



Varsity 'S' Newsletter

Fabulous Fall

Successful Events Bring Hundreds of Alumni to Campus

A series of activities—enjoyable, long weekends filled with events that brought alumni, family and friends back to campus—made the fall an important time for the Varsity 'S' Club.

Numerous sports teams hosted events that included dinners, reunions and even scrimmages.

In a season following the Summer Olympics, several special visitors (our own Olympians) returned to campus. Also, alumni and friends embraced the One Team approach championed by the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Alumni took great pride in returning to campus to bond with former teammates and connect with current coaches and student-athletes.

"Every team's event was a little different, but one thing was similar about all the activities—the Penn State pride," said Clint Eury, Varsity 'S' coordinator. "It's always exciting to have alumni back on campus. Some return every year and others might be making their first trip in years. No matter the timing, it's special."

SPRING SEMESTER ALUMNI EVENTS

Women's Basketball.....	Jan. 13
Men's Volleyball.....	Jan. 19
Women's Ice Hockey.....	Feb. 8-10
Men's Ice Hockey.....	Feb. 15-17
Men's Basketball.....	March 10
Men's Lacrosse.....	April 6
Men's Gymnastics.....	April 19-21
Men's and Women's Track & Field.....	May 17-18



Among the groups back on campus were (from top): baseball alumni, former men's basketball stand-out John Amaechi, men's soccer alumni, fencing alumni and field hockey alumni.



Olympians enjoy festivities, return to campus

Among the more than 800 alumni, family and friends who returned for Homecoming and Varsity 'S' Day were eight Penn State Olympians who were honored during the second half of the Oct. 6 football game vs. Northwestern.

The Olympians honored were: Felix Aronovich (gymnastics, Israel), Dominique Blake (track and field, Jamaica), Miles Chamley-Watson (fencing, United States), Shana Cox (track and field, Great Britain),

Natalie Dell (rowing, United States), Daniel Gomez-Tanamachi (fencing, Mexico), Bobby Lea (cycling, United States) and Kirsten Nieuwendam (track & field, Suriname). All of the Olympians and their Penn State coaches were recognized during the game.

The Olympians' itinerary also included photos at the Nittany Lion Shrine and convertible rides during the Homecoming parade. Those photos and more can be found on the Varsity 'S' Club's Facebook page.



GREAT GOLFERS

An enjoyable and successful part of men's lacrosse alumni and reunion activities was a golf outing at Toftrees.

Record Varsity 'S' Day

By Matthew Allibone

While the weather was dark and cloudy prior to Penn State's homecoming football game vs. Northwestern, the mood could not have been brighter inside Medlar Field, where numerous former Penn State athletes congregated together at a tailgate put together by the Varsity 'S' Club.

The event, which lasted from 9 a.m. to noon, was attended by more than 400 former letter winners, including past and current Olympians.

"When you come back to Penn State it's like being home," said Corrine Leparik (women's basketball, 1978). "It's great to see some old friends at the tailgate."

For some in attendance, such as Marc Dinacci (men's soccer, 1994), returning to campus is a common practice.

"I come back most weekends and it's always fun to be back," said Dinacci. "I'm looking forward to seeing some familiar faces."

Others such as Richard Shank (bowling, 1980) were making their first trip to State College in many years.

"This is the first time I've been back in 18 years," said Shank. "I felt it was time to come back and show some support."

Many of the letter winners said supporting the University was especially important.

"We've done this in past years but this year we have over double the amount of people we've ever had before," said Kelly Grimes (women's golf, 1979). "I think it has to do with how Penn State's really proud and

we're all behind the One Team that Bill O'Brien started."

Another aspect of the tailgate that many enjoyed was the chance to meet and converse with former athletes from other sports and generations.

"It's really fun to look around and talk to people and see when they were in school and the difference in time," said Lynne Hairston (gymnastics, 1986).

Although everyone enjoyed the tailgate, the most anticipated part of the Varsity 'S' Day for many was the opportunity to walk on the Beaver Stadium field before the game to participate in the first-ever letter winners' tunnel for the football team to run through.

Even some former football players couldn't contain their excitement about stepping on the field once more.

"It's a great honor to be introduced in front of 107,000 of your closest friends," said Pete Cimino (football, 1960).

Along with their excitement about the festivities, the opportunity to get together was



important for many letter winners. Just getting the chance to meet new friends or re-connect with others made the day especially valuable.

"It's an honor to be back at Penn State," said Jim Restauri (football, 1979). "I appreciate the invitation from the Varsity 'S' Club and it's good to know that you're still a Penn Stater."



