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‘Cats go international

- Volleyball team eyes regional berth
  – See Page 13

- Cross country teams look to extend streaks
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- Golf teams ready to tee it up
  – See Pages 16 & 17

Willie the Wildcat also became a world traveler.
 – See Page 3
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Inside Wildcat Illustrated

Chico State’s trip to Trinidad may prove to be a ‘life-affecting’ experience for members of the women’s soccer team.

See Page 5

The cross country teams will be bitterly disappointed if they don’t continue their CCAA winning streaks.

See Page 9

Wildcat volleyball is looking to qualify for the NCAA regionals for the second straight season.

See Page 13

There are always high expectations for the men’s golf team and the 2017-18 season is no exception.

See Page 16

World Wide Willie

Most folks see the letters “www” and think it stands for “World Wide Web” but around the Chico State athletics department, “www” stands for “World Wide Willie!”

That’s because Chico State’s lovable mascot, Willie the Wildcat, has had a summer vacation to remember! The nomadic feline has been all around the United States, hit the beaches off the coast of South America, made his mark in jolly old England, and got a taste of the European countryside in Spain. Later this year, Willie has booked a trip to China as well as a sojourn up to the beautiful state of Alaska.

Wherever Willie goes, he hears stories and fond memories from Chico State alums or people who invariably say, “I know someone who went to Chico!” He sees it as all being part of the Wildcat family.

Willie loved visiting all of these memorable sites and hopes you enjoy some of the photos he brought back with him as you travel through Wildcat Illustrated.

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International loss could have positive result down the road for the men’s soccer team.

See Page 5

Chico State’s Athletic Hall of Fame will be welcoming a new class Sept. 23 in the Bell Memorial Union.

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Chico State Athletics is funded in part by student Instructionally Related Activities fees.

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Loss can be dream come true for men’s soccer unit

Some losses are nightmares that can plague a head coach for years. On a hot August afternoon in Spain, Chico State Head Coach Felipe Restrepo found out firsthand how a loss can also be a dream come true. Even 5-2.

The Wildcats were in the midst of an 11-day playing tour of Spain in preparation for the 2017 season. They played three matches and toured the country, visiting many of the hallowed grounds of Spanish fútbol.

But one afternoon was extra special for Restrepo and his Wildcats. Restrepo tells it best:

“There were a lot of amazing moments. But I would say the one moment that meant the most to me was the opportunity to visit one of the greatest football clubs in the world in Sevilla. Not only were we able to get in the training grounds, but we had an opportunity to play a match against their third team.”

“It felt like Fort Knox. We walk on to one of the training fields and the first team for Sevilla was training. We witnessed some of the best players in the world training and what that looked like from a skills, work ethic, and organizational standpoint. Just to be able to see that was special. Then they walked off the field and we were asked to step on. As we were stepping on to warm up, Sevilla C (a member of Spain’s third division) came out and basically, we’re in a wrestling match with the third team from one of the greatest clubs in the world. Having to lace them up against that club. Pinch me. Here I am coaching my college team and we’re playing Sevilla C! What happened that day was powerful for us. We had to come together as a group and have the spirit and fight to perform. We went up 1-0 and all hell broke loose. We went to the half 1-1, and they turned it up 5 notches. We ended up losing 5-2, but I think on that day those kids had their perspective popped open on what fútbol looks like and what it’s about and how fortunate they are to be part of the game.”

Restrepo enters his 10th season at the helm with a record of 95-49-28 and six postseason appearances under his belt. He’s led the ’Cats to three California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) North Division crowns, three National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championships Tournament appearances, and a West Region title.

His head assistant coach, Bertin Loyola, is now in his third season, which Restrepo believes is the moment that meant the most to him was the opportunity to visit one of the greatest football clubs in the world in Sevilla. Not only were we able to get in the training grounds, but we had an opportunity to play a match against their third team.”

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**See Loss/Page 23**

Trip provides life-affecting experiences

Sutton ranked 33rd in career wins

The pitch was a muddy mess. Three inches of goo. But the children were everywhere and ready to play. Chico State’s women’s soccer players embraced the moment. Freshman Nicole Marquez smeared the mud on her cheeks as the Wildcats soaked up a sensation that they will likely never forget.

The experience was part of the Wildcats’ six-day playing tour of Trinidad this August. The Wildcats played great, winning all three of their matches. They beat two of the nation’s top club teams by scores of 4-1 and 6-1, and then defeated the combined Trinidad and Tobago National Team/ National U-20 team 2-1. The wins were exciting and portend good things to come for the young but potent Wildcats.

But the highlight of the voyage may have been the clinic hosted by an ex-Trinidad and Tobago women’s National Team member. The young boys and girls from the village where the clinic was based had nearly as much fun frolicking in the mud as the Wildcats themselves, who at the end were serenaded by all the boys and girls with a “Chico!” chant and dance.

“The trip was an amazing experience for the team,” said Chico State Head Coach Kim Sutton. “They all had their eyes wide open. What an incredible amount of life-affecting experiences in the six days we were there.”

Now back in Chico and continuing their preparations for the upcoming season, Sutton sees the fruit borne from their unique experiences.
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8-11 ABC PRIME
11:00 KCRW NEWS CHANNEL 7
11:30 JIMMY KIMMEL SHOW
12:30 NIGHT LINE

**KCVU**

5:00 TWO & HALF MEN
5:30 TWO & HALF MEN
6:00 BIG BANG THEORY
6:30 BIG BANG THEORY
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The Chico State men’s and women’s soccer teams each enjoyed amazing trips this summer where they were able to play international competition against some outstanding teams, all while taking in the sights and sounds of the native land. For the men, it was a trip to Spain and for the women, the island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. Wildcat Illustrated caught up with soccer vets Dylan Wakefield and Erin Woods to talk about their respective experiences and the upcoming season.

WI: What did you guys enjoy most about your respective trip?

Woods: The excursions were really fun. We went to a place that really is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We got to go swimming in bat caves. We saw beautiful waterfalls and of course, playing the games and meeting the people from the other team.

Wakefield: Our second or third day in Barcelona, we all got to jump on a huge catamaran and went out into the Mediterranean and anchored down and just did diving and swimming. We played seven games in 11 days so this was one of the few times we really got to kick back and act like tourists.

WI: What surprised you most during your trip?

Woods: There was a player on the other team that was breastfeeding. At halftime and at the end of the game. Didn’t expect that. It’s an underdeveloped country so that was a shock to some of the girls who have not experienced that before. The people though were super laid-back and friendly. And normally, when you take a tour you see other tourists. But we didn’t see anyone but the people who live there, so wherever we went, we were the main attraction.

Wakefield: They have siesta in Spain. We were trying to find a little market to buy some lunch meat before a game so a few of us went outside and literally there was no one else on the street. We were the tourists that didn’t know about siesta time. This is about 3:30 in the afternoon. We didn’t eat dinner sometimes until midnight or 1:00am. They go to bed late, and then wake up late. And they club like every single night. It’s their lifestyle.

WI: So did you guys get to take another vacation during the summer that didn’t involve soccer?

