BSU Women Merge Program with Athletic Department

By Jim Poore
Idaho Statesman, April 17, 1975

To some, it's going to seem as if the women are muscling in on the men; to others it's just the prudent thing to do. But whatever it is, come September at Boise State, the women's and men's athletic departments — by mutual consent — are going to have a marriage of sorts.

At that time, the women's athletic department will join the men's program with Lyle Smith, Boise State's veteran athletic director, overseeing both operations.

"I guess we'd say it will happen at the next state board meeting, but the effective date of employment is probably Sept. 1," said Dr. John Barnes, BSU's president, about the move. "We'll be recommending to the board that Connie Thorngren, who this year in kind of an unofficial way has been developing the girls' sports program, be appointed assistant director of athletics for women. Of course, the idea there is that the program should be coordinated under one canopy."

The merging of the two programs will allow the women to take part in the school's athletic funding which draws its funds from student fees, football revenue, basketball revenue, Bronco Athletic Association contributions, concessions and programs receipts and rental of Bronco Stadium.

"Primarily, what we're doing is taking care of their funding," said Assistant Athletic Director Ron Stephenson. "The institution has made the decision the women's program will be funded with the men's program."

The women's budget, which totaled about $32,000 — including coaches' salaries, for the 1974-75 season — will jump to about $48,000 for the 1975-76 season.

Thorngren, a native of Arco and an Idaho State graduate, led the Boise State women's basketball team to the national tournament in March. She said the move is probably a wise one.

"I think probably it's a thing that needs to be done," said Thorngren. "There's a lot of questions that come up whether it's the best move or not, but I think at this time it's the logical move." Thorngren said the only thing the women are really worried about is whether or not they are able to maintain their own identity. "The thing that women want to see is that we do remain in control of our programs ... because we are in the men's programs we don't want to follow all the procedures the men do, we want to preserve our own identity."

From talking with Smith, Thorngren believes the women's program can accomplish this.

"In the past, he (Smith) has acted many times as an adviser to us," said Thorngren. "So he's been very helpful to us as has Ron Stephenson."

Few fans were in the stands in the early years of women's basketball.

Smith's job won't be one of active participation in the women's program. "It's more the coordination of the program," said Smith. "I'll approve schedules and expenditures, I'd say I'll just be the general administrator of their program."

The women will continue to make up their own budgets and draw up their own budgets which would then be submitted to Smith for his approval.

Neither Smith nor Stephenson are worried — as perhaps some backers of the men's programs are — that the addition of the women's program will lead to breakdowns in any other areas of the program.

"I think this will be all right. We're wanting to see a solid program and I think our women have done a fine job thus far," said Smith. "It's pretty obvious women's programs are going to come on. If we can contribute to their growth, we'll be glad to do it."

Stephenson — who feels his department especially will be able to help the women coordinate their travel plans — said, "I think it's great it's this way. Now we'll all be working toward a common goal."

Barnes, who is a strong advocate of a solid women's program, said the new budget and the fusion of the two athletic programs is just a step towards a better women's program, not the end result.

"Every year we're going to beef this up some, hopefully from gate receipts, appropriations and such," said Barnes. "It's a gain. I think a healthy gain. But we're not where we want to be. It should be expanding year after year until we get to a level where we want to be."
Women's Basketball 1970-94

By the fall of 1970, all Bronco varsity sports had moved to four-year competition. The first women's basketball team to compete at the intercollegiate level was formed that fall. Many of the same people who had met only moderate success in field hockey and volleyball earlier in the fall turned out for the team that was coached by Connie Thorngren. But both they and their coach had slightly more experience in basketball.

The first game in the history of the program was a 34-31 win over Northwest Nazarene. In its first year the team won 12 and lost only one. Despite that record, by season's end the team was still unknown in the Northwest. Because of that, the Broncos did not originally receive an invitation to the Northwest small college tournament. It was only after several passionate last minute phone calls that the tournament director made room for the team to enter. It did not take the Bronco women long to lose their anonymity. By defeating the University of Idaho, Puget Sound and Pacific Lutheran, they came home with the first place trophy and established a winning tradition over the next eight years that would result in a 101-21 record.

Members of the first team were Toni Turnbull, Penny Gillaspy, Barbara Eisenbarth, Ginger Waters, Jayne Van Wassenhove, Diane Westbrook, Carmen Latina, Kris Faull, Brenda Swift, Marsha Andrews, Francine Mortenson, Gail Lewis, Linda Teeter and Kristy Baker.

In the 1971-72 season, the team added Della Kunz, a talented transfer from Ricks College. After another successful regular season, the women entered the Northwest tournament, this time in the large college division. They lost the first game to defending champion and eventual tournament winner Washington State University, which had a 6'6" freshman. (Players that tall were very unusual at that time. BSU was considered a tall team because they had two players who were 6 ft.) BSU went on to beat the University of Washington and the University of Montana to finish the season at 15-2.

