

THE GAIN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
MIAMI UNIVERSITY MEN'S RUGBY CLUB ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Volume 7, Issue 1

April 2009

murugby.com

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Miami U. Men's Rugby Football Club Alumni Association, Inc. shall be organized and operated to develop, support and sustain collegiate rugby football at Miami University.

CLUB PREPARES FOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION IN CALIFORNIA, MAY 1-2

As a fitting finale to Miami rugby's 40th year, the University club is readying itself to compete for the USA Rugby National Division 2 (D2) Collegiate Championship at Stanford Un. next week (**see special Final Four insert**). Following wins against the alumni Old Boys in September (details inside), the club's A-side posted a fall record of 5-0 in their league and won the Midwest D2 championship: Playoff 1: Defeated Slippery Rock 60-7; Playoff 2: Defeated W. Virginia University 44-0; Semi-Final: Defeated St. John 37-10; Final: Defeated U. of Wisconsin-Madison 24-0. This qualified Miami as one of the "Sweet 16" teams competing for the National D2 Championship in the spring.

During the fall season, the club's B and C sides were also highly successful, providing the promise of a healthy supply of younger players to continue the club's upward path. According to Head Coach Jared Moore, a major key to success this year was a Miami Rugby Alumni Association-sponsored weekend training clinic in October with U.S. Eagles forwards coach Marty Wiggins. Following the fall season, the coaching staff led indoor workouts on campus twice a week throughout the winter to build fitness and prepare for the spring season. In addition, club members traveled to Saturday sessions in West Chester, OH with the professional athletic training company, Adrenaline Sports and Fitness. The Miami Rugby Alumni Association funded these fitness sessions which were provided at a heavily discounted cost by owner and MU grad, Tony Poggiali.

The club's spring season was a huge success, with an A-side record of 6-1. The season was shorter than expected: the opening two-game weekend (2/28-3/1) in which Miami was to face D2 powerhouse East Carolina University and Kutztown University, a top D1 side (ranked #5) was canceled due to a late-winter storm in Greenville, NC. After spring break, the season commenced with strong wins against Ball State (A-side 63-8, B-side 65-0) and D1 Notre Dame (A-side 39-3, B-side 29-26). The only A-side loss came at the hands of Purdue (13-10) in a shortened 60 minute match in the Nash Bash tournament; this was followed by a solid tournament win against Michigan (22-10). In preparation for the National Championship, one of the club's most important tests was against Ohio State. Significantly, the A-side came away with its first victory against OSU in more than a decade (15-0), and the B-side made it a sweep, winning 50-17. This was followed by the "Mud Pig" tournament, with the Miami B's winning all of their matches against A-sides (Wright State 12-10, Marion 22-5, and Wittenberg 46-0). The B-side will also be competing in the Ohio Classic tournament (4/25-4/26) in Columbus.

On April 17, the club traveled to Sanford, FL to continue its drive to the National Championship in the Sweet 16 playoffs (2 teams each from the Northeast, Midwest, South, Southern California, West regions; 3 each from the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific regions). Miami outclassed East Carolina University in its first playoff match (36-10). The following day, Miami crushed U. of Northern Colorado (50-7), qualifying it for the Final 4 National D2 Championship (Miami, Wisconsin, Middlebury, Georgetown) that will be held in Palo Alto, CA on the weekend of May 1-2 (details inside). Congratulations and good luck to the players, Head Coach Jared Moore, and Assistant Coaches Tim Williams, Bill Griffes, and Bob Deck. Two more wins brings Miami its first National Championship!

MIAMI RUGBY CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY

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Old Boys Weekend 2008 – 40th Anniversary



More than 120 Miami rugby alumni descended on Oxford to celebrate the club's 40th anniversary. It all started on Friday night, with informal gatherings uptown, where old teammates met to reacquaint themselves and catch up on what had been going on in each others lives. The night was filled with emotion and great fun, with some older alumni meeting again for the first time in more than 30 years.

After a late night, about 40 hearty souls roused themselves out of bed the following Saturday morning to attend the Annual General Meeting of the MURFC Alumni Association, chaired by President Mike Coco. The Alumni Association's mission, progress, and finances were discussed, and plans for the future were made. An exciting new direction that was decided upon was the formation of a Tours Committee, which will work to find ways to plan and finance domestic and/or overseas touring, primarily for the University sides, but also possibly for Old Boys.

By noon on Saturday, the crowd had started to gather at Ditmer Field, and a spirited match of touch rugby was played by oldsters, while the younger Old Boys warmed up for the main event. The Old Boys A-side, togged out in matching 40th anniversary jerseys, took the field against Miami's A-side in what proved to be a closely contested match. It was a highly entertaining battle, with the youngsters prevailing over the young Old Boys by a score of 32-29. Following this match, a second, older group of Old Boys took the field against Miami's B's. Miami legends from the 80's and the 70's did their best to regain honor for the alumni, but fell short by a score of 32-22. In a third abbreviated match, the oldest alumni (some well past 50) attempted to relive past glory against Miami's C's. Sadly, age and treachery could not overcome youth and speed, and the youngsters scored many tries to a single Old Boys try, despite a final lineup of 21 Old Boys. The good news, though, was that for the first time in almost 30 years, Miami is fielding 3 sides, and the Old Boys did their best (willingly or unwillingly) to build the youngest players' confidence. The club's wins over the alumni would prove to be a taste of what was to come for their fall season...

