

# Gymnastics Masters Team World Cup

## Japan Women's Team

Dekade	Name
40	Reiko Akasawa
40	Shouko Segata
40	Kana Fujiwara
50	Yuiko Hirata
50	Kzuyo Sueyoshi
50	Mieko Arai
60	Shuko Uchimura
60	Mamie Uenohara
spare	Etuko Koike
	Rika Tanaka

**Reiko Akiyama Akasawa \* 13th Sep 1977 (46)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

■1990 (Age 12) As a first-year junior high school student, I chose to join the rhythmic gymnastics club. I liked it but had no sense of it, and I didn't compete in almost any competitions for three years.

■1993 (Age 15) Entered high school, I joined the gymnastics club. The club did not have sufficient facilities, but I met good teachers and friends and had a good time. In second year, the great earthquake struck to my town. Our school became an evacuation center, and we had to exercise at another school until I retired.

■1996 (Age 18) I entered a university that had a gymnastics club, but the team was too strong for me to join, so I went into general gymnastics and The Rad. However, I neglected my studies, so I had to quit the club activity after my freshman year.

■2003 (Age 25) Returned to gymnastics for the first time in 7 years at a small gymnastics practice session in town! However, I was only able to practice once or twice a month.

■2012 (Age 35) In the previous year, I saw my gymnastics-mates, regardless of age or ability, performing so vividly that I got to hope to try again, and since then I have participated in masters competitions every year. Although I did not have many opportunities to learn gymnastics properly, I have been able to continue without interruption, and now is the most enjoyable and exciting time of my life. I am still enjoying this moment when I can get to do more and more, little by little.

**Specialties**

Event: Floor  
Skill: Big jump!

**Job**

• Civil Engineer



**Successes**

1996 All Japan Rhoenrad Championships, 5th place

All Japan Masters Championships  
2020: 3rd place in the 40's  
2021: 4th place in the 40's

**Activity in the competition (individual)**





**Shoko Oshie Segata \* 2th Oct 1981 (41)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

1994 (age 12) When I was in junior high school, I wanted to join the basketball club, but my school didn't have one. I wanted to join a cool club, so my next choice was the gymnastics club. There were three types of events: floor, balance beam, and vaulting box.

1997 (age 15) Entered high school and joined the gymnastics club. However, there were times when there were only three members. Almost every day of muscle training on a gym mat and a low horizontal bar.

2000 (age 18) Entered Kyoto Women's University and joined a gymnastics club. My university did not have practice facilities, so I practiced at the Kyoto University gymnastics club. Among them, I met a wonderful teacher and friends who are still practicing together. I started practicing uneven bars . By the time I graduated, I wasn't able to do a giant, which was just a dream at the time, but I enjoyed gymnastics itself and continued to practice even after graduation. 2010 (age 28) After graduation, every time I say I was in gymnastics club in my school days, I am often asked, "Can you do a giant on the bar?" I wanted to do a giant, which has been my dream since I was in college. So I searched for a place

even adults could learn gymnastics, and I finally found the gym where I practice now. And at the age of 28, I succeeded to do a giant on uneven bars for the first time. There are days when I can't practice, and even now my giants are too unstable, but my current goal is to use them in competitions. Through gymnastics, I met wonderful people of all ages and was inspired. I am grateful that I am still able to continue doing gymnastics.

**Specialties**

favorite event: Bar  
hard working technique: giant swing

**Job**

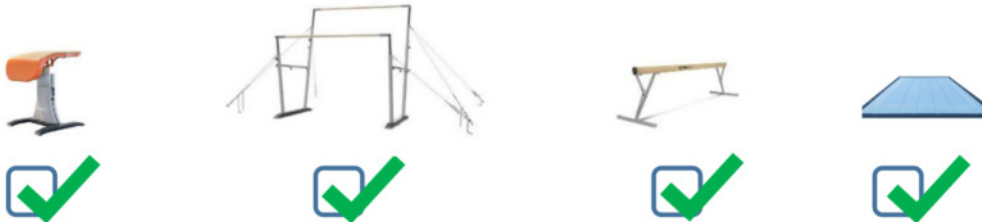
nutritionist



**Successes**

- All Japan Masters competition Every year since 2005
- 2022:3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 40s +

**Activity in the competition (individual)**







**Kana Goto Fujiwara \* 23th Oct 1982 (40)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

I started gymnastics at the age of 3.  
I have practiced at Mukogawa Women's University for over 30 years in junior high school, high school and college.  
I have never thought I am talented, but I have been dedicated to practice as I like it so much.  
One more try, one more try again...I really enjoy the feeling of acquiring skills and pursuing my own gymnastics way.