The following year was a rebuilding year (9-4) because of the loss of center Westbrook and guard Turnbull to graduation. But the Broncos roared back in 1973-74, taking an 11-0 record into the Northwest tournament at the University of Oregon. The team's success was largely due to the addition of three talented freshman from Boise's Capital High School — Elaine Elliott, Kendra Falen and Elaine Godfrey. The team began the tournament by defeating Oregon State but then lost again to Washington State in the semifinal round. Finishing with wins against Portland State and Simon Fraser, they placed third in the tournament with a season record of 14-1.

The Early Days

When the women first started playing intercollegiate games, they paid their own expenses, including officials, uniforms and travel. Officials often traveled with the team and a collection was taken to pay for their rooms. The cars of coaches and students were used for transportation, and officials often ended up being drivers as well. Because staying overnight was so expensive, the team usually traveled home immediately after a tournament, even if it meant driving all night. Several Oregon trips ended with drives back in snowstorms.

During the second year of competition, approximately $500 was donated by the Physical Education department to pay for officials. In 1973, the women's teams were allowed to use school vans for their trips.
The 1974-75 season was an outstanding one for the women's basketball program. Only four years after the team was assembled, they qualified for a trip to the national tournament. The season began with wins over Western Washington and Washington State and ended with victories over those two teams in the Northwest tournament. The Broncos went on to nationals with 22 wins and only one loss on the road at Eastern Oregon, 40-36. The Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) national tournament at James Madison College in Harrisonburg, Virginia, featured the top 16 teams from the large colleges across the nation. It was the only national tournament the BSU women's basketball team attended prior to 1994.

The results of the tournament proved disappointing for the Broncos as they lost to Kansas State University 65-37 and to long time AAU champions, Wayland Baptist, 93-37. Still, the Broncos were young, inexperienced in national competition and determined to have another opportunity to play at that level. They had played and beaten one other team in that tournament earlier in the season — nationally ranked Utah State, 62-49.

The tournament appearance ushered in a new era in women's sports at Boise State. It was the first time many of the women had ever flown in a plane and the first time any had been to Washington, D.C. The Idaho Statesman had a representative travel with the team who photographed the games and the front page of the paper was filled with news about the trip. Team members who traveled to the national tournament were JoAnn Burrell, Elaine Elliott, Kendra Falen, Elaine Godfrey, Deanna Brower, Bette Will, Connie Coulter, Cindy Fralick, Maureen Hirai,
Theresa Anderson, Karla Merrill and Bev Ballard.

A return to the national tournament eluded the Broncos as they missed by one game each of the next two years. In 1975-76, the team went 18-5 on the season and was on a 14-game winning streak before they lost by two points to Portland State in the championship game in Portland. In 1976-77, BSU again won 18 games and lost only four. They hosted the tournament but even with a record 2,000 fans in the old Bronco Gym, the team again lost the championship game, this time to Western Washington by a single point, 62-61.

The team changed dramatically the next year as several outstanding players graduated. However, Wade Trophy and Kodak All-American nominee JoAnn Burrell was a senior and a junior college standout guard, Vicki Hileman (later to be Wade Trophy nominee), transferred to BSU. The team ended the season by beating league-leading University of Washington. However, Burrell was injured and unable to travel to the tournament in Bellingham, Washington. The team seemed to lack confidence without her presence and losses against Portland State and Western Washington left the Broncos at 17-6 overall and 11-4 in league.

Kendra Falen and Darlene Bailey served as part-time assistants in basketball at the same time as they were head coaches of volleyball. The first full-time assistant, Karen Jones, served for one year and in 1981 Barbara Eisenbarth, a former multi-sport athlete at BSU, became the assistant for the next three years. This was the beginning of active...
Women's Athletics in the 1980s
By Rosemary Wimberly

The history of women's sports on the varsity level dates to the arrival of Connie Thorngren on campus and represents recent history when compared to the men's competition.

The women's sports program became a part of the Athletic Department in 1975. Coach Thorngren became women's athletic director, and the budget for women's sports increased from $32,000 to $48,000 for the 1975-76 season.

In a newspaper interview, Thorngren said that the women "will continue to make up their own schedules and draw up their own budgets which would then be submitted to the athletic director" for final approval. President Barnes viewed the union of the two athletic programs as a "healthy gain."

The decade of the 1980s saw many changes in the scope of women's athletics at Boise State. The 1979 Title IX legislation called for the university to provide equal funding in both men's and women's programs. Dr. John Kelser quickly wrote a reply to Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph A. Califano Jr. stating that Boise State University interpreted the law to mean equal funding per student in each similar sport.

He explained that football equipment and uniforms far outweighed the cost of any other sport and similar dollars could not be spent on any other sport. He said that consideration had to be given to the revenue that a particular sport will produce as well as the spectator interest that it will generate. He said, "these two factors are definitely taken into consideration when we budget for our various sports. Our per capita expenditure is greater for revenue-producing sports than it is in our non-revenue-producing sports."

He went on to say that he hoped the Title IX guidelines would exclude football and men's basketball, the two sports that generated the most money and paid the highest coaches' salaries. The letter apparently expressed Boise State's willingness to comply with the intent of the law. Title IX assured women athletes of scholarship dollars and equal opportunity.

