By Ann Patton
Academy Spirit staff

The Air Force Academy's Outdoor Recreation Agency was named the best in the Air Force by Lt. Gen. Richard Newton, the deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services, March 3.

ORA director Chuck Alfultis said the location, facility and staff all came together to make it a winning combination.

The same held true in 2006 when the Academy's ORA also garnered the top spot in the Air Force.

"Colorado in our backyard is a perfect outdoor playground," he said, citing its mountains, rivers and climate. Having a facility smack dab in the middle of the Academy's 18,000-plus acres is also a big plus. Now housed in the Community Center, it features a rustic cabin décor, which the staff constructed through self-help. The facility houses the program's 100-item rental program, with 1,600 skis and more than 800 retail items available for outdoor enthusiasts.

The staff is what makes the program special, Mr. Alfultis said. "We have fantastic people who work here. It is a direct reflection of their hard work," he said of the award.

Mr. Alfultis added many staff members have been with the Academy for a long time, and there is a good mix of skills. "All truly care about each other and their company," he said.

Staff not only work together, they play together in outdoor activities — as well as pull practical jokes on each other, like the day Mr. Alfultis came to work to find his office stuffed with kayaks.

The ORA has a huge impact on the Academy, Alfultis said. "The Air Force Academy's Outdoor Recreation Agency was named the best in the Air Force."
National Nutrition Month: Eat real food

By 2nd Lt. Meredith Kirchoff
Academy Public Affairs

We have a problem in America: we have forgotten how to eat. Don’t get me wrong, we know exactly how to put food into our stomachs, but we have really lost touch with the basics. Sixty-seven percent of Americans are overweight or obese. This is not due to genetics and it is not because our jobs have forced us into sedentary lifestyles—exercise is only half of the equation, and the human genome hasn’t changed anytime recently.

Half of a century ago people did not formally “work-out” nearly as much as they do today, but the prevalence of obesity in America has more than doubled since that era.

The problem is food, and food is the answer.

If you’re reading this article, you need food to survive and have consumed enough food in your lifetime to be sitting where you are, with the body you have, at this moment. Other people die every single day from a lack of food; it is that simple and that essential. So, fundamentally, we must eat.

With that established, the proverbial and inevitable question from our generation is, “What should we eat?”

Food defines cultures and makes tradition. We are passionate about food and each person is intimate with food in a different way. It is that intimacy and instinctive quality around which we should shape our eating habits.

The answer to what we should eat is truly simple—real food! Food is as close to its natural state as possible.

Americans eat far too many processed and packaged foods. Take a bag of raw almonds and an almond butterscotch yogurt flavored granola bar. Which one is a real food? The plain nuts, of course.

We take real foods and add gels and emulsifiers to hold them together, sugar to sweeten them, and hydrogenated oils to give them shell life.

We strip the grains of their nutritious bran and shell, and with it all of the fiber, all of the good stuff. We bleach out the color because we prefer white breads and melt-in-your-mouth donuts. These foods are okay to eat in moderation, but it’s the everyday, every meal, choices we must change.

Many processed foods are calorie-dense and nutrient-deficient.

I challenge you to try this—eat more real foods, foods that don’t come in a plastic wrapper.

Interestingly enough, populations like the Greeks or Italians who eat traditional foods, and foods that are nutritionally sound and without the added preservatives and pesticides. More pay and less guilt! It seems simple to us, but perhaps reveals a great deal about the obesity problem in our country. We choose the wrong products, and we want more of them.

So make a choice for yourself. Don’t fall for it. It’s an industry out there and food scientists will buddy up with marketers to get you to buy the most ridiculous products all because of nutritional claims or their promise to be the next weight-loss wonder.

Start eating instinctively, like we were born to eat: eat when you’re hungry and stop when you’re full. But, most importantly, make a choice to eat real food.

Make a choice to better your health and your life, for good.

Author’s Note: Views expressed in this commentary were developed from the book What to Eat by Marion Nestle and Margo Sandwich. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or Colorado Springs Military Newspaper Group, of the products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. The printer reserves the right to reject any advertising.

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Clark

From Page I

the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and went on to a flying career after graduation.

He went to England in June 1942 with the 31st Fighter Group, the first American fighter unit in the European Theater of Operations. His unit was flying British Spitfires on July 26, 1942 when his squadron and two other Allied units engaged a group of Luftwaffe FW-109s just inland of the French coast near the town of Abbeville. In the aerial melee, then Lt. Col. Clark became separated from his flight lead and was pounced on by four German fighters. Eluding these, he later took flak damage and nursed his aircraft into a crash landing along the coast near Cape Grisnez. He was soon taken prisoner, interrogated and transported to Stalag Luft III, in what is now Poland, as a prisoner of war.

