What a Fiesta!

The Fiesta Bowl was a huge coming out for the Varsity B Club. Many Varsity B members took advantage of their Varsity B membership and purchased pre-release tickets for the Fiesta Bowl in Glendale, Arizona. We had a great time at the Varsity B Fiesta Bowl tailgate in Arizona, sponsored by 7th Heaven RV. The reunion camaraderie and reminiscing between old Bronco teammates was free-flowing. Together, we witnessed a truly great moment in college football history, and a defining moment in the history of Boise State University and Boise State athletics.

The 43 to 42 overtime win over Oklahoma was a very proud moment indeed; offered by a Bronco football team which included 22 seniors who will now be crossing the threshold to the Varsity B. They will join the growing numbers of former student athletes who feel that their time as a Bronco was very special and recognize that it is a privilege to be a Bronco.

The parties were great, the game even better, and Boise State’s future is looking astounding. Go Broncos! —vb

For information on the Varsity B visit the recently updated Varsity B web site: www.broncosports.com/varsityb

Seventh Heaven RV is the official sponsor for Fall 2007 Varsity B tailgate season

Look for the 7th Heaven – Varsity B tailgate during the 2007 football season. Located in front of the Allen Noble Hall of Gallery in the Larry and Marianne Williams Plaza. Varsity B members Bob Bruce and Dan Lukehart will be expecting you.
Can’t You Hear Them Laughing Back East?

Printed in the Idaho Statesman, January 8th, 1978, page 1 Sport section article by Jim Poore, popular sport editor and sportswriter for the Idaho Statesman from 1969 to 1987

Say you’re a rather small, non-descript conference scattered throughout the sagebrush, ski slopes and grain silos of Montana, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Arizona.

You hunger for publicity, but it’s tough. No matter how hard you try to tell the world that you’re the best Division II football conference in the nation or good enough to compete in Division I basketball people in the East snicker.

Big Sky sounds like a candy bar. It sounds like John Denver’s just written another song about living in the Rockies.

When it is recognized, the Eastern press can’t help but be derisive.

Once Sports Illustrated did a piece on basketball snake pits – those arenas where, unless you come equipped with a sub-machine gun, your chances of escaping alive, much less with a basketball victory, aren’t good.

Guess who rated right up there – teams in the Big Sky, especially Weber State.

Saturday evening Post once did an article on the University of Idaho where hot pennies were thrown at the players and a group of rowdy fans once chased two referees to the dressing room.

When Idaho State knocked off UCLA in the NCAA regionals last March, Sports Illustrated trotted out references to potato farmers. It even referred to Idaho State’s boosters as “potato pancakes.”

I wonder what they’re going to do with what happened Friday night in the Boise State-Montana State game.

Late Friday night, other newspapers were clamoring for more information. The Chicago Tribune called the Associated Press and wanted to know a little more about the game that ended so strangely out here in the potato fields of Idaho.

Rick Juarez is, I’m sure, outraged. Bus Connor is probably a little relieved. And I’m sure Bill Jones is more than a little confused about what happened and probably wishing that he’d been someplace like Broken Bow, Nebraska, Friday night.

Somehow Jones put down the wrong score during the Montana State – Boise State game, crediting Boise State with points scored by the Bobcats. From that point on, the game became a chilling mindful of “what if.”

What if Boise State would have gone into a stall in the final seconds instead of sending Freddie Williams on the three-point fast break that gave the Broncos the cushion they needed for the win?

But consider for a moment this ending, one so bizarre that had it happened I would have quickly looked at the scorer’s table to make sure Rod Serling hadn’t reappeared for one last dance with the unsuspecting.

Here’s the scenario: with 10 seconds left, Montana State comes down the floor, trailing 84-82 on the scoreboard but actually holding an 84-82 lead. If the Bobcats hold the ball for 10 seconds, or take a shot and miss, the game is over and then the scoring mistake is discovered.

Montana State wins.

But with 10 seconds left Montana State takes a final shot and hits it, tying the score 84-84. The game isn’t over so they don’t stop to check the scorebook because the referees hustle them right into overtime.

In overtime, Boise State takes command and thumps the Bobcats 96-89.

Now Juarez comes bouncing off the bench, screaming his team’s been robbed. Jones adds up the score again and there is a discrepancy.

Actually then, Montana State won the game 86-82 in regulation time.