Woods: I was in Europe for seven weeks. Pooja (Patel) and I went to Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Greece and Czech. I really haven’t been home all summer.

Wakefield: My plan was to go to Mexico, but the funds were a little low so that didn’t happen. So, I just bounced back and forth between Chico and Sacramento.

WI: Let’s talk a little about the upcoming season. Both teams lost key players to graduation. On the men’s side, Dylan, you lost
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Some teams rebuild while others reload, but for Gary Towne and his Chico State cross country teams it’s just a matter of the next athlete stepping up.

The Wildcat men have dominated CCAA cross country competition with 15 straight championships—a record for any program in the 78-year history of the conference, have won the West Region championship 12 of the last 15 seasons—including last year—and they finished fourth in the nation last season.

The women also won the CCAA title by a wide margin, with 25 points. San Marcos was second at 79 and Cal Poly Pomona had 137.

“We graduated a big group but we have established guys coming back while others are on the cusp and they need to step up as has happened in the past,” Towne said.

The Men

Chico State has four All-CCAA runners returning, which may seem to discount a turnover in talent at the top, but the top 15 athletes at the conference meet earn that honor. Eight Wildcats were among those 15.

Towne thinks that his top returnee on paper may be senior Kyle Medina, although he only finished seventh in the CCAA meet behind two other returning athletes. Medina went on to garner his second All-American honor with an 11th place finish in the cross country national championships, then had a banner track season where he was a two-time All-American.

Senior Connor Fisher is also an All-American candidate in Towne’s way of thinking. He was second at the CCAA championships and qualified for nationals in the steeplechase during track season.

“With his experience last year, I think he is ready to take the next step to All-American,” Towne said.

Juniors Arturo Arevalo and Steven

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Alex Burkhart

Kyle Medina

2017 Cross Country Schedule

<table>
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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Capital Cross Challenge at Sacramento</td>
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<td>Oct. 7</td>
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<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>at CCAA Championships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>Doc Adams Open at Davis</td>
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<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>NCAA West Regional at Monmouth, Ore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 18</td>
<td>NCAA Championships at Evansville, In.</td>
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Proud Title Sponsor for Chico State Cross Country
The Athletic Hall of Fame dinner set for Sept. 23
11 honorees will be celebrated at Bell Memorial Union fete

They will come from as far as Texas and as near as down the street; from Folsom, Redding, Rancho Cucamonga, Sonoma, San Diego, and Napa. But they all—at least in part—grew up and excelled as Chico State athletes.

The Hall of Fame board is excited to introduce the Chico State Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2017, which will be inducted on Sept. 23, 2017, at the Bell Memorial Union on the California State University, Chico campus. The class features nine impeccable inductees: Bruce Griewe, Chuck Hay, Scott Wulferdingen, Ken Duimstra, Tony Prescott, Stacey (Clifton) Glenn, Katie (Lee) Layman, Missy (Lendl) Jones, Marissa White, and honorary inductee Dr. Alan Azevedo. Another great Wildcat, Scott Fairley, will be honored with the Mac Martin Award.

The 2003 women’s cross country team, which captured the program’s first of many NCAA West Region titles and NCAA Championship podium finishes with key contributions from Layman and Jones, will also be celebrated during the ceremony.

Tickets—$45 each or $340 for a table of eight—can be purchased by calling the Chico State Athletic Department at 530-898-6470. The deadline to RSVP is Sept. 8. The event will begin with a social hour at 5:30. Dinner will be served at 6:30, and the induction ceremony will follow.

As part of their self-submitted biographical information, all nine athletes to be inducted spoke of the tremendous impact Chico State athletics had on their lives.

The Honorees:
Ken Duimstra
Football, 1988-90; Baseball, 1988-89

The Chico State football program’s all-time leader in receptions (142) and touchdown catches (16), Duimstra set Chico State and Northern California Athletic Conference (NCAC) records with 78 receptions as a senior in 1990, ranking second in NCAA Division II in receptions per game (7.8). Duimstra also ranks second in school history with 1,820 career receiving yards.

He was a First Team All-NCAC receiver in 1990 and was invited to play in the MLK All-America Classic in 1991.

Duimstra, who owns 3D Steel Services in Rancho Cucamonga, also lettered in baseball for two seasons, splitting time between starting pitcher and reliever.

Stacey (Clifton) Glenn
Volleyball, 2001-03

The most prolific hitter in the history of the Chico State volleyball team, Glenn averaged a school record 4.11 kills per set over her three seasons with the Wildcats after transferring from the University of Texas. That record remains.

A three-time All-California Collegiate Athletic Association selection, Glenn helped lead the program’s resurgence. Following five consecutive single-digit win seasons prior to her arrival on campus, the Wildcats went 48-33, riding Glenn’s powerful swing, during her career in a Chico State uniform.

Glenn wrapped up her career with 1,166 kills (fourth in program history) and 208 blocks (seventh). She also racked up two of the top 10 kill totals and kills-per-set marks in single season history, and ranks ninth in single-season aces with 47.

Bruce Griewe
Baseball 1958-59

Griewe had a live fastball and a devastating curve that sent many a collegiate baseball player walking back to the dugout head down in despair. But the former Chico State baseball pitcher and Los Angeles Dodgers farmhand spent his life after baseball doing the opposite: encouraging young people and lifting their heads.

Following his time at Chico State (1958-59) and then in professional baseball, the Sonoma High School graduate returned to teach in Sonoma, eventually retiring after 36 years as a teacher and administrator.

Nearly 50 seasons after wrapping up his Chico State baseball career, Griewe still ranks among the program’s all-time top 10 in career winning percentage, wins, strikeouts, and earned run average.

After transferring from Santa Rosa Junior College where he lettered in baseball and basketball, Griewe dominating Far Western Conference (FWC) hitters for two seasons. He was 9-2 with a 2.41 ERA as a junior, leading the Wildcats to an overall mark of 18-6. As a senior, Griewe went 10-3 with a 2.45 ERA, striking out 94 in 88 innings of work. His one-hitter against San Francisco State late in the season clinched the FWC title for Chico State, which finished 18-10 overall.

Chuck Hay
Water Polo 1964-65; Swimming 1965-66

The Chico State swimming and diving program was among the nation’s best for approximately three decades. Chuck Hay was one of the engines that propelled the program into national prominence. One of the first All-Americans in the history of the program (he earned three All Americans altogether) and a member of the team that made the program’s first appearance in the NCAA Championships, Hay set five Far Western Conference (FWC) and 10 school records over the course of two season.

Hay was among the first six All-Americans in program history during Chico State’s 11th-place finish at the NCAA Championships in 1965. In 1966, Hay helped the Wildcats to a ninth-place finish at the NCAA Championships. That was the first of 23 top-10 finishes at the NCAA Championships for the program over the next 25 years. The team won four NCAA titles in the decade following Hay’s time at Chico State.

He won three individual and two relay titles at the FWC Championships as a junior and then four more conference titles and a relay title in 1966.

Hay also helped Chico State’s water polo squad to a pair of runner-up conference finishes over his two seasons on the team.

