MAACO BOWL Las Vegas 2011

By Michel Bourgeau, Varsity B Coordinator

IT WAS LIKE DÉJÀ VU all over again. They say: “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.” It was hard to keep it quiet this time around with such a great class of senior football student-athletes representing our university.

The word is out, and you can ask the Arizona State football team...they didn't really have a chance. The Broncos played the 20th MAACO Bowl with the attitude of an upset, caged animal. Senior running back Doug Martin ran the opening kickoff in for a Bronco score and the rest of the MAACO Bowl game was a perfect way to close the books on the 2011 season.

Many Varsity B members made the trek to Las Vegas in support of the Bronco football team. It was a great way to show support for such a tremendous group of student-athletes, while having an epic time in Vegas.

The social hosted by the Varsity B Club at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino was well attended, and those who were there enjoyed meeting new Boise State athletic director, Mark Coyle. Coyle was not scheduled to start until January 5th, 2012, but he felt that it was important to meet with some of the alumni student-athletes attending the MAACO.

We hope to see more of you in 2012!

– It is a great time to be Bronco!
MAACO Bowl Fun – Las Vegas

Old guard wishes the young gun well. From left to right, Varsity B coordinator Michel Bourgeau (80-83), Tom Spadafore (79-80), David Hughes (77-80), and Doug Scott (76-79) wish current Bronco player Dillon Lukehart (son of former Bronco Dan Lukehart) good luck at Maaco Bowl Las Vegas.

Bronco cheerleaders pose for the loud and proud Varsity B section at Sam Boyd Stadium.

December 2011 Graduation—Welcome to the Varsity B!

Winners of the Varsity B honorary captain award which were voted by the members of the graduation class.
The male and female student-athlete graduates who best represent the spirit of Bronco Athletics were Jarrell Root, football (left) and Mele Vaisima, track & field (right).

FALL 2011

LIFE AFTER BOISE STATE?
Life is good. I've been able to scratch out a comfortable lifestyle with what I do. Can't say that what I learned at Boise State prepared me for the path my life has taken, but I can definitely attribute my determination to succeed in the business world to those days in the trenches as a student athlete.

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BOISE STATE?
The people and culture of the school, along with the surrounding community of Treasure Valley.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY WATCHING?
Not a major sports buff.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB?
I think it has been a fantastic organization; the Varsity B club has come a long ways. It has allowed those of us who live outside of Idaho or even just away from Boise to maintain relations with the school, rekindle contact with old friends and continue to experience the Bronco Pride.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BOISE STATE BRONCO?
Once a Bronco, always a Bronco and we bleed Blue & Orange!

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Winners of the Varsity B honorary captain award which were voted by the members of the graduation class. The male and female student-athlete graduates who best represent the spirit of Bronco Athletics were Jarrell Root, football [left] and Mele Vaisima, track & field [right].
LYLE SMITH knew what he was doing—not only on the field, but behind a desk. Smith, the “grandfather of Bronco football,” had retired from coaching after the 1967 season. He was the new athletic director for the school that had morphed from Boise Junior College to Boise College to Boise State College. He needed a coach to lead the Broncos into the four-year era. Smith chose Tony Knap, a respected offensive mind he had known for 30 years. Knap had led Utah State to a 25-14-1 record in four seasons (1963-66) before taking a job with the B.C. Lions in the Canadian Football League.

Knap had to reinvent the program with a new Boise State identity in 1968. The Broncos had about 15 or 20 players who, in effect, transferred from Boise Junior College to play four-year football. Knap pieced them together with a wave of newcomers to craft an 8-2 record in that first season, with the signature win coming against the first Big Sky Conference school that agreed to play the Broncos in Boise, Idaho State.

By 1970, Knap’s high-scoring offense had fostered an energized new fan base conference entry into the Big Sky, and the current Bronco Stadium opened with ambitious plans for the future of the program (although no one could have envisioned what it has become). Knap led Boise State into its first postseason game in 1971, when the Broncos rallied past Chico State 32-28 at the Camellia Bowl in Sacramento.

Nothing symbolized Knap’s “Silver Fox” nickname more than a couple games at the height of his tenure. In 1972, Knap’s pass-happy offense was well-established. The Bronco defense was even better, allowing 10.7 points a game. Knap had one of the top aerial attacks in Division II. Knap knew what Nevada (then Nevada-Reno) was thinking when the Wolf Pack came into Bronco Stadium in 1972. What did the Broncos do? They ran the ball. Then they ran some more. At the end of the balmy October night, Boise State had rushed for 516 yards in a 56-19 pasting of the Pack!

That was not a one-time occurrence. In 1973, Montana came to town while the Broncos were again racking up big numbers in the passing game, as Jim McMillan and Ron Autele split time at quarterback the way they did the season before. Knap must have read the Grizzlies’ minds, too, because the Broncos shocked them with 521 yards on the ground. The 55-7 victory that night clinched the first of Boise State’s three straight Big Sky championships. Those ambushes on Montana and Nevada remain the top two team rushing performances in Bronco history.

