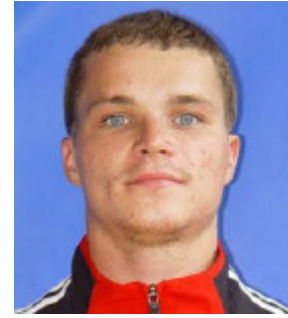


Interview of Alexander Rusakov

Leader of the Russian team



*First, Alexander, we want to thank you for granting us this interview. It is with pleasure and enthusiasm that the readers of **Acrobatic Sports** will find out more on one of the most dominating trampolinists. NB: This interview was conducted in February 2005.*

Acrobatic Sports : Alexander, you recently finished second behind Yuri Nikitin at the 2004 World Cup Final in Algeria. Do you consider this result as a performance or as a disappointment ?

Alexander Roussakov : consider this result as a disappointment.

Acrobatic Sports : You also finished second behind Yuri Nikitin at the 2004 European Championships in Sofia. Could you tell us more on your experience at this competition ?

Alexander : Each of my appearances in competition is like a new start. Nikitin is a serious opponent. But it is very pleasant to compete against this strong opponent. Even a defeat to him is a valuable experience in order not to let him win at the next meeting.

Acrobatic Sports : You were ranked first after the preliminaries at the Olympics, the 2003 World Championships, and at the European Championships in Sofia. In your opinion, what made the difference during the finals ?

Alexander : In my opinion, the appearance at the Olympics cannot be compared with any other competition since the elite of all sports is assembled at the Olympics.

Acrobatic Sports : Could you tell us more on your experience and your performance at the Olympics? How can the pressure and the stress of jumping last at the finals of the Olympics be managed ?

Alexander : I was competing last from Russian team. It is very complicated for me to adjust after such a magnificent performance by Alexander Moskalenko.

Acrobatic Sports : In your opinion, what was your greatest performance or your greatest memory in competition until now?

Alexander : The 2004 European Championships in Bulgaria. I remained very happy with the performance of the routine with a 16.40 point difficulty. Even my coach Oleg Gavrilovich Zaporozhenko congratulated me, which is very rare. ☺

Acrobatic Sports : What is your biggest disappointment in competition?

Alexander : The 2004 Olympics.

Acrobatic Sports : Could you tell us more on your first World Championships in 1996 in Vancouver at the age of 15, with the highest tariff of the whole championship behind German Khnychev?

Alexander : I was shaken by such a high level of competition. Everything was unusual and beautiful. I had to take on a new role within that team. I managed this task.

Acrobatic Sports : It seems to us that it happened very rarely to you to fall in the past few years whereas it seems to us that it happened to you more often at the beginning of your career. Did you change your approach of the competition or is it due to the accumulated experience and the maturity gained with time?

Alexander : I changed my tactical approach.

Acrobatic Sports : It seems to us that you are currently (NB: in February) at a camp with the national Russian team in Moscow. What is the frequency of the camps of the Russian national team? Do you systematically meet before each big competition? What is the duration of these camps and what is their content (number of trainings, specific work, etc.)?

Alexander : Camps are conducted before each big competition.

Acrobatic Sports : What are the frequency and the content of your training sessions in Yeisk (number of training sessions per day, per week, number of hours, hours of work out, specific work, ballet, etc.)? What are your training conditions?

Alexander : Training sessions happen every day except Sundays. The conditions left much to be desired. The gym for the training sessions is not specialized for the practice of trampoline. The conditions are not comfortable temperature-wise. It is cold in the winter and it is hot in the summer. There are no showers.



Acrobatic Sports : Does your coach Oleg Gavrilovitch Zaporozhenko (photo) have coaching specificities or specific training methods?

Alexander : It is not entirely clear to me what you mean with the specific relationships with the athletes.

Acrobatic Sports : How is your relationship with your coach? It seems to people in competitions that your relationship seems at the same time close and based on respect and authority. Is it correct?

Alexander : There is all of that. But, first, we are one team with the coach.

Acrobatic Sports : You were a very precocious trampolinist, competing in particular a routine beginning with three triffises at the 1994 World Age Groups in Porto, at the age of 13. Was your learning of high difficulty based on the “part method” (i.e., a learning based on learning the different parts of a skill and executing progressive maneuvers) or on a method using suspended elastic belts, or on a combination of both methods?

Alexander : All the known methods were used. But my coach has also for sure his secrets.

Acrobatic Sports : It seems to us that you have an exceptional quality of rotation that permits you to execute triffises, especially the half in half out triffis, with an impressive easiness. Is this quality of rotation natural for you or is it something that you specifically work on?

Alexander : Everything is achieved with continuous trainings and work.