But they went ahead and played the overtime and Boise State has won 96-89 or 94-91 with the adjustment.

Who wins?

Actually, both teams have won, Montana State in regulation, Boise State in overtime. But this isn’t Lollypop Land: Somebody has to lose.

“That’s a dandy.” Said Steve Belko, the Big Sky Conference commissioner.

So, who wins?

“If they carried the ball game out into overtime to its final conclusion, Boise State would have won,” Belko said. “The game would have been official.”

Belko has a long history in basketball – he coached at Idaho State and Oregon for many years – and has seen incidents like the Montana State-Boise State mix up occur before.

“It’s too bad that it happened but it’s just like the occasional bad call from an official,” Belko said. “Everybody knows it happened but there’s really nothing you can do about it.”

Bill Jones has been Boise State’s official scorer a long time and this is the first time he’s had a problem. But what a problem!

Jones has done a good job and will undoubtedly go on doing a good job for years to come. If, that is, he can keep from meeting Rich Juarez in a dark alley just before Juarez leaves on a deer-hunting trip.

For Bus Connor, it was a tough opening night of celebration turn into a night of confrontation with everybody from Juarez, to the media and to the doubts about what happened had Boise State gone into a stall with a lead they never really had.

For Juarez, Friday night was probably not a night of easy sleep.

But it’s over. Belko said there’s really nothing that can be done.

About the only thing left is to watch Sports Illustrated because, shudder, they have already said they’re interested in what went on. —vb
A visit with Boise State Track and Field Legend: Ed Jacoby

HOMETOWN: (where did you grow up and where do you live?) I currently live right outside of Grangeville, Idaho, right by the south Fork of the Clearwater. I grew up in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

FAMILY: My wife Jean of 48 years – son Jake, coaching at U of Louisville, daughter, Lorrie, nurse at St. Alphonsus in Boise, daughter Karla, real estate sales person in Boise and seven grandkids.

JOB: After retiring from Boise State in 1996, I built my house here, and then I was asked by Northern Arizona to help with their athletes. Even now the track is special, as I have a granddaughter competing there as a high school athlete.

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS: The track at Bronco stadium. I spent so much time there working with our athletes, there were many and there were many good ones. Spending time with the athletes at the track was my favorite thing to do and my favorite place to be. It was here that both my son Jake and daughter Karla became Idaho State Champions. They later competed in the stadium as Boise State Broncos. Even now the track is special, as I have a granddaughter competing there as a high school athlete.

THOUGHTS ON STUDENT-ATHLETES: There are too many to remember. However, what has been very meaningful to me over the years is the number of my former student-athletes that have gone into teaching or coaching. I am very proud of the fact that they have chosen that career path, because to me it means that at some point along the way I may have had an influence which resulted in their career choice. Now many of my former student-athletes are influencing many young people in their respective careers in education and coaching.

HOW HAS THE UNIVERSITY AND ATHLETICS CHANGED SINCE YOU LEFT? To be honest, I never thought that Boise State would achieve the national attention that it is getting today. What really moved our track and field program ahead was, believe it or not, hosting the first and second rounds of the NCAA men’s basketball tournament. This helped put Boise, and Boise State on the map. We were able to approach better track and field recruits that otherwise would have never even paid attention to us. Hosting the NCAA Nationals helped to open the flood gates for us as far as the access to even better recruits who felt that Boise State University was a Track and Field school and track and field destination.

LIFE AFTER BOISE STATE? I am enjoying my work with Tartan Tracks. I am traveling a lot and staying in touch with all my track and field friends who are coaching all around the country. In fact, I was traveling in Oklahoma recently and got stopped by an Oklahoma State Trooper who, after looking at my driver’s license, was not sure if he should let me go or jail me for having worked at Boise State University. The “game” BSU versus Oklahoma was the best I ever witnessed. When I am home, I love to fish and hunt.

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BOISE STATE? All the great coaches that worked at Boise State, guys like Mike Young, Bobby Dye and Herb Criner were great to work with and consummate professionals. Our athletic department was very successful in hiring the right people for the job, even though we were a smaller school in those days.

—continued on page 9
Babe Anduiza came to Boise Junior College in 1955 and played football for Lyle Smith in 1955 and 1956. He was a hard charging tailback who ran with reckless abandon and left it all out on the field.