Such funding and opportunity placed new pressures on women's sports to be more competitive. In the wake of the changes, the all-women's AIAW conference disbanded, and the teams came under NCAA rules in the 1980-81 season. Below: Sunn Smallwood, #25 in front, and Ardena McInelly at guard.

recruitment for female athletes at Boise State. Prior to this time, letters were sent to promising athletes, but paid campus visits and full grants were not given.

The teams during these years were not nearly as successful in the win-loss column as previous teams. However, there were some outstanding individual efforts as the team finished 9-15 in 1979-80, 8-19 in 1980-81 and 15-13 in 1981-82. Outstanding players included Sunny Smallwood, Cheron Moyle, Ardena McInelly and LeAnne Nordahl at guard; Connie Sandland, Ruth Fugleberg, Marla Curtis and Dona McCanlies at forward; and Karla Meier, Nancy Phillips, Karen Scriver and Tami Stuart at center. In 1981, freshman Curtis set a school record in free throw percentage with 92 percent on the season while averaging 7.7 rebounds a game. In the two years she attended BSU, Fugleberg set a career scoring record average of 16.2 and Phillips averaged 1.3 blocked shots a game. Meier ended her career in 1982 as one of the top rebounders and scorers in Bronco history. She is second on the career scoring list with 1,434 points. She is first in career rebounds with 975 and holds the record for most rebounds in a season.

The Broncos joined the newly formed Mountain West Athletic Conference in the 1982-83 season. The conference consisted of five schools from the former Northwest Basketball League — BSU, Montana, Montana State, Portland State and Eastern Washington — and three new schools, Idaho State, Weber State and Idaho. The record for the season was a disappointing 10-15. However, Curtis was selected to compete with the Athletes in Action summer program on their Latin American summer tour.

Thorngren entered her 14th and last season of coaching the women's basketball program in 1983-
Recruiter Barb Eisenbarth had an excellent year bringing in several outstanding freshman from strong California programs, including Stephanie Bassard, Penny Williams and Kathy Smith. However, the freshmen did not have enough experience to lift the program to the winning side and the season ended at 10-15. One highlight of the season was a first place finish in the BSU Holiday Invitational tournament.

The Broncos played hot and cold during the season. At one point in February 1984 they had a four-game win streak, including two games on the road against Idaho State and Weber, but they finished the season with an 11-16 mark. Sandland’s selection to the Mountain West Athletic Conference second team ended the career of the fourth-leading scorer in BSU women’s basketball. In her four years with BSU, Moyle set records in assists and steals.

Tony Oddo became head women’s basketball coach in 1984 and DeAnne Nelson joined the staff as an assistant. In recruiting, Oddo concentrated on California and the Bronco women’s program attracted some solid new talent. Oddo’s first two teams included Lesley Slaton, Stephanie Bassard, Missy Dallas, Heather Nemchick and Jill Silva from California, Jan Ecklund and Debbie Austin from Washington, Deidre Tuten from Arizona and a lone Idahoan, Trish Widner from Midvale, Idaho.

Despite good recruiting, the Oddo-coached teams did not have winning seasons for the first three years. Ecklund made the all-conference first team in 1987. Not until 1987-88 did the women’s basketball team get back to a winning season. A new assistant coach, Yvonne Brittain, joined Oddo in completing the most successful season since joining NCAA Division I ball in 1982, with a record of 18-10 overall and 10-6 in conference.35

Led by seniors Marj Connors and Dallas and junior Ecklund from Oddo’s first team, the Broncos qualified for post-season play in the MWAC tournament. The team, a blend of experience and youth, saw Ann Jensvold as the leading scorer and rebounder. She received scoring and rebounding help from Ecklund and Kelly Heagy. The Broncos also had a strong bench with Jocelyn Pfeifer, Becky Sievers, Niki Gamez and Lisa Enger.
The Broncos, seeded fourth, lost to the University of Montana in the semifinal round of the championships. Montana went on to win the MWAC title. Jensvold made the All-Mountain West first team, and guards Dallas and Connors received honorable mention.

In 1988-89, it was on to the Big Sky, which had absorbed the MWAC. The Broncos again finished 18-10 overall and 10-6 in the conference. The Broncos were seeded third for the Big Sky tournament, but a loss to the University of Idaho in the first round at Missoula ended their season.

Credit for a winning season went to the leading scorers — Ann Jensvold and Jocelyn Pfeifer, and their teammates Ecklund, Gamez and Sievers. Wendy Sullivan and Heagy led the way on the boards. The Bronco defense ranked among the nation's top ten by holding opponents to an average 56.2 points a game. This squad performed in the classroom, too, as Connors, Ecklund, Gamez, Heagy and Sullivan made the Big Sky All-Academic team.

The BSU women's basketball program took a new direction in April 1989, hiring June Daugherty from the successful Stanford Cardinal program, where she served as a top assistant.

In Daugherty's first year as Bronco coach, the women recorded 19 wins and 12 losses and were 11-5 in the Big Sky. The 19 wins were the most since 1974-75, when the Thorngren-coached team racked up 22 wins and three losses. The 1989-90 team made it to the Big Sky Conference tournament, but lost in the opening round as Montana swept the field. Gamez made the All-Big Sky Conference first team, and she, along with Heagy, Shelly Stoican and Sullivan, were named to the All-Academic team.