HAPPY HOMECOMING

Members of the 1982 national champion football team returned to campus and were honored at halftime of the Temple game earlier this year. (Photo by Mark Selders)

Challenge offers former student-athletes chance to impact team

The Varsity 'S' Club, the Nittany Lion Club and Acting Athletic Director Dave Joyner are proud to present a challenge for Varsity 'S' Club members.

The Penn State Alumni Challenge for Former Student-Athletes will provide former student-athletes with the opportunity to show support for the teams they participated in while wearing the blue and white. Former student-athletes of each team will compete against the other teams to have the highest percentage of former student-athletes supporting Penn State Athletics.

During the past year, more than 2,000 former student-athletes represented their teams by supporting Penn State Athletics through the Nittany Lion Club. The challenge offers the opportunity to increase those numbers and better benefit current coaches and student-athletes.

The challenge will run through the 2012-2013 fiscal year (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013), and will enable former student-athletes to have the opportunity to provide their varsity team with two \$6,000 prizes.

The two ways in which the challenge can be won are:

- 1) to be the sport with the highest percentage of former student-athletes giving to Penn State Athletics; or
- 2) to be the sport with the highest percentage increase in giving from former student-athletes compared during the fiscal year to Penn State Athletics.

**Penn State Alumni Challenge
for Former Student-Athletes
Give Today!
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All 31 current varsity sports and their former student-athletes will be included in the challenge. (The men's and women's ice hockey programs will not be eligible to win the highest percentage increase of former student-athletes compared to 2011-2012 since they were not varsity programs at that time.) The

spirited challenge provides an avenue for each team to compete against each other to see who can show the most support to its program throughout the year.

"The challenge is a tremendous opportunity to engage coaches and former student-athletes in a fun competition," said Clint Eury, Varsity 'S' Club coordinator. "We can work together as one team in making a big difference for our current student-athletes."

Through the first few months of the challenge, 1,031 former student-athlete donors have contributed—that's 66 percent more donors than at this time last year! Among teams, those with the highest percentage of donors have been: women's soccer (26 percent), field hockey (16 percent), men's volleyball (15 percent), men's ice hockey (11 percent), women's golf (11 percent).

To learn more about this challenge, and to stay up to date on the progress, visit the Varsity 'S' Club website and Varsity 'S' Facebook page. To make a gift online, visit: www.givetonlc.psu.edu and select the sport you would like donate to under "designations."

The end of the tax year is a great time to make a donation to your sport and support the challenge. All gifts through the Nittany Lion Club are tax deductible. To donate, visit www.givetonlc.psu.edu to support your program. To find out more about the challenge and to see an update on where your program ranks, go to www.gopsusports.com/varsitys online.

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OLYMPIAN Q&A: SHANA COX

Hometown?
Westbury, New York

Current job?
I am running track professionally.

Where do you live now?
Cary, N.C.

Family?
My mom and dad, Valerie and Sandy Cox. I also have three brothers, Adrian, Justin and Tyler. And in November 2013 my family will be a little bigger when I marry my fiancé, Michael.

What do you remember about your first trip to Penn State?
My first time visiting was for my recruiting trip in Fall 2002. The vivid memory that stands out in my mind about that trip was attending a football game. I remember it being raining and cold, but despite the weather, thousands of Penn State fans rallied and cheered for the Nittany Lions. I remember how awe inspiring that was, and how much

a part of that I wanted to be. I immediately canceled the rest of my recruiting trips and signed on to be a Nittany Lion.

What were the highlights of your career as a student-athlete?
First of all, graduation. I worked so hard for four years and it seemed to go by so fast. Being a graduate was something I worked toward everyday during my time at Penn State, to actually walk across the stage was truly gratifying. My second highlight would be winning the 2008 national championship in the 400 as well as the 4x400 relay.

Who are some of the people who had the most influence on you at Penn State? Why?
I would certainly say my coach Chris Johnson, and his wife GiGi had a great influence on me. GiGi was an exemplary student-athlete, and her along with Chris provided guidance on the track, in school and spiritually.



They helped me to become a well rounded person and prepared me for success while on my Penn State journey, and most importantly beyond.

How often do you talk about Penn State?
I absolutely love to talk about Penn State. My experience there was a dream and I love to share that with current students, as well as alumni. People outside of the Penn State community are always intrigued with my experience as well. I beam with pride whenever I talk about my alma mater.