The former BJC standout and Varsity B member, arrived in Macon, GA for the University of Georgia’s home opener against the Boise State Broncos back in 2005. One could have knocked Babe Anduiza over with a feather. No matter direction he looked, his gaze was met with a sea of red, white and black UGA logos imprinted on everything from shirts and hats to stickers, flags and drink cups.

A lifelong BSU fan, Babe was used to seeing our familiar Bronco logo around the Treasure Valley and those of competing teams whenever he visited their home games against BSU.

What he wasn’t prepared for though, was the sheer depth and scope of the community’s support for the Bulldogs. It seemed that, quite literally, everyone and everything had the UGA logo or its mascot on it.

On the sad trip back home, Babe had a vision of how he could help Bronco fans show their team support in a more permanent manner – with the BSU Bronco logo literally carved in stone. Much like sand-blasted stones are used as monuments at the entrances to residential communities or to display address numbers, Babe envisioned the familiar blue and orange logo on similar stones in homes and businesses throughout the area.

For more information please see: www.sports-stones.com —vb
Boise State Tennis
The Birth of a Dynasty
by Greg Patton

You couldn’t start a season and establish a legacy any better than the Broncos of 1997. We had traveled down to the legendary UCLA campus to open up our season against the #1 team in the nation (and who had been undefeated at home for the past four years.) Every member of our team knew how great we could be and that this opening match for us was the juncture to put us onto the National Tennis Map for not only this season but for generations to come. Usually in the pre match meeting I address each players strategies for his particular match up, but on this date my only advice was a passionate demand that our players look their opponents in the eye with a stern look and grip their hands with a firm handshake during the team introductions at the start of the match to put the fear of God into the UCLA players. We were at UCLA for only one reason: to defeat the #1 team in the nation and to catapult our program to the heights of collegiate tennis.

From the very beginning of the match, the Bruins knew that we were not some lackeys who had driven down to Southern California in a horse driven potato cart. In collegiate tennis, we play three doubles to a pro set (first team to 8). The winner of two out of the three doubles matches receives a 1 point lead going into the 6 singles matches.

Our doubles teams split the first two doubles matches that came off the court (our #1 team of All Americans Ernesto (Punto) Diaz and Albin (Capper) Polonyi lost 8-3, while our team of freshman Joseph (Pele) Gilbert and ASU transfer Tsolak Gevorkian won 8-4). This left our #2 team of Rickard Strom and Ryan Thompson battling at 7-7 to try to gain the one point lead into singles. They eventually fell 9-7 but the match was so close and intense that it gave our entire the team a feeling that empowering feeling that “yes” we can upset this #1 team in their house.

After the doubles point, many of the large crowd of students left the match with the false sense of confidence that the match was now over. For how could Boise State win 4 out of the 6 singles and win the team match against a National Champion and #1 team in the nation.

As the collegiate tennis world realized that afternoon, don’t ever underestimate the resolve of this group of Boise State players.

Each match in the singles was a toe to toe battle of nerves and resolve. The first player off the court was #4 singles player Rico (the Fox) Strom who easily won 6-2, 6-1 with his signature scrambling ball machine accuracy. All of a sudden the team score is now tied 1-1. He was followed by another straight set victory by “Doctor” Tsolak Gevorkian who won 7-5, 6-2. Within an hour, the UCLA team lead has been lost and Boise State is now leading the #1 team in the nation 2-1 and all we need is to win two out of the next four matches to upset the supposedly invincible UCLA squad. The call went out to many of the fraternities around the Tennis Center, and before we could pronounce “Greek Fraternity House”, the crowd has surged to a large and boisterous band of Bruin fans trying to will the Bruins to withstand the Bronco onslaught.

All of the remaining four singles matches have been extended to the third set. The next two matches off were #1 Ernesto (Punto) Diaz who lost 6-2, 3-6, 7-5 and then #3 Ben (Harley) Davidson fell 3-6, 6-2, 6-4. The Bruin fans now breathe a sigh of relief for the Bruins now lead 3-2 and only need one of their two remaining players to bring home the bacon and victory.

