

Written by Admin
Friday, 16 November 2007 14:21

After nursing a slight injury to her right leg, 2007 world champion **Shawn Johnson** should be "100 percent back" this weekend, according to coach **Chow Liang**.

"Right now we're in the foundation-building stage and getting her body and mind recovered, and getting ready for the Olympics," Chow told IG on Friday.

The injury was a stress reaction to her shin, which could have resulted in a stress fracture if left untreated. Johnson has been wearing a walking boot to allow the leg to heal.

Johnson overcame a few uncharacteristic mistakes to win three gold medals at the Stuttgart worlds in September, capping off an incredible 2007. "She had a lot of competitions this past year, and overall she had a very, very successful season," Chow said. "And everybody has to understand that she is a human being and she makes mistakes. She's not a machine (laughs)."

It was ironic that Chow, a former Chinese national team member, was the coach of an American gymnast in Stuttgart, and one who helped the U.S. defeat China in the team final.



Johnson and Chow

"I do have a lot of friends on the Chinese team," said Chow, who coaches with his wife, Li. "On the personal side we are still friends, and on the competition floor we're competitors. And I believe my friends and I [handled] it very professionally. Before we go to the competition floor we say good luck, and afterward we congratulate each other."

Written by Admin

Friday, 16 November 2007 14:21

Chow couldn't say what changes, if any, he would make in Johnson's routines for 2008, but we might see her upgrade to a 2-1/2-twisting Yurchenko on vault. After all, she almost competed it at the Visa Championships last August. "We did it during the warm-up," Chow said. "I almost had her do it — almost. I probably felt one month short (of preparation) back then. I didn't want to take any risk."

The 2-1/2-twisting Yurchenko carries a 6.5 difficulty rating, compared with 5.8 for a double twist. But, ultimately, it was Johnson's four-event balance that made the difference. "Honestly, there was no doubt in my mind that she was the one capable of (winning)," Chow said.

Though Johnson is the only elite at Chow's Gymnastics and Dance Institute in West Des Moines, Iowa, Chow says he has more budding stars in the making. "They are 10 and 11 years old," he said proudly. "I'm pretty excited, actually, and I think Shawn set a good example for them."