



## DEAR AIR FORCE ACADEMY TRACK & FIELD-CROSS COUNTRY ALUMNUS,

We're well into the 2011-12 school year, and I've not yet reached out to our alums as I keep promising you I'd do—I've depended on Maj. Jason Zarb-Cousin to keep you informed for the past 2 years, but he's now PCS'ed to Peterson AFB, and I'll personally resume trying to keep you up-to-date! Be forewarned—this will be a l-o-n-g message by the time I'm finished with it!

### CROSS COUNTRY-TRACK & FIELD "REUNION"

Before you (and just in case you don't) read further, I want to give you a "heads up" about the **ALUMNI WEEKEND** we're planning on hosting in conjunction with next May's hosting of the *Mountain West Conference Outdoor Track Championships*. I know Maj Zarb-Cousin wrote you last Fall about this event, originally planned for May, 2011, but with the delays in construction of our newly-renovated Cadet Outdoor Track & Field Complex (see below), we postponed our entire home meet schedule until 2012. We are planning a spectacular weekend, including such activities as a "Eat & Greet" Pasta Buffet with our team on Friday night, followed by a *social* at the new *Colorado Mountain Brewery* just a mile from USAFA's North Gate, an Alumni 5K or 10K Run/Walk/Race Saturday morning, tours of our athletic facilities, sale of specially-made XC/T&F Alumni *Nike* apparel, post-meet BBQ on Saturday, an Alumni Golf Tournament on Sunday morning, and more! Please plan on these dates-- Friday-Sunday, May 11-13. We'd love to see as many of you here as possible!

To plan this event, I'd like to solicit YOUR input—please reply with any input or ideas about how we can make this a really special event! In the meantime, I'd like to invite any local alumni (i.e., currently residing in the Colorado Springs-area) to attend a planning meeting on Thursday, October 27, 7:00 p.m. in the Falcon Room in Cadet Field House. We'll serve some refreshments and enlist you in leadership positions for the different events planned for the weekend.

### (RECRUITING) CLASS OF 2015

Our track-cross country recruiting Class of 2015 is almost 4 months into their Academy experience. We have a terrific group of freshmen, including the #1-ranked high school girls' javelin thrower in the country from 2011, and the #2-ranked high school boys pole vaulter in the country from last season! We're particularly excited with the addition of some promising female sprinters and distance runners. You can read more about our recruiting classes at the following links: [Women's Class of 2015](#); [Men's Class of 2015](#).

### CROSS COUNTRY

Head Cross Country coach, **Juli Benson**, believes we may have both our best women's team in years and our best men's team in several years! They certainly haven't been shying away from competition—our men opened with a win over Nebraska at the *Woody Greeno Invitational* in Lincoln, while our women placed 2<sup>nd</sup> to Nebraska in the same meet. Two weeks later they competed at the *Notre Dame Invitational* in South Bend, and then this past weekend at Wisconsin's *adidas Invitational* in Madison, WI. Individually Falcon runners have already collected five Mountain West Conference Runner-of-the-Week awards this season—Senior **Jim Walmsley** (twice), Junior **Jeremy Drenckhahn** (1), Sophomore **Gavin Owens** (1) and Junior **Melissa Fuerst** (1)!

In less than two weeks they'll travel to Fort Collins for the *Mountain West Conference Championships* on Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, and then the *NCAA Mountain Region Championships* in Provo, UT on November 11<sup>th</sup>. If we qualify, the *NCAA Championships* will be held on Monday November 21<sup>st</sup> in Terre Haute, IN.

## COMPLETION OF CADET OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD COMPLEX (finally!)



We are very excited to announce the completion of the renovation of our outdoor track. Its completion gives us one of the most impressive facilities in the NCAA, of course in the most spectacular setting. It's 100,00 square feet of a first-class *Rekortan* (full-pour polyurethane) surface. The track oval and all runways are "Berlin Blue" with all surrounding areas in gray. We widened the radius, expanded the lanes to 48" wide and moved the track a little north and west so that the pole vault "apron" on the west side abuts against the grass slope for a natural viewing area, and relocated common finish line, and accompanying bleachers and meet operations "box" to the east side of the complex. We believe we have the premier field event facility in the US, with 4 high jump pit positions, 4 long-triple jump pit positions on ends 2 bi-directional runways, 6 pole vault box positions on 4 runways, 2 javelin runways— one on each "D-zone", 2 shot put rings and sectors, and separate discus and hammer cages, rings and sectors, allowing all throws to be conducted on the infield, while retaining our cages on the upper field.

We inaugurated the Outdoor Track with our hosting of the 1<sup>st</sup>-ever *Wing Open* Intramural Track & Field meet in which over 300 cadets participated. You can read more about the facility on our website at [Outdoor Track Article](#). Be sure to click on the "photo gallery"!