They were to be denied, first by Bronco #3 singles player (Albin Poloni) who dug deep to scrap and claw to fight back in his match after trailing 1-6, 6-3, 2-4 (in the third set) against one of the nation’s top ranked players. Albin is a passionate player who plays with an intensity that would power a nuclear power plant. As he vocally encourages #2 teammate, David Dalgard, on the adjacent court, he relentlessly attacks the net with ferocious shots and blistering net play. The UCLA player is obviously dazed by the barrage of shots and the fact that Albin continues to come to the net. Albin fights back to a tie breaker and courageously ties the team score to 3-3 by defeating UCLA 7-5 in the tie breaker. After trailing for all the match, Albin gains his only lead of the match at the very end of the match when he is up 6-5 in the 3rd set tiebreaker. This is undoubtedly one of the greatest victories in the history of Boise State Tennis by sealing a 1-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-5 in the tiebreaker) victory.

With the score tied all eyes fall on the adjacent court where Boise State #2 singles player, David Dalgard, is locked in a dog fight with a Bruin All-American who has hundreds of Bruin college students storming from court #3 to #2 court with the realization that this final singles match was for all the marbles. David played with a steady resolve to match his UCLA opponent, shot for shot. After being tied at 3-3 in the critical third set and accelerating my hair loss by the thought that we were on the verge of a major collegiate upset, David hunkered down with the mantra that he would not miss any of his shots. He abandoned his attacking game to play a nerve wracking game of deliberate resolve. David (Slinger) evolved into a ball machine that would never need a tune up.

Before I even could reflect on the magnitude of this match, “Slinger” broke the Bruin down mentally and physically, and found himself on the bottom of a team dog pile, celebrating his 7-6, 4-6, 6-3 upset victory in a Boise-Style-love-in-on-the-Bruin courts. When I realized that we had captured the team victory, I was swept into

—continued on page 12
Our mission is to encourage and promote the heritage, traditions, 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.

Send your photos and info to:
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Varsity B Club Coordinator
**Varsity B Club**
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Boise, ID 83725-1020
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Bob Bruce, Dave Williams, Doug Scott, Dan Lukehart, Dan Williams, and Rick Woods tailgating at the Fiesta Bowl.

Heather Little, (basketball 2001-2006), current facilities manager at Boise State, really enjoyed her time at the Fiesta Bowl.

Southern Idaho chapter of College Hall of Fame Honoree, Korey Hall, and Varsity B members, Larry Alder, Perry Gossett, Michel Bourgeau, Bob Bruce and Dan Lukehart.

Varsity B Men’s Basketball reunion 2007 - Welcome Back Gerry!
The Varsity B Three Core Goals:
1. Social and professional interactions for Varsity B members.
2. Helping our current student athletes get a fast start to life after athletics.
3. Being good ambassadors for Boise State athletics in their community.
Interview with…

Debbie (Thompson) Sparks
GYMNASTICS 1997-2001

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS:
My favorite place on campus would have to be the Sub – Student Union Building or the Rec center. Besides the gym or class, the sub and the Rec center are the other two places where I spent the majority of my time.

THOUGHTS ON COACHES: I couldn’t have had better coaches, they were awesome! Tina, Sam, Bill and the various assistants like Steve and Sonja taught me so much. I learned so much from them, not only did they teach me gymnastics skills, but they incorporated life skills, and confidence. Each coach took the time to address me individually and work with me as a person – not just as an athlete. They definitely know their stuff; I can’t say enough positive things about them. They are amazing and so passionate about what they do. All of the coaches were so understanding and in tune with each individual gymnast’s needs inside the gym as well as outside the gym. I think that this is what sets the Boise State gymnastics coaches apart from a lot of other coaching staffs and makes them so great.

HOMETOWN: (where did you grow up and where do you live?) I grew up in St. Paul, MN, and currently live in Boise, ID. I never thought I would stay in Idaho, but now I can’t seem to leave – it’s a great place to live.

DEGREES: BS in Kinesiology – Health Promotions

FAMILY: My husband, Nate Sparks, our 3 year old son Makhai (who will make you melt! He is absolutely adorable and so funny!)

JOB: I work for the J.R. Simplot Company in the California Agribusiness department. My family in Minnesota thinks its great and so befitting that I work for “the potato” company. Of course I work for the potato company – I live in Idaho! No really, Simplot does much more than just potatoes.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A STUDENT: Mandatory study hours in the Peterson center…ha ha! No, I really enjoyed Dr. Hoeger’s exercise physiology lab course. It had to be one of my favorite classes. We got to measure our VO2 max, body fat, and tons of other exercise and strength tests. I have always had a strong interest in fitness.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A BOISE STATE STUDENT-ATHLETE: My fondest memory as a Boise State Student-Athlete is traveling to competitions with my teammates. The gymnasts were very fortunate and we were able to vacation a little while on the road. I have great pictures of my teammates and coaches at Disney land, Magic Mountain, Washington DC, Venice Beach, etc. Also road trips were the perfect opportunity for pranks – Luckily I always paired up with the #1 prankster – Australian Louise, so I didn’t have to worry about veggie-mite on my toothbrush, or my underwear being strung through the hotel. Road trips were such a great bonding experience and truly built some of my best friendships.