Enthusiasm among the Bronco fans had increased as the word spread that "women's basketball was worth watching." The fans helped rank the 1990-91 team among the top 30 NCAA Division I schools for home attendance, averaging 1,433 per game.

The Broncos stepped their schedule up a notch that season, and Daugherty's young team finished with an 11-16 record, just missing a conference playoff spot. Senior forward Sievers and freshman center Lidiya Varbanova received all-conference honors.

Daugherty's program kicked into gear in her third year when the 1991-92 women brought Boise State its first Big Sky Conference regular season championship with a 14-2 conference record and 22-7 overall mark. During the season, the team drew record-breaking crowds to their games. The team defeated the University of Idaho three times during the season, but the key to the title was a road sweep of Montana and Montana State, one of the most difficult tasks in Big Sky basketball — be it women's or men's.

Varbanova and her Bulgarian country-woman Irena "Tory" Torrolova joined Lyndsie Rico, Angie Evans, Janet Soderberg, Shelly Wright, Wendy Myers, April Cline and Trish Bader to form a powerhouse team.
BSU's regular-season championship brought the Big Sky women's basketball tournament to the Pavilion for the first time. The women enjoyed their third victory over the Vandals in their semifinals. However, in the championship game, the sharpshooting of All-American Shannon Cate of the Montana Grizzlies ended the Bronco season. A great season it was — both on the court and in the classroom — as six Bronco players (Varbanova, Cline, Wright, Rico, Torrolova and Bader) were named to the Big Sky All-Academic Team. Varbanova led the nation in field goal percentage and the team set or equalled more than 25 records, including a conference attendance record of 9,556 for the Montana game. The Broncos averaged 3,208 fans per league home game.

BSU women's basketball stepped up its schedule again in 1992-93, getting four Pac-10 schools on the docket. Three of them came to the Pavilion: Washington, California and Oregon. All three fell to the Broncos before increasingly boisterous crowds. A win over Washington State in Pullman gave the Broncos a 4-0 mark that season against Pac-10 competition.

The Bronco women won 19 games and lost eight during the 1992-93 season, posting a 9-5 record in Big Sky play. The Broncos finished the season third in the Big Sky, behind Montana and Montana State. Evans, Bader and Varbanova were named to the All-Conference first team, and Cline received honorable mention. Evans made the all-tournament team at the Big Sky championships held at Montana State.

Varbanova, who won the national title for shooting percentage for the second consecutive year, led the Broncos in scoring with 18 points per game and was named a Kodak All-American. She was also one of nine finalists for the Champion Player of the Year award, and was named to the Bulgarian national team during the summer.

During the off-season, Bader became the first BSU basketball player to win a spot on the U.S. Sports Festival team that competed in San Antonio, Texas, in the summer.

The Broncos had lost only two seniors — April Cline and Lyndsie Rico — when the 1993-94 season began. There were early signs that this Bronco team would be something special. In a tough pre-conference schedule, the Broncos beat Pac-10 teams California, Washington State and Oregon and WAC power BYU. Only road losses to Arkansas and Minnesota marred the early season. The Broncos got off to a quick start in conference play, and by mid-season were nationally ranked for the first time in history. The Broncos climbed as high as 17th in the nation after beating Montana in front of 11,558 fans in the Pavilion.

The conference race was a battle between Montana and BSU, with each team losing to Montana
State and beating each other at home. After posting identical 12-2 records, Montana won a coin toss to determine the host site for the Big Sky tournament. The Broncos lost their third matchup with the Grizzlies 81-65, but were still invited to play in their first NCAA tournament. The tournament pairings matched the Broncos against the powerful Washington Huskies of the Pac-10. Playing in Seattle, the road-weary Broncos couldn't keep pace with the Huskies and lost 89-61.

Their early exit from the NCAA did not dim the accomplishments of the 1993-94 team. Led by Varbanova and teammates Evans, Heather Sower, Torrolova and Bader, the Broncos posted a 23-6 season, the most wins in the school's history. The team also blocked a record 107 shots and held opponents to an all-low 38 percent field goal mark. Bader set a school record for assists and Varbanova made the most free throws in a season. Varbanova set a new career point record, scoring 1,834 to eclipse the previous mark set by Karla Meier by 400 points. The Bulgarian native also set a new national record for field goal percentage. The starting five received strong bench help from Verna Guild, Michelle Schultz, Deidre Pierson and Lisa Workman.

### 1993-94

**Big Sky Co-Champions**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Player</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tricia Bader</td>
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<td>Lisa Workman</td>
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<td>Verna Guild</td>
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<td>Lidiya Varbanova</td>
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Head Coach: June Daugherty
Assistant Coaches: Trisha Stevens, Jill Stevens and Mike Daugherty

### Lidiya's Legacy

When Bulgarian basketball star Lidiya Varbanova decided she would not return home from the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle, little did she imagine what a good hand fate would deal. A friendship with an assistant coach eventually led her and teammate Tory Torrolova to Coach June Daugherty and Boise State. Bronco basketball has not been the same since.