I am also working as a judge. I advise students on their practice from a judge's point of view. At the same time, I try to talk to the students in a way that they can feel how joyful and wonderful sports gymnastics is.

I would like to be a pioneer to open a path for gymnastics lovers to follow, by creating an environment where students can stay in touch with gymnastics after graduation. My dream is to compete with them some day as Mukogawa alumni's team.

I hope to enjoy the competition, with heart of everyone who has been given support for me!

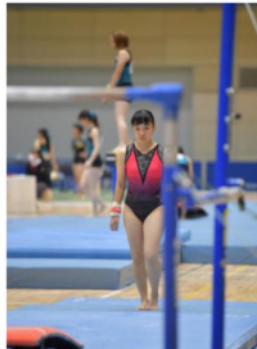
I have been wishing to visit Germany for long time, the birthplace of gymnastics, and finally the time has come. I would like to enjoy not only the competition but also the history and culture of the event.  
My motto: Never give up until you achieve your goals! Continuity is the father of success.

**Specialties**

Event : Uneven Bars  
Skill : Silivas · Omelianchik on the Beam

**Job**

Associate professor



**Successes**

- Participated competition :
- National Athletic Meet
  - All Japan Junior
  - All Japan Inter College
  - All Japan Masters competition
- Team champion 11 times  
Individual champion 1 time  
Individual winner in the 30s  
• 2020 Tokyo Olympics (Judge)

**Activity in the competition (individual)**





**Yuiko Hirata \* 30th Sep 1965 (57)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

I have been doing gymnastics for 45 years, from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of junior high (12 yrs old) to present (57 yrs old). I practiced in the gymnastics club at school during junior high and high school days, then I have explored the places where the adults can practice gymnastics like a sports science university, a sports club etc.

When I was 19 yrs old, one of the gymnastics friends asked me if I would like to participate in the competition called "Masters Competition" which was held once in a year. That was in 1985 and my first time for the Masters Competition. I was impressed that even Olympians and ex-student champions were there.

Since then, I have participated in the competition almost every year. I missed 6 times due to baby care or injury, but 33 times of participation is the #1 record for Women's Masters.

In 2011, when I was 45 yrs old, I got ACL injury at the dismount of uneven bars. After that I had not tried to do giants on bars, but recently, I finally got it back again – I am very happy that I can do giant swings without being spotted at all!

Now my husband and my son (already an adult) are also doing gymnastics, and we will participate in this year's competition as a family. I would like to keep enjoying gymnastics safely, seeking for what I can do at my age.

**Specialties**

Event: Uneven Bars  
Skill: Giant swing

**Job**

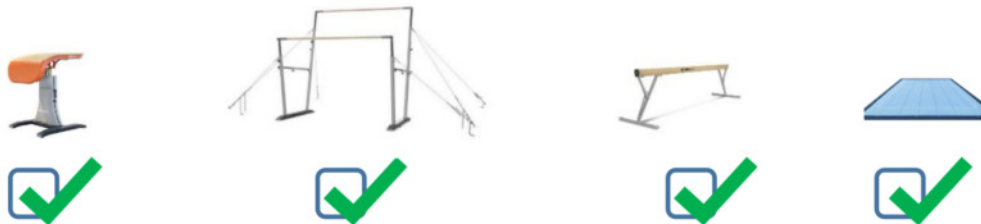
• Gymnastics instructor



**Successes**

- Participated in prefectural competition in Junior High and High School
- All Japan Masters competition
  - 1<sup>st</sup> prize in Women's 2<sup>nd</sup> class (1987)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the age 30's (1997)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the age 30's (2002)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in the age 30's (1996, 2001)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the age 40's (2006, 2009)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the age 40's (2007-08, 2013-15)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the age 50's (2016)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in the age 50's (2021)

