



SWIM & DIVE

October 2018 Edition 4



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BYU ALUMNI

ALUMNI REUNION A BIG SUCCESS



@BYUswimanddiveteam

David White and I were honored to be part of our alumni reunion on September 7-8. It was truly a labor of love. BYU has meant so much to us and we were thrilled to be giving back in a small way.

The reunion weekend kicked off with the alumni meet. Current team members were required to swim every event, while we alum were able to pick our events. It was great fun on Friday afternoon. Our first impressions of the new pools – awesome!

Then on Friday night, we held our dinner banquet. Over 230 people attended, including nine recruits. Based on feedback from many of you – the evening was a great success. Our Associate Athletic Director, Chad Lewis, likened the current team to the children of Israel – struggling and wandering throughout last year's season, homeless without a pool they could call their own. Continuing he said that they've now arrived at the "promised land" with a new pool, and need to develop a "warrior" mentality and compete at the highest level of their ability. Tim Powers challenged us all to never give up, and compete with everything we have until the end. John Brooks thanked all the alumni for their support, and for funding the electronic scoreboards. Finally, our keynote and concluding speaker, Rowdy Gaines, and his wife Judy, each spoke to us. Rowdy is a humble Olympian who brought so much energy, love, class, and spirit to the event. We are so grateful that he

would take the time to join us for this event. Wow... it was just too cool. Everyone loved listening to him. We were also really grateful that Judy jumped in and shared some of their story, and testimony. It was powerful. It spoke so much of them as a couple and as representatives in the world for great things.

On Saturday morning, Rowdy spent an hour with the team and coaching staff. Then we opened up the pools to all alumni and families. Over 200 again attended this fun event. Lastly, 100 of us gathered in a section of Lavell Edwards Stadium to enjoy a football game under the lights, preceded by a dinner provided by the BYU Varsity Club. Thanks for all your support of the BYU swim and dive program.

Many have asked how we got Rowdy to attend our reunion. It all began back in 2016 after we had our first reunion. Lance Gordon, my former teammate, who was part of our alumni reunion committee in 2016, suggested that we try to get Rowdy to come speak at our next reunion. Lance and Rowdy have been friends for many years. It may also have helped that Rowdy had joined the church some years ago, and had a daughter, Emily, who had attended BYU. Lance contacted Rowdy, and the rest is history.

Chris Smith

THANKS FROM ROWDY

To the entire BYU Aquatic family,

I just wanted you all to know what an incredible weekend my wife Judy and I had at the recent alumni gathering. It was so inspirational on many levels and I so appreciate everyone's love and kindness to my family while we were in town. When so many programs all over the country are being cut, BYU not only gives that support but also re-builds an amazing facility! I was so impressed with the entire coaching staff and current young men and women who showed such grace and respect while I was there. Please know I will always feel a part of the BYU family and I want to particularly thank Lance Gordon and Chris Smith. Lance is a friend for almost 40 years and was instrumental in initially reaching out to me about the event and Chris is that new friend who I feel I've known for 40 years!

Thanks again! Go Cougars!!!
Rowdy Gaines



Alumni attendees at the dinner/banquet on September 7, 2018

A LETTER OF APPRECIATION FROM A PARENT OF A RECRUIT

It was not difficult to set aside my Utes pride when I attended BYU's Alumni Program in September during my son's recruiting trip. While I have attended many other swim banquets, I've never experienced one like BYU's Swim Alumni Banquet. Mr. Gaines was such an inspiring motivational speaker. He and his wife Judy made the evening fun and joyful for all that attended. Although he is not an alumni of BYU, he mentioned he felt like family during his time at BYU. I felt the same. I helped one Alumni swimmer take a picture in front of his black and white action shot poster so he could send it to his mother.

Mr. Gaines mentioned in his speech he gave one of his Olympic medals to his own mother. I was deeply touched to see so many of the alumni swimmers wanting to share their personal victories with their mothers. Thank you so much for the thought and effort put into this wonderful evening. I know how much work the coaches must of have put into such an event. I truly enjoyed my experience at BYU's Alumni night. It was an experience my son and I will not soon forget. Thank you BYU!!

—Parent of a recruit - where both attended the dinner

A RECRUITING STORY by Corey Killpack

The pathway that eventually led me to BYU seemed unlikely at first, but turned out later to be miraculous. My father, Darwin Killpack, was my coach at Cyprus High School in Magna Utah. He also coached Rick Morley, a gifted swimmer who received a full-ride scholarship to swim at Auburn for Eddy Rees at the same time as another swimmer by the name of Rowdy Gaines. Rick and Rowdy were one year ahead of me in school. My father corresponded with Coach Rees, and the plan was that I would also come to Auburn on a full-ride scholarship the following year. However, when I went to Auburn on my recruiting trip, they committed some major blunders. First, they took me to a bar, and then they housed me in a trailer with a few of the swim team members, one of which had a live-in girlfriend. There was also pornography plastering the walls where they lived. It was not the kind of environment I was expecting.

The second blunder occurred following an Auburn swim meet. The weekend I was there Auburn was scheduled to go up against Alabama in a dual meet, which they won as I recall for the first time in their history. This was exciting and showed the quality of Auburn's up and coming swim program. Following the excitement of the upset, however, there was a huge party at which many of the swimmers got completely wasted. I remember watching American record holders and future Olympians getting intoxicated and making fools of themselves. There were a few swimmers, like Rowdy Gaines and Billy Forrester, however, who did not participate, but I was disappointed to see most of the swimmers engaged in this kind of out of control behavior. That night I remember kneeling down and asking for a miracle. As good as this swimming program was, I didn't want to get thrown into the middle of this kind of environment.