Future plans for the facility include replacing the grass infield with a specially-designed synthetic turf that we can throw on, additional landscaping around the South curve and West slope, erecting covered "pavilions" over both a *staging area* and a *Sports Medicine area*, and installing wind screens on fences around the entire complex.

### 2012 TRACK & FIELD SCHEDULE

We just completed the first phase of our Fall Training Program for our sprinters, hurdlers and field event'ers, and we'll resume practice indoors right after Thanksgiving. For the first time since I've been at USAFA, we'll be hosting an indoor meet in December—the *Blue-Silver Open*. (Thanks to the completion of the *Holiday Athletic Center* building, an impressive indoor training facility for football, we no longer have conflicts with football in Cadet Field House!)

In addition to the 3 home indoor meets we've hosted annually in past years, we have 5 meets on our home outdoor schedule—the *Pikes Peak Quadrangular* on March 31, the *Air Force Decathlon-Heptathlon* on April 5-6 and the *Air Force Relays* on April 7. In addition, it's our turn to host the annual *Front Range Classic* against CU, CSU, Wyoming and Northern Colorado on May 4, and, for the first time since 2002, we'll host the *Mountain West Conference Outdoor Track & Field Championships* on May 9-12.

In addition to our full schedule of meets you can read about at [2012 Meet Schedule](#), we'll be hosting the *WOUNDED WARRIOR GAMES* sometime next Spring—an event our staff, team and myself have embraced as a service project—as well as events like renewing our annual Track/Cross Country section of *FALCON SPORTS CAMPS*, BCT Field Day, repeating the *Wing Open*, and adding other events in the future.

### 2012 TRACK & FIELD SEASON OUTLOOK

Our coaching staff is really excited about the upcoming season—we believe "on paper" we may have the best Falcon women's team in history AND the best men's team in history! We return a defending MWC Champion men's 4x400m Relay team (indoors) and defending individual Conference Champions **Rob Drye** (Hammer Throw) and **Bryce Bergman** (400m Hurdles), both outdoors. We also return the majority of a men's Distance Medley Relay team that both smashed our School Record and advanced to the NCAA Indoor Championships last March, along with discus thrower **James Cole**, who advanced to the NCAA Outdoor Championships last June. **Paige Blackburn** heads up a promising women's team and continues our legacy of outstanding female throwers over the past several years. We think we have 4 women capable of 13' and at least 4 men capable of 17'8"+ in the pole vault. Our distance and middle distance crews are as strong as usual, led by All-MWC runners **Jim Walmsley** and **Jeremy Drenckhahn** on the men, and **Melissa Fuerst** (MWC scorer at 1500m), **Kate Kanetzky** and **Morgan Mosby** on the women.

### COACHING STAFF

Coaches **Juli Benson** (Distance/Middle Distance, 4<sup>th</sup> year @ USAFA), **Scott Irving** (Throws, 12<sup>th</sup> year) and **Scottie Steffan** (Jumps, 5<sup>th</sup> year) give us what I believe is the best coaching staff in the NCAA! **Bob Graf** (High Jump) and **Ron White** (Sprints)

return as volunteer coaches with several years each in our program. Those of you who ran cross country and distance races here from 1991–2007 will be glad to know Coach **Mark Stanforth** returns for his 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a volunteer assistant to Juli. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt **Kelly Heinbaugh** is the newest addition to our staff, replacing Jason Z as our Director of Operations. She's an alumna of the University of Texas-Austin track program and was commissioned through the UT's ROTC program, and served the past 3 years at Ramstein AFB. She's been a terrific addition to our staff in the few short months she's been here and brings a dedicated work ethic and appreciation for Cadet athletics. **Col Martin France**, Astro Department Chair, continues to serve as our O.R., also wearing the hats of our chief photographer (check out some of his photos on his [Facebook page](#)), Eligibility Committee, frequent tutor and field event announcer at all our home meets!

We had another really exciting result from one of our volunteer assistant coaches just 2 months ago, when **Jenny (Barringer) Simpson**, who trains under Juli, won the World Championship 1500m title in Daegu, Korea, with a stunning race! She becomes the USA's 1<sup>st</sup> female 1500m World Champion since 1983. You can read about her win here: [Simpson World Champion!](#) The "covergirl" on the latest issue of [Track & Field News](#), Jenny ran collegiately at CU where she won several NCAA titles and set a Collegiate Record in the 3000m Steeplechase, before moving to Monument to train here at USAFA with Juli. She has totally adopted USAFA, our program, and of course, Juli's guidance and training regimen—read this interview from [Jenny's blog](#) posted on the *FloTrack* website before she left for Daegu, and also [Jenny's earlier interview](#) in the British track magazine, *Spike*.

