Records of the Sports Division/Athletics 1960s-1990s

Creator: Sports Division/Athletics
Title: Inventory of Sports Division /Athletics
Dates: 1960s – 2000s
Quantity: 2 cubic feet (2 storage boxes)
Origin: Most of these records were extant in the University Archives as of 2003. No record of transfer. Additional material has been submitted from various sources, including the Alumni Office, the Rugby Club, as well as acquired purchases.
Repository: Fairfield University Archives and Special Collections

Scope and Content of Papers

The Records of the Sports Division /Athletics Department consist of various media guides, game programs, prospecti and miscellaneous print material from various Varsity, Intramural, and Club Sports on campus. The coverage is not consistent. The main bulk of the collection pertains to Men's and Women's Varsity Basketball.

History of Fairfield University Athletic Programs

The Fairfield Stags are the athletic programs representing Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut. Most of the programs are members of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) and classified as Division I-AAA in the National Collegiate Athletic Association. As of 2012, Fairfield sponsors 20 varsity sports - baseball, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's crew, men's and women's cross country, field hockey, men's and women's golf, men's and women's lacrosse, men's and women's soccer, softball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, and women's volleyball. In addition, there is a long standing tradition of club and intramural sports at Fairfield University, including the Rugby Club which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

TRADITIONS

History of the Stag

With the dawn of the first athletic team (cross country) in the fall of 1947, it became apparent that a nickname would be needed. For the 1947-48 season, Fairfield University adopted the "Men In Red" as its nickname.
The following year, the University introduced men's basketball as its next team and its first varsity sport. With the start of varsity sports, the school put it to the students for input in naming of a school mascot. Two recommendations were made to the Board of Trustees for an official decision and vote. As the late Fr. Charles F. Duffy S.J. recounted: "As a member of the Board of Trustees, I remember voting at a board meeting late in 1948 on the naming for our athletic teams. We voted for Stags over Chanticleers!"

What made the decision for the Board a bit easier and logical was the fact that the school was part of the Dioceses of Hartford and the word Hartford means stags (hart) and stream (ford). According to Webster's New World Dictionary the word "hart" means "A male of the European red deer; stag." As for the world "ford" Webster describes it as "A shallow place in a stream, river, etc."

As a result, Fairfield University's seal itself was designed featuring a deer leaping over a tumbling brook to represent both the school's connection with the Dioceses as well with its close ties with nature.

Fairfield is situated on a rolling, immensely wooded 200-acre (0.81 km²) campus overlooking Long Island Sound. The name fits well as a nickname because the Stag is a good jumper and it spirited and agile, as Fairfield would like all of its student-athletes to be.

**FIGHT SONGS**

"The Fairfield University Fight Song"

- Written by Prof. Brian Q. Torff during the 1995-96 academic year for a contest sponsored by the Fairfield University Student Association.

> Come catch the spirit, Fairfield U.
> For all to hear it, Fairfield U.
> Red and White will always conquer,
> Go for the winner 'till the end, and so we'll
> Fight! Fight! Fight! Fight for Fairfield U.,
> Each day and night our hearts will be true,
> And all across the land we'll always stand by Fairfield U.
> And all across the land we'll always stand by Fairfield U!
"The Men in Red"

- Written by Rudy Ross '51 when Fairfield was an all-male institution.

\begin{quote}
The men in Red will always fight for Fairfield.
The men in Red will fight tonight for Fairfield.
We'll stick out our chin, and we'll wind up with win, with a grin.
The men in Red will raise a shout for Fairfield.
The men in Red will go all out for Fairfield,
As we go on rolling up the score for dear old Fairfield ever more.
\end{quote}