Through a series of fortunate events, I ended up swimming for the "Y" during the 78-79 Season. As a team, we won the WAC Championships in Laramie Wyoming that year. I contributed by winning my three individual events (100 & 200 yd. Butterfly, 200 yd. Individual Medley), and taking part in two winning relays (400 yd. Medley Relay, 800 yd. Freestyle Relay). I went on to compete in the NCAA championships in Cleveland Ohio. I missed making the finals by 3 hundredths of a second. This disappointment turned to my blessing in the end. I had planned to try for the Olympics in 1980, but felt impressed after my first season swimming at BYU that I was supposed to go on a mission immediately. This was a change of plans, and though it would affect the team, Coach Tim Powers completely understood. After serving a year on my mission, the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, Russia were boycotted by all U.S. teams.

After returning from my service in the Spain Madrid Mission, I continued swimming for BYU for my remaining 3 Seasons, and even helped as a graduate assistant for an additional year before completing my education. My experiences at BYU helped to shape the person that I am. While at BYU, I went through the Church Education pre-service program and was hired upon graduation to teach seminary. My first teaching assignment was back at my alma-mater of Cyprus High School. I am now in my 33rd year of teaching in the Seminary and Institute Program.

I want to add some important thoughts about our team during the 78-79 WAC Season. The reason we won the championship was because we were unified and kept the standards of the University. Every swimmer did his part! We trusted and believed in each other and what we could accomplish together. We also trusted our coaches. As I think back on it, I was just a young inexperienced freshman, but we had great veteran leadership from John Sorich, Wally Andelin, Chris Smith, and especially a sort of spiritual leadership from Mark McGregor. This is why we were successful and not because of any individual performances. Everybody stepped up in a synergistic way, and we collectively accomplished something great. Some of the life lessons that I learned from these experiences were that it really is "all for one and one for all." A team is so much better than the sum of its parts. Hard work, consistent effort, and divine aid are the keys to success in every life endeavor. Having a plan, outlined by established goals, gives our efforts a focus and a purpose. Marriage and family living provide the anchor to every good thing in life. I noticed that our married team members provided a stabilizing influence for all of us. These learned lessons have stayed with me through all of the experiences of the past 33 years.



Two divers at alumni meet on September 7, 2018

NEW HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Congratulations to BYU diver, *Aaron Russell*. Aaron became the 14th member of the swim and dive program to be inducted into the BYU Athletic Hall of Fame. Our list of inductees now includes:

Male Inductees—7

Alma Shields
Fred Baird
Stan Curnow
Keith Russell
Bryon Shefchik
Dmitri Malinovski
Aaron Russell

Female Inductees—7

LeLei Fonoimoana
Tristan Baker Schultz
K.C. Cline Lemon
Courtney Nelson Murrell
Melanie Rile Menezes
Vanessa Bergman Thelin
Rachelle Smith Kunkel



UPDATING OUR ROSTER PROFILES

Update your profile on the byu.edu web site. Click on *Roster*, then *All-Time Roster* tab and find your profile. If you want to update or change it, send your edits to Becca at the following email address: swimming_sid@byu.edu



ALUMNI FEEDBACK FROM OUR REUNION

- The #1 reason to attend future reunions is teammate participation; posting a real-time list of attendees was the #1 rated suggestion
- Bi-Annual reunions were the most desired frequency, but attendance would improve if they were instead planned around targeted alumni groupings by year
- Attendees overwhelmingly enjoyed the participation of current swimmers/divers
- Scheduling the reunion in conjunction with a football game was very popular, although probably not with Homecoming
- Scheduling the alumni meet on Saturday would be helpful for people coming in from out of town
- Attendees overwhelmingly enjoyed the dinner speakers, especially having a keynote speaker
- Scheduling conflicts were the biggest reason that kept people away, with a 6-12 month advanced notice period the biggest request
- More involvement in the program from past divers, coaches, women, and more recent alumni
- Serve desert!

We've received lots of helpful comments and suggestions too numerous to mention here. Comments have been particularly helpful.

David White

GET INVOLVED!

Over the last year, we've worked hard with the BYU Alumni Association and the Athletic Department to identify and locate past swim/dive alumni. We currently have a database of contact information for almost 1100 former swimmers and divers with many dating back to the 1950s and 60s!

During this last year, we've also formed an official BYU Swim/Dive Alumni Chapter. Our purpose in forming an alumni chapter was two-fold. First, to foster continued friendship and communication with fellow alumni members of these teams. And secondly, to support the current swimming and diving programs through financial donations,

service, and through other means as needed. The Alumni Association has been extremely helpful in both of these regards. You can check us out at: <http://alumni.byu.edu/chapters/byu-swimming-and-diving-alumni>.

That said, broader participation and involvement would help. Your involvement! There are lots of interesting things we can do together to help foster and strengthen our friendships with former teammates. If you'd like to get involved, shoot an email to either myself (dl.white@comcast.net) or Chris Smith (chrissmith207@gmail.com)

David White



Alumni Newsletter

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