By the time Varbanova's career as a Bronco was over, she owned every scoring record and had led her team to its first national ranking and first appearance in the NCAA tournament. She was the only player in conference history to be named to the All-Big Sky first team four times. Varbanova also made her mark at the national level, leading the country in field goal percentage her sophomore and junior years and setting a national career record of 67.4 percent.
Wrestling in the 1970s
By Matt Taylor

In the 1970s Boise State built a wrestling dynasty that would endure until the Big Sky Conference dropped the sport in 1987. Led by Coach Mike Young, Bronco teams won 10 conference titles and featured several wrestlers who went on to compete in the national championships. The foundation for the winning decade was laid in 1972. With Bill Bowman still at the helm, the Broncos welcomed a solid group of wrestlers that included freshman Mark Bittick, a 370-lb. Junior Olympic champion and four-time state champion from Middleton. The freshman class also included Dave Chandler of Aberdeen, who would go on to become one of the most successful wrestlers in Boise State history. The season began with assistant coach Mike Young's proclamation that the team might be the best yet. He was not wrong. The team took a 7-3-1 record into the Big Sky meet, but was unable to overcome a powerful Idaho State team that had dominated the conference for several years. But the Broncos finished a strong second, with Chandler, Tom Harrington and Jerry Elliott winning their weight classes.

Young, who wrestled internationally while an assistant, ended his competitive career and took over the head coaching duties for the 1973 season. With five matches against nationally ranked teams, the Broncos ended the dual season at 5-5-1 and then went on to take fourth in the Big Sky.

Chandler at 158 pounds and Harrington at 134 pounds won league championships and earned berths in the NCAA championships in Seattle.

The Broncos bounced back to have one of their best seasons in 1974. They won the first of many Big Sky wrestling championships and posted a phenomenal 13 wins and one loss record in dual competition against the toughest teams in the West, including the previously unbeaten Idaho State Bengals. The Broncos had never beaten Idaho State in either dual or tournament competition, but in 1974 they did both. The Boise State team also won the prestigious Beehive Wrestling Tournament in Provo, Utah. They defeated such western powerhouses as Oregon State, BYU, Washington State, and the universities of Oregon and Washington.

The 1974 Big Sky championship brought to an end seven years of wrestling domination by Idaho State. The Broncos took six first-place Big Sky championships in 1974: Mark Hatten, 126 pounds; Jeff Howell, 142 pounds; Randy Watson, 150 pounds; Chandler, 158 pounds; Greg Leonard, 167 pounds; and Rory Needs, 177 pounds.

With most of the team returning, the 1975 Bronco grapplers won another Big Sky tournament with five individual titles, including impressive wins by Chan-

Dave Chandler was one of the all-time best wrestlers in the Big Sky. With his incredible strength and agility, he became the first Boise State wrestler to win the Big Sky title every year of his collegiate career. He placed fifth in the NCAA championships his senior year, and was named the Big Sky's outstanding wrestler in 1973 and 1974. In four years he lost only seven matches.
The 1980s

In the 1980 season, the Broncos, led by Big Sky champions Barrett, 126 pounds; Doug Pugmire, 142 pounds; and Wood, 167 pounds, captured yet another Big Sky championship. Wood was named the tournament's outstanding wrestler. Wood and Barrett red-shirted the 1981 season because of injuries. Despite four first-place championships in the Big Sky competition, the Broncos lost the title for the first time since 1974 when Weber State edged them by 3/4 of a point.
Four 1981 champions advanced to the NCAA wrestling championships — James Williams, 134 pounds; Harold Wittman, 190 pounds; Braseth, 177 pounds; and Homer Lord, 167 pounds.

With Wood and Barrett back after missing a season with injuries, the Broncos again won the Big Sky championship in 1982 and sent five wrestlers to the NCAA championships: Barrett, 126 pounds; Clayton Armstrong, 134 pounds; Ben Coronado, 142 pounds; Wood, 177 pounds; and Wittman, 190 pounds.

At the NCAA meet Barrett came within one win of becoming a national champion. He advanced through the winners bracket, reaching the finals against defending champion Dan Cuestas of Cal State-Bakersfield. A loss put Barrett in second place, the highest finish for a Bronco wrestler since the junior college era. Led by Barrett, the Broncos took 15th at the NCAA meet, their highest national finish ever. Barrett would go on to win his fourth Big Sky title in 1983, joining the elite group of David Chandler and Randy Watson as four-time champions.

The 1983 wrestling season featured one of the toughest schedules ever, with early competition in the Beehive Tournament at Provo, Utah, and the Western Open in Las Vegas, which included powerful wrestling schools like Oklahoma State, Oklahoma, Louisiana State and Iowa State. Four Broncos captured Big Sky championships in 1983, including Tracy Yeates, 118 pounds; Barrett, his fourth at 126 pounds; Coronado, 150 pounds; and John Bauman, 190 pounds. The team again placed second.

In 1984 Yeates took his second Big Sky championship at 118 pounds and was joined by Stan Armstrong at 126 pounds and Dan Bicandi at 150 pounds as the Broncos slipped to third.

The Broncos placed only two wrestlers in the 1985 Big Sky championships as Armstrong captured the 134-pound title match and Randy Schimmel took the 142-pound contest. But BSU still won another league title.