MEN'S VARSITY TEAMS

Men's Baseball

The Fairfield Stags men's baseball team competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I and plays their home games at the Alumni Baseball Diamond on the campus of Fairfield University. Fairfield fielded its first varsity baseball team in 1951, winning 7 of 12 games. The Stags, coached by Don Cook, made the first of three straight trips to the ECAC New England Tournament in 1977, defeating defending champion University of Maine. The team was MAAC South Champions in 1983, 1991, 1993, 1995 and 1997. Individually, Anthony Hajjar was named a 2010 Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American; Peter Allen was named to the 2008 Brooks Wallace Player of the Year Watch List following his program record setting season in 2007 in which he was ranked nationally in doubles, batting average, and slugging percentage; and Mike Pike was named a 1993 Mizuno Freshman All-American. Keefe Cato, the holder of ten Fairfield pitching records including seven career shutouts and one no-hitter, was the first Fairfield athlete to play in a major professional sport on the major league level after being selected by the Cincinnati Reds in the second round of the 1979 Major League Baseball Draft. He was the Reds' winning pitcher in his second game. And Rob Gariano, who surpassed Cato's 31 year stand as Fairfield’s all-time strikeout leader with 293 strikeouts was drafted in the 36th round of the 2010 Major League Baseball Draft by the San Diego Padres. The Stags are currently coached by two-time MAAC Coach of the Year John Slosar.
Men’s Basketball

The Fairfield Stags men’s basketball team competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games in the 9,500 seat, state of the art Arena at Harbor Yard in Bridgeport, Connecticut and recently played two games in Alumni Hall back on the campus of Fairfield University during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons. The team competed in the National Invitational Tournament in 1973, 1974, 1978, 1996 and 2003 and the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament in 1986, 1987 and 1997. In the 1973 National Invitation Tournament, the Stags advanced to the second round where the team lost by one point to eventual National Champion Virginia Tech. And in the 1997 NCAA Tournament, the Stags nearly achieved a historic upset of top-seeded North Carolina after leading the Tar Heels by seven points at halftime. The team also won the MAAC Regular Season Title in 1986 and the MAAC Championship Tournament in 1986, 1987 and 1997. Individually, Joe DeSantis earned All-American honors in 1979; Darren Phillip was the nation’s top rebounder in 2001 averaging 14 rebounds per game; and Deng Gai was the nation’s top shot blocker in 2005 averaging 5.5 blocks per game ranking him 5th all-time in NCAA Division I basketball. The Stags are currently coached by Sydney Johnson.

Men’s Cross Country

The Fairfield Stags cross country team is the oldest athletics program at the University, dating back to 1947. The Rev. Victor Leeber, S.J. founded the team and is the namesake of the annual Father Leeber Invitational hosted by the University and held on the campus grounds. Members of the Fairfield University Hall of Fame include: John Barry '62, Joseph von Ehr '74, Joseph Miko '51, Michael Collins '77, and Ian MacNeill '97. The Stags participate in the MAAC conference like the majority of the other Fairfield programs. For three straight years (07-09) the men have been recognized as part of the NCAA Academic Performance Program. The program has seen a resurgence since the hiring of John Sagnelli, formerly a coach at the University of New Haven, in 2007. Last year the men's team placed 5th in the MAAC up two spots from 7th in 2008 and 9th in 2007.

Men’s Football

The now defunct Fairfield Stags football team competed in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I-AA between 1996 and 2003. Following the team's inaugural season, the 1997 team recorded the second-best single-season turnaround in Division I-AA history posting a 7-3 mark. The Stags won the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference title in 1998 posting a 9-2 record and head coach
Kevin Kiesel captured the league's Coach of the Year Award. Fairfield also had the top-rated Division I-AA defense for rushing (61.7 y.p.g.) and for total yards (213.8 y.p.g.). The 1999 team also went 9-2 and ranked fifth among the nation's Division I-AA non-scholarship teams. The defense was ranked second for scoring defense (13.4 p.p.g) and for total defense (237.7 y.p.g.). The 2000 team compiled an 8-2 record and ranked seventh in the country.

In total, seven Fairfield players earned All-American honors, and one player received Academic All-American honors. During the 2000 season, senior Steve Dogmanits (Fairfield's all-time leader in interceptions with 21) set a school-standard of 11. This was enough to lead all of Division I-AA, just missing the national record (12) set in 1987 by Dean Cain of Princeton University and "Lois & Clark" fame.