Missy (Lendl) Jones
Cross Country, 2001-03 & 2005; Track and Field, 2002-05

Competing in cross country from 2001-03 and in 2005, Jones helped lead the Chico State women’s cross country team to its first two conference championships in 2002 and 2003. first NCAA West Regional Championship in 2003, and first two NCAA Championships podium (top four) finishes in 2003 and 2005. In track and field (2002-05), the three-time All-California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) performer and two-time NCAA Championships qualifier

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Bringing you news, sports, entertainment, community calendar, photos, videos & more!
Just about everything fell into place for last year’s talented Chico State volleyball team: a 23-8 record, a California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) North Division crown, a trip to the conference tournament finals and the program’s first National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championship Tournament berth since 2008. The 2017 edition of the Wildcats, which features three returning starters from a year ago, aspires to reach the same lofty goals—and Head Coach Cody Hein is counting on big contributions from everyone on the roster to make another successful season a reality.

Last season’s accomplishments put the 2016 Wildcats squarely amongst some of the best teams in the program’s history.

“We accomplished a lot of things we set out to do, so it was a very gratifying year,” Hein said. “In some ways, we overachieved—just the way we went about things, crushing (perennial West Region power) Cal State San Bernardino and going 6-0 against the CCAA’s Southern California teams. It’s crazy—we didn’t get an NCAA Tournament win, but it was one of the best years we’ve ever had.”

Hein, the winningest coach in Chico State volleyball history and who is now entering his 15th season at the helm, is looking for his 2017 team to repeat last year’s success. The Wildcats are long on skill and vast in depth, but will experience a whole host of challenges this season: an extremely tough pre-conference schedule (including matches against three of the top 25 teams in the nation at the D2 West Region Volleyball Showcase in Anchorage, Alaska), improved competition in the CCAA, and the proverbial bull’s-eye on its back, with opponents anxious to bring down the ’Cats.

Despite losing All-American setter Torey Thompson and key players Shannon Cotton, Jacki Kreymborg, and CCAA Freshman of the Year Camryn Rocha, Hein is confident he has sufficient firepower to keep the Wildcats in the winner’s circle.

“We return two First Team All-CCAA players who, when their careers are over, will probably be considered two of the best volleyball players Chico State’s ever had,” Hein said. “We also return a lot of good ‘role piece’ players that I anticipate will step up and be an even bigger part of the team this year. And we have a lot of leadership—we’ve got some players that have been on the court for a

2017 Volleyball Schedule

Aug. 31 - at William Jessup University 
Route 92 Showdown at Hayward 
Sept 1 - Holy Names 
Sept. 1 - Dominican University 
Sept. 2 - Biola University 
Sept. 2 - at Notre Dame De Namur 
D2 West Region Showdown at Anchorage, Alaska 
Sept. 7 - Alaska Anchorage 
Sept. 8 - Concordia University 
Sept. 8 - Cal Baptist 
Sept. 8 - Western Washington 
Sept. 12 - Simpson University, 7 p.m. 
Sept. 15 - Cal State LA, 7 p.m. 
Sept. 16 - CS Dominguez Hills, 7 p.m. 
Sept. 22 - at CS San Marcos 
Sept. 23 - at UC San Diego 
Sept. 29 - at Sonoma State 
Sept. 30 - at SF State 
Oct. 3 - Sonoma State, 7 p.m. 
Oct. 7 - Stanislaus State 
Oct. 10 - SF State, 7 p.m. 
Oct. 13 - CS East Bay, 7 p.m. 
Oct. 14 - CS Monterey Bay, 7 p.m. 
Oct. 21 - at Humboldt State 
Oct. 27 - at CS San Bernardino 
Oct. 28 - at Cal Poly Pomona 
Nov. 3 - Humboldt State, 7 p.m. 
Nov. 10 - at CS Monterey Bay 
Nov. 11 - at CS East Bay 
Nov. 16-18 - CCAA Tournament at SF 
Nov 30-Dec. 2 - NCAA West Regional 
Dec. 7-9 - NCAA Elite Eight 

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The end of summer is always a good time to catch up and see how some of our former and current Wildcat alums have been doing.

First, let's start with some Wildcat alums playing professional baseball.

**Baseball**

**Nick Baker**, a mainstay of the Wildcat rotation from 2011–14, is wrapping up his season with the advanced Single-A Visalia Oaks of the California League. The Cal League is known for its offense, and Baker has seen an uptick in his numbers from last season. In 30 appearances, the 25-year-old right-hander has a 1-2 record with a 5.25 earned run average. Similar to last season, Baker got bumped up to Triple-A Reno to make a spot start for the Aces. Playing alongside and against established major leaguers like A.J. Pollock, Oswaldo Arcia, C.J. Cron and Michael Bourn, Baker lasted 3.1 innings giving up seven hits and five earned runs. He did strike out four batters, however, including Cron and Bourn.

For his minor league career, Baker is 18-7 with a 3.45 ERA, with 42 walks and 206 strikeouts.

**Troy Neiman**, a teammate of Baker’s in 2012–13, was promoted to Double-A ball this year as he is baffling hitters in the Eastern League with the Rockies’ affiliate, the Hartford Yard Goats (one of the better minor league team names). Neiman has been “Steady Eddie” out of the bullpen, posting a 4-1 mark with a 3.81 ERA in 30 appearances. The 6-6 Neiman has struck out 54 in 56.2 innings of work.

Neiman’s minor league career has also been impressive, as he’s compiled a 23-9 record with a 3.36 ERA. In over 294 innings of work, he has struck out 296 batters and held opposing hitters to a .231 batting average.

**Luke Barker**, the school’s single-season record holder for saves in a year, played last year for the Traverse City Beach Bums of the independent Frontier League. Based on his performance with the Beach Bums, the Milwaukee Brewers rang Barker’s phone this year and assigned him to Single-A Appleton (WI) in the Midwest League. Barker posted five saves for the Timber Rattlers before being moved up to the Advanced-A Carolina Mudcats. For the season, Barker is a combined 1-4 with five saves and a 2.96 ERA.

**Dalton Erb**, who pitched one year for the Wildcats before being snagged by the San Diego Padres in the 2016 draft, started the 2017 season with the Tri-City Dust Devils of the short season, Single-A Northwest League. He recently was moved to Fort Wayne of the full season, Single-A Midwest League. The 6-8 righty has been very solid as a reliever for both squads, compiling a 1-1 record with a miniscule 1.55 ERA. Erb has missed a lot of bats as well, striking out 32 in just 29 innings.

The Wildcats most recent draft pick, **Hunter Haworth**, who was selected in the 22nd round by the Boston Red Sox this past spring, is still rehabbing an injury that kept him out of the final weeks of the 2017 Wildcat season.

A couple of other former Wildcats have been performing well in the independent leagues. Former ‘Cat **Kagen Hopkins** started 15 games for the Frontier League leading Schaumburg Boomers (IL), compiling a 8-4 record with a 4.44 ERA. In 85 innings, Hopkins was struck out 71 while walking 29. Meanwhile, **A.J. Epstein** has been part of the High Desert Yardbirds pitching staff, where the southpaw has posted a 2-2 record with a 2.18 era.

But enough about the alums, let’s check in with a couple of the guys Wildcat fans will see again next spring in the Cardinal and white.