Yeates, wrestling at 126 pounds, scored his third Big Sky conference championship in 1986 and Coronado also captured his third championship at 150 pounds. Armstrong at 134 pounds and Schimmel at 142 pounds also took Big Sky titles as BSU again was crowned champion.

In 1987, Coronado at 150 pounds became the fourth Bronco to win four Big Sky championships. He was joined in the championship ranks by Travis Krawl at 134 pounds and heavyweight Pat McDade. The team took second in what was to be the last Big Sky meet.
A New Era in Pac-10

An era came to an end in 1987 when the Big Sky dropped wrestling as a conference sport. Three schools—Idaho State, Montana State and Montana—had earlier given up wrestling. The Broncos broke into their new league, the Pac-10, in 1988. The Big Sky days were over, and much tougher competition awaited the Bronco wrestlers in their new conference.

The Broncos won three individual Pac-10 championships during their first four years in the conference. The first came in the heavyweight division by McDade in 1989. He later went on to finish fourth at the NCAA tournament and earned All-American status. McDade, who was a Big Sky champion in 1987, had been recruited to Boise State from Winnemucca, Nevada, by football coach Lyle Setencich.

The second and third Pac-10 titles belonged to Nels Nelson, who won the 1991 and 1992 championships at the 150-pound weight class. In 1992, he ranked fifth in the nation and received an automatic berth into the NCAA championships, where he placed seventh and was named an All-American.

As a team, Boise State had a tougher time against the much larger programs of the Pac-10 than it did in the Big Sky. The Broncos' highest finish came in 1989 when the team placed third to winner Arizona State and runner-up Oregon. Other finishes have been eighth in 1988, sixth in 1990, ninth in 1991 and fifth in 1992.

In 1993, the Broncos placed fifth in the Pac-10 championships, held in the BSU Pavilion for the first time. The meet was dominated by national power Arizona State, but the Broncos placed ahead of Oregon, Cal State-Fullerton, Stanford and UC-Davis.

Four Broncos emerged from the consolation brackets to reach the NCAA national tournament. The three third-place finishers were heavyweight Tony Vanek, Andy Leathers at 158 pounds and...
Tony Evans at 142 pounds. Paul Jackson, 177 pounds, received a wild-card berth. This was the first time the Broncos had sent four wrestlers to the NCAA championships since joining the Pac-10 in 1988.

The 1994 Broncos were hit by injuries and lack of depth during the regular dual meet season, but by tournament time, the team had healed well enough to take sixth in the Pac-10 tournament. As the year before, four Broncos qualified for national competition — Brett Bingham at 118 pounds, Evans at 142 pounds, Joey Gilbert at 150 pounds and Charles Burton at 167 pounds. Called the “surprise team” of the NCAA tournament by Amateur Wrestling News, the Broncos finished 21st, the second highest finish after the 1982 team’s 15th place.

Bingham led the team by taking third place and earning All-American honors. Bingham almost made it to the finals, but lost his semifinal match 2-1. Bingham’s finish was the highest nationally for a Bronco since Scott Barrett took second in 1982. As a team, the four Broncos wrestled 18 matches before being eliminated, the best-ever showing at the national level.

Men’s Track and Field 1970-94

In the fall of 1968 Boise State bid a fond farewell to the Intermountain Collegiate Athletic Conference and two years later joined the Big Sky Athletic Conference. In 22 years of ICAC competition, the Bronco track and field teams had won eight championships and had finished second three times. No other conference member could claim such success. The transition to Big Sky track competition was not easy. The early teams had a wealth of individual talent, but little depth, especially in the field events. The Broncos finished fourth in the Big Sky in 1971 and sixth in 1972, but improved to third in 1973.

A pair of outstanding athletes, Mike Bennett and Gerry Bell, brought recognition to the Bronco program in the early ‘70s. Bennett, an Oregon native, was a standout higher jumper and 400-meter hurdler, while Canadian Bell set records in the triple jump and long jump. In 1972, Bennett’s 6’8” high jump set a school record that lasted until the early 1980s, while Bell’s 50’ 10 3/4” triple jump record lasted even longer. Bell was selected
as a member of the 1976 Canadian Olympic team.

Ray Lewis retired as head track and field coach in 1973 after 18 years and eight conference championship teams. Ed Jacoby took charge of BSU track and field in 1973, and by 1974 the Broncos were contenders in the Big Sky. That year, the Broncos—sparked by triple jumper Bell, runners Bob Walker and Bennett, sprinters Sam Jenkins and Larry Stark and hurdler/long jumper Ken Carter—took second place at the Big Sky Conference meet, and Karl Bartell, Jenkins and Bell qualified for the NCAA meet.

The Broncos finished fourth in the Big Sky championships in 1975, but Sam Jenkins won the 220 in 21.42 seconds and became BSU’s first titlist in that event.

Boise State’s results in the Big Sky were up and down for the rest of the 1970s.

In 1976, the Broncos finished sixth in the conference, moved back to fourth in 1977, regained second in 1978 and ended the decade with a tie for third place.