Men's Lacrosse

The Fairfield Stags men's lacrosse team competes in the ECAC Lacrosse League of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games at Lessing Field on the campus of Fairfield University. The team was nationally ranked in 2005 (15th), 2006 (20th) and 2007 (12th) and competed in the NCAA Division I Men's Lacrosse Tournament in 2002 and 2005. The Stags also won the ECAC Tournament in 1998 and 1999 and were Conference Regular Season Champions in the MAAC three times (1996–1998) and the GWLL twice (2002 and 2005). Individually, C. J. Kemp in 2002; Greg Downing in 2005, 2006 and 2007; Charlie Cipriano in 2012 and Brent Adams in 2012 earned All-American honors. The Stags are currently coached by 2004 MAAC Coach of the Year Andrew Copelan.

Men's Soccer

The Fairfield Stags men's soccer team competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games at Lessing Field on the campus of Fairfield University. The team was ranked nationally in 1998 (24th), 2000 (15th), 2001 (12th), 2005 (24th), 2006 (15th) and 2007 (17th) and competed in the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Tournament in 1999, 2006, and 2008. The 2006 team advanced to the second round in the NCAA Tournament after defeating in-state rival University of Connecticut, 2-1. The team also won the MAAC Championship Tournament in 1999, 2006 and 2008. Individually, eleven players have earned Regional All-American honors including Mark Longwell '82 who was the first Stag to go on to play for the United States men's national soccer team.
and major professional soccer for the NASL Tampa Bay Rowdies. The Stags are currently coached by 1998 NSCAA New England Coach of the Year Carl Rees.

WOMEN'S VARSITY TEAMS

Women's Basketball


Women's Field Hockey

The Fairfield Stags field hockey team competes in the America East Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games at University Field on the campus of Fairfield University. The team competed in the 1981 NCAA Division III EAIAW Regional Playoffs and the 2001 NCAA Women's Field Hockey Championship. The team also won the Patriot League Regular Season Title in 1998 and the Patriot League Tournament Championship in 2001. Individually, Mary Beth Combs received the Connecticut NCAA Woman of the Year Award in 1993 and ten players have earned NFHCA Mideast Regional All-American honors. The Stags are currently coached by Jackie Kane '87.

Women's Lacrosse

American honors. The Stags are currently coached by National Lacrosse Hall of Fame Inductee and 2009 MAAC Coach of the Year, Michael J. Waldvogel.

**Women's Soccer**

The **Fairfield Stags women's soccer team** competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games at Lessing Field on the campus of Fairfield University. The team has advanced five times to the NCAA Division I Women's Soccer Tournament, most recently in 2005 and 2008. The team has also won the MAAC Championship seven times (1993, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2005 and 2008). Individually, Abby Allan in 2000, Meghan King in 2004 and Ahna Johnson in 2008 earned All-America honors; Ahna Johnson in 2008 earned Academic All-America honors; Betsy Nyman in 2007 earned Regional Academic All-America honors; and Nicole Cavallaro in 2007 received Freshman All-America honors. In 2010, Brett Maron became the first former Fairfield player to sign a professional contract in the United States with the Atlanta Beat of the Women's Professional Soccer league. The Stags are currently coached by 2008 NSCAA Northeast Region Coach of the Year Jim O'Brien.

**Women's Softball**

The **Fairfield Stags softball team** competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home games at Alumni Softball Field on the campus of Fairfield University. The team won the MAAC Regular Season Title in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Individually, in 2003 Mellissa Santos became the 16th player in Division I history to reach 1,000 career strikeouts and is currently ranked 23rd all-time on the NCAA Division I Softball career strikeouts list. And Jen Derouin in 1998 and Tara Hansen in 2006 earned Academic All-American honors. The Stags are currently coached by Julie Brzezinski who achieved her 500th career win in 2006.

