

# THE GAIN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE

MIAMI UNIVERSITY MEN'S RUGBY CLUB ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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## Old Boys Weekend 2009 (Details Inside)

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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.



## Old Boys Weekend 2009 Wrapup

For the 37th straight year, Miami rugby held its traditional Old Boys weekend on September 11-13, with rugby alumni from around the country meeting in Oxford to renew old friendships and make new ones with the current crop of Miami rugby players. As usual, the headline event of the weekend was the competition between the Old Boys and the current Miami players (Young Boys) on the pitch. The following accounts were provided by a Young Boy (MURFC president David Vargo, '11), and an old Old Boy (Steve Seilkop, '72 & '74).

**Young Boys Perspective - Match Reports from David Vargo:** Last year, at the celebration of Miami's rugby's 40th anniversary, the Old Boys were defeated by Miami's A-side 35-32. That game kick-started a memorable season for the Miami collegiate team, culminating in a trip to the Final 4 Division 2 championship in California in May, 2009. Although there were fewer Alumni in attendance this year, those that showed up were determined to avenge last year's loss.

In the first game of the day with Miami's "A" side, the Old Boys immediately erased any doubts about their competitiveness, quickly scoring a try on the weak side in the first 10 minutes. The Young Boys, shaken but not scared, answered back a few minutes later with a try of their own. The game looked to be a promising one, until more weak side plays from the Alumni resulted in several more tries. The Young Boys were lucky to make it to halftime down by only 20-5

The second half did not start out well for the Young Boys, with the Old Boys' fullback scoring 3 tries in the first 15 minutes. The rest of the half was followed by more big plays from the Alumni, and they accomplished their goal, beating the current Miami squad 44-15. (Alumni- 7 tries and 3 conversion; Miami A side- 3 tries). The Alumni dominated the rucks and scrums, and showed their superior skill throughout the game. It was evident that the Alumni did not just want to win, but wanted to send a message. This message was sent when "Man of the Match" (3 year running) Dike Ajiri, broke several tackles on an inspiring run to score a try with no time left, and converted his own try with a perfect drop kick.

The second game of the day proved to be a much better match for the viewers. A current Miami "B" side filled with mostly new players stepped out on the field for their second time to go against the more skilled, crafty Alumni. The first half was filled with big hits and some exciting runs. Unlike the previous game, the current Miami squad jumped out to a 7-0 lead. The new players were eager to prove that they had the ability to hang with the veterans. The second half was much like the first, with both sides having moments of momentum and big plays. Although the Alumni dominated with superior rucking and passing, the young Miami squad was able to use big runs and support to beat the Alumni. It was the combination of big runs and fitness, which allowed the Miami "B" side to finish off the Alumni and hold onto a 24-15 win. ( Alumni - 3 tries.....Miami B side - 4 tries and 2 conversions).

**Old Boys Perspective from Steve Seilkop:** Thanks go to David for the excellent accounts of the matches, but there are some additional points I thought worth mentioning. Much of the success of the Old Boys' this year was due to a larger number of recently graduated alumni players than in previous years. This is a great trend, which I hope continues into the future. These young legs brought more snap into the Old Boys' game, and the rugby skills on display were quite impressive. It was also clear that several of the older veterans had made a serious commitment to training for the match; for the most part they also exercised admirable restraint on Friday night, despite the best efforts of Steve "Pookie" Williams to provide everyone with Mexican libations.

In my view, David was perhaps a bit too deferential in his treatment of the Old Boys, who were operating with a few advantages that he didn't mention, including their use of free substitution and some players of questionable Miami lineage. In reality, in the A-side match the Young Boys were camped out in the Old Boys half of the field for much of the second half, and they were looking dangerous. Under modest restrictions on the Old Boys' substitutions and roster, the Young Boys' fitness might well have prevailed over "age and treachery" to produce a closer outcome. Overall, I was quite impressed with both Miami sides in terms of talent, fitness, and aggressiveness. The coaches are doing a great job with these kids, who are doing extremely well this year (see page 3).

Once again, the weekend was a high point in my year. Thanks go to those who set up the tents and chairs and did cleanup at the pitch, to the Griffes' for their preparation of the barbecue dinner, and to all who attended. I'm hoping that next year (September 11, 2010) we'll see many of you who missed out on this year's fun.



### 2009 Award Winners (L-R)

#### Young Boys Volunteer

Kenny Thompson

#### Doug Edwards Memorial Scholarship

Adam Sigrist

#### Tim Kehoe Award

Steve Seilkop

#### Old Boys MVP

Dike Ajiri

#### Young Boys MVP

Vincent Juron

#### Doug Edwards Memorial Award

Dan Lemoine, Sr.

#### Old Boys Volunteer

Craig Scheiderer

### MU Men's Rugby Alumni Association News

The Annual General Meeting of the MUM RFC AA was held as part of Old Boys Weekend on September 12, 2009. Updates on current activities that were discussed:

**Coaching:** We are currently financially supporting the expenses of three coaches at a cost of approximately \$13,000/year. Head Coach Jared Moore was named MU Club Sports Coach of the Year.