Following the matches, a superbly organized banquet program commenced at the Isaac Walton Lodge, with a large tent set up outside the lodge to accommodate the crowd of more than 200. A first-rate catered barbecue was served, and prior to and during dinner, slides from the club's history were projected at the front of the hall, and memorabilia were displayed, providing a sense of our history and memories over the years. A silent auction of game jerseys and articles contributed by alumni was also ongoing. After dinner, banquet speakers Steve Seilkop (founding member, Captain '70-'74), Bill Cotton (Coach '76-'79), and Roger Mazzerella (BGSU rival for 40 years) recounted their own versions of the lore of Miami Rugby, and a video of the club's first home match was shown. The winners of game jersey auction were announced, and awards for play and volunteer efforts were given. Top bidders in the game jersey auction were Steve Williams (Captain of '84 Final Four Team), and Mike Harrington (founding member, '72, '74). Overall, the silent auction netted the Alumni Association more than \$7,000. Mark your calendars:

Next Old Boys: Saturday, September 12, 2009

2008 Old Boys Weekend Awards

Old Boy MVP: Dike Ajiri

Young Boy MVP: Kenny Thompson

Doug Edwards Memorial Award: Jared Moore

Lionel Young Memorial Scholarship: Mark Thompson

Doug Edwards Memorial Scholarship: Alex Megura

Outstanding Young Boy Volunteer: Luke Markovich

Outstanding Old Boys Volunteer: Nancy Pruitt Harrington

Tim Kehoe Award: Charlie Howard

Steve Smith Scarlet A Award: John Lyons

Honorary Old Boy: Tim Williams

FINAL FOUR FUNDRAISER



April 21, 2009

Dear Miami Old Boys & Supporters:

It hardly seems possible that 25 years have passed since the 1984 National Collegiate Championship was held in Carmel, California. I was fortunate enough to be a member of the squad that finished fourth in the nation in 1984. It was a very exciting time and stories of the tournament have circulated for years. Some of those stories are even true! We played some excellent rugby that year and overcame some significant adversity to win the Midwest Championship on a muddy weekend in Muncie, Indiana. When I think back about the nationals, I recall how competitive we were, but ultimately, we were not a complete team. Our



strength came from our forwards and from our coach, Doug Edwards. I never would have guessed it would take 25 years for Miami to go back. Of course there have been many good teams and great players, but the club has not achieved its prior level of competition....until now.

In the last two years the team has put together a group of coaches and set up a network of coaching support, locally and with the use of national programs that has helped the team regain its swagger. This is evidenced by our quickly approaching trip to Palo Alto, CA for a chance at a national championship. Of course the team's accomplishments are a result of the players own hard work, and desire to win, but without the support of the coaching arranged and supported by the Miami Rugby Alumni Association the successes would not have been realized. Our coaches have had to make significant personal sacrifices to make it work. Recognizing the advancements directly related to the improved coaching, the alumni association has dedicated itself to the support of persons and clinics that help the team progress in systematic ways. Support for these programs is costly as is club travel for playoff matches. Changes to the game, to the unions and to the travel make it completely beyond the reach of student players to carry the burden alone. We are now in a position to provide the kind of fully encompassing support that our club has never had.

The club continues to collect dues, fundraise and seek funding from the university in order to pay the day-to-day operational costs of the club, including regular season travel. This spring, the students also shouldered the cost of travel to Florida for the Sweet Sixteen. The catch to our success in winning through the Sweet Sixteen is that the club now needs \$22,000 to fund their trip to the final four.

The alumni association has set a goal of raising \$6,600 (30%) of the \$22,000 needed for this once in a lifetime chance for the players to compete for a national championship. Although we have raised over \$1,000 of that goal we are still far from the goal. Donating using the enclosed envelope or at www.murugby.com in the next seven days will help us achieve our goal. I encourage you to think about the lessons you gained from your rugby experience that apply to so many areas of life. Perhaps, like me, you see that we can no longer watch from a distance, because no one wants to wait another 25 years to reach this level of play again.

Very truly yours,
B. Scott Skillman, '84

Fellow Ruggers: Please consider a donation towards our \$6,600 goal to assist in covering the club's travel expenses to the Final Four. As Scott described from his experience, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the players and Miami Rugby. The examples to the right provide some guidance on the type and amount of costs we are attempting to cover. Perhaps you could sponsor a team dinner along with an old teammate. Or challenge your fellow backline teammates to sponsor a van. Better yet, insist that your fellow tight-five players cover all four nights of one hotel room (that's only \$75 per forward!). Please use the enclosed envelope or go to www.murugby.com to donate. Donations are tax-deductible as charitable contributions and 100% of donations given towards the Final Four will spent covering the players' direct expenses. Thank you for your continued support! - Mike Coco, '97