In the POW camp, the general continued his efforts to resist the enemy. He wound up in the Allied officers’ camp and was one of the first Americans interned with the largely British officer population at the time. The Allied Airmen kept themselves well-organized, dividing up duties to continue their war effort in their ever-expanding camp. Lt. Col. Clark’s job demonstrated his organizational and managerial prowess.

“I became known as ‘Big S.’” General Clark wrote in his book, 33 Months as a POW in Stalag Luft III. “We knew that in the spring, when we moved to the next camp, the Germans would search each of us thoroughly. The task of getting our money, false travel papers, tools, compasses, maps and civilian clothing through the search would be a formidable one.”

While some small escape efforts were made, larger plans were in place. Individual escape efforts were attempted in March 1942 and 1943 with varying degrees of success and failure. But the Allied Airmen were working toward a more long-term objective. They spent months digging three underground tunnels to get past the camp’s perimeter and created their own mini-factories with the goal of equipping 200 escapes.

On the night of March 24, 1944 a group of Allied Airmen hazarded a sandy, claustrophobic tunnel to escape Stalag Luft III. The escape tunnel didn’t go far enough outside the wire and was dangerously close to the midpoint of one of the guard’s patrol routes.

“As it turned out, 76 men were able to clear the area and two or three were caught above ground at the exit,” General Clark wrote. “Some 50 to 60 men, still head to toe in the tunnel, had to crawl backwards all the way back … fumbling and thrashing in total darkness.”

Seventy-three of the Airmen were eventually recaptured and 50 were executed by the Germans. Memoirs and histories from that escape attempt formed the basis for the 1963 film, The Great Escape. Also during his years as a POW, General Clark documented everyday life in the POW camp. U.S. Army Intelligence disguised cameras and other equipment in parcels which were sent to specific POWs and packaged to appear as if the POW’s family had sent the parcel. Because some camps used POW labor with Axis oversight to inspect the high volume of inbound packages to the prisoners, vital pieces of equipment got through to the prisoners and enabled them to continue their escape and resistance efforts.

Through the general’s efforts, some of the compasses, maps and other clandestine equipment are on display in the McDonnell tunnel. Mr. Hodge, this is in the Special Collections section here at the Academy. Among those items is a compass made by a POW using part of a broken phonograph record and stumped “Made in Stalag Luft III.” But it was the covert camera use and General Clark’s ingenuity that helped tell future generations about the camp.

“My objective in the use of our secret cameras was to photograph all of the essential elements of life in prison camp including German personalities, the security facilities, the rations, the living conditions, and so forth,” he wrote. “I knew it would be quite a coup and would provide important informal history of the camp if we were able to get these photos home. This vital work was conducted at considerable risk, as most of it would be considered espionage.”

The film was not developed in the camp but kept hidden until after the war. The general also kept scrapbooks of life at Stalag Luft III: both life in the camp and clippings from German newspapers and magazines on German leaders and military equipment.

“This collection was being mounted in big scrapbooks, the covers made out of cardboard from the Red Cross parcels and pages of newspapers. It was beginning to become more than a hobby, almost an obsession, and it contained a wealth of information that I had vague hopes of someday getting home,” General Clark said.

The general and his fellow Allied prisoners were freed in May of 1945. His post-World War II assignments included staff positions at Tactical Air Command, Continental Air Command, Air Defense Command and Air Force Headquarters. He later served as chief of staff for U.S. Air Forces in Europe, vice commander of TAC in 1965 and commander of Air University in 1968 before taking the helm at the Academy in 1970.

His military decorations and awards include a Distinguished Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, an Air Medal, an Air Force Commendation Medal and a Purple Heart.

After retiring from active duty, the general stayed involved with the Air Force Academy. He became a founding member of Friends of the Library in 1987 and never missed an Academy home football game.

His funeral mass is scheduled for Wednesday in the Catholic. Cadet Chapel at 11 a.m., followed by internment at the Academy Cemetery.
Academy kicks off Women’s History Month

By 2nd Lt. Meredith Kirchoff
Academy Public Affairs

Women’s History Month officially commenced at the Academy during a kick-off ceremony here March 4.

The guest speaker, retired Chief Master Sgt. Linda Matthews, brought this year’s theme, “Writing Women Back into History,” to life for the audience during the gathering held at the Community Center Ballroom.

“When you think about it, women have been making history since the beginning of time,” she said, noting that women have been pharaohs and queens, Olympic athletes and astronauts.

The common thread among all of these women and the women of today is that “Every woman has her own story, and every woman makes her own history,” she said, as she began to identify specific women in uniform from the crowd at the event.

Senior Airman Jessica Morehouse, an Academy firefighter and member of a team that recently broke a firefighter challenge world record, was one of the women named.

“Do you realize the history you are making?” Chief Matthews asked Airman Morehouse and others.