**Women's Tennis**

The **Fairfield Stags women's tennis team** competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home matches at the Walsh Athletic Center Tennis Courts on the campus of Fairfield University. The Stags have earned three berths to the NCAA Women's Tennis Championship and have won nine MAAC Championships in program history. The Stags faced the University of Washington during the 2004 NCAA Women's Tennis Championship, the University of Southern California during the 2009 NCAA Women's Tennis Championship and eventual National...
Champion Stanford University during the 2010 NCAA Women's Tennis Championship. The Stags are currently coached by 2008 MAAC Coach of the Year Ed Paige.

Women's Volleyball

The Fairfield Stags women's volleyball team competes in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference of NCAA Division I. The Stags play their home matches at Alumni Hall on the campus of Fairfield University. The team was nationally ranked in 1998 (24th) and 1999 (32nd) and competed in five straight NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Tournaments between 1997 and 2001. The team has also won the MAAC Regular Season Title nine times (1996–2000 and 2004–2007) and the MAAC Championship Tournament five times (1997–2001). Individually, Renee O’Neill earned Academic All-American honors in 1989 and Joanne Saunders earned Regional All-American honors in 2000. The Stags are currently coached by Alija Pittenger.

MEN'S CLUB TEAMS

Men's Football

The 1979 Fairfield Stags football team led by All-America quarterback Craig Leach ’81 played in the National Collegiate Football Association's championship game where the Stags fell 60-40 to the University of Massachusetts Lowell. The 1980 team started the season ranked #1 in the pre-season NCFA Polls.

Men's Hockey

Hockey began as a club sport with a schedule of scrimmages in 1966-67. In its first full schedule of games in 1968-69, the team finished with a 18-8-0 record and joined the Metropolitan Intercollegiate Hockey League (MIHL). The team posted a 27-0 regular season record during the 1973-74 season and captured the MIHL championship.

The hockey program was elevated to varsity status for the 1974-75 season under Dr. John McCarthy and posted an 18-8-1 mark that year. The Stags were a founding member of the MAAC Hockey League in 1998, and the team’s best record in the MAAC came in 2000-2001 with a 10-14-2 mark. They posted a 275-414-28 record in varsity play, heading into the 2002-03 season. The team was disbanded by the University due to financial reasons after the 2002-03 season.[8]
Hockey as a club sport returned to the University during the 2003-04 season. The 2004-2005 squad finished the regular season with a 12-2-1-1 regular season record and fell just a game short of the Metropolitan Collegiate Hockey Conference (MCHC) championship. The 2003-2004 squad finished their season in second place and made it all the way to the league championship. And the 2005-2006 Stags posted a 20-4-0-0 record and reached the league semifinals for the third straight season. The 2007-2008 club finished with an overall record of 20-9, qualifying for a trip to Rochester, Minnesota to compete in the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA) National Championships. The Stags finished their championship run with a 6-3 victory over Old Dominion, compiling a 1-3 record at the national event.[9] And the 2009-2010 season began with the team competing in the newly formed Empire Collegiate Hockey Conference.

The home ice of Fairfield hockey is the Wonderland on Ice in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The Stags currently are coached by head coach Marshall Richards and assistant coach Corey McGee.

Men's Rugby

The Fairfield University Men's Rugby Football Club or FURFC is a men's college rugby club which competes in the Men's Collegiate Division II League of the Metropolitan New York Rugby Union. The nickname for the FURFC is the Red Ruggers. Brad Troup '03 and Will Brazier '05 were USA Rugby Collegiate All-Americans, Honorable Mention. And two former Red Ruggers represented the United States in international competition, Paul Sheehy with the USA Eagles at the 1991 Rugby World Cup and Will Brazier with the USA Tomahawks and USA Falcons. The Coach of the Red Ruggers is Matt Leonard.

SPIRIT TEAM

The Spirit Team consists of the cheerleading squad, dance team, and mascot. These groups perform at all men's and women's home basketball games, as well as some other athletic contests and University events.