**Pitcher Joe Wagner** and catcher **R.J. Hassey** both did well for the Humboldt Crabs in Eureka. Wagner was just about perfect, going 1-0 with seven saves in 13 appearances while allowing only one unearned run. Meanwhile, Hassey posted a solid .340 batting average with one home run and 20 runs batted in. Left-hander **Grant Larson** was up in Oregon playing for the Bend Elks and recorded 27 strikeouts in 34.1 innings of work while posting a 3.14 ERA.

**BASKETBALL**

Former All-West Region and All-CCAA player **Jordan Semple** tore up European basketball playing for Akademik Bultex 99 Plovdiv of the Bulgarian Basketball League. Semple was the dominant scorer for his team, averaging just under 26 points per game while ripping a team-leading 12 rebounds per game as well. Semple’s former teammate, **Amir Carraway**, appeared in 13 games for ETB Wohnbau in the German Pro-B League. Carraway averaged 14 minutes per game and shot a slick 50% from the field while also grabbing a couple boards per game. He then joined Cimarrones del Choco in Colombia where he averaged better than 15 points and seven rebounds per game. He scored 21 points to lead his team to the Colombian League championship.

**GOLF**

Former Wildcat **Brandon Harkins** plays professionally on the Web.com tour. So far in 2017, Harkins has posted a couple of top-10 finishes including a third-place finish at the Club Colombia Championship in Bogota, Colombia, and a ninth-place finish at the Chitimacha Louisiana Open. Meanwhile, **Alistair Docherty**, one of the most decorated golfers in school history, is a member of the Mackenzie Tour PGA Tour Canada after posting a combined four victories on the Golden State Tour and the Pepsi Tour. Next stop for Docherty is the Web.com qualifying school this fall.

**SOFTBALL**

Former softball player **Brooke Langeloh** has been busy playing and coaching softball in Europe for the past two summers. After graduating in the spring of 2016, the former Wildcat pitcher went to Sweden and played for the Skovde Saints and was awarded Sweden’s Pitcher of the Year honors. Her team then had the opportunity to play in the European Cup in Italy against some of the best teams from Belgium, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and Denmark. She had her chances to return to Europe this summer but decided instead to coach a U16 travel ball team.
If there is one person who is just as excited about the women’s fall golf season as the new coach and players is former head coach Nick Green. Green, who spent two years as the women’s head coach and last year as the interim head coach, has recruited all the current players and he’s eager to see what they can do for the soon-to-be-named head coach.

“I was excited and looking forward to see what they can do,” said Green who will be watching from outside the program for the first time in six years (he spent three years as an assistant coach). Green is in his second season as the head coach.

There is a lot to look forward to on the women’s side. The Wildcats have qualified for the NCAA Regional three of the last four years. Although there are no seniors on the team, three returnees played in nearly all the tournaments.

Junior Emily Rollin, who is a two-year veteran, played in all 10 tournaments, averaging 79.75 shots, while fellow junior Brittany O’Bryant also played in all 10 events and averaged 80.4 shots. The Wildcat have finished sixth (by two strokes) in a region where only the ‘Cats finished sixth (by two strokes) in the NCAA Finals for the fifth time in six years. The ‘Cats finished sixth (by two strokes) in a region where only top five schools advanced. “Just missing out should help motivate us this year,” said head coach Nick Green. The coach may also have a little motivation, “Just missing out should help motivate us this year,” said head coach Nick Green.

Expectations always high for men’s golf team

Expectations are always high for the Chico State men’s golf program and why not? The Wildcats have qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the second straight year. They are back in junior Kelley Sullivan and senior Madison Stephenson, who averaged 83.8 in nine tournaments. One other player returns in Jax Soli, who averaged 83 strokes during limited appearances. “I hope the juniors step up to provide leadership and are motivated to lead the women’s team back to regionals.” said Green. I think we have a good mix of veteran and young players but I guess we will find out in September.”

Speaking of regionals, Green says surviving the West Region is a challenge for any team. Three teams only come out of the West but 10 of the top 25 teams in the nation were in the West.

Nick Green

Wildcats

2017-18 Men’s Fall Golf Schedule

Sept. 21-23 – Second Midlands Invite at Topeka, KS Oct. 6-7 – Western Washington Invitational at Blaine Oct. 20-23 – Bear Wall Invitational at Stakem University Oct. 27-28 – Bay Area Fall Invitational at Moraga Country Club Nov. 3-4 – Western Washington Invitational at Everett Nov. 11-12 – Long Beach Invitational at Diamond College Nov. 17-18 – UC Invitational at Irvine

“Just missing out (on the NCAA Finals) should help motivate us (the men’s team) this year,” - Nick Green

“I hope the juniors step up to provide leadership and are motivated to lead the (women’s) team back to regionals.”

Women seek regional berth for 4th time in 5 years

The third returnee is juniors step forward to being able to focus on the trio of new returnees include junior Tom McAdam, who averaged 76.9 in nine tournaments. One other player returns in Jax Soli, who averaged 83 strokes during limited appearances. “I hope the juniors step up to provide leadership and are motivated to lead the women’s team back to regionals.” said Green. I think we have a good mix of veteran and young players but I guess we will find out in September.”

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Traveling with Willie

Willie had quite a summer adventure. Top left, he visited the Seattle Space Needle with associate director of athletics Mitch Cox, while on the right he hopped a bus with the men's soccer team in Spain. At the middle left, he ferried across the Mersey with sports information assistant Rory Miller then visited the Houses of Parliament in London.

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Now the Top 10:

1. Shooter McGavin in Happy Gilmore. I am a golf coach so obviously Shooter was going to be #1. Great moves, great quotes, great hair. You can’t see him bleed his own blood.

2. Ivan Drago in Rocky IV. He killed Apollo Creed. And all he could say is “if he dies, he dies.” A soulless robot of a person. He is in his sixth year on the team but gained a “medical exception” due to losing a year to a broken jaw and another to leg surgery.

3. Coach Bud Kilmer in Varsity Blues. Every athlete has had a coach at some point who was a real high-strung, over-the-top, loud, and angry individual. But none would compare to Bud Kilmer. He is every horrible coach to the tenth power. He cost Paul Walker his career as a quarterback.

4. Coach Wolf Stannson and Team Iceland in D2 The Mighty Ducks. I am sure there are a fair amount of ’90s kids who believe that Iceland is full of big mean hockey players because of this movie. Coach Wolf = great hair!

5. Judge Elihu Smalls in Caddyshack. He is basically the fun police. A complete classic character though, with a ton of great lines.

6. Chong Li in Blood Sport. Karate movies were big in the ’80s and Li was one of the most evil characters in the entire genre. They had to make somebody appear stronger and faster than Jean Claude van Damme, and Li was it.

7. White Goodman in Dodgeball. Fan-tastic hair and hilarious quotes. Dodgeball would probably have been a pretty awful movie without Goodman. Nobody makes him bleed his own blood.

8. Coach Bud Kilmer in Varsity Blues. Every athlete has had a coach at some point who was a real high-strung, over-the-top, loud, and angry individual. But none would compare to Bud Kilmer. He is every horrible coach to the tenth power. He cost Paul Walker his career as a quarterback.