She said each woman’s journey of service and sacrifice is a history that deserves to be written and that observing women’s accomplishments is not theirs alone, Chief Matthews said.

“They are a celebration of those who have shared our journey and loved us along the way,” she said and named husbands, children and friends as loved ones who share in each woman’s history.

“I see all the histories in the audience today,” she concluded, “Combined, you create a military that is superior; a nation that is free.”

Chief Master Sgt. Todd Salmanz, the Academy’s command chief, followed the guest speaker and related a personal story from his days as an in-flight refueling operator. He told the crowd how he always greeted the pilot he was refueling with, “How are you tonight, sir,” and never thought much of it. However, on this particular night, when he gave his usual greeting, he heard a female voice on the other end reply, “Great, Boom, thank you.”

The chief quickly realized that the pilot was female, and apologized to the “ma’am” flying the aircraft before moving on to the second pilot who was also, to his surprise, a woman.

“The history is out there. I challenge you to look forward as well as look to the past,” he said, emphasizing that stories like his are recurrent throughout the Air Force and should be remembered and treasured for their historical significance and personal impact.

National Women’s History Month began as a week-long observance of the historically significant and ongoing contributions of women. In 1987, at the request of museums, libraries, and educators, the entire month of March was designated as National Women’s History Month.

“March 11th is an annual celebration of the women who have made our nation great,” Chief Matthews said.

“Every woman has her own story, and the women of today is a celebration of those who have shared our journey and loved us along the way,” she said, concluding, “Combined, you create a military that is superior; a nation that is free.”

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National Women’s History Month
Harmon was ‘ideal man’ for 1st superintendent

By Staff Sgt. Don Branum
Academy Public Affairs

Lt. Gen. Hubert Harmon is not one of the best-known names in Air Force history, but he was one of the most important, a Class of 1970 graduate and author of a book about General Harmon said during the 52nd-annual Harmon Memorial Lecture at the Academy's Arnold Hall Theater March 2.

"I think (General Harmon) is a largely forgotten figure, even here," Dr. Phillip Meilinger told an audience of about 1,500. "I guess the average cadet probably knows little about the man, other than that his name is on the building where the superintendent's office is located."

Dr. Meilinger, a retired colonel who published "Hubert R. Harmon: Airman, Officer, Father of the Air Force" in 2009, talked about General Harmon's personal and professional history, including how he came to be installed as the Academy's first superintendent and what qualified the general for the job.

General Harmon graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1915 and quickly came to believe West Point's academic curriculum was lacking.

"The military training and academic curriculum were mired in the previous century. The curriculum was a single list of courses that all cadets took," Dr. Meilinger explained. "The classroom environment consisted of rote learning and cadets reciting their lessons on the instructor."

"Harmon's entire career had convinced him that military officers needed a broad education," Dr. Meilinger said. "It's got his wish. The Air Force Academy's curriculum in 1955 consisted of 53 percent math and sciences and 47 percent humanities and social sciences."

One of many challenges facing General Harmon upon establishing the Air Force Academy was creating the Honor Code, Dr. Meilinger said.

General Harmon chose the wording for the Honor Code — "We will not lie, steal or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does."

"Many youngsters were taught that they should not 'rat out' their friends, but the Toleration Clause required cadets to do precisely that: to inform on friends they saw committing an honor violation," Dr. Meilinger said. "For Harmon, the Toleration Clause was the heart of the Honor Code: it made the code self-policing."

Cadet 2nd Class Chris Cassidy, a military history major with Cadet Squadron 08, and native of Buffalo, N.Y., said cadets talk about many of the same challenges today.

"We often talk about the Honor Code," Cadet Cassidy said. "People have different opinions on how it should be enforced."

But the most important challenge facing General Harmon, and one that the Academy continues to face, is the institution's mission, Dr. Meilinger said.

"As early as 1948, Harmon wrote that the first and most important goal for an Academy was articulating its mission statement," he said. "As superintendent, he devised a statement that will sound familiar to all of you; it is not dramatically different from the Academy's mission statement today: 'The mission of the Air Force Academy is to provide instruction, experience and motivation to each cadet so that he graduates with the knowledge and qualities of leadership essential to become a junior officer in the United States Air Force, and with a basis for continued development throughout a lifetime of service to his country, leading to a readiness for responsibility as a future air commander.'"

"This is important. These words are important. But too often, we memorize them without internalizing them," Dr. Meilinger said. "Ultimately, the success of the Air Force Academy must be measured by its ability to produce military commanders — specifically, combat commanders. This is why we exist."

Several traits made General Harmon uniquely qualified to become the Academy's first superintendent.

The general was inclined toward education, having spent nine years taking college-level courses, Dr. Meilinger said. General Harmon also understood the political environment and counted President Eisenhower among his close friends.

