

Four inducted into AU Sports Hall of Fame

10/09/05

ALFRED, NY Four former student-athletes were welcomed to the Alfred University Sports Hall of Fame Saturday. John Walsh '84, William Ruffle '88, John Hoosock, '92 and Julie Francis '93 were inducted during banquet ceremonies held as part of the University's Homecoming weekend. The AU men's and women's soccer teams of 1988, which each played in the NCAA Division III championship tournament, were also honored at the banquet. Walsh was a three-year member of the track and field teams at AU (1982-84) and served as captain his senior season. During his career, he set several school records that still stand today. He owns individual records for the indoor high jump (2.07 meters, set in 1984) and the outdoor high jump (2.09 meters, set in 1984). He was also part of the indoor and outdoor 1,600-meter relay teams that established school records. He was Independent Collegiate Athletic Conference (ICAC) champ in the indoor and outdoor high jump in 1982 and was the ICAC indoor champ in both the high jump and 400-meter run in 1983, when he led AU to the team indoor ICAC title. Walsh spoke fondly of his time at Alfred University. He said he transferred to Alfred from Syracuse in part because of the reputation of the AU College of Ceramics but also because of the quality of the track and field program. "A big reason I came was Coach (Cliff) DuBrueil," Walsh said, referring to the legendary former AU track coach. DuBrueil, himself an AU Hall of Fame member, was at Saturday's banquet. "I owe a lot to Coach DuBrueil and to Alfred University. This was a great place to come to school. I learned a lot here." Walsh graduated from AU in 1984 with a bachelor's degree in ceramic engineering. He is a president and CEO of Ceramic Protection Corp. in Newark, DE, a manufacturer of ceramic products used in industrial and military applications. He lives in Newark, DE, with his wife, Rina, and their two children. Ruffle was a standout member of the men's soccer team from 1984-87, when he was a four-year starter who helped lead the Saxons to ECAC titles in 1984 and 1987. A regional All-American and ICAC First Team All-Star as a senior in 1987, Ruffle ranks sixth all-time at AU in career points (66), second in career goals (27) and ninth in career assists (12). In 1988, he served as an assistant coach on the AU women's team, helping guide the Lady Saxons to an NCAA tournament appearance. During Ruffle's career, AU won 35 games. He lists as his greatest thrill as an AU student-athlete the 1987 season, when he helped lead AU to a 12-3-4 record and a victory in the ECAC Upstate Championship game. Ruffle was humbled by being chosen for induction into the Hall of Fame, saying it's more a testament to the teammates he played with than his own individual talent. "Soccer was always like a second family," he said. "The team's goals always meant the most to me. The team was always first." Ruffle graduated from AU in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in mathematics. He earned his master's degree in education from Alfred in 1989. He is currently an instructor of mathematics at Northern Virginia Community College in Manassas, VA. He and his wife, Sheri, live in Reston, VA, with their two children. Hoosock is one of the top defensive players ever to play football at AU. A three-year starting linebacker who played from 1987-90, he holds the school record for tackles in a game (28, vs. Canisius in 1990) and season (154, set in 1990) and ranks third all-time in career tackles (350). He was a First Team Pizza Hut All-American in 1989, when he helped lead the Saxons to victory in the ECAC North Championship game, and a Second Team Champion All-American in 1990. Hoosock spoke with pride over being part of AU football's longstanding commitment to excellence and winning. "From the moment I walked onto campus, the seniors and upperclassmen taught me about the tradition here, and I wanted to be part of it," he said. "I couldn't have done it on my own. There were so many people coaches, teammates, former players who were mentors for me." Hoosock earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from AU in 1992. He lives in Skaneateles, NY, and is a materials logistics professional at IBM in Endicott, NY. Francis is perhaps the top goalkeeper ever to play women's soccer at AU. A four-year starter from 1989-92, she holds school career records for saves (542) and shutouts (22). She also holds the school records for lowest goals-against average in a season (.98, set in 1990). Francis was a First Team New York State Collegiate Women's Athletic Association All-Star in 1992 and a First Team Empire Athletic Association All-Star in 1991 and 1992. As a freshman in 1989, she was named team Rookie of the Year. That season, she helped lead the Lady Saxons to an 11-6-2 record and the ECAC Mid-Atlantic Championship. She had eight shutouts in 1989, with three coming in the ECAC playoffs. "Being back here is humbling," said Francis. "I'm extremely honored to be here representing Alfred University." Francis spoke to several of her teammates and her former coach at AU, Pat Codispoti, who were in attendance. "The camaraderie we had, on and off the field, was wonderful. It's very special to be back here with you," she said. To Codispoti she added: "You were a coach, a mother and a friend to us. This (induction) is a testament to you." Francis graduated from Alfred in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. She lives in Glenview, IL, and is vice president and general

manager for Coca-Cola Enterprises, Lakeshore (IL) Division. Both the men's and women's soccer squads enjoyed outstanding regular seasons in 1988, with the men going unbeaten at 13-0-3 and the women winning their first eight contests before finishing 12-4-1 going into the postseason. The men's team, coached by Steve Allison, would win its NCAA opening-round match at Clarkson before falling at RIT to end the year at 14-1-3. The Pat Codispoti-coached women, after winning two of three games in the state tournament and placing third, lost their opening-round NCAA match at William Smith to finish 14-6-1. The 14 wins for each team are single-season records. The AU teams dominated play, particularly during the regular season. The men outscored their opponents 46-7 and tallied seven shutout wins. The women scored 50 goals, to their opponents' 18, with eight wins coming via the shutout. The women would add a ninth shutout in a state playoff game against Albany. Both teams had All-Americans in 1988. The men had a national All-American in Martzel Mariscal and regional honorees in Tony Cocchito, Curt Jacobs and Pedro Oregui. Cocchito holds AU career goalkeeping records for wins, shutouts and goals against average. The women had a pair of regional All-Americans in Andrea Hynes and Denise Friedly, both of whom are AU Hall of Fame inductees. Hynes is the school's career leader in goals scored.