**Activity in the competition (individual)**





**Kazuyo Sueyoshi \* 22th Apr 1968 (55)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

When I was eight years old, I was so impressed by Nadia Comaneci's outstandingly beautiful performance and dignified stand at the Montreal Olympics that I wanted to do gymnastics myself. In the upper grades of primary school, my new school has a gymnastics club and I took gymnastics lessons for the first time. I was so happy when I could do the moves I couldn't do before that I devoted myself to gymnastics in junior and senior high school. I retired from gymnastics in my third year of high school.

Twenty-seven years after retiring, I told Shuko, she is Kohei Uchimura's mother and the teacher at my daughter's ballet class, "I would like to try gymnastics again someday." So, she said, "Do you want to go to a competition?" I answered, "Yes, I would like to." After a long blank, it was a reckless challenge to return to gymnastics at the age of 45, but I began to compete in the All-Japan Masters competition.

I directly feel the spirit of love and enjoyment of gymnastics regardless the age from the participating athletes, and I have received a lot of courage from them. I am very happy to have the opportunity to participate in international exchange through gymnastics, which I love.

**Specialties**

Event: Balance beam, Floor

**Job**

• Dentist

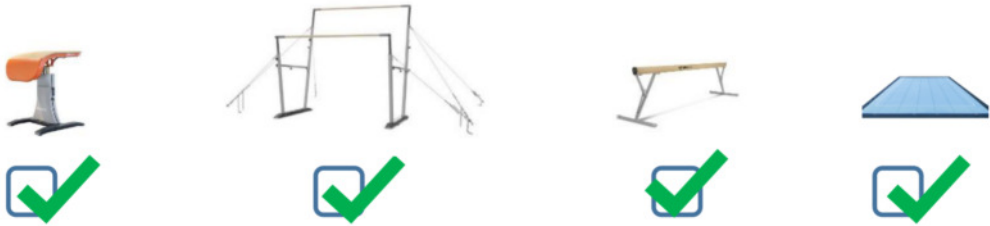
**Successes**

Inter-High School Championships  
Kyusyu region Championship

All Japan Masters Championships  
2016: 3rd place in the 40's  
2022: 2th place in the 50's



**Activity in the competition (individual)**





**Mieko Arai \* 3rd Jan 1967 (56)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

I got interested in gymnastics when I was in primary school. My father bought me a low and a high bar in our garden. I practiced every day and loved it.

After entering junior high school, I joined the gymnastics club and spent three enjoyable years learning to do backflips and somersaults. In high school, I joined the gymnastics club which I had longed for, but I couldn't keep up with the hard practice of the club and quit after one year. I later regretted this decision. Time passed as I graduated from a social gymnastics college, got a job, got married, and quit the job to raise my children. I decided to start working again when my child reached the second grade of primary school. Then I heard from a university student who came to part-time work that adults can practice gymnastics at the university. As I practiced with the university students, I found out that there were competitions for adults. I decided to participate in the All-Japan Senior Games with the university students. It was the 2010 competition in Kitakyushu.

After that, I participated in the Masters Competitions on my own for a few years, but then I could join the Kawasaki DKSS team. Since then, I have been practicing with my teammates which has been very fulfilling.

I hope to continue practicing with many friends and the population of gymnasts will increase more and more.

**Specialties**

Floor: Round-off > backflip > somersaults  
Ballance Beam: illusion, I-turn  
Uneven bar: Back kip