What does it mean to you to be a Penn Stater?
At times I feel that being a Penn Stater is only something one can understand and conceptualize by having the experience of being a Nittany Lion. However, to best put it into words I would say that being a Penn Stater means being a leader as well as an aide. Being at Penn State helped me to learn to lead by example and to always strive to not only be the best but do your best and to do it with integrity.

and encouraged me the most. I am forever grateful for the nudge he provided. And, of course, the faculty members were super. I took John Lucas's class on the history of the Olympics and Dot Harris taught sports psychology. There were just so many people and they were all supportive and a great bunch to be around.

How often do you get back to campus?
As often as I'm asked or can. Doing a lot of motivational speaking has allowed me to be able to give back and be able to represent the University in the best light possible. It's always nice to see Penn State as it is and the growth that's happened. So, it's really nice to get back.

How often do you talk about Penn State?
I definitely share my feelings about the University. I'm clear about it. My blood is blue. It doesn't matter where I'm at, if I see anyone with a Penn State anything on I stop them and ask what year they graduated. It all boils down to it being an awesome place.

OLYMPIAN Q&A: MARY ELLEN CLARK

Hometown?
Newtown Square, Pa.

Current job?
Wellsley College, coaching with focus on strength and conditioning program. Also conducting motivational speaking and personal training.

What do you remember most about your first trip to Penn State?
As a freshman in high school, states were at Penn State. I was a freshman and ended up winning. It's such a great memory.

How did you decide on Penn State?
It was basically between Penn State and Indiana and my parents left it up to me. They told me to go where I thought home was. Trying to decide I took a walk, jumped on the trampoline and then decided to flip a coin—heads Penn State, tails Indiana. I flipped it an it was tails and I was like, 'OK, best two out of three.' I guess I always knew Penn State was the place for me.

What does it mean to you to be a Penn Stater?
As a student-athlete, you're immediately coming into 25 or 30 friends or people that share a common interest with you. Even at a school as large as Penn State, you immediately have this sense of belonging. As a freshman you might feel a little vulnerable but you have that team for a connection and support. For me, it was quick. Yes, I loved going home for Thanksgiving, and that was wonderful, but it was also good to get back to campus afterward. You feel connected and you just want to be on campus. It's a special place.

Who are some of the people who had the most influence on you at Penn State? Why?
When I first arrived on campus, Ellen Perry was my adviser. She was tremendous. Bob Goldberg, who was my coach, was obviously important as well. He was super positive



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Clint's Corner: Successful season for all

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Varsity 'S' Club

Dear Varsity 'S' Club members,
This fall, Penn State Athletics and our sports have had a great deal of success both on and off the field. That includes four Big Ten championship teams—field hockey, women's soccer, men's soccer and women's volleyball—and conference Coach of the Year honors for Bob Warming (men's soccer), Erica Walsh (women's soccer), 400-plus game winner Char Morett (field hockey), Russ Rose (women's volleyball) and Bill O'Brien (football).

In addition to these successes, I am also proud of the success of our former student-athletes. On a daily basis I have the opportunity of hearing from our former student-athletes and the accolades that they have achieved after wearing the blue-white. We are truly part of a special group of individuals.

This year's Varsity 'S' Day provided an opportunity for our former student-athletes to come together as ONE TEAM to attend the tailgate and be a part of a new tradition for the Varsity 'S' Club. I, along with 400 former student-athletes participated in the first Letter Winners Tunnel. It provided a great opportunity for many

I look forward to seeing you there.

Go State!
Clint



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of us to be recognized for our many accomplishments as a Penn State student-athlete. Next year, I am hoping to have an even larger crowd attend the event.

In closing, I encourage our former student-athletes to participate in the Penn State Alumni Challenge for Former Student-Athletes. It is a great opportunity to show your support to Penn State and the current student-athletes that walk in your shoes.

In the upcoming year as I travel to various sporting events and activities around the region and country, it would be great to meet up. I also encourage each of you to reach out to me the next time that you are on campus.

Also, this spring during Blue/White Weekend, the Varsity 'S' Club will be hosting a tailgate for our former student-athletes. Information regarding the tailgate will be sent out by email.

ALUMNI NOTES

Former men's soccer player Anthony Calvano and his wife Rachel recently welcomed a baby daughter, Olivia Marie Calvano. (photo at right)



Former Olympian and U.S. record holder Horace Ashenfelter was inducted into the Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame. (photo at left) **STORY**



Lacrosse alum Tom Hayes was named Lacrosse Magazine's 2012 Person of the Year (photo at right) **STORY**



Alumna Ashley Morici welcomed a "little lion" to their family this summer. Santo Morici was born June 6, 2012.

If you have news to share (honored, promoted, married ...) please email varsity@s athletics.psu.edu