Still, the era was stamped with Knap’s innovative pass-first offense that was way ahead of its time. In 1974, Boise State averaged 334.9 passing yards, a record that stood until Ryan Dinwiddie’s senior year 29 years later. And the Broncos amassed 516.9 yards a game in total offense in 1974—that mark lasted 36 years, until last season. Knap went 71-19-1 during his entertaining eight seasons at Boise State.

It was with great sadness that we marked the passing of Knap in September at the age of 96. Here’s a story I’ve heard many times, first when I was the stadium announcer in 1977. Knap had returned to Bronco Stadium that season for the first time as head coach at UNLV, and his Rebels were being routed by his old team, 45-14. “Late in the game with the Broncos’ big lead, Tony was behind his players’ bench, quietly limping back and forth on the track,” one Boise State fan recalls. “The stadium was quiet. My seats were in Section 7 behind the UNLV bench and we had a big voice fan in our section. Big voice fan: ‘Hey Tony.’ Tony stopped, looked up. Big voice fan: ‘We still love you.’ Everyone in Section 7 stood up and let out a loud affirmation.”
The Varsity B’s mission is to encourage and promote the heritage, traditions, and success of Boise State student-athletes and Boise State athletics for all Broncos; to honor the legacy, and preserve the qualities that represent being a Boise State Bronco.

Bronco seniors and former Capital HS standouts Jarrel Root and Kyle Efaw ham it up with former Bronco and long time Capital HS football coach Steve Vogel (center) at the Varsity B football alumni BBQ.

Former Bronco all time great quarterback Jim McMillan shares a laugh with current all time great quarterback Kellen Moore at the Varsity B football alumni BBQ.

The Varsity B section was loud and proud at the opening game of the 2011 season. The Georgia Dome in Atlanta was a great place to host a party for the Broncos!

Varsity B honorary captain Avi Rofe (75-76) made a return to Bronco Stadium for the Tulsa game. Avi, nicknamed the “Tel Aviv Toe” for his kicking prowess, made a point to check in with Coach Lyle Smith.
Former Bronco volleyball alums Hilary Meek and Christina Moore-Ward make the Varsity B pitch to the Bronco volleyball team before practice.

Homecoming Varsity B captain and former Bronco volleyball star Rhonda Sprague was thrilled to be recognized at the Bronco home volleyball match vs. Wyoming.

Bronco soccer alum, Libby Johnson, was recognized before the start of the New Mexico game on Homecoming weekend – Way to go Libby!

Former Bronco volleyball alums Hilary Meek and Christina Moore-Ward make the Varsity B pitch to the Bronco volleyball team before practice.
The Varsity B hits the road for the Colorado State game in Fort Collins. The Varsity B tailgate was hosted by local Broncos Paul Coffman, Frank Robinson and Kirk Strawser.

Former Broncos Rolly Woolsey, Dave Williams and Dave Giacomazzo had a great time tailgating at the UNLV game.

Send your photos and info to: Michel Bourgeau, Varsity B Club Coordinator
Varsity B Club • 1910 University Dr., Boise, ID 83725-1020
michelbourgeau@boisestate.edu 208-426-5440

FALL 2011

PAGE 7
The pre-tournament social was well attended. Coach Lyle Smith never misses a chance to meet up with former Broncos.

**2011 Varsity B Gus Urresti Golf Scramble**

**THIS FALL** the Varsity B could not resist scheduling the annual Varsity B Gus Urresti golf scramble on the eve of the rematch with Nevada. The weather was more agreeable in the beginning of October rather than the traditional homecoming weekend, which was October 22nd. The Gus Urresti Golf Scramble was another success with over $15,000 raised for scholarships.

With over 140 participants, lots of chorizos and inspiring pre-game speeches by Coach Lyle Smith and Coach Pete, the field of golfers did their best to push the rules and mulligans to the limit. It was the perfect weekend; many prizes were won, and more importantly the Broncos took care of the Wolfpack, leaving no question that a Bronco is definitely higher on the food chain.

Be sure to make a point of participating in the 2012 Varsity B Gus Urresti Golf scramble. Former Bronco, Rich Urresti, chairman of the Varsity B Gus Urresti golf scramble, will make sure you have a memorable day! – Go Broncos!

Bart Hendricks, Dayton Hendricks and Jeff Edwards made a Blue and Orange fashion statement.

Abe Kealoha, Rocky Lima and Steve Fisher had a fabulous time.

Gus Urresti golf scramble chairman Rich Urresti congratulates third-place team members Ryan Wynterswyk, Darrin Lyle and Tim Brady on winning the coveted “Chinstrap award”.

The pre-tournament social was well attended. Coach Lyle Smith never misses a chance to meet up with former Broncos.
Catching up with…
GREG AND DONA JO SABALA
GREG SABALA – FOOTBALL 1990-1993
DONA JO (STILLWAUGH) SABALA – MANE LINE 1990-1993

HOMETOWN: (where did you grow up and where do you live?)
Dona Jo – Boise, ID (Meridian High School 1990 Grad)
Greg – Meridian, ID (Meridian High School 1989 Grad)

We currently live in Meridian, ID

DEGREES: Dona Jo – Bachelor of Business Administration.
Greg – Bachelor of Arts - Communication.