STAGS IN THE STANDS

Stags in the Stands, founded by Marco Ambrosio '07 in 2005, is a new organization looking to bring back the intense Stag spirit of the Red Sea, the athletic fan base formed in the 1970s, when students clad in red poured into Alumni Hall and created one of the region's best home court advantages. Now run by
Andrew McMahon and Frank Aquino, the Stags in the Stands student group has elevated the fan base tremendously as the Stags have seen 4 of their top 10 largest crowds in 2010-2011.

Alumni Athletics Hall of Fame
The Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame was established in 1982 to honor those alumni who achieved excellence and distinguished themselves in Fairfield's athletic programs. Each year, inductees are selected through a nomination process by the Athletic Hall of Fame Committee and honored at a Fall induction ceremony.

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

- George Bisacca, 1964–1971
- Don Cook, 1972–1985
- Chappy Memminger, 1986–1994
- Gene Doris, 1995–

FACILITIES

Principal athletic facilities include:

- Webster Bank Arena (capacity: 10,000); Alumni Baseball Diamond (1,000); Alumni Hall (capacity: 2,479); Alumni Softball Field; Alumni Stadium (capacity: 4,000); Lessing Field; Tennis Courts; University Field; Aquatics Center.

The Thomas J. Walsh Athletic Center is a 51,000-square-foot (4,700 m²) structure catering to the academic and athletic needs of Fairfield student-athletes with a high-tech academic study center, practice gymnasium, state-of-the-art locker rooms for all athletic teams and a 4,700-square-foot (440 m²) weight training center.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

- Lou Brodersen Papers – Folder #2 – Sports Press Releases, 1966
- Fairfield University Men’s Basketball – 1949 – 1950
- Men’s Basketball - 1960s – Media Guides
- Men’s Basketball – 1970s – Media Guides
- Men’s Basketball – Media Guides – 1990s
- Men’s Basketball – Prospecti – 1980s
- Men’s Basketball – Prospecti – 1990s
- Men’s Basketball - 1960s - Media Guides
- Men’s Basketball – 1970s - Game Programs
- Men’s Basketball – 1980 - Game Programs – Folder #1
- Men’s Basketball – 1980 - Game Programs – Folder #2
- Men’s Basketball – 1981 – Game Programs
- Men’s Basketball – 1987 – Game Programs
- 25 Years Plus One by Dan Harrison (book) – 1974
- Men’s Basketball - Playing Cards - 1981-82
- Women’s Basketball - Media Guides – 1995/96
- Women’s Basketball – 1980s – Game Programs
- Women’s Basketball – Games Programs – 1990s
- Women’s Basketball – 1988 NCAA Guide
- Women’s Basketball – 1977 – Northeast District Small College Basketball Championship
- Men’s & Women’s Basketball – Misc. Material
Box 2

- Baseball (Men’s) – 1970s to 1990s- various
- Men’s Football – 1996
- Men’s Golf
- Men’s Ice Hockey
- Men’s Tennis
- Men’s Soccer – 1980s/1990
- Women’s Soccer
- Women’s Softball
- Women’s Field Hockey
- Women’s Tennis
- Cross Country – Men’s and Women’s
- Swimming and Diving – Men’s and Women’s
- Fairfield University Rugby Club – 1969
- Fairfield University Rugby Club – 50th Anniversary – October 2013 – Folder #1
- Fairfield University Rugby Club – 50th Anniversary – October 2013 – Folder #2
- Fairfield University Rugby Club – 50th Anniversary – October 2013 – Folder #3
- Fairfield University Football Club- 1971
- 1996-97 Student Athlete Handbook
- Athletics Annual Report – 2009-2010
- Athletic Hall of Fame & Homecoming Weekend – 2000
- Fairfield University Varsity Schedules – 1958-1997 (various)
- Fairfield University Sports Banquets – Misc. Material – 1980s and 1990s
- Fairfield University Spring Sports – 1972
- Player’s Edge Pro Championships – 1994
- Proposed Athletic Complex & Ice Rink – 1998
- RecPlex – Misc. Material
- Sports Camps
- Fairfield University Sports – Misc. Material