



LOU NOVICK

TOP Coaches/ CHOREOGRAPHERS GYM OWNERS

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Kristen & Victor **ROSARIO**

CLAIM TO FAME

Owners of Top Gun All-Stars

*"Beautiful minds, beautiful people—
their brilliance motivates and inspires
all of us!"*

—Elaine Pascale, owner of World Cup All-Stars

If there are any true *cheerlebrities*, a term we heard swirling around The Cheerleading Worlds, they've got to be Kristen and Victor Rosario, the Brangelina of the cheer world. At Worlds, even international teams who couldn't speak English understood the name Top Gun. At any event, when the Rosarios' Miami-based program takes the floor, audience members clamor over one another to watch what happens on the mat. And what happens is always magic. The choreography is seamless and innovative, the

tumbling technique is flawless and the energy is through the roof. Whatever Top Gun does this season is what dozens of imitators will try next season, but they always manage to stay a step ahead of the pack.

Celebrating its 15th year, Top Gun has earned countless national titles and two Worlds gold medals. With such accolades, the Rosarios, who met in high school and cheered together in college, have much to boast about. Yet somehow they're a quiet presence at events, humble to the core even after all

their success. This humility is reflected in the behavior of their athletes. "One of our most famous quotes to our athletes is, 'It's easy to be number one—staying there is the challenge,'" Kristen says. And while this year at Worlds it was another team's turn to shine, the silver medalist Top Gun athletes showed that true champions aren't only the ones who win the trophy. Led by Victor and Kristen, the athletes displayed an inspiring show

of class, sportsmanship and respect. "In the end, we're trying to raise good people," Kristen says, "not just good athletes." Victor adds: "I tell my athletes that when they step out of the cheer world into the real world, nobody's going to care that they can do a double full or won Worlds. All the lessons they've learned along the way about teamwork and accomplishing goals are what's going to help them with everything in life." —*MW*

Q: Kristen, one of the most touching moments at Worlds was when you inducted Victor into the USASF Hall of Fame. You're such a power couple, but how do you keep balance in your relationship?

KR: It's hard sometimes. You learn to pick your battles. We've learned to agree to disagree, but we do complement each other. I'm usually the more personable one who people come to with their problems, but Victor keeps people from walking all over me. He's a force to be reckoned with in the gym, while I'm more so in the office.

VR: Kristen's organizational skills are amazing. She balances me out. I'm more the procrastinator and unorganized one, and she's the one who pinches every penny and makes sure we're taken care

of for the present and future—that helps us both on a personal level and in the business.

Q: You and your athletes are regarded as celebrities. How do you keep your athletes humble?

KR: It's important to always remember how you began and what it feels like to be at the bottom of the totem pole. We constantly remind ourselves and our athletes that we all have to start somewhere.

Q: You inspire so many people, but who inspires you?

KR: We're re-inspired by so many different people: Elaine Pascale, James Speed and Rey Lozano, just to name a few.

Q: What do you hope to inspire?

VR: First place, second place, third place...People remember that for a little while, but it's the performances when

you give the crowd something new and innovative that I want Top Gun to be remembered for. That's why we go above and beyond every year to put out innovative, creative routines.

Q: If you could hire a dream coaching team to create the ultimate routine, whom would you call?

KR: Victor Rosario, Eric Little, Rey Lozano, Billy Pope and Gianni Denegri. (Those are some brilliant and scary minds.)

Q: What advice would you give to other coaches?

VR: Get involved. Go to the National All-Star Cheerleading Coaches Congress (NACCC) meetings and vote online. It was created for us to have a say in major decisions that affect everyone from the gym owner to the competition company. It's sad to see there's not more involvement. ★