- Example Donation Levels**
- \$100 pays for one hotel room for one night for four players
 - \$150 pays for gas for one van for the entire trip
 - \$200 sponsors a student needing financial assistance for this trip
 - \$300 pays for a team lunch
 - \$400 pays for a team dinner
 - \$460 pays for one player's round trip flight
 - \$650 pays for one 15 passenger van for the entire trip

FINAL FOUR WEEKEND INFORMATION

Friday, May 1

10:00 am: Women's D2 Stonehill College vs. Delaware - F2
 11:30 am: Women's D2 Washington St. vs. Shippensburg - F2
 1:00 pm: Men's D2 Georgetown vs. Middlebury - Field 2
 1:00 pm: Women's D1 Stanford vs. Brown - Steuber
 2:30 pm: Men's D2 **MIAMI** vs. Un. Of Wisconsin - Field 2
 3:00 pm: Women's D1 Navy vs. Penn State - Steuber
 5:00 pm: Men's D1 BYU vs. San Diego State - Steuber
 7:00 pm: Men's D1 Cal Berkley vs. Army - Steuber

Saturday, May 2

1:00 pm: Division 2 Women's Championship
 3:00 pm: Division 2 Men's Championship
 5:00 pm: Division 1 Women's Championship
 7:00 pm: Division 1 Men's Championship



Miami A-Side Prior to Kickoff against the Old Boys, September-09

Tickets:

Only available at the gate; \$15 per adult; \$5 per student/military with ID

Hotel:

Fairfield Inn & Suites

[555 Skyway Road, San Carlos, CA 94070](http://www.fairfieldinn.com)

Phone: 650-631-0777

Discounted Rate: \$89.00+Taxes (Mention "USA Rugby")

General Amenities: Free deluxe continental breakfast offered each morning. Hotel is also within walking distance other restaurants and local shopping. Additional amenities include free high speed internet access and wireless internet, heated outdoor pool, whirlpool, fitness center and business center onsite.

Distances To: Stanford = 10 mi.; San Francisco Airport = 12 mi.; San Jose Airport = 24 mi; Oakland Airport = 28 mi.

Directions from San Jose International Airport to Stanford University:

- Coming out of the airport, take Highway 101 North.
- You will be on 101 for about 14 miles.
- Take the Embarcadero Road West exit and follow Embarcadero west to El Camino Real (approximately 2 miles).
- Embarcadero Road changes to Galvez Street as it crosses El Camino Real.
- Stay on Galvez Street as it enters the campus.
- Turn left on Nelson Road (first left immediately past football stadium).
- You will dead- end in the Varsity parking lot.
- Steuber Field is on the far side of Sunken Diamond Baseball Field.

Directions from San Francisco International Airport to Stanford University:

- Coming out of the airport, take Highway 101 South.
- You will be on 101 for about 20 miles.
- Take the Embarcadero West exit and follow Embarcadero west to El Camino Real (approximately 2 miles).
- Embarcadero changes its name to Galvez as it crosses El Camino Real.
- Stay on Galvez as it enters the campus.
- Turn left on Nelson Road (first left immediately past football stadium).
- You will dead-end in the Varsity parking lot.
- Steuber Field is on the far side of Sunken Diamond Baseball Field.



40th Anniversary Images



THEY STARTED IT ALL - Old Boys from 1968-1975: Sitting L-R, Dave Kirchner, Bill Hansel (founding member), Mike Lindner; Kneeling L-R, Marc Hirth, Steve Gustin, Tom Barney, Chris Hines, Kevin Iler, Doug French, Charlie Howard, Dave Heidel; Standing L-R, Bob Lyon (founding member), Bill Griffes, Ken Glassmeyer, Dave Weber (partially hidden), Itchy Penman, Greg Oberlin, Ron Pruitt, Jeff Torrence, John Miller, Tim Butler, Woody Fox, Rick Lamb, Tom Peate, Mike Harrington (founding member), Chuck Kikta, Brian Svegl, Mike Davis, Sam Moser, Steve Seilkop (founding member), Alan Weber (photo courtesy of Tim Butler)



A-side: Dike Ajiri on the move



B-side: John Trauth draws a crowd



C-side: Three of these Old Boys are over 55



Everyone was well fed at the Banquet



Standing room only for the Banquet Program



Barb Edwards, Mother Miami Rugby



Bill Cotton awards a bear that sings the Haka



Jared Moore (right) receiving Doug Edwards Memorial Award from Mike Coco

Miami Rugby Alumni Association
P.O. Box 1603
Traverse City, MI 49685
USA



Miami advances the ball in its 15-0 A-side victory over Ohio State, April 4, 2009.

Contact Us

Membership: Contributions of \$50 or more per year qualify you as a member of the Miami Rugby Alumni Association. Mail them to Mike Coco, P.O. Box 1603, Traverse City, MI 49685, use the enclosed envelope. or pay via PayPal at www.murugby.com

Gain Line News: If you have a story, picture, or other information that you'd like to contribute, contact Steve Seilkop, 3942 Rives Chapel Rd., Siler City, NC 27344 (seilkop@earthlink.net)

List Serve: Get the latest news. To join our email list serve, send an email to: murugby-subscribe@yahoogroups.com