

# Issue 1

## April 14

**TO:** Fans, Friends, Alumni, and supporters of Oakland University Athletics

I'm excited to launch this series of letters to you, our supporters of Oakland University Athletics, to outline our vision of excellence for your athletics program. "Grizzly Bites" will deliver regular updates on the issues facing our athletics program as well as provide a forum for feedback and discussion on topics that are important to you.

**OU Athletics has a vision of being the top athletic program in The Summit League and getting our teams in NCAA postseason each and every year. We also strive to continue producing top academic student-athletes and carry on our tradition of Graduates and Champions here at Oakland University.**

Let me begin by telling you a few things that are important for our future.

We made a decision to improve our website and offer an online clothing store to fit the needs of our community of OU Athletic apparel back in the fall. We feel like we have surpassed anyone in The Summit League in this department and are moving in the right direction as we move forward in 2009.

Secondly, we must improve our customer base. Our location in Oakland County, approximately 30 miles north of Detroit, provides tremendous marketing opportunities, but we must provide value for the competitive dollar. We must make each customer feel that no matter the outcome of the contest they have attended, they made a wise decision to attend an OU event.

Thirdly, we must value our product. College athletics has grown into a very large industry, one that requires a substantial revenue stream each and every year. In subsequent writings, I will detail more about our financial status, both present and future, and how we may need to alter our current business practices to achieve a level of financial stability.

### **Hall of Honor**

We are excited to recognize our 22nd class of inductees into the Hollie L. Lepley Athletic Hall of Honor. Becki Bach Simmons, Ericka Burns, John Eley, Giovanni Gentile, Ashley McGhee, David Paxton, and Anita Rapp will take their place in history on Saturday, April 25 at our annual induction ceremony.

As our athletic department continues to move forward, it is important to recognize and honor the student-athletes that laid the foundation for our present and future success. This year's class represents the very best of our championship tradition here at Oakland and it is our privilege to have the opportunity to honor them.

### **Summit League Women's Golf Championship**

Oakland University is very excited about showcasing one of the finest golf courses in the state of Michigan, and probably the most demanding home course of any schools in the conference, as our women's golf program serves as the host of the 2009 Summit League Women's Golf Championship on Monday and Tuesday, April 20-21, at the Golf and Learning Center on Katke-Cousins Golf Course.

Admission is free and tee times will begin at 8 a.m. with parking in the usual spot along side Adams Road in front of clubhouse. We look forward to watching our women's golf team compete for a league title.

### **Congrats to Jessica Pike and Anders Jensen**

Senior women's basketball player Jessica Pike was named the Division I-AAA Athletics Directors Association Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Along with our entire athletic community, I would like to congratulate her on this prestigious honor.

As some of you may know, I sit on the NCAA Swimming and Diving Committee and spent two weeks in March at the championships for both men and women, hosted by Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. What a superb meet it was, and it was even more exciting for me to watch our own Anders Jensen qualify for the finals of the 200-yard backstroke, finishing 12th to earn All-America Honorable Mention honors. He led the men's swimming and diving team to its fourth consecutive top 35 NCAA finish, scoring five points to finish in 35th place.

### **Men's Soccer Hosts Kart-2-Kart Fundraiser**

I would also like to remind those of you who love the thrill of racing that our men's soccer team is hosting their annual go-kart fundraiser on Friday, April 17th at 6:30pm at the Kart2Kart Indoor Karting and Conference Center. This event is always a good time and provides much-needed support to our men's soccer program. Details are available by contacting Coach Pogue at [pogue@oakland.edu](mailto:pogue@oakland.edu).

### **Kangas Thrills OU Fans Once Again**

Senior Erik Kangas competed in the ESPN Dunk and Three-Point Championships at the Palace of Auburn Hills on April 2nd, during the weekend of the Final Four, which also aired on ESPN. The athletic department showed up in full support, as well as most Golden Grizzlies' fans, to cheer on our favorite 3-point shooter. He represented Oakland University well, making it all the way to the finals, finishing runner-up. Great job Erik!

**Basketball Teams Make Postseason**

For the first time since moving to Division I in 1999-2000, our men's and women's basketball programs earned postseason berths. The women's team had a phenomenal season, posting a Division I best 26 wins and earned a spot in the Women's National Invitational Tournament (WNIT), hosting Dayton in the first round.

Our men's basketball team was selected to participate in the inaugural CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament, winning a Division I record 23 games, one shy of the all-time school record of 24. The men defeated Mid-American powerhouse Kent State at home, before falling to Bradley University in heartbreak fashion on a 75-foot buzzer beater in Peoria, Ill.

The basketball programs provided us with another exciting season in the O'Rena, and your support of these two programs this year has been remarkable. With the returning players and talented recruits we have for next season, 2009-10 could be ever more special.

**Spring Sports in Full Swing**

Our baseball, softball, outdoor track and field, men's and women's golf programs, along with women's tennis are in full swing of competition. The Golden Grizzlies have hosted several home games in baseball and softball, and we look forward to seeing your support throughout the rest of the spring. It is free admission for all baseball and softball games.

If you cannot get out to an event, we hope that you enjoy one of our many new features on ougrizzlies.com, Gametracker, which allows our fans to follow game action via live stats on our website.