FAMILY: 2 boys – Brennen, 10 & Donavon, 8.

JOB: Dona Jo–Works for Air Van (The Official Mover of the Broncos) - 21 years.
Greg – Vice President of National Brokerage – 14 years.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A STUDENT: Greg & DJ–Graduation. Completing the goal of graduating.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A BOISE STATE STUDENT-ATHLETE: DJ–1993, taking First Place in the NCAA Dance Competition with the Mane Line Dancers. Also, all the great friends that I made.

Greg–Just being with the guys. Meetings, work outs and living together made it seem as if I had 100 brothers. BSU is an extended family.

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS:
Had a Newfoundland dog - Kujo. Enjoyed walks through campus and to the river.

THOUGHTS ON COACHES:
Boise State has always been a place that takes maybe not the most highly recruited kids and turns them into competitors. That’s how I was, not recruited heavily but my coaches got me to play at my full potential and squeezed every last ounce of talent out of me.

HOW HAS THE UNIVERSITY AND ATHLETICS CHANGED SINCE YOU LEFT? Greg–Football is as an entirely different level. They currently expect to win against any competitor. It makes me proud to say I played in the past.

LIFE AFTER BOISE STATE? We were married in 1998 and still reside in Meridian. We enjoy activities with our two boys and still make going to the BSU football games a part of our lives. Camping and fishing as a family are two of our favorite activities.

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BOISE STATE? The growth of the university and athletics programs is amazing to see in our short time since graduation.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY WATCHING? Basketball. That is our youngest son’s favorite BSU activity.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB? We appreciate what the Varsity B Club does for athletes of the past. It makes us feel more attached to the athletics of today and the university.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BOISE STATE BRONCO? We are proud of what we accomplished in the past but are astounded to see the new heights they have taken the programs. We know there are a lot of demands on a student athletes and are amazed to see the high standards in both academics and athletics.
Broncos Giving Thanks
By Matt Strohfus (Football 1998-2002)

IN THE SPIRIT of the holiday season, this past Thanksgiving the Varsity B wanted to help the needy families that have supported the former and current student athletes throughout the years. With this concept in mind, “Broncos Giving Thanks” was born. The concept was simple but the impact was immense.

In conjunction with donations, volunteers, the Salvation Army, and student athlete participation the Varsity B invited and received 40 families to the women’s basketball game at Taco Bell Arena on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. They were able to receive a pre-game meal, enjoy the game, and then following the BSU win, each family was given a basket of everything they needed to cook a turkey dinner for their family later that week. The basket, which became known as “Turkeys Bleed Blue and Orange”, included a turkey, the baking pan, stuffing, green beans, potatoes, and a pumpkin pie.

During this event we were able to feed over 300 people and it could not have been done without the help of our current student athletes. Our Gymnastics team was a great help in passing out the baskets to the families and our Women’s Basketball team did a tremendous job in greeting and signing autographs for the families after the game. Needless to say, there were smiles all around!

The Varsity B would like to thank all of those that participated and we look forward to putting on more events like this in the future!

PS From Michel Bourgeau, Varsity B Coordinator.
“A special ‘Thanks!’ to Matt Strohfus for spearheading this effort and coordinating all the donations and volunteers. Matt’s efforts are what makes it a privilege to be a Bronco!”
Men’s Basketball Reunion

COACH LEON RICE likes to get the season started on the right foot. Rice called for a basketball alumni reunion for the 2011 homecoming weekend. It was another good call by Rice, as the Bronco alumni showed up to see the fiery Bronco basketball scrimmage, tour the new Arguinchona Basketball Complex, and re-connect with old teammates.

Boise State hall of famers Ron Austin (1968-1972) and Roberto Bergersen (1996-1999) were on hand along with many other basketball alums who were excited for Coach Rice’s second season. The meet and greet social at The Huddle Sports Grill in downtown Boise was well attended. Former coach Bus Connor enjoyed seeing the old timers like Dan Bofenkamp and Bart Chaffee.

The state of the art Arguinchona Basketball Complex showed how far Bronco basketball has come. The Bronco basketball alumni got to attend a closed pre-season scrimmage and saw a team full of hustle, and no-quit attitude. That afternoon many of the basketball alumni enjoyed some tailgating hosted by Kenny and Suz Bolton, and the Boise State vs. Air Force football game under a beautiful Boise sky.

– Go Broncos!
ATHLETES HELPING ATHLETES

BRONCO FOOTBALL COMPLEX will break ground in 2012. Football alumni are encouraged to leave a lasting legacy by sponsoring a locker in the new state of the art football locker room. – Go Broncos!

To reserve your locker contact: Michel Bourgeau, Development Officer, Boise State Athletics michelbourgeau@boisestate.edu (208) 426-5440

Thank you mybullfrog.com for sponsoring the Varsity B Club headgear