Acrobatic Sports : Alexei Tchiviaga recently competed an optional routine beginning with a half out quadriffis pike. Do you master quadriffises in training? If yes, which ones? Do you plan to integrate them into your routine competed in competitions?

Alexander : I believe that the execution of quadriffises will be irrelevant within the next five years. The execution of this skill by Tchiviaga was a way to draw attention to him. To waste time during trainings to work on such elements is irrational since they are complex but are ineffective with respect to the end-result.

Acrobatic Sports : What are the most difficult skills that you have executed during trainings? Do you plan to integrate some of them into your routine performed in competitions in the near future?

Alexander : Half in half out triffis pike. I often have competed it.

Acrobatic Sports : What is the tariff of the most difficult routine you performed at training? Could you let us know what were the skills composing this routine?

Alexander : 16.7 points.

Acrobatic Sports : It seems to us that you usually execute your twists in rudy outs with the arms straight along your body. In contrast, it seems to us that you prefer to position your arms bent in front of your bust when you twist rudy out fliffises. Is our analysis correct? Is it a deliberate choice? If yes, could you explain us the reasons of this technical choice?

Alexander : Yes, it is a deliberate choice. When I put my hands on my bust, it increases my twisting speed.

Acrobatic Sports : You start your twisting in rudy outs and your rudy outs without visual contact with the end of the trampoline (which is the method usually taught in France). In your opinion, what are the respective advantages and inconvenients of starting the twisting without visual contact like you do and starting after visual contact like it is taught in France?

Alexander : I do it the way it was taught to me.

Acrobatic Sports : Have you ever experienced skill losses?

Alexander : I think it happened to every athlete and nobody is insured against it.

Acrobatic Sports : What do you like about trampolining?

Alexander : "To draw". ☺ This is, it is beautiful to do skills.

Acrobatic Sports : When and in which circumstances did you start trampolining?

Alexander : I was eight year old when my gym teacher took me to the trampoline section because I was bright and strong at the same time.



Acrobatic Sports : What does Alexander Moskalenko (photo) represent for you as trampolinist? Which influence did he have on your career? Was he a model to you? Do you consider him as the greatest trampolinist of all times or simply as a teammate?

Alexander : I consider him as a great athlete. He served as a guide, a reference to me. But it does not mean that I do not aspire to surpass him.

Acrobatic Sports : Did you have other trampolinists as models?

Alexander : Igor Bogachev (NB: 1983 European Champion and 1984 World Champion Runner-up) and Alexander Moskalenko served me of models to emulate from.

Acrobatic Sports : Does Alexander Moskalenko's retirement put more pressure on you to step up and be the new leader of the Russian team?

Alexander : There is no pressure. We have normal human relationships within the national team.

Acrobatic Sports : Do you know what will be the composition of the Russian national team this year following Alexander Moskalenko's retirement?

Alexander : Trampoline is an unpredictable kind of sports. Rankings at the Russian Championship and the Cup of Russia will decide of everything.



Acrobatic Sports : Could you tell us more on your Yeisk teammate and 2004 European youth Champion, Dimitri Ouchakov? Do you think that he will become part of the Russian national team in the near future? (NB: Ouchakov was actually a member of the national team at the China-Russia competition in December 2004).

Alexander : He is a young, capable and promising athlete. I consider that he will represent some serious competition for all, including me.

Acrobatic Sports : Is there a (sportive and friendly) rivalry between the two neighboring teams of Yeisk and Krasnodar and their respective coaches Oleg Zaporozhenko and Vitaly Dubko?

Alexander : Certainly, it exists since there cannot be two leaders, there can be only one leader. As Vitaly Dubko says: "If there would be no Zaporozhenko, there would also be no me." ☺

Acrobatic Sports : What are your occupations in life besides trampoline?

Alexander : I listen to music, I play football, I like to drive.

Acrobatic Sports : Which advices would you give to a beginner who would like to reach the top level?

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Alexander : To work and to have the same chance as I had with my coach Oleg Gavrilovich Zaporozhenko.

Acrobatic Sports : What are your objectives for 2005?

Alexander : To win the World Championships.

Acrobatic Sports : Is your mid-term primary goal to become 2008 Olympic Champion in Beijing?

Alexander : Yes, this is my goal. But, it is only a beginning.

Acrobatic Sports : What can we wish you?

Acrobatic Sports : I will become a father in March (NB: His daughter was born on March 11, 2005, the day he won the Russian championship). Wish health to my child.

Alexander, Woldtramp.com team thanks you for your time and the kindness for having granted us this interview.

Interview prepared by Guillaume Lefebvre and translated to Russian by Marina Ducroux, whom we thank a lot.

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