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10. David Simms and The Horrible Ending of the movie Tin Cup. Everyone knows that Dave Simms treats old people and children like dirt. But the real villain is the ending to this movie, which is an otherwise decent film.

Honorable Mentions: (Clubber Lange, Rocky 3) (Rachel Phelps, Major League), (The Beast : The Sandlot).

ATHLETES: Many

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Velarde are also returning All-CCAA performers.

Junior Jason Intravaia was a redshirt last season but recorded some fast times running unattached, and Towne expects that he could be among the top five this year.

A couple other runners to watch are Jack Johnson and Wyatt Baxter. Johnson, who is a junior, didn’t originally make the team but kept at it and has done well since. He spent the summer working out at high altitude in Truckee. Baxter is a redshirt freshman who had solid seasons in both cross country and track last year.

Other contenders are juniors Derek Morton, Eddie King, Teddy Kassa, Cameron Ashbaugh, and Daniel Harigan-Cota; sophomores Zach Chamberlain and Garrett DeLong; freshmen Remington Breeze, Mathew Herrera, and Cameron Tomlinson.

The Women

As with the men, the women lost key performers from last year but have a good returning group and others ready to step up. Chico State has six All-CCAA returners, four of which were All-West Region. Karlie Garcia, Alex Burkhart, Nora Pizzella, Hannah Dorman, Haley Kroll, and Kayden Carpenter were all-conference while Garcia, Burkhart, Pizzella and Dorman were all-region.

Towne expects to get senior leadership out of Garcia, Dorman, Burkhart, and Kroll.

Garcia is probably Chico State’s most talented runner on paper, but she has been plagued by injury. She was second in the CCAA last year and sixth at region but was sick at nationals and unable to run during track season due to injury.

According to Towne, Garcia has not been able to run since last cross country season and probably won’t compete until the CCAA championships. She has been keeping up her conditioning through cross training.

Dorman had a breakout season as she finished among the top five in all the team’s big races and was the CCAA champion in the 5,000 meters, then went on to achieve All-American status in the 10,000 during track season.

Kroll is the “seasoned veteran” of the team. She will be doing her student teaching while competing as a graduate student. She is in her sixth year on the team but gained a “medical exception” due to losing a year to a broken jaw and another to leg surgery.

Burkhart has been a solid performer both in cross country and track. She was fifth in the CCAA and 16th at regionals in the fall then came back to quality for nationals in the steeplechase during track. She set the school record in that event five times before losing it to teammate Sadie Gastelum in the final meet.

Sophomores Pizzella and Carpenter are also counted on for continued big things. Pizzella was seventh at the CCAA meet and named “Freshman of the Year” while Carpenter was 13th at the CCAA finals and named “Newcomer of the Year.”

A sophomore who may be on the verge of breaking out is Jenny Giguer, who has made good progress with PRs (personal records) in track distance races last year.

In addition, Towne says, “We have a good support group with many of the athletes having good potential.”

That group includes seniors Danielle Oden and Jacque Adams, junior Nicole Anthony, sophomore Desirea Jones, and freshmen Alex Tucker and Britni Frace.
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WOMEN: No seniors

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players to help carry the load.

Among the recruits are Jessica Rudd from Reedley College, Clare Brady from Arch Bishop Mitty High School in San Jose, and Natalie Kinney from Oak Ridge High School in El Dorado Hills.

Rudd was a two-year member of the Reedley golf team, playing in the No. 2 position as a freshman and No. 1 as a sophomore. She was also named the school’s Outstanding Female Scholar Athlete.

Brady has won several tournaments with a full slate of action this past summer and Kinney has also played a lot of junior golf prior to entering Chico State.

There will be a new aspect to women’s golf this year, in that for the first time Chico State will have the opportunity to play for a conference championship. In past years, the CCAA did not have enough teams to form a conference but Cal State LA added women’s golf to join the Wildcats, Sonoma State, Cal State Monterey Bay, Cal State San Marcos, and Cal State East Bay in making up the six-team conference.

“It’s awesome!” said Green of the new conference.

Not only will it give the women a conference title to shoot for, but it will help fill a monthlong void between the end of the regular season and the regional.
the bulk of your scoring with the departure of Omar Nuno. How is that loss going to be made up?

**Wakefield:** Well we have a new player named Jeremiah Egujie and he’s very similar to Omar in that he’s big and strong at the center forward position. But we all know that goals are going to have to come from all parts of the team. Everybody understands that we all need to contribute offensively and not just wait for Omar to take care of business.

**Woods:** I think we’re going to be a little under the radar. We sort of relied on our seniors last year and when that broke down, we weren’t able to recover. I think this year we have a group of just really hard workers like Jamie Ikeda and Pooja that are going to surprise some people.

**WI:** What’s your favorite thing about putting on the Wildcat uniform?

**Wakefield:** The butterflies.

**Woods:** I was going to say the same thing. Right before a game when you put on the jersey it’s like “Woooo!”

**Wakefield:** The whole process of going to the locker and then getting prepared in pre-game meeting. Then when you walk out to the field it starts getting more and more real. Then you start warming up and it’s like everyone is just biding their time. And then once you get the jersey on, all the hooligans come out and are ready to go!

**Woods:** I run. I ran cross country in high school, but I wouldn’t call it a sport I participate in now.

**Wakefield:** In high school, I ran track and played baseball. Baseball was just a little too slow for me and track…I just don’t like running for no reason. At least in soccer you get to chase a ball. It’s like fetch.

**WI:** Graduation is right around the corner for you Dylan. What’s on the horizon?

**Wakefield:** Well, I just found out I can graduate at the end of this semester! I thought I had at least the whole year so that’s sort of thrown me. But my interest is in public relations. I’d like to focus on the outdoors—either the national park service or outdoor equipment, that sort of thing. Don’t know where I’m going to live. I don’t think I want to go back home, that’s kind of backtracking.

**WI:** You’re a nutrition major Erin. What are your plans?

**Woods:** After I graduate, I would like to join the Peace Corps and do that for a few years and then come back and go to nursing school.

**Wakefield:** I wish I had a plan like her.

**Woods:** A lot of Bob Marley. Lately, I’ve been listening to bluesy-soul music. Then on game day, some more upbeat rap. I mostly just use YouTube. I’m pretty lame.

**Woods:** I get all my music from (former teammate) Shelby Lanksbury. She takes screenshots of her latest playlists and then sends them to me and I check it out. She’s really into music. My favorite right now is Galantis. But I also really like Neil Young. My mom named my brother after him.

**WI:** What’s your favorite app?

**Wakefield:** Probably YouTube, but that’s so basic. Geez…

**Woods:** My most used is probably SnapChat. Social media stuff is so annoying. You can get so addicted to using them? It’s so annoying. But I use it. And I hate it!
a boon for the program.

"I’m throwing Bertin into the fire a little bit more and I really like what I see," said Restrepo. "I think he brings a lot to the table for us."