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BOISE STATE? The thing that stands out the most about Boise State for me is the community support and the family like atmosphere. This is what drew me to Boise State and what has kept me in Boise.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY WATCHING? I enjoy watching football, basketball and golf – he is definitely an athlete in the making.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB? I think the Varsity B Club is a great organization to keep the alumni connected and up to date on what is going on with the athletic programs at Boise State. Not only does it allow alumni to stay in tuned with what the current athletes are doing, but with also with what the alumni are doing. I think the Varsity B Club is a wonderful avenue for the alumni to show their support of the athletic programs at Boise State.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BOISE STATE BRONCO? Being a Boise State Bronco means that I have come from a great Bronco family that has taught me great values traditions that won’t ever be forgotten. I am proud to be a Boise State Bronco!
Boise State Athletics has more to brag about than their accomplishments on the field, in the gym, or on the court these days!

The purpose of the BroncoLIFE program is to provide opportunities that will encourage personal investment and enhance the quality of the student-athlete experience at Boise State University. This program is based on the NCAA CHAMPS (Challenge Athletes Minds for Personal Success) Life Skills program emphasizing a commitment to the following areas of excellence:

- Commitment to Academic Excellence
- Commitment to Athletic Excellence
- Commitment to Personal Development
- Commitment to Career Development
- Commitment to Service

The 2006–2007 academic year has exemplified the commitment of student-athletes in each of these areas!

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Fall 2006 marked several academic records!
- Highest Cumulative Athletic Department GPA on record: 2.94
- 52% of all student-athletes over a 3.00

New record highs for Wrestling, Women’s Tennis, Football, Men’s Basketball, Women’s Track!

4.00 IN FALL 2006
- Coby Karl (MBB)
- Kate Keller (Soc)
- Brennan Lau(SOC)
- David Lowery (FB)
- Megan Olivetti (Track)
- Robbie Richards (Mens Golf)

ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE
- Football has undefeated season and FIESTA BOWL WIN!!
- Men’s Track & Field Indoor WAC Champions
- Women’s Basketball regular season champions, WAC Tournament winner, and earned bid to the NCAA

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
- Student-Athletes participated in a seminar regarding the downfalls of Sports Gambling with nationally known speaker Michael Franzese.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT
- BroncoLIFE hosted Career Preparation workshop in October to assist graduating student athletes prepare a perfect resume, learn more about opportunities with Varsity B and plan for graduate school.

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Spring 2007 has been a record semester for community service requests! Since January 1st, we have received over 100 requests to have student-athletes participate in community activities. Student-Athletes have participated in Read Across America Week at local elementary schools, Jump Rope for Heart, and many other events!

Alumni student-athletes are becoming an integral part of our services provided to the athletes, especially in the areas of career and personal development and financial support.

If you are interested in assisting in any of these programming efforts, your volunteerism is welcome!! Please contact Valerie Cleary at 208-426-1103 or vcleary@boisestate.edu to find out how you can be a part of this exciting program!

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY WATCHING? I really enjoy watching figure skating. I am amazed with all the maneuvers they can do on a pair of metal blades and ice. I am always trying to figure out how they can mechanically improve their degree of difficulty.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB? Perhaps one of the most important things that can be done by the athletic department is reuniting the “old” athletes to the prospective programs. The student-athletes spend a short time at the university, but it is during the most influential period of their lives. They need the identification that ties their athletic career at Boise State to those very formative years.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BOISE STATE BRONCO? Pride more than anything else: Remembering and building on the past and looking forward to all that can be accomplished in the future. —V8

Write a mortgage with Primary Residential Mortgage and $500 will be donated to the Varsity B!