**Job**

• Sports instructor

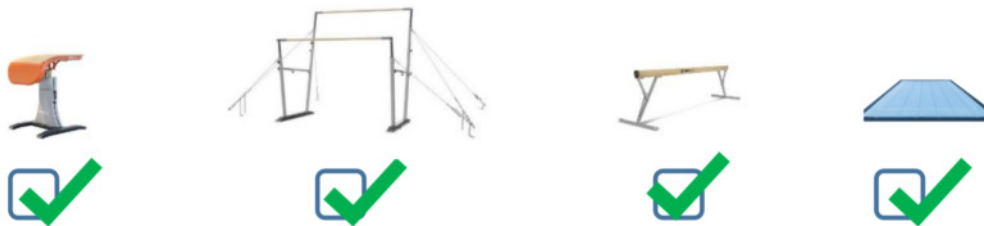


**Successes**

All Japan Masters Championships  
Participated every year since 2010

2018: 6th place in the 50's  
2021: 4th place in the 50's

**Activity in the competition (individual)**







**Shuko Uchimura \* 27th Apr 1962 (61)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

Mother of Japanese gymnast Kohei Uchimura. Graduated from Nagasaki Junshin Women's Academy and then from what is now Nagasaki Prefectural University. I taught physical education to young children at a gymnastics school before opening Sports Club Uchimura with my husband in 1992.

As well as teaching gymnastics, I have also worked as a classical ballet teacher at the Shu Ballet Studio.

Currently, I teach at Sports Club Uchimura and Shu Ballet Studio for all ages from infants to adults. I established Buddy Uchimura Gymnastics Club in Shibuya-ku, Tokyo in April 2017 and in Ariake, Tokyo in 2022, where I also teach gymnastics classes for infants and school children.

As an instructor and mother who raised my son to become a world-class athlete, I also give lectures to parents and the general public on child-rearing, dreams and motivation.

I have been participating in Masters competitions since 2014.

**Specialties**

Event: Floor  
Skill: Ballet

**Job**

• Ballet teacher



**Successes**

1981:Kyusyu region Inter college Championship 1<sup>st</sup> place

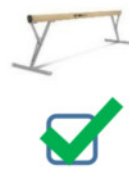
All Japan Masters Championships

2014: 1st place in the 50's

2019: 4th place in the 50's

2022: 1st place in the 60's

**Activity in the competition (individual)**







**Mamie Uenohara \* 30th July 1960 (63)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

【student】 I was fascinated by the smile of Olga Korbut at the Olympics in Mexico (I was 12 years old) and by Nadia Comaneci at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal (I was 16 years old) , so I joined the gymnastics club in my second year of high school and practiced for a year and a half.

【Office worker and child-rearing years】 At the age of 24, I found a place to practice gymnastics at the Tokyo YMCA and met gymnastics-mates, and the following year, at the age of 25, I participated in the masters gymnastics competition for the first time. After that, I was unable to practice gymnastics for a long period of time, as I had three children and entered postgraduate school. Then after my 40s, I had knee and meniscus surgeries and experienced the onset of illness.

【Present since 60 years old】 I could not give up my passion for gymnastics and resumed practicing. As I got older, it seemed like a dream to acquire the techniques. I have been practicing the kipping which I could no longer do for three years, but I still can not do it. While facing the difficulty of maintaining the status quo, I can feel the joy from

bottom of my heart that I can do what I love. This has changed my attitude towards practice. My goal is to keep challenging and evolve day by day. I seek for the beautiful gymnastics with stretched toes. I'm looking forward to visiting Germany and enjoy gymnastics there with my friends. I wish this event will go on and be widely known to people in the world.

**Specialties**

Event: Vault  
Now, I can't jump because of a bad knee

**Job**

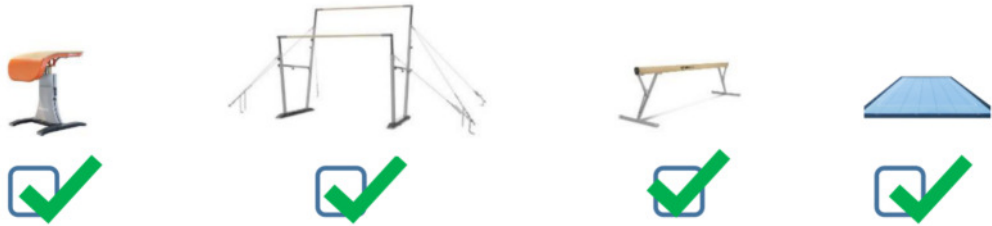
Worked for a financial institution, now retired



**Successes**

- All Japan Masters Championships 17 times since 1985
- 2009: Master's award
- 2010: 3rd place in the 40's
- 2011: 2th place in the 50's

**Activity in the competition (individual)**





**Etsuko Koike 28-JAN, 1975 (48)**



**Personal story in gymnastics life**

**Phase 1 1990-2002**

When I was a girl, I liked to play with a gym mat, a vaulting box, and a low horizontal bar. So once I found there was a gymnastics club at high school, I decided to join. This was my first step of my long journey with gymnastics. As I learned skills like kip, back handspring, back flip..etc., I was getting attracted to gymnastics more and more.