The coaches are not the only members of the team who own valuable experience. The team is senior heavy, with eight in all, including five in their fourth season of eligibility: Frankie Palmer, Carter Johnson, Dylan Wakefield, Matthew Tarr, and Sasha Peranteau. Donna’e Garcia, Christian Roman, and Triston Montoya are seniors who transferred in.

“They’re veterans. They’ve been to the playoffs. They’ve won a lot in this conference and know what it takes to win," said Restrepo. "I’m excited for this veteran group. They’ve got the experience behind them and they are ready to go."

Those seniors are among the 19 returners from last season’s 8-6-3 squad that came on strong at the end of the season, winning its final five regular-season matches before bowing out in the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) Tournament.

Six of those returners – Palmer, Johnson, Peranteau, Colby Cueva, Garrett Hogbin, and goalkeeper Damion Lewis – are returning regular starters.

“The most important piece going into such a short season is to be able to stay focused on your outcomes and stick to your game plan,” said Restrepo. “When you have an older group that has been through it, you can lean on them to keep everyone on the right track. Veterans know what it’s like on the road. They know what our process looks like. They are helping me get that message to the whole group.”

They are also providing a vital sense of urgency.

“The feather that they’re missing is that NCAA Tournament bid,” said Restrepo. “This group is thirsty for that.”

The team’s newcomers are vital to the quest to get there. The trip to Spain provided the team’s true freshmen and junior college transfers more opportunities to showcase their talent.

“The new batch of guys is awesome—as good as we’ve ever had in terms of talent and character,” said Restrepo. “They are bucking for some playing time. That usually doesn’t happen because, frankly, you don’t have the opportunity to give those kids much of a chance. This allowed us to see a few guys in different situations and they’ve been impressive.”

Goalkeeper was the one area already cemented prior to Spain. Lewis, Luke Dennison, and Montoya all return this season after combining to allow only 15 goals in 17 matches in 2016.

“In my opinion, Damion Lewis is one of the best goalkeepers on the West Coast, if not the best,” said Restrepo. “Luke and Triston are very talented as well. I’m comfortable with any of those three back there.”

Hogbin, a sophomore lauded by Restrepo for his work ethic, bite, and competitiveness on the pitch, leads the back line. A combination of Peranteau, Tarr, Cueva, Garcia, fellow returners Justin Bethke and

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Willie at a Barcelona game at Camp Nou (stadium's name). It was a charity match between Barcelona vs Chapecoense AF of Brazil. The three survivors of the plane crash were presented prior to kick-off. The team was able to watch Barcelona and some of the best players in the world (Leonel Messi, Luis Suarez, etc.) in action.
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Acker Gym will have new look this season

It was a different kind of quiet around Acker Gym this summer. Normally, the hallways are filled with the sounds of kids enjoying one of the many sport camps offered by the Chico State teams. But Acker was shut down the entire summer for some major renovation work, so the only noises that were heard were the sounds of workers drilling, hammering and well, renovating.

Fans coming into Acker Gym this fall for volleyball season will certainly notice the freshly painted and finished floor. They might also notice that both the men’s and women’s restrooms were renovated to meet ADA requirements. While this resulted in new fixtures, water-saving faucets, automatic towel dispensers, etc., it also cut back on the number of stalls in both restrooms. Just a heads up – this could mean some longer lines, especially during halftime of basketball games.

The biggest change to Acker will be seen on the south end of the gym where the old wooden bleachers have been replaced by brand new plastic ones with the word CHICO proudly emblazoned across the front. “The wooden bleachers have been around since the gym first opened and while that’s great for charm, the reality is that they needed to be replaced for safety concerns,” said Associate Athletic Director, Mitch Cox.

The new bleachers feature handrails up every aisle, wide step platforms and a tall kick-plate that will prevent items from falling under the bleachers. “My student staff spent every basketball game underneath the south bleachers retrieving cell phones, sweaters, water bottles, you name it,” said Cox. “It wasn’t the fans’ fault, there was just a huge gap between rows that allowed things to fall through.”

The new heavy-duty plastic bleachers feature individual seating spaces rather than the old flat wood plank. This will reduce the capacity slightly of Acker, but will provide a more comfortable experience for everyone.

So what happened to the old bleachers? Most of the wood was sent to surplus and put up for auction. But a few boards were saved and are being turned into memorabilia. “There’s a lot of history in those bleachers,” said Cox. “Just think of the number of people who have been in Acker for games, concerts, academic activities, you name it over the last half-century. We thought this would be a unique way for folks to “own” a piece of that history.”

Fans in Acker Gym will find new, safer bleachers on the south side.
Honors those who left mark on Wildcat athletics

From Page 11

helped to propel the Wildcats to their first ever CCAA title in 2004.

A standout in competition and in the classroom, Jones was named the Chico State Female Scholar Athlete of the Year as a senior.

She began her Wildcats career in style as well, capturing 2001 CCAA Cross Country Freshman of the Year honors. Jones would go on to place 18th and 32nd at the NCAA Championships in 2003 and 2005, respectively, becoming the first two-time All-American in the program’s history. She also earned two All-West Region honors, leading the 2003 team to its first ever West Region title with her team-best fourth-place finish.

On the track, Jones twice finished second to teammate Layman in the 5,000 meters at the CCAA Championships and earned three All-CCAA honors. She also qualified twice for the NCAA Championship finals in the 10,000 meters, finishing ninth in 2004 and 2005.

Jones still ranks fourth-fastest in the 10,000 meters in school history.

Missy Jones and Katie Layman

Katie (Lee) Layman
Cross Country, 2001-03 & 2005; Track and Field, 2002-05

Competing in cross country from 2001-03 and 2005, and in track and field from 2002-05, Layman enjoyed a legendary run as a Wildcat, earning seven All-America honors and claiming six CCAA titles along the way.

Layman also helped lead the women’s cross country team to its first two conference championships (2002 and 2003), first NCAA West Regional Championship (2003), and first two NCAA Championship podium performances. The Wildcats finished fourth in the nation in 2003 and 2005.

Layman won six CCAA track and field titles, winning the 3,000 and 5,000 meters in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Her 20 points in the 2004 meet propelled the Wildcats to their first ever CCAA title. Her team-high 20 points at that meet led the way. She was even more familiar with the NCAA Championship podium. The runner-up in the NCAA Championships 10,000-meter final in 2003, Layman also finished fifth in the nation in the 5,000 meters twice, fifth in the 10,000 meters once, and logged finishes of fifth and sixth place in the 3,000 meters.

On the trails, Layman’s 15th-place finish at the 2003 NCAA Cross Country Championships is the fourth-highest finish by an individual in the history of the program. The three-time All-West Region and All-CCAA cross country performer was the runner-up at the NCAA West Region Championships in 2005 and the runner-up at the CCAA Championships in 2003.

Tony Prescott
Basketball, 1992-93 & 1993-94

Currently the Regional Director for the North Bay Basketball Academy in Napa, Prescott led Chico State to back-to-back Northern California Athletic Conference (NCAC) titles in the 1992–93 and 1993–94 seasons. His career scoring average of 17.52 points per game still ranks sixth in Chico State men’s basketball history. He also ranks 10th in career steals (88) and free throw percentage (.842).