Finally, General Harmon succeeded because he loved his people and the Academy. Dr. Meilinger recalled a tale General Harmon's wife, had told about the relationship between General Harmon and his cadets.

"When (General Harmon) left the office, he had walked out onto the sidewalk, and there were two cadets walking along," Dr. Meilinger said. "When they saw him, they stopped, came to attention, popped a salute, then smiled and said, 'Hi, General Harmon!' It made his day, and it summed up his life."

Dr. Meilinger said the combination of respect and affection says much about General Harmon and his impact on the Academy.

"Hubert Harmon, the father of the Air Force Academy, was the ideal man for the job," he concluded.
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Academy. Last year, it served more than 100,000 customers combined at the Equestrian Center and Farish Recreation Area. It also kicked off the “Year of the Air Force” with a Winter Expo ski extravaganza, with discounts for more than 3,000 base personnel; hosted “Vacation Destination” at the Peregrine Pines Family Camp with 2,300 recreational vehicles over the summer season, and hosted the Air Force Global Volksmarch as a joint-base event with Schriever Air Force Base.

In addition, the ORA manages the Cadet Bike Impound Program to turn quality unclaimed bikes into rentals, and provides a 515-RV storage area and operates an annex in the cadet area. Staff also serves as guides for such events as concerts, visits to landmark attractions and tours, including the “Magical Mystery Tours,” wherein participants board buses for unknown destinations.

The ORA also offers a myriad of offerings with trips, classes and maintenance services, and it is only one of three entities to hold a license to accompany customers on trips to Pikes Peak.

Outdoor adventure programmer Cecil Gaddy leads rafting and kayaking trips and treks for skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling and teaches classes, among his responsibilities.

Bill Coble is also an outdoor adventure programmer and leads bike rides for amateur and experienced cyclists, hikes and seminars on such topics as fly fishing, bike riding and star gazing, among other activities.

“Bill plays in the dirt, and I play in the water,” Mr. Gaddy quipped.

Mr. Coble said the programs are successful first because the center has something customers don’t have, such as equipment like skis. Second, customers more often than not don’t know about the activity or area they will visit, like the hidden landmarks at Moab, Utah, a favorite bicycling destination. Finally, he said the ORA staff can provide services like transportation to a ski area.

Mr. Gaddy said he is not surprised the Academy ORA came in first again this year. He pointed out the program organizes 360-plus activities every year.

“We put out a lot of programs, and quality programs, all year,” he said “We want to not just satisfy our customers but exceed their expectations.” The staff is also highly committed, putting in 14-hour program days, not counting scouting time for possible new activities.

“When you work, we work. When you play, we work harder,” he said.

Equestrian Center director Billy Jack Barrett said his staff strives to make a customer’s experience a positive one.

“All of our patrons are special to our staff. We make certain that they feel that way,” he said and pointed out riding trails, or simply brushing a horse, is a great stress reliever.

Mr. Barrett credits the success of his operation to great horses, fair prices and beautiful riding trails. The Academy is the only Air Force installation that owns its own horses.

Peregrine Pines Family Camp manager John Rodrigues said the camp is a favorite getaway for base personnel, and his staff works to make the facility the best it can be.

“The camp is on base, but the trees, squirrels, rabbits, birds, deer and even the bears and mountain lions make you feel like you are in the real outdoors,” he said, and added guests also appreciate the convenience of laundry, shower and Internet hook-ups, satellite television and a new playground. Coming soon is also a dog park.

“We have a very dedicated, helpful and friendly staff who make the operation such a success,” he said.

Mr. Coble said the ORA is always looking for volunteers to present unique programs like birding and geocaching. The center is always open to host special group outings as requested.

“We come up with ideas and just throw them out there,” he said. “We can be creative, and that’s the part I like.”
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Outreach efforts unite Academy, community

By Staff Sgt. Don Branum
Academy Public Affairs

When is being at the end of your rope a good thing? How about when you’re a middle- or high-school student visiting the Air Force Academy’s rock climbing wall as part of the Cadet Wing’s Youth Diversity Outreach program? Nearly 30 teenagers from the local community spent a full day with cadets, including three hours in the rock climbing room, Feb. 27. In addition to climbing, visitors met the Bird and Air Force cheerleaders and watched the Air Force basketball team play the UNLV Rebels.

Jarnell Reynolds, a student at Mitchell High School in Colorado Springs School District 11, said climbing was his favorite part of the day. “It was something different,” Jarnell said. “It’s not something you do every day.”

Volunteers found out about the program through the Cadet Multicultural Club, said Cadet 1st Class Carrie Wong K, the cadet in charge of the event and an exchange student from Belize who is assigned to Cadet Squadron 11. She signed up because she loves working with children and teens. “I did work like this when I was at home, so I’ll continue doing this when I return, probably with the YWCA,” Cadet Wong K said.