I had no hesitation to join the gymnastics club at university. Study and gymnastics – these were the 2 top priorities of my university life. When I decided to study in the US, I was going to quit gymnastics. But I couldn't resist after all, and I explored to look for the gymnasium to knock the door. It was the most precious experience for me that they accepted me so easily as a gymnastics friend even though I couldn't speak English well at that time.

After graduating the university, I went to the gymnasium where non-student adults can practice gymnastics every weekends. It was new and very stimulating for me to practice with the gymnasts in various ages. I enjoyed challenging more advanced skills than ever.

**Phase 2 2015-Present**

I was away from gymnastics during the busy time with my 4 kids,

thinking I wouldn't be able to do gymnastics ever again. But I got a chance to try hand-stand or cart-wheel with my daughters when I was in late 30's. It was fun enough for me to recall how I like gymnastics. I started from very basic skills, then I have been able to get the skills back little by little as I keep practicing. I am learning that this proverb is true – where there is a will, there is a way. There is no age limitation for gymnastics. My dream is to participate in the Masters Competition with my 2 daughters!

**Specialties**

Event : Uneven Bars  
Skill : Always positive, always smile ☺

**Job**

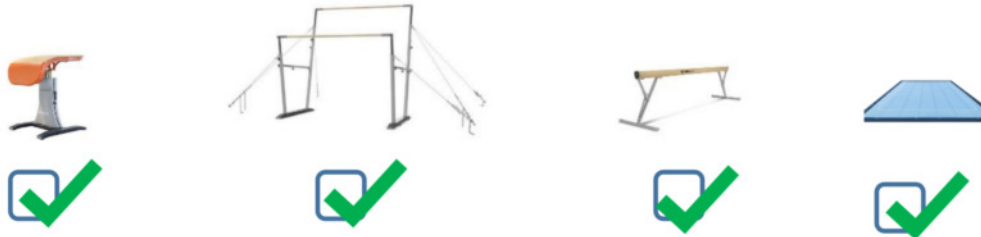
Semiconductor industry



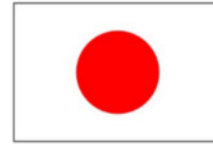
**Successes**

All Japan Masters Competition  
3<sup>rd</sup> in the age 40's in 2019  
3<sup>rd</sup> in the age 40's in 2021

**Activity in the competition (individual)**







**Rika Tanaka 23th Nov 1965 (57)**

**Personal story in gymnastics life**



How I started gymnastics

When I was in elementary school, I saw Nadia Comăneci on TV and thought, "I want to do gymnastics too!" For that reason, I chose the gymnastics club without hesitation as a junior high school club activity.

Junior high school and high school days

In junior high school and high school, I practiced with the slogan "Let's go for the national competition!". I really enjoyed learning new tricks such as backflips and somersaults.

University days

I enjoyed gymnastics as a hobby rather than competed seriously. As a result, my weight increased by about 15 kg and one day, I broke one bar of the uneven bars. This caused me to have more tricks I didn't (couldn't) practice. Fortunately, I didn't get seriously injured, so I was able to do gymnastics for four years.

Opportunity to participate in the Masters Competition

One day I saw All Japan Masters competition was broadcasted on TV, and that people of all ages were doing gymnastics at various levels of difficulty. I wanted to participate in the competition together, so I resumed doing gymnastics at the age of 49.

Present

I practice three times a week in various places and have made many friends.

**Specialties**

Event: vault  
But what I practice the most is the balance beam

**Job**

accounting



**Successes**

- All Japan Masters competition 2020 Champion in the 50s + 2021 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 50s +

**Activity in the competition (individual)**