## USAFA

2011-12 is an exciting time at USAFA! IMHO, we have maybe the most outstanding leadership team in my 23 years here—**LtGen Mike Gould** continues as Superintendent and is both respected and revered by cadets, faculty, staff and coaches alike, as well as the community for his up-front leadership style and his emphasis on character education. **BGen Richard Clark** is a dynamic Commandant and has established a terrific program called *Mission Partners* in which each IC team is teamed up with a Cadet Squadron and an academic department in an effort to provide a "joint" atmosphere of mutual support among the different mission elements—it's been a great success so far—we had a large number of cadets from CS-32 attend our opening cross country meet at Monument Valley Park in Colorado Springs, and each of our teams have enjoyed some dinners at the Clark's Otis House residence along with cadets and leadership from our partner squadrons, CS-14, 15 & 32, and the faculty and majors from the Philosophy and Electrical Engineering departments. **BGen Dana Born**, an '83 alum of our track and cross country teams as Dana Lindsley (still our school record-holder in the Women's 3-Mile Run!), continues to provide awesome leadership as USAFA's Dean of Faculty—our faculty continues to reap accolades and awards—here's one of the latest: [CBS Moneywatch Faculty Rating](#). BGen Born and her family have been great supporters of Falcon track & field and cross country!

Amazingly, we have no fewer than eight (8) alums of our track and/or cross country programs who are serving in DF or CW—faculty members **Lt Col Chris Nelson** (Math), **Lt Col Kristi Lowenthal** (History), **Maj Brian Payne** (Management), **Capt Brian Dumm** (Engineering), **Capt Kelly McPherson** (Physics), **Capt Becky Stone** (Chemistry), **Capt Anne (Chumlea) Portlock** (Economics), and of course, BGen Born! We also have 2 alums serving CW—**Maj Melissa Youderian** is AOC for CS-05 and **Capt Jocelyn (Dooley) Smith** is a Commander in the Powered Flight Program. Let's not forget **Sierra (Gould) Suhajda**, who serves AD as our Assistant Director for NCAA Compliance. Recent grads 2<sup>nd</sup> **Lt's Chris Severino** and **Katherine Ward** are both serving our program while on "casual status" waiting for their respective UPT classes to begin.

## ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Our athletic department is thriving right now for lots of reasons! We've got some remarkable new head coaches in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year in our department—expect "turn-arounds" in the next few years from our women's basketball (Andrea Williams, head coach), women's volleyball (Matt McShane, head coach) and baseball (Mike Kazlausky, head coach) teams. Our men's basketball team (Jeff Reynolds, head coach) is also on the verge of resurging to the top of the MWC. I continue to be in awe of Troy Calhoun, our head football coach (and NOT just because he's Callie's brother!)—he leads his staff and team the "right way", and I'm big fans of himself, his staff and his team. Coach Frank Serratorre, our ice hockey coach, also "gets it" about USAFA and everyone around here is excited about their season, which is off to a great start.

In addition to our new outdoor track and the *Holiday Athletic Center* (both mentioned above), our facilities continue to improve with each passing year. Latest to be completed is a newly-renovated and improved Cadet Natatorium (swimming pool) and a completely remodeled and expanded *Human Performance Laboratory*, both in Cadet Gym. Also under construction in Cadet Gym is a *Cadet Fitness Center* which will be first rate for its aerobic training facility, rock climbing gym and weight rooms, among other features.

AD's Athletic Hall of Fame continues to grow, and now numbers three (3) former track-cross country athletes among its first 15 members. The latest class, inducted last May, included **Gail Conway**, who joined previous inductees **Alonzo Babers** and

**Callie Calhoun.** You can be assured I'll continue to nominate alums from our programs, trusting that former NCAA Division I champions **Jim Murphy** (5000m), **Mike Ryan** (Cross Country) and **Dana Pounds** (2X Champion, Javelin Throw) will be among inductees in upcoming classes!

## WCAP

We have six (6) former USAFA track/cross country alums currently in the USAF's *World Class Athlete Program*—**Sean Houseworth** (10,000m), **Matt Williams** and **Justin Tyner** (both 3000m Steeplechase) are all training with Juli Benson here at our facilities through next summer's US Olympic Team Trials. **Dana Pounds** (Javelin Throw) continues to train with Coach Irving, while **Nick Frawley** (Pole Vault) has moved to Phoenix to train with Greg Hull and **Sara Neubauer** to Los Angeles to train with Conor McCullough, Sr, noted Hammer Throw coach.