Col. Gail Colvin, the vice commandant of cadets, started the program in 2007 to familiarize students from the community with what the Academy offers and to let them interact with cadets, said Carol Lagatta, administrative assistant to the vice commandant. “This is a great way to expose children who may not have the chance otherwise to see what we’re really doing at the Academy,” Ms. Lagatta said. “Thirty cadets volunteered to spend the day with the visitors, and 26 families from Colorado Springs quickly filled the slots. Colonel Colvin said she hopes to carry the program into the future. “We want to reach out to the community and show them what’s available out here,” she said. “Our vision is to continue this partnership with the local community and encourage (children) to be hopeful for their futures, set goals and dream for something bigger than they had ever imagined.”
The Air Force Academy community packed the Falcon Club Saturday night to recognize its shining stars.

Retired Maj. Gen. Irving Halter Jr., the event’s guest speaker, advised the awardees and audience to stay humble.

“Being retired reminds me of a tombstone I once read on Boot Hill in Tombstone, Ariz.,” said General Halter, who was vice superintendent at the Academy from June 2005 to September 2006. “The one that I always recall says this: ‘Remember, as you are, so once was I. And as I am, you soon will be. Remember that.’”

“I’m here to tell you that retirement is just fine, but do not hurry towards it thinking that it will make you happy — it absolutely will not,” General Halter said. “You are living the best years of your lives — sure, deployments are tiring, workloads are heavy and raising families is difficult under these conditions, but you are doing it for a cause that transcends a paycheck, working alongside folks who share the bond of an oath to a sacred document that is still a beacon to the world.”

The general took a moment to congratulate the award nominees for their achievements.

“This is a big night, a proud night, one you will cherish their time in the Air Force and told attendees to stay humble.

“Surprise us,” he said. “Find someone who you know is a diamond in the rough, even though they look like coal to the rest of us. Make them your special project and get them here so that the rest of us can take notice and say, ‘We never knew they had that in them.’ Likely as not, a couple of you came from the same category, time to pay it back by paying it forward.”

Retired Maj. Gen. Irving Halter Jr. addresses the award winners and guests at the Academy’s annual awards banquet here Saturday. General Halter served as the vice superintendent from June 2005 to Sept. 2006.

By Staff Sgt. Don Branum

The Academy’s annual awards banquet was held in honor of those recognized for distinguished service throughout the year in their respective categories.

The Falcon Club hosted this year’s annual awards banquet for award winners and other attendees. A formal dinner and award presentation was held in honor of those recognized for distinguished service throughout the year in their respective categories.

To the award winners, he added, “Enjoy this moment and share the credit with those around you, and remember that now we expect even more, because your country needs more of what you can provide. And on behalf of all of us — family, friends, colleagues, subordinates, all who helped get you up on that fence post and are now aindaing at your success — we want to thank you for becoming what we knew you could be. Now get out there and make us proud.”
Falcons select national team with Wing Open Finals

By Valerie Perkin
Athletic Communications

March 12, 2010

With the chance to be named one of the “Dirty Dozen,” 18 members of the Air Force boxing team stepped into the ring under the lights of Clune Arena March 4 for the 52nd installment of the Wing Open Championships. With only one of the nine bouts ending before the final bell, the Falcons showcased their talents, as they demanded a spot on the Falcons’ national team.

Senior Sam Sheppard, making his collegiate debut, raced out of the corner at the first bell and quickly staked his claim on the 125-pound title. Sheppard showcased his quickness in the bout with Vicente Vasquez. The freshman couldn’t overcome his hard-hitting opponent in Sheppard, and after three standing eight counts in the opening round, the referee stopped the bout, giving Sheppard the title.

Junior Michael Mizes toed the line with freshman William Petersen in the 132-pound bout. Mizes, a native of Junction City, Kan., forced Petersen against the ropes in the early part of the bout, connecting on several hard body shots as well as several key uppercuts. Despite the referee calling a standing eight in each round, Petersen didn’t give up and battled Mizes to the end. The judges unanimously awarded the bout to Mizes, who improved to 7-0 on the year.

Defending Wing Open champion Daniel Starr returned to the ring in the 139-pound bout facing senior Bailey Ball, who was denied the title during his last appearance in the finals during the 2008 season. Ball, a native of Lahaina, Hawaii, came out hard, taking control of the ring early. Starr responded, and the two boxers traded punches until the final bell. Following a hard-hitting six minutes, the judges awarded the decision to Ball, who concluded his cadet career with his first Wing Open title.

Junior Michael Dunn, a two-time Wing Open finalist, stepped into the ring for the 147-pound contest, facing freshman standout Ben Fox. The two fought hard, trading blows and ring advantage for the entire bout. However, once the judges’ votes had been tallied, Dunn, a native of Leesburg, Va., was awarded his first Wing Open title.

