn't have mine on and started warming up again. No one noticed that I didn't have my number on until it was my turn to compete on bars. One of the judges told me that I didn't have my number on. I was just thinking to myself, oh my gosh . . . what do I do? Everyone was asking me where my number was and I really didn't know. They were throwing everything out of my bag and it wasn't in there. Finally someone just wrote my number on a big piece of paper and pinned it on my back really fast. It was a scary experience and I guarantee it will never happen again.

**Q** Which is your favorite event and why?

**A** Bars and beam are my favorite events. They're just a lot easier for me. They come more naturally for me and I feel more comfortable on those events. I have to work a lot harder on floor and vault.

**Q** How did you get started in gymnastics?

**A** My mom used to be a gymnast. I remember watching gymnastics on TV when I was little and I would always try to copy them. So, when I was 3 my mom enrolled me in a little recreation center. I was only there for a few months before I went to my first real gym, Metroplex of Dallas, then from there I went to WOGA.

**Q** What's the best part of gymnastics?

**A** I don't know what the best part of gymnastics is because I just love it for what it is. I fell in love with the sport when I was really little and the passion has always stuck with me. I think it is a fun and challenging sport. Plus it allows me to travel to so many places! It's amazing.

**Q** What's World Olympic Gymnastics Academy like and the coaches there?

**A** WOGA is a great gym. I love it! We have so many elite gymnasts right now and I think that is really awesome. It just shows how good our coaches are! My coaches are Russian and they did gymnastics, so they have already been through all the stuff that we are going through now. They know how to help us and what to do to make us the best we can be!



Hollie when she was younger.



**Q** Who do you hang out with the most at WOGA?

**A** I hang out with all the elite girls. We are all so close! We're not only best friends, we're like sisters. I could trust any of them with anything! I love the relationship that I have with my friends! We help each other with gym and are always pulling for each other.

**Q** What are your goals in the sport?

**A** My goals have always been to make National team each year and to make the 2003 World Team and the 2004 Olympic Team. I just have one more goal to fulfill and I really hope that I can do it!

**Q** Which gymnast do you most admire and why?

**A** When I was growing up I looked up to pretty much all the girls that were part of the Magnificent 7. But, I would have to say that Shannon Miller was probably my all time favorite. I just loved watching her. She was so graceful and had beautiful lines and technique.

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**Q** What's a normal day for you?

**A** I wake up at 6:30 a.m. and do gymnastics from 8-11:30, then I go home and do school from about 12:30-3:15, then I go back to gym from 4-7. When I get home I usually do some homework and get online and then it's time to go to bed.

**Q** Tell me about school, your favorite subject and future educational goals.

**A** I'm a sophomore right now and I do school on the computer. It's an online program and I have teachers that I can email. My favorite subject is math. I definitely want to go to college. As of right now, I'm not really sure what kind of job I want to have. I'm changing my mind day to day, but I think something to do with designing would be a lot of fun!

**Q** What do you like to do when you're not at the gym?

**A** When I'm not at the gym my favorite thing is definitely shopping. I could shop all day and my friends and I sometimes do. Other than shopping I like going to the movies with my dad. We do that a lot. I also like just hanging out with my friends.



**Q** Tell me about your family?

**A** My parents are Eddie and LeeAnn. My dad is a firefighter and also works at American Airlines. My mom works for Satara Leotards. I have three brothers, Brandon (20) is a full time student and works for a roofing company, Brad (18) is in his senior year of high school and plays baseball, and Weston (13) is in 7th grade and plays football and baseball.

**Q** Do you have any pets?

**A** I have 2 dogs named Boomer and Foxie. Boomer is a sheltie and Foxie is a sheltie mixed with something else. We got both of them from the Sheltie Rescue center. I'm so glad that we found them and were able to give them a good home.

**Q** I heard you just got your drivers license and you have a new car. Will you drive yourself to practice now?

**A** I turned 16 on Dec. 6, Saturday, and got my license on Monday, Dec. 8. I got my car about a month ago. It's a 2003 Silver Accord. I love it so much. I will be driving myself to gym every day - I'm so excited.

Good Luck in all you do Hollie!