## STAYING CONNECTED

As many of you have already been doing, you can follow our track and cross country programs three ways: (1) our website (soon to be renovated and updated at the end of November) at [www.goairforcefalcons.com](http://www.goairforcefalcons.com), (2) following us on *Facebook* by searching for 'Air Force Track and Field Sports Team' and becoming a "fan", or (3) doing the same *on Twitter* by searching for 'airforcefalcons' and following us there. We understand there are other *Facebook* pages where many of you are already linked up and keeping in contact with your teammates. [Our Facebook page](#) offers "one-stop shopping" where you can go to read current articles from our website, get results, look at pictures, see Alumni updates, get our schedule and much, much more. It is also an effective means to get updates from you, where you are, what you are doing, and if there are any significant events going on in your lives.

In updating the mailing list for this newsletter, we've found there are a large number of grads for whom we have no e-mail address or can't find on USAF's "Global" address list—particularly those who are either (1) no longer in the USAF (2) have "married" names we're unaware of, or (3) graduated prior to 1989. Please BOTH forward this message to them, and also reply to me with any personal e-mail addresses you might have for some of your former teammates.

Additionally, please go online to [AF T&F-XC Alumni Questionnaire](#) and either completing it or, if you've filled it out in the past, updating your information. Thanks in advance!

**I can tell you that the single most rewarding aspect of being a coach at the Air Force Academy is when we hear from you or you drop by our offices when in the area and give us updates on your careers, your families (!!!) and your service to our Country!** Please keep us updated with what is happening in your life—promotions or retirements, moves, weddings, babies, or anything else that you would like to share. Also, we encourage you to come out and support the Falcon cross country and track & field teams, especially when we are in your area...coaches and athletes alike would really appreciate it!

## FALCON PRIDE CLUB

With Track season just a few months away, and the anticipation of another exciting season, we wanted to take this opportunity to tell you about the Falcon Track & Field/CC Pride Club's mission, and how you can become a member of this prestigious club. The Falcon Pride Club is a donor program that was started in order to help give our Cadet-Athletes the resources they need to compete at the highest level of collegiate athletics. Over the past four years the Pride Club has raised over \$1,000,000 for our amazing Cadet-Athletes. When you make a gift to the Falcon Track & Field/CC Pride Club, 100% of your gift goes directly towards Air Force Track & Field/CC for needs such as athletic equipment, academic support tools, and pre-meet dinners above and beyond allotted budgets. To make a 100% tax deductible gift to the Falcon Track & Field/CC Pride Club, please visit [Falcon Pride Club](#) or contact Alex Yack at 719-333-2122 or by email at [alexander.yack.ctr@usafa.edu](mailto:alexander.yack.ctr@usafa.edu).

One of our big goals right now, in addition to some of the items mentioned on the flyer, is to mount a "HERITAGE DRIVE" solely from alumni donations, which will help us fund improvements to our Indoor Track in Cadet Field House that highlight the rich heritage of our teams. Among the improvements we're planning are (a) doubling the size of our "Wall of Fame" on the mezzanine level to include photos of many of our stars going back to the beginning of our programs in the 50's, (b) purchasing a trophy case for the entry foyer on the west side of the mezzanine-level over the indoor track, (c) replacing our USAFA School Record Boards, (d) replacing our Conference and National team title banners, (e) adding some (individual) "Champion" banners recognizing our NCAA Champions (and Olympic Champion!), and (f) purchasing an attractive display board recognizing all our past Conference Champions—individuals and relay teams.

Of course, we understand times are tough for so many in our current economy, but if you have the resources, please consider a donation—we'll recognize any and all alumni donations with some form of name plate inclusion on the item you fund or help fund.

## **FINALLY...**

Can you believe this is my 23<sup>rd</sup> year at the Air Force Academy?!? I've never appreciated it or enjoyed it as much as I do now—I'm convinced I have the best coaching job in America! I am wholly embraced with the USAF's core values and USAFA's mission—"educating, training and inspiring men and women to become officers of character, motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation." I love my coaching staff and the young men and women cadet student-athletes I get to work with!

My health is the best it's been in years after numerous knee surgeries and a couple of cardiac incidents—no hospital trips in 3 years as of this Sunday! My wife and I will celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary right before Christmas, and we're blessed to have both our son and daughter, their spouses and our six grandkids within an hour's drive—close enough to attend their soccer games or whatever sports are in season, including track meets (field days?!), concerts, recitals and programs, not to mention birthdays and holiday celebrations!

Please stay in touch—send an e-mail or update your "Alumni Questionnaire" on our website. I'll make every effort to continue to do the same from this end. Count on getting a flyer in the mail shortly after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January (if not sooner!) inviting you to our **Track-Cross Country Alumni Reunion** next May. Hope to see you then!

*Godspeed,*

*// Coach Lindeman //*

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