Junior Joe Silvio, a Pennsylvania native, claimed his first Wing Open title after a well-fought bout with sophomore Tyrus Korecki in the 156-pound bout. For the second straight bout, punch tallies and ring control were traded between the boxers for the six-minute duration of the bout.

Results

112-lbs: Matt DeMars (CS 14) unopposed
119-lbs: Andrew Pineda (CS 05) unopposed
125-lbs: Sam Sheppard (CS 30) rsc-1 Vicente Vasquez (CS 05)
132-lbs: Mike Mizes (CS 24) dec. William Petersen (CS 12)
139-lbs: Bailey Ball (CS 04) dec. Daniel Starr (CS 32)
147-lbs: Mike Dunn (CS 01) dec. Ben Fox (CS 30)
156-lbs: Joe Silvio (CS 21) dec. Tyrus Korecki (CS 24)
165-lbs: Dalton Hall (CS 12) dec. Nick Cataldo (CS 08)
175-lbs: Mike McLain (CS 24) dec. Spencer Baucke (CS 25)
185-lbs: Will Keuchler (CS 30) dec. Reggie Howard (CS 12)
195-lbs: Cory Tintzman (CS 36) unopposed

Hywct.: Mike McLain (CS 16) dec. Richard Meldrum (CS 10)

In the 165-pound bout, junior Dalton Hall got the best of sophomore Nick Cataldo, the recipient of last year’s Wing Open Outstanding Boxer award. Hall, a native of Boonville, Mo., improved to 7-0 on the year with the judges’ selection, using a well-planned bout and an aggressor’s mentality.

Sophomore Mike McLain successfully defended his Wing Open title at 175 pounds, defeating classmate Spencer Baucke by decision. Despite being in the same class, McLain used his experience as a NCBA All-American to defeat his opponent, as he controlled the pace of the bout and kept Baucke against the ropes.

Junior Will Keuchler came out swinging from the first bell of his 185-pound bout with classmate Reggie Howard. He immediately connected on several hard shots, causing the referee to call a standing eight count in the first round. Keuchler caused stoppages from the referee in both the second and third rounds, before having his hand raised based on a unanimous decision, over Howard, from the judges.

The final bout featured the “big boys,” as heavyweight contenders junior Mike Chambers and senior Richard Meldrum stepped into the ring. Both boxers traded punches to the body and appeared to gain momentum from the crowd’s enthusiasm as the bout progressed. Chambers, a native of Harbor, Ore., gained the upper hand midway through the bout, but Meldrum responded, taking the decision to the final bell. Chambers, a finalist one year ago, claimed his first Wing Open title with the judges’ decision.

Three weight divisions went unopposed this year. Junior Matt Fairchild named as an alternate.

Four-weight divisions went unopposed this year. Junior Mike DeMars, the defending NCBA national champion at 112 pounds, repeated as the Wing Open champion in that weight division, while freshman Andrew Pineda was the untested winner in the 119-pound weight class. Senior team captain Cory Tintzman, who had dominated the heavyweight field for two straight years, dropped down to 195 pounds and went unopposed in that weight division. Tintzman’s Wing Open title is his third in as many years.

Following the bout, the judges and coaching staff selected Ball as recipient of the Clune Award, which is awarded each year to the outstanding boxer of the Wing Open Championships. Ball is the seventh 139-pound boxer to be awarded the Clune Award in its 31-year history.

The 2010 version of the Falcons’ “Dirty Dozen” will represent the Academy at the upcoming National Collegiate Boxing Association regional and national events. Air Force will travel to San Francisco for the NCBA West Regionals Thursday through March 20.
Editor’s Note: This story about Air Force Academy spring football is the second in a two-part series. The previous story ran in the March 5, 2010, Academy Spirit.

Many high school student-athletes will participate in signing days and appear to sign a National Letter of Intent with the Air Force Academy, but they are actually signing a Certificate of Intent which is a non-binding agreement that signifies an athlete’s commitment to follow through with the appointment process and allows them to participate in signing day for publicity purposes. The Academy is a non-scholarship institution and doesn’t use the National Letter of Intent, as do most civilian schools.

“Our recruiting process was very thorough and comprehensive,” said Head Coach Troy Calhoun. “We were very selective and pinpointed some key individuals and spent a great deal of time with them. Leadership is the most vital thing we are looking for. We looked hard to find young people that we feel will become great leaders for our Air Force. We want to find guys that are going to fit in and excel here.”

But Coach Calhoun and the majority of his coaching staff are now entering their fourth year leading Falcon Football, so there are several current players here who have been through this recruiting process and are bonafide members of the ‘been there, done that’ club, like sophomore defensive back Anthony Wright, Jr.