**Fitness Training:** Over the past year we provided the professional fitness training during the fall and winter at a cost of \$2,800.

**Player Housing:** We own a house that is being rented to 4 rugby players at a break-even rate that covers the mortgage and maintenance costs.

**Support of National Championship Expenses:** Alumni donations to defray travel expenses (hotels, food, airfare, local transport) associated the club's Final 4 trip to California amounted to >\$14,000! The University also provided ~\$6,000. This allowed players to travel to Florida and California at a personal cost of only \$150 each.

**MU Women's Rugby Alumni:** The idea of eliminating "Men's" from our Association title was discussed, thereby allowing the formation of an overall MU Rugby Alumni Association including both men and women. For the immediate future, we will remain a "Men's" Association, but will take a first step by extending an invitation to the women to play their alumni match during Old Boys Weekend.

**National Events:** The hosting of a Sweet 16 national collegiate tournament is being considered to elevate the visibility and stature of Miami rugby. This event would be run by the alumni (not the University club). A committee headed by Kevin Iler was formed to study the feasibility of hosting the event.

### MU RFC News

#### A-side Posts 6-2Record Through 10/17

8/29	Notre Dame	20-16 (W)
9/5	Cincinnati Wolfhounds D3	40-34 (W)
9/12	Old Boys	44-15 (L)
9/19	Kent State	59-0 (W)
9/26	Xavier	22-5 (W)
10/3	Ohio U.	41-0 (W)
10/10	U. of Cincinnati	27-5 (W)
10/17	U. of Dayton	29-30 (L)
10/31-11/1	Midwest Tourney	(Away)
11/14-15	Midwest Tourney Finals (Elkhart, IN)	

### International Rugby News

At its recent meeting in Copenhagen, the International Olympic Committee announced that rugby would be returning to the Olympics in 2016 and 2020. 15-a-side rugby was played at 4 Olympics between 1900 and 1924. When rugby returns in 2016, the sevens format will be employed, as it conducive to television coverage, sponsorship, and (according to some) a higher degree of excitement for spectators and fans.

### Farewell Letter from Departing MU RFC Captain Dan LeMoine

**Editor's Note:** *The following letter from Dan LeMoine, who graduated after the 2009 run to the National Final 4, attests to the intensity of his rugby experience at Miami, and provides inspiration for the MUM RFC AA to continue to help in making such experiences possible.*

Miami Rugby,

I felt the need, as part of my past captaincy and as your friend, to thank all of you for being a part of the closest team I've ever played with. The last four years we have went from a club with little to no reputable leadership and no direction, to a club that I am SO proud to say that I played for. Our legendary antics off the field, to the blowouts of teams twice our size and rank, to the excruciating loss in California all created an experience for me that I will no doubt cherish for the rest of my life. I apologize if I let any one of you down in anyway along our journey, and I take the weight of our short comings in California more personal than you know. I pray that I led bravely, and never asked anything of anyone that I myself was not willing to give.

I KNOW that you guys have what it takes to make it back to California and win a national title, there is no doubt in my mind about it. It purely is a matter of **heart and attitude**. This past season we were not always the most talented team or the fastest team, but we were ALWAYS a *team* in the purest meaning of the word (and always the best looking team, if I can say so myself). I encourage all of you not to sweat the small stuff, check your attitude before every training and game, respect the coaches, do not complain, give maximum effort every run, ruck, maul, set piece, etc. and enjoy the experiences for what they are. Leave nothing on that pitch after 80 minutes, because when the final whistle blows it is over.

"In our country, true teams rarely exist; social barriers and personal ambitions have reduced athletes to dissolute cliques or individuals thrown together for mutual profit. Yet these [strappingly handsome Miami] rugby players, with their muddied, cracked bodies, are struggling to hold onto a sense of humanity that we in America have lost and are unlikely to regain. The game may only be to move a ball forward on a dirt field, but the task can be accomplished with an unshackled joy and its memories will be a permanent delight. The men who play on that rugby field are more alive than too many of us will ever be. The foolish emptiness we think we perceive in their existence is only our own."

For a long time I could not understand why anyone would not be absolutely in love with this sport, allowing it to transcend into all areas of daily life; and in some ways I still don't understand how someone could not feel the same way about it that I do, but thats okay. I have realized that the moments that have made this sport and our team so profound to me, are not defined by the tic marks in the Wins and Losses categories or our national rank, but the bonds made on and off the field that few can understand and that words can not give due justice to. Whether in victory or defeat, aim to glorify whatever or whomever it is that you are playing this game for. Wins or loses, being on the field with you men has been a true honor.

Dan LeMoine



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



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## Old Boys Weekend 2009 Participants



Don't Miss Out on the Next Old Boys Weekend: September 10-12, 2010

### 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 donate via PayPal at [www.murugby.com](http://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](mailto:seilkop@earthlink.net))

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