

# NavApache Independent

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## Walk-on success

# Determined Young makes ASU roster

**Keith Morris**  
The independent

Billy Young's dream was to play baseball for Arizona State University.

So the 2009 Show Low High graduate tried to make the Sun Devils as a walk-on in the fall of his freshman year. The odds were stacked against him. He didn't make it.

But he didn't give up.

Young, the 6-foot-3, 195-pound right-handed pitcher who was attending the university on an academic scholarship, played club ball at

ASU, which is sort of like the junior varsity team, in the spring of his freshman year. That team played other club teams, as well as community college teams in the Valley. Mesa CC coaches were impressed and invited him to pitch for their team the following season.

But in order to not lose his ASU academic scholarship, Young needed to carry at least 12 credits. But he also had to enroll at MCC in order to play on that school's baseball team. He took one class at MCC in the fall of his sophomore year but had to become a full-time student during the baseball season so he carried 13 credits at MCC and 12 at ASU, for a total of 25 credits.

It was quite a challenge.

"Just imagine being a full-time stu-

dent and doubling that," he said. "I had twice as much homework and twice as much time in class. Then we had to practice in the afternoon and we had games four days a week."

Although it was a draining experience, he figured he only needed to do survive it for one season.

"I said at the beginning it's just one year. I've got to do it and it's going to be worth it in the end," Young said. "Because I wanted to play baseball at ASU, it was the only path. I had to keep my scholarship at ASU and play baseball so I could get more competition and more experience."

He appeared in 12 games for the Thunderbirds in the 2011 season, going 6-2 with a 3.93 earned run average and

46 strikeouts in 71 innings.

Young then again tried to make the ASU squad as a walk-on in the fall of 2011. It's rare for anyone not recruited by ASU to make the team as a walk on. And that's what ASU head coach Tim Esmay told him.

"His ability to persevere and really, his ability not to take no for an answer," Esmay said when asked what impressed him most about Young. "He just would not accept that. He's a hard-working young man. He's got his stuff together."

This time, he was rewarded with a spot on the ASU roster.

"I'm excited," Young said. "(It's) my dream come true. Everything I've ever worked for my whole life came true. I

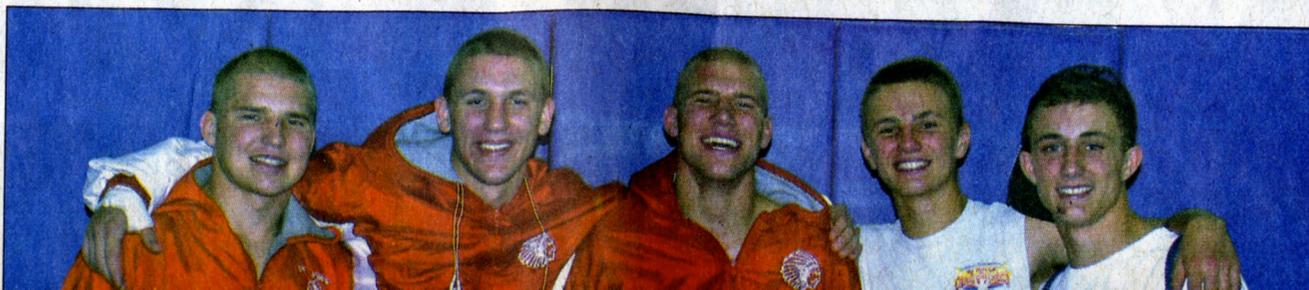
felt like I was going to make it."

Esmay has been impressed with Young.

"I'll tell you this, that young man has persevered," Esmay said. "Being in the situation he's at right now at Arizona State says a lot for him as a young man. He tries to go through the walk-on process here and was told that he wasn't ready for this level. So then he does the club thing. Then he decides, 'You know what, I'm going to keep asking and keep trying.' Then he goes to Mesa Community College and does well there and comes here as a walk-on trying to make the club and after the fall he's on the team."

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Weeks, three  
Yellow Jackets  
named Arizona  
All-Americans



'Skins going  
for 2nd crown  
in 4 years