Wright was quarterback for Maple Heights High School in Cleveland, Ohio when the Academy entered the picture in the form of former linebackers coach Brian Knox, during the May of Wright’s junior year at Maple Heights.

Coach Knox kept in contact, as did other schools. Wright was recruited in his senior year by Buffalo, Ball State, and Ohio, as well as the Air Force Academy.

“Come August, I still wasn’t too high on Air Force because I didn’t know how to deal with the military aspect,” recalled Wright. “I liked the coaches, and everything they had to offer, but I thought the military life wasn’t for me, so it took me a while to make my decision.”

Wright ended up committing to Ball State. But, then he revoked his commitment to Ball State, and selected the Academy; he attended the Air Force Preparatory School in 2007. During his freshman season in 2008, Wright played in all 13 games and started 10, racking up 32 unassisted tackles, two forced fumbles, one tackle for loss and an interception. During the 2009 season, Wright had 54 tackles, seven of the Falcons’ 20 interceptions, one fumble recovery, and scored three touchdowns.

The key that made Wright select the Academy, and thus wreak havoc on opposing offenses, were the opportunities the Academy offered, and a visit to USAFA to see the Academy in person.

“I was with my dad and we just enjoyed everything they have, from the campus to the facilities to the education. As far as the interactions with the coaches, it was second to none. I felt at home. My dad felt it would be like a second home to me for the next four to five years,” said Wright. “Once I got home, we sat down and outlined the pros and cons of Ball State versus Air Force, and in the end Air Force was a better fit for me not only right now, but in the future.

The future beyond football was also a draw for fellow sophomore Jonathan Warzeka.

A high school quarterback and safety for the Temescal Canyon Titans in Lake Elsinore, Calif., Warzeka was playing in the virtual back yard of the San Diego State University Aztecs, just 62 miles up I-15 from Qualcomm Stadium, where the Aztecs host home football games.

“During my junior year, they were really interested in me attending there,” said Warzeka. “San Diego State was my first choice during my junior year. It was close to home, I had a lot of friends that went there, I love San Diego, and it just seemed a good fit at the time.”

During April of the same year, Coach Warren saw Warzeka play at a camp, and he liked what he saw. Now Air Force was in the running.

“I got a lot more interest from other schools, but it really just came down to Air Force and Navy; those were the only ones who really offered me anything,” said Warzeka.

He got along well with both coaching staffs, and both schools had the quality academics and opportunities after graduation to make the military training, academic rigors, Saturday Morning Inspections, and calling minutes as a dodder worth it. It came down to Air Force being a shorter distance from home, and in the Mountain West Conference.

“I liked that Air Force is in a conference, instead of Navy being an independent. You have that conference championship to play for,” Warzeka added. “And actually playing in Qualcomm was a dream come true, during my freshman year.”

Warzeka returns to Qualcomm this fall in what will be a home game for him, even though it’s technically an away game for the Academy versus San Diego State.

In Warzeka’s two seasons he has played in 25 games. Warzeka’s versatility gives the Falcons more options. He finished the season with 48 rushes for 267 yards and two touchdowns, had 18 receptions for 246 yards and one touchdown, as well as showing his QB skills with a 16-yard touchdown pass. As if he needs to do more, he added 12 kickoff returns for 482 yards, including a 100-yard touchdown return in the Falcon’s 47-20 Armed Forces Bowl game destruction of Houston.

Despite the bowl win, there’s little downtime for Falcon Football. For the coaching staff, Warzeka, Wright and the rest of the Fighting Falcon football team, it’s time for spring football. Spring football practice started Feb. 18 and wraps up Wednesday. Barring a change for weather or other Academy events, the remaining practice days are Tuesday and Wednesday at 3:30 p.m.

Falcon sophomore wide receiver Jonathan Warzeka stiff-arms San Diego State cornerback Matthew Kawulok to stretch his yards-after-catch, during the Falcons’ 26-14 win over San Diego State at Falcons Stadium. San Diego State was one of the schools which recruited Warzeka, before he chose to come to the Air Force Academy.

games played in a season and career, most season and career shutouts, most season and career wins and highest season and career saves percentage.

Men’s Soccer
The men’s soccer team announced its 2010 spring exhibition schedule Tuesday, its first game scheduled for Wednesday in Denver.

The Falcons will play six preseason games, including two games in Las Vegas April 10 and a three-game home-stand April 17-18.

Women’s Soccer
Falcon women’s soccer coach Larry Friend announced the team’s 2010 spring exhibition schedule Wednesday.

The Falcons will open the preseason at home against UCSS Wednesday, followed by games in Denver April 10 and April 11 and a final preseason game at home April 17.