While the team had yet to win its first Big Sky title, several student-athletes set conference records or won individual titles during the 1970s.

1971 — Gerry Bell won the outdoor triple jump with a 46' 2" mark.
1972 — Brad Weidenbach won the outdoor pole vault at 15' 4.5".
1974 — Ken Carter became BSU’s first Big Sky long jump champion at 24' 3" and Bell broke the Big Sky triple jump record with a 50' 10" jump.
1975 — Sam Jenkins won the 220 in 21.42 seconds and became BSU’s only outdoor champion in this event.
1977 — Ross Masson won the 440 hurdles in 52.39 seconds.
1978 — Steve Collier won the 1500 meters with a time of 3:51.77 minutes, Rod Pearsall won the 200 meters in 21.43 seconds, Ken Sam won the 100 meters in 10.7 seconds and Sean Cafferty won the 60-yard hurdles in 7.53 seconds and became BSU’s only indoor champion of the 1970s.

BSU’s fortunes in outdoor track and field were mixed as the 1980s began: the Broncos were seventh in the Big Sky in 1980, eighth in 1981 and fifth in 1982. The best finish for the Broncos during the decade was second in 1988—until 1989. That year the Broncos captured their first Big Sky outdoor title, scoring 51 more points than second place Weber.

Leading the Bronco victors with first place finishes were Danny Sheets in the javelin, Steve Muse in the discus and shot put, David Lawyer in the 400-meter dash and the relay team of Eugene Greene, Byron Canty, Renwood Wells and Lawyer.

Besides victory in the Big Sky, the program received additional honors in 1989 when Jacoby was selected as District VII and Big Sky Coach of the Year.
While team titles eluded the Broncos in the 1980s, five individuals achieved All-American status for their outstanding performances. One was named to the Israeli Olympic team and one track/cross country runner was named a Rhodes Scholar.

The first All-American was Jake Jacoby, son of Coach Ed Jacoby. Jacoby was a member of the track team from 1981-85 and in 1982 he became the first Bronco to break the seven-foot mark in the high jump. He was a Big Sky Conference champion in both indoor and outdoor track in 1982-84 and won the 1985 outdoor meet. He set a record of 7' 5 1/2" in 1984. Jacoby was named an All-American when he won the NCAA meet in 1983, the first Bronco to win a national track and field championship since the junior college era. Since then he has continued to participate in meets worldwide.

Steve Muse was recommended to Jacoby by the father of Carl Lewis, who was Muses' high school coach. By his sophomore year, 1986, he had qualified for the NCAA meet in the discus. In 1987 he set school records in the shot put, 61'8", and discus, 198'2", that still stand. That year he placed second at the NCAA meet in the discus and sixth in the shot put, and was named an All-American. He was named an All-American again in 1988 when he finished fifth indoors in the shot. After recovering from a broken arm in 1988, Muse returned in 1989 to win the Big Sky titles in the shot and discus. He won a total of six indoor and outdoor conference titles. He still competes and was ranked fifth in the U.S. in the discus in 1993.

Troy Kemp, perhaps the most successful track and field competitor in Bronco history, tied the NCAA high jump record in 1988 and went on to participate in the 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games. (See Troy Kemp profile, Page 162.)

Wendell Lawrence was a four-time Big Sky champion in the triple jump, winning indoor and outdoor titles in 1987-88. He held the conference record both indoors and outdoors and was a bronze medalist in the Pan-American Games. He also participated in the 1992 summer Olympics for the Bahamas. He still holds the BSU triple jump record of 55'6". Lawrence was named an All-American after placing fourth in the 1988 NCAA indoor meet. He also placed sixth at the 1987 NCAA indoor meet.

Clifford Dillard won conference high jump titles in the 1989 indoor and 1990 outdoor seasons. In 1989, he earned All-American status by placing fifth at the NCAA meet.

Karl Knapp, an English major, ran on the track team from 1976-80. Knapp was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, a national collegiate honor society, and won the Boise State Scholar Athlete Award in 1980.
In December of that same year, Knapp became the first Bronco student-athlete to win a coveted Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford University in England. Only 32 students from the United States are selected each year as Rhodes Scholars. Knapp also competed in cross country while at Oxford.

Yair Elor (Mackler) came to BSU in 1981. A native of Israel, he was that country’s amateur shot put record-holder. In 1983, he won the Big Sky outdoor shot put title with a record toss of 59’ 9 1/2”. Like Knapp, Mackler was selected as both the Big Sky and Boise State Scholar-Athlete of the Year for 1983. He was also selected for the 1984 Israeli Olympic team. In 1983, Yair changed his name from Mackler to Elor.

**Track in the ’90s**

One Bronco has earned All-American honors thus far in the 1990s—Eugene Greene. Greene, a freshman when BSU won the Big Sky title in 1989, won conference championships in the triple jump in 1989, ’90 and ’91 and added the long jump title in 1991. But his biggest success came indoors. His first exposure to national competition came in 1990 when he finished sixth in the triple jump at the indoor NCAA meet. But the next year he came back to win the NCAA meet, only the second Bronco to be crowned a national champion in track since the school became a four-year university. By the time he finished his BSU career, Greene won nine Big Sky championships, the most of any Bronco in history.