Jacoby—continued from page 3
Interview with…

Gary D’Orazio

WRESTLING, 1960-1962

HOMETOWN: where did I grow up?
Born in Saskatoon Saskatchewan, Canada. I grew up in Ottawa, and Thunder Bay, Ontario. Moved to Boise when I was 15, attended West Jr. High, Boise High, Borah, Boise Junior College, Boise State College and Boise State University. I have been an Idahoan ever since even though my career took me out of state. Attended Boise State U for 4+ years but was transferred with Albertson’s out of state before I got my degree.

FAMILY: My wife, Linda and I have six children, ten grandchildren. I have two brothers and one sister here in Boise. My older sister still lives in Thunder Bay, Canada.

JOB: I am retired from the retail supermarket industry where I spent 27 years with Albertsons. I have also managed with Fred Meyers, Krogers and Wal Mart. For the last six years, I have been working in the real estate business with Coldwell Banker Aspen.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A STUDENT: I relished the opportunity to learn, grow and meet friends for a lifetime.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A STUDENT ATHLETE: Having the opportunity to compete on the college level, thus better preparing me for life. I had doors open to me that would not have been possible if I had not participated in college wrestling. I met some incredible people whom I am still friends with.

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS:
The wrestling room where we learned to be warriors, and the library which opened up the whole world and made me realize how much is out there waiting for us.

HAS THE UNIVERSITY AND ATHLETICS CHANGED SINCE WE LEFT? Absolutely…athletics are now 7/24’s and require specializing. The demands are greater as are the rewards.

LIFE AFTER BOISE STATE: BSU will always be a part of my life. From the sports, culture events to continuing education and classes. I am proud to be a small part of the institution and its heritage.

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BSU: The level is has attained in academics and athletics. BSU is destined for greatness and is getting better with each passing year. I am proud of what our University has accomplished and will accomplish in the future.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY? I enjoy all collegiate athletic competition. The pureness of the sports on the BSU level is inspirational and therapeutic.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB: A great idea! The competitive nature and demands of being a collegiate athlete, in my opinion, differentiates us from the other participants… It has been a great way to stay connected to the school which meant so much to me.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BRONCO? Being a Bronco means a whole new level of responsibility…leaders by example, mentors, role models, making a difference, community involvement, leaving it a better place than you found it…These are the responsibilities of being a Bronco as well as taking great pride in being part of the Bronco Nation…it is like family…as BSU continues to grow and achieve new heights I feel the same pride of a parent…Go Broncos!

History of the Challenge Coin

During WWI pilots carried medallion coins with them as a show of respect, loyalty, oath, and camaraderie for their unit. This tradition came about after a pilot was shot down, captured; escaped, and then thought to be a spy at the front line where they were going to execute him. The only ID the pilot had to prove his identity was his coin, which saved his life. Ninety years later this tradition still continues. Soldiers, police officers, firemen...
Interview with…

Nan Phillips

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL, 1976-1981

HOMETOWN: (where did you grow up and where do you live?) I was born and raised in Boise. My dad, Gordon Phillips, started working at Boise Junior College in 1964 so I was introduced to Boise State early on in my life. I graduated from Borah High School and have stayed in Boise all my life.

DEGREES: I have a bachelor’s degree in Speech/Communications with minors in Health/Physical Education and English.

FAMILY: I am single and live with my 4 year old chocolate lab, Guinness. We spend a lot of time with my Mom, Barbara, who lives in Boise. I have a brother Rick, in Reno, and brother and sister-in-law, Mike and Sue and sons Tim and Nick that live in Woods Cross, Utah. We spend many hours together with family activities and vacations.

JOB: I am the Manager of Administrative Services at Blue Cross of Idaho where I just celebrated 20 years of employment (April 1). I am responsible for managing the design and print production functions, corporate purchasing, mail and copy services and cafeteria operations and am co-manager of the Business Continuity Plan for the company. I enjoy my job and the people I work with.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A STUDENT: Spending time with friends; in the dorms, at the SUB, in the gym or in watercolor painting classes. My folks used to have team dinners at our house and we always had fun eating too much, knowing we had to run extra the next day.

FONDEST MEMORY AS A BOISE STATE STUDENT-ATHLETE: The road trips were a blast. We spent a lot of time in the BSU vans and drove long distances over some pretty rough roads, but we were always laughing and joking about it. I also loved the pre-practice silliness in the training room. Lots of laughs.

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS: The training room. I would hang out with friends in there and study before practice. We had some pretty awesome trainers and managers. They took care of us and always make sure we had plenty of ice for our pains.