A Second Team All-NCAC selection and the team’s Defensive MVP as a junior, Prescott helped lead the Wildcats to the NCAC’s regular-season and postseason Shaugnessy Tournament titles. He averaged 22 points and 6.5 assists per game in the Shaugnessy Tournament and carried that momentum over to his senior season.

Prescott garnered First Team All-Conference and Team MVP honors as a senior after leading the Wildcats in scoring (19.5 points per game) and assists (120 on the season).

After graduating, Prescott spent a season playing professionally for the Shepparton Gators in Western Australia. He also spent many years playing in the legendary SF Bay Area Pro-Am League, earning a title as a player for East Bay in 2009. He is now an assistant coach with East Bay.

Marissa White
Basketball, 2002-03 & 2003-04

Her statistics were outstanding. Her accolades were numerous. But statistics, awards, and expressions fall short in describing White’s impact on the Chico State women’s basketball program. White, who played for the Wildcats during the 2002–03 and 2003–04 seasons, brought toughness, competitive spirit, and hometown pride to the program at just the right time.

Chico State Hall of Famer Jodie Vossler Gleason, White’s coach during her two seasons at Butte College, put it wonderfully: “I see the value of Marissa White more now than I did when she was on my team many years ago. I didn’t fully realize what a gem I had in Marissa. After coaching for 20-plus years, I now realize that people like Marissa are hard to come by.”

White, who grew up in Chico and played at Chico High School and then Butte College, led the Wildcats to back-to-back NCAA Championship Tournament berths following a six-year drought.

As a senior, she led the California Collegiate Athletic Association in 3-pointers made (80) and 3-point percentage (.415) and earned First Team All-CCAA and Second Team All-West Region honors. She also led the team in scoring (16.7 points per game), steals (58), and free throw percentage (.789) while averaging 3.6 assists 3.0 rebounds per game. Her 80 3-pointers crushed the school record (which still stands) and her 16.7 points per game remains 10th on the all-time Chico State list.

As a junior, White earned Second Team All-CCAA accolades after averaging 14.3 points per game. She buried 57 triples and led the team with 63 steals.

Scott Wulferdingen
Soccer, 1987-89

Wulferdingen spent three seasons with the Wildcats, culminating in First Team All-America and Northern California Athletic Conference (NCAC) MVP accolades in 1989, before starting his decade long professional career. He tallied 16 goals and 38 points as a junior before signing a contract with the San Francisco Bay Blackhawk. He also played for the Atlanta Attack, Dutch clubs SVV Schiedam, SVC SM, and Hermes DVS, and the Chico Rooks.

Wulferdingen also earned First Team All-West Region accolades as a sophomore in 1989.

His 16-goal total as a junior still tied for the fourth most in the program’s single-season history. His 38 points that season are tied for third.

Despite bypassing his senior season, Wulferdingen ranks 10th in school history in career goals (27) and assists (13) and is seventh all-time in points with 69.

“He’s the best athlete I ever coached,” said legendary former Chico State Head Coach Don Batie.

Honorary Inductee
Dr. Alan Azevedo

Beginning in 1985, Azevedo gave his time freely as the department’s team physician for more than 30 years, evaluating injuries and performing surgeries. But according to Chico State Head Athletic Trainer Scott Barker, Azevedo did much more than that.

“There is no doubt that his skills in

See FAME/Page 27
FAME: Honorees getting what they deserve

From Page 26

medicine enabled countless athletes to return to the sport they love,” said Chico State Head Athletic Trainer Scott Barker. “But what makes Dr. Azevedo extraordinary is his understanding and appreciation for that special thing that beats inside a competitive student-athlete in the prime of their competitive life, and what it means to have that taken away due to an injury. He understands the needs and desires of our student-athletes because he shares their competitive drive.”

Azevedo’s generosity was not reserved only for Chico State. The lone orthopedic surgeon in the area to meet the requirements for membership in the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, Azevedo spearheaded the program that put physicians on the sidelines during local high school football games, and provided free preseason physical examinations for thousands of student-athletes at local high schools each year.

Mac Martin Award winner
Scott Fairley

A legend in the world of high school track and field, Fairley is the head track and field coach at Chico High School. It was the start of what would become one of the most successful high school coaching careers in Northern Section history. After leading the Panthers boys track and field team to four Eastern Athletic League titles, Fairley became the head track and field and cross country coach at the brand new West Valley High School in Cottonwood.

Over the last 34 years, Fairley’s West Valley teams have won 119 varsity league and section championships and posted a combined dual meet record of 586-28-2. He has guided the West Valley girls team – the only team to have athletes ranked in every event on the all-time Northern Section performance list – to the Northern Section title 23 times in the past 30 seasons.

Some of his honors:

- 1994 Northern Section Cross Country Honor Coach
- 2000 California Coaches’ Association Girls’ Track and Field Coach of the Year
- 2002 USA Track and Field National High School Pole Vault Coach of the Year
- 2011 Northern Section Athletic Director of the Year
- 2011 Northern Section CIF Distinguished Service Award
- 2011 Anderson Union High School District Employee of the Year
- 2013 Oroville Union High School District Hall of Fame inductee

Fairley also started the wrestling program at West Valley High School and served as head coach for eight seasons. He has served as West Valley’s Director of Athletics since 1998, Northern Athletic League Co-Commissioner since 2005, Northern Section Track and Cross Country Chairman since 1991, and served as a State CIF Track and Cross Country Advisory member from 1998-2004.

The 2003 Chico State Women’s Cross Country Team

Led by Katie [Lee] Layman and Missy [Lendl] Jones, the 2003 Wildcats won the program’s first NCAA Championship West Region title, beginning a stretch of three straight titles and seven in the past 14 years. The Wildcats went on to finish on the NCAA Championships podium for the first time, placing fourth. They also won the CCAA crown for the second time in school history.

[Lendl] Jones finished 18th at the NCAA Championships, Kelly [Ortlieb] Butler came in 36th, and Margaret Pridgen placed 46th. At that time, those were three of only five top-50 NCAA Championships finishes in the history of the program.

[Lendl] Jones also led the way at the West Regional Championships, placing fourth. She, Pridgen, [Ortlieb] Butler, Sarah Montez, and [Lee] Layman all earned All-West Region honors with finishes within the top 10.

Head Coach Gary Towne was named the CCAA and West Region Coach of the Year.

The complete 2003 Chico State Women’s Cross Country Roster:


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Joshua Beida, and junior college transfer Ryan Caro, will compose the remainder of the final third.

Carter Johnson (career totals of six goals and five assists) and Christian Roman will anchor the midfield, surrounded by loads of talent, including Wakefield (four goals and two assists), Palmer, Esten Schroeder, Fabian Roman, and Alex Fluit (the team’s assist leader last season with four).

Junior College All-American Jeremiah Eguje, who tallied 26 goals in two seasons at Arizona Western College, is a big and talented striker in the mold of Omar Nuño, the Wildcats’ scoring leader last season.

“Jeremiah has been very good. We think he’s going to be able to put some balls in the back of the net,” said Restrepo. “And there are a slew of young guys right behind him who are bucking for time.