1990 marked the 20th season of Big Sky track and field participation for the Broncos. The Broncos were unable to repeat their 1989 Big Sky championship performance, but the squad, which was depleted by injuries, still placed third. Individual championships were earned by David Lawyer, 400-meter hurdles; Ed McElroy, 110-meter hurdles; Greene, triple jump and Clifford Dillard, high jump.

In 1991, the Broncos’ best meet of the season came in April when they hosted — and beat — the University of Houston and the U.S. Air Force Academy. The Broncos ended the season by taking third in the Big Sky outdoor championships, led by individual winners Greene, long and triple jumps; McElroy, 110-meter hurdles and Patrick Gallagher, high jump. The Broncos slipped to fourth place in the Big Sky in 1992. But sprinter Kerry Lawyer set a school record in the 100-meter dash with a 10.31 time and was the Broncos’ lone representative in the NCAA championships held in Austin, Texas.

In 1993, the team placed fourth in the conference meet, which was highlighted by junior Scott Lupo’s Big Sky-record pole vault of 17’. In addition to Lupo’s first in the pole vault, junior David Stuart won the triple jump and freshman Walter Reed took first in the 200-meter dash.
The Broncos moved up to second in the Big Sky in 1994. The BSU sprint corps was the class of the conference, with Reed nipping the previously unbeaten Lawyer in the 100 and Lawyer coming back to beat Reed in the 200. The two combined with Rashid Gayle and Carlos Albury to win the 400-meter relay and Jon DeBerry took first in the high jump.

Earlier in the year Lawyer and Richard Lee, who was ranked seventh in the nation in the steeplechase, qualified for the NCAA meet, which was hosted by Boise State.

**Men’s Indoor Track**

Construction of domed stadiums and pavilions on university campuses in the late 1970s and early '80s altered the definition of seasonal sport in the Big Sky Conference. Track and field, which had always been a springtime outdoor sport, could be held at any time of the year in these new, spacious, temperature-controlled facilities.

In 1979, BSU fielded its first indoor team when the Big Sky added indoor track and field to its list of sports. The Bronco men won their first Big Sky track and field indoor championship in 1983 with 97.5 points to outdistance their nearest rival, the Idaho Vandals, by 11 points. Record-setting performances by Dave Davis in the 500-meters, Paul Murphy in the 800-meters and Roy Givens in the 55-meter hurdles gave the Broncos their victory. The Broncos placed third in 1987 and 1989, and took second place in 1988.

In 1988, the Broncos qualified a small team for the national indoor championships in Oklahoma City. What the team lacked in numbers, it made up for in quality. Three Broncos placed and came home with All-American honors — Steve Muse fifth in the shot put, Troy Kemp second in the high jump and Wendell Lawrence third in the triple jump. Kemp tied the NCAA indoor record at 7' 6 1/2", but was

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**Troy Kemp**

*By Jim Brown*

Nassau born Troy Kemp jumped his way to glory at Boise State University after joining the Bronco track team in 1984. He came into his own in 1987, when he took first place in the high jump in the Big Sky indoor and outdoor championships. In 1987, he also won the gold medal at the Pan American Games. That year, he attended the world championships, but after jumping 7' 4 1/2" he was forced to withdraw because of a back injury.

In 1988, Kemp tied the NCAA indoor high jump record of 7' 6 1/2", and he placed second at the national championships behind Hollis Conway. Kemp represented the Bahamas in the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea, but again a back injury forced him to withdraw. Bronco fans saw Kemp carry the Bahaman flag in the opening ceremonies of the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. He finished seventh in the Games in the high jump. In 1993, Kemp placed fifth at the World Championships in Stuttgart, Germany.
relegated to second because the winner, Hollis Conway, had fewer misses. The team placed seventh, the highest national finish ever for a Bronco track and field team.

In 1990, the Broncos took third at the conference indoor meet, led by Eugene Greene’s meet record in the triple jump. Greene and fellow triple-jumper Burlington Moss were invited to the NCAA indoor championships, where Greene took sixth and Moss 12th.

BSU again took third in the Big Sky in 1991. As in 1990, two members of the squad competed in the NCAA championships. Greene became BSU’s second student-athlete to win an NCAA national title by taking first place in the triple jump, while Pat Gallagher took 11th place in the high jump.

The squad slipped to fifth in 1992, but Kerry Lawyer had an outstanding conference meet, placing first in the 55-meter dash, second in the 200 and third in the long jump. In 1993, the Broncos moved up to a second-place finish indoors. Brian Davidson led the men by taking first in the high jump and Chuck McTheny won the shotput.

The indoor track program hit a new high in 1994 when both the BSU men and women swept the Big Sky championships for the first time in school history. The men’s team won six first places enroute to a 40-point win over nearest rival, Idaho State. The men won all of the jumping events — Brad Abbott in the pole vault, Kerry Lawyer in the long jump, Dave Stuart in the triple jump and Jon DeBerry in the high jump. The other two wins came from Tom Roorda in the 5,000- and 3,000-meter runs. Lawyer and DeBerry went on to compete in the NCAA meet.