



Volleyball Hopes for Share of Spotlight

By MEREDITH BENNETT-SMITH
Sun Assistant Sports Editor

Kerri Walsh. Misty May-Treanor. You'd have to be living under a rock to not know who these names belong to. Walsh and May-Treanor make up one of the best — if not the best — ever beach volleyball duo. The team capped an impressive Olympic tournament with an unprecedented second-straight gold medal, as well as 108 wins in a row. They haven't lost a match in over a year.

And while Cornell does not currently have a varsity beach volleyball team, its women's indoor squad is hoping that all of the attention lavished on volleyball (America's indoor and outdoor teams won a combined four medals — three gold and one silver) will give their own program a boost this season.

The Olympics bump is a documented phenomenon, said volleyball head coach Dietre Collins-Parker, herself a former professional indoor vol-

leyball athlete. How well the Americans finish has a real effect on the hype surrounding hometown teams — when America wins, volleyball attracts more interest. But when they lose the opposite is true. And although Collins-Parker said she would not classify Cornell's volleyball team as a total bust in the attendance department — "I'd give it a medium rating," she said — it has never attained the "premier" sports status enjoyed by men's basketball, football, hockey and lacrosse. However, despite pulling in fewer fans at matches than some other sports, volleyball has enjoyed very high participation rates at both the high school and collegiate levels.

In 2007 volleyball had the third highest number of female participants with over 400,000 athletes, according to the National Federation of State High Schools (NFHS), trailing only outdoor track and field and basketball.

However everything changes after college if athletes are looking to compete above the amateur level.

"Everyone who plays pro volleyball leaves the United States," Collins-Parker said. She played professionally on teams in Italy and France. Additionally, Alex Dyer '07 played in a European exposure tour and earned a spot on Odbojkaski Klub OTP Banka Pula, a team located in Pula, Croatia. Dyer helped the Red win two Ivy League titles and ranks third in Cornell's record books for career kills.

So while the volleyball competitors in

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AXEL KOESTER / THE NEW YORK TIMES

MATT HINTSA / SUN SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Above | Misty May-Treanor (above) and her partner Kerri Walsh were frequently televised in primetime slots during NBC's coverage of the Beijing Olympics.

Right | Junior libero Megan Mushovic (9) and the volleyball team hope that the success of the U.S. athletes in the Olympics will bring volleyball more attention.

Innate Competitors Find Homes Among Red Rowers

By SHANNAN SCARSELETTA
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You were seven years old when you first noticed it. Never satisfied with getting picked first for kickball on the blacktop, you needed to be the captain. Soon you were timing the kindergarteners' 40-yard sprints to recruit early, and you suddenly found that your best friend was Todd

Lung, the 5-10 fourth grader whose birth certificate was more questionable than those of the Chinese Olympic gymnastic team. Later in life, you probably turned into a three-sport athlete, P.E. all-star or a just a pick-up basketball fiend who calls backcourt violations and carries a play-book with his gym shorts. You are a competitor who lives for a challenge. And men's varsity crew is looking for you.

You've been told again and again by concerned parents, teachers and that little voice in your head that the best way to find your niche at Cornell is to get involved and join a club or two. And considering the last time you worked for Habitat for Humanity, you insisted on building a house worthy of MTV Cribs to show up the other volunteers, you might want to stick to the competitive world of sports.

Cornell offers a club for just about any sport you can imagine, but for those of you who thrive on hard work, dedication and the fight towards victory, there is a more competitive and rewarding, albeit more demanding, option for you. Some varsity teams at Cornell like polo, women's swimming and men's and women's crew, do a lot of recruiting on campus and allow for walk-ons. No doubt you've seen some rowers sketching around the swim test pools, salivating at the sight of a six-foot girl or a pair of broad shoulders. And perhaps you, too, had to wipe away a little drool at the thought of joining a competitive team again. Admit it, there was definite dribble.

According to Todd Kennett, the current heavyweight rowing coach and winner of three national titles as the Cornell lightweight rowing coach, the difference between a club sport athlete and a varsity athlete is not, in fact, tal-



MEGHAN HESS / SUN STAFF

Fighting spirit | Many Red rowers are former high school athletes who walked on to the team.

INSIDE SPORTS

▶ Jankovic Tested in Second Round

No. 2 seed Jelena Jankovic clawed her way past Sofia Arvidsson of Sweden in the second round of the U.S. Open.

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▶ Bolt Returns to Track

Olympic medalist Usain Bolt will compete on Friday for the first time since the Olympics at the Weltklasse meet in Zurich, Switzerland.

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▶ Red Sox Trade for Kotsay

Boston acquired outfielder Mark Kotsay from the Atlanta Braves in exchange for minor league outfielder Luis Sumoza.

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