THOUGHTS ON COACHES: Connie Thorngren was innovative and a force to change the image of women’s athletics. She stressed teamwork and helped us all become better individuals, not just basketball players.

HOW HAS THE UNIVERSITY AND ATHLETICS CHANGED SINCE YOU LEFT? It has grown so much, both academically and athletically. I have watched it grow from tiny little BJC to Fiesta Bowl champs. I think BSU is highly respected and I am proud to be an alum of such a fine institution. It is fun to see blue and orange wherever you travel now. As Coach Pete said, it is a great time to be a Bronco!

LIFE AFTER BOISE STATE? I played city rec basketball and softball for several years after graduation. Now my athletic endeavors include longs walks, golf and working in the garden. I love Boise and all it has to offer. I love to go down to walk along the Greenbelt and reminisce about life as a student at BSU. I stress the teamwork I learned at BSU in my dealings with employees and co-workers at Blue Cross of Idaho. Life is good!

WHAT STANDS OUT THE MOST ABOUT BOISE STATE? The never quit attitude that the athletic teams show and the dedication to excellence that all BSU displays is awesome. Mediocre is not acceptable on the field, on the court or in the classroom.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS DO YOU MOST ENJOY WATCHING? College football and basketball, especially around March Madness time. I also love the Chicago Cubs and an occasional golf tournament.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE VARSITY B CLUB? I like the way it is bringing athletes of all eras together. It is fun to see teammates and those who have played before and after me that I have followed in the news. It is fun to be tied to such an awesome group of people, the proud folks of Bronco Nation.


and paramedics risk their lives everyday for our safety. They carry their coin as a personal token symbolizing this devotion and allegiance to their unit. The Varsity B coin will only be available to members of the Varsity B. The coin is a great way to carry with you a reminder of your experience as a former Bronco.

MAKING A CHALLENGE

As an owner of a challenge coin it represents your affiliation, oath, camaraderie and loyalty to the Varsity B Club. A challenge is made by presenting your coin to another coin owner or Varsity B member who is then required to produce their coin. If the individual fails to produce their coin, they are obligated to buy you a drink. However, if they do produce their coin, you then owe them a drink.

Please let us know if you would like to order a Varsity B coin by sending an email to michellebourgeau@boisestate.edu.
Earlier this spring, the most well-preserved of all former Boise State athletes gathered for a reunion on campus. We're talking gymnasts here. On March 23, to honor Sam Sandmire's last home meet after 20 years as BSU coach, over 60 former Bronco gymnasts were introduced on the floor of Taco Bell Arena. Sandmire's infectious energy must have kept many of those women young, because they looked grrrrrrreat.

To say Sandmire's retirement marks the end of an era would be an understatement. Since Boise State became a four-year school athletically in 1968, only wrestling coach Mike Young had a longer tenure with the Broncos. Her persuasive nature was evident the first time I met her—at previous coach Jackie Carringer's farewell banquet in 1987. Having had already been the BSU gymnastics PA announcer for many years, and with a lot of things going on, I figured I'd hang up the mike.

The conversation went something like this. “You’re Tom, aren’t you?” said Sam. “Why, yes,” I replied. “I know you did PA for Jackie—will you keep doing it for us?” she asked. “Well, uh, actually I really…well, okay,” I said decisively. Such is the effect Sandmire has had on people as she has tirelessly promoted her program.

The week of a big meet, you could always count on Sam to be at the podium at the BAA luncheon, or on the radio with a morning team. She was on the phone enough in the 90’s to help bring the NCAA Championships to Boise State in 2000, along with the NCAA Regionals in 1994 and 1997.

And there have been results on the floor—great results. These days we look at the Bronco football team and its no. 5 ranking, and the men’s tennis and track teams and their usual place in the polls. But in the early 90’s, there was only one BSU entry in a Division I Top 25: the gymnastics team. In fact, Sam had eight Top 25 finishes in her 20-year coaching career.

Gymnastics at BSU has long been on an island. Over the years, the gymnasts have shuffled from conference to conference; thankfully the WAC has finally re-added the sport. It perseveres at Boise State because of its successes and its community acceptance and involvement. And Sandmire has been the catalyst.

Virtually all of those alumni gymnasts who returned in late March looked like they could still compete. In fact, Sam did, too. The hunch here is that she will 10 years from now as well. —vb