Falcons @Home

Today
Men’s Tennis vs. Seattle University, 4 p.m., Tennis Courts
Ice Hockey vs. Army, 7:05 p.m., Cadet Ice Arena

Saturday
Lacrosse vs. Army, noon, Falcon Stadium
Men’s Tennis vs. St. Peters, 2 p.m., Tennis Courts
Ice Hockey vs. Army, 7:05 p.m., Cadet Ice Arena

Sunday
Ice Hockey The Army (tiebreaker), 7:05 p.m., Cadet Ice Arena
Summer employment

Students enrolled or accepted to a college, university, technical or vocational school may apply for summer jobs at the Air Force Academy through March 31. Applicants must hold a 2.0 or better grade-point average and be 16 years old by June 1. Positions available include clerical, food service worker and general laborer jobs. Announcements at www.usajobs.gov will contain details and specific examples. Applicants may e-mail completed applications to the 10th Force Support Squadron at 10fs.seep@usafa.af.mil. For more information, contact 10th FSS at 333-4363.

Free tax preparation

The Air Force Academy will prepare tax returns free for active-duty service members stationed at the Academy as well as cadets and retirees in Arnold Hall near Hap’s through April 15. Hours of service are weekdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

To have your tax return prepared, you will need a military ID card, wage and earnings statements from your employers and any interest and dividend forms. You will also need bank routing and account numbers if you would like your tax refund issued through direct deposit. For more information, contact the tax center at 333-3905.

Sports meetings

The sports council will meet at the Fitness and Sports Center Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

Additionally, an intramural soccer meeting is scheduled to be held at the Fitness Center March 29 at 3:30 p.m. For more information on these meetings, contact intramural sports director Dave Castilla at 333-4078.

Women’s History Month

The theme of Women’s History Month is “Writing Women Back into History.” For more information on Women’s History Month events, contact Senior Master Sgt. Alvena Salley at 333-4145 or Gina Moore at 333-4258.

Luncheon

Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Brig. Gen. Dana Born, the dean of the faculty, is the guest speaker. Admission is $10 for club members and $12 for non-members. Ticket points of contact are Senior Master Sgt. Alvena Salley for the superintendent’s staff, Cadet Wing and Plans and Programs (333-4145), Gina Moore for the 10th Air Base Wing, (333-4832), 1st Lt. Jason Pollard for the 10th Mission Support Group (333-0005), and Tech. Sgt. Sandra Hummel and Rachel Smith for the 10th Medical Group (333-5567 or 333-5855).

Health and Fitness Fair

Managing, with 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Drawing will be held for prizes. Fun Run/Walk/Bike 10th ABW Flagpole - March 29, 2 p.m.

Positions available include clerical, food service worker and general laborer positions. For more information, contact the tax center at 333-3905.

Civilian tuition assistance

The Civilian Tuition Assistance Program has money available for appropriated-funds employees of the Academy who are in an active civilian pay status. For more information or to apply for tuition assistance, call Christy Pfalmer at 333-5445 or 333-3444 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Transition Assistance Program

Monday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Designed for Airmen separating or retiring in the next two years, the Transition Assistance Program provides the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transition to the civilian workforce. Learn interviewing skills, resume writing, networking, negotiations, dress for success and more. Call 333-3444 to reserve your spot in the next available class. Newcomers’ orientation

St. Patrick’s Day Parade

The 27th-annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade will start at St. Vrain Street and run downtown to downtown Colorado Springs. Tickets are available at the Ticket Center and online at www.usafa-academyband.com for $10. The event is free and open to the public.

Academy Band appearances

The Air Force Academy Band’s ensemble Blue Steel will perform at the Pikes Peak Center Sunday at 2:00 p.m. The concert is free and open to the public.

The Air Force Academy Band will perform for the Chamber Recital Series at Sangre de Cristo Arts and Conference Center in Pueblo Monday at 7:30 p.m. and at Colorado College’s Packard Hall in Colorado Springs Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in a show called “Perception Playtime.” The performances will feature Tech. Sgt. Henrique De Almeida and friends. For more information, visit the Academy Band’s events page at www.usafa-academyband.com/events/.

Pikes Peak or Bust scholarships available

The Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo Parade will sponsor scholarships to family members of servicemembers killed or wounded in action while in a designated combat zone. The scholarships are awarded to family members who have been accepted to an accredited college or university and who are current college students and can be applied for either traditional degree programs or vocational and technical education.

Applicants must apply by March 30 and must be committed to attend during the 2010-2011 academic year. Students who have already been selected for full scholarships or have been selected to attend a second academic year are not eligible. For more information, contact the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce at 719-575-4325.
THE USO IN A BOX PROGRAM

The USO in a Box program can deliver a USO center to remote locations anywhere in the world. At moments like this, it’s easy to see how USO programs make a difference in the lives of our troops.

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