They include true freshmen Eric Arceta, Juan Perez, and Daniel Adeyeye, and sophomore Michael Hirsch.

Restrepo is also excited about adding to the tradition of local players in the program this season. Nick Lopez (Pleasant Valley High School of Chico), Beto Gonzalez (Los Molinos) and Montoya (Yuba City) are part of a strong history of local talent during Restrepo’s tenure, joining the likes of Kenny Rosecrance and Chia Thao (Chico High School), Hector Cibrian (Live Oak), Jake Ward (Pleasant Valley), Luis Martinez (Olivehurst), Ryan Struckmeyer (Yuba City), and Leo Zarate (Gridley).

“There’s a little magic to this group,” Restrepo said. “With the exception of my first year, I feel that every year we’ve had the right recipe for success: talent, work ethic, and the ideals of the program. Every year we’ve had an opportunity to win and to win big, and we’ve won a lot. This year is no different than year’s past. Except for that little bit of magic.”

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**VOLLEYBALL: Hein: ‘Serving for places, not aces’**

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while, and we expect that to show.”

Replacing Thompson—the program’s all-time assists leader—will be of the utmost importance. But the Wildcats have a pair of more-than-able setters—senior McKenna Carroll and sophomore Nicole Desrochers—who have been waiting in the wings for their chance to shine.

“McKenna brings great leadership to the court,” Hein said. “The girls love her; she stays on them and brings out the best in them. Nicole offers great athleticism and the ability to run a quicker-tempo offense.”

The setting duo has played just 19 matches between them, but Hein is not worried.

“They just need the experience to be able to feel comfortable playing their own game and applying their skills,” he said. “You develop grit by getting onto the court and feeling comfortable in your own game, and that grit is what we need McKenna and Nicole to establish.”

Hein could utilize some offensive setups that could see both Carroll and Desrochers on the floor at the same time.

The Wildcats boast of plethora of hitters in 2017, led by senior Olivia Mediano. The First Team All-CCAA outside led the ‘Cats with 379 kills last year while collecting 30 service aces and over 300 digs.

Middle hitter Kim Wright also won First Team All-CCAA honors last season by racking up 294 kills and leading the Wildcats with 43 aces and 81 blocks.

Senior Anna Baytosh will look to top her career-high 177 kills from a year ago.

Sophomores Bekah Boyle and Alex Boyle also expected to figure heavily in the ‘Cats’ attack.

“Bekah improved her vertical touch to nearly 10 feet during the spring, and very few people will be able to stop her when she’s attacking at that height,” Hein said. “Alex is one of our best blockers and she’s sure to do good stuff offensively as well.”

The Wildcat have stockpiled several other hitters that will keep the offense productive for years to come: Freshmen middles Makaela Keeve (a product of Terra Linda High School in San Rafael) and Kelley Jacone (Carlsbad High School); outside hitter freshman McKenna LaForge (Montgomery High School in Santa Rosa); opposite Claire Wilson (San Clemente High School); and junior middle Cassidy Lee (a transfer from Shasta College in Redding). Any and all could make an immediate impact in 2017.

The success of Chico State’s back line will be a huge factor in the Wildcats’ fortunes. Along with Mediano, senior Tristen Thompson and sophomore Brooke Fogel are being asked to spearhead the ‘Cats’ defensive and passing game this season.

“Tristen, Brooke and Olivia will be our primary passers this year,” Hein said. “We’re really excited with what Anna (Baytosh) is doing; she’s developed into a solid passer over the years. But clearly it’s going to fall on Olivia, Brooke, and Tristen to effectively get the ball to the setter.”

Junior transfer Letysha Cephas (Rocklin’s Sierra College) and freshman Makenzie Salva (Alhambra High School in Martinez) will help fortify the defensive specialist position.

One aspect of last season’s Wildcat attack that Hein hopes to duplicate in 2017 is the team’s aggressive serving game.

“The ‘Cats’ piled up 208 aces last season—the most by a Chico State team in 14 years.”

“If you’re not built huge, you have to take teams out of their offense, and the best way to do that is on the serve,” Hein said. “I’m not allergic to aces, but we have a concept of ‘serve for places, not for aces.’ We did a great job last year of finding which opponents didn’t pass well where, and we exploited those weaknesses on our serves. What was just as impressive as the number of aces we collected was—even with our aggressive style—how few serving errors we made. When you put together that combination, you’re bound to have some success.”

**EXPECTATIONS:**

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who was third in his state high school tournament among 87 players, and Grant Leppke, a freshman out of Rocklin who Green thinks has a lot of upside.

The final new addition is Nick Caputo who, according to Green, shot a 68 in a Web.Com qualifier.

Green is happy with his newcomers, who he feels could be in the running for tournament slots.

“This is going to make our qualifiers tougher and it will be tougher to make the team,” he stated. “We will be only as good as our depth.”

The highlight of the fall schedule is the InterWest Wildcat Invitational that will be held at the links at Rolling Hills, October 9–10. Green expects as many as 15 teams to take part.

Kelley Sullivan is the defending CCAA individual champion.

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The Wildcats pose with the Trinidad and Tobago U-20 national team. The trip was a ‘life-affecting’ experience for many of the Chico State players.

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experience in Trinidad.

“The bonding time and them just getting to know each other was so valuable,” said Sutton. “Generally, it’s halfway through the season and we’re still getting to know the freshmen. This was a tremendous chance to get to know each other. The chemistry and commitment and desire to support one another that we discovered is special.”

Sutton is starting her 23rd season (17th at Chico State) as a head coach at the NCAA Division II level. She is No. 33 on the career victories list with 216.

So, it is not a mystery to her where that chemistry, commitment, and desire come from. It starts with the Wildcats’ three-woman senior class of Pooja Patel, Brooke Coelho, and Courtney Sharrah. They make up half of the team’s leadership council, which also includes juniors Erin Woods, Devon Morones, and Jamie Ikeda.

Together they came up with a very simple and straightforward team motto: “Behind the Line.”

Throughout the preseason, those leaders have given their teammates bracelets that display the motto as a reminder to do the little things, such as starting behind the line during drills, which they believe can make the difference between a good and great season.

“They are phenomenal individuals who really get putting the team before themselves,” Sutton said. “That is what it takes. This team is really all about what’s best for the team. They want to do whatever it takes to be successful.”

The Wildcats are motivated by last season’s struggles. After rising as high as No. 13 in the nation following a 4-0-1 start, they dropped six straight, digging a hole too deep to climb out of to reach the postseason.

“Nothing like a rough year to get you fired up,” Sutton said.

The California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) coaches expect Chico State to rebound in 2017, and picked the Wildcats to finish fifth in the standings. The top six teams will advance to the CCAA Tournament, the winner of which earns an automatic berth in the NCAA Championship Tournament.

With just five starters returning, a postseason berth hinges largely on how the team’s younger players perform. The 29-woman active roster features 16 freshmen and five sophomores. So far, they have been up to the task.

“We have a lot of really exciting young players,” said Sutton. “This is one of the most impressive freshmen classes I’ve seen. But they’ve yet to be tested in this conference, which we all know is a gauntlet. Well, those of us who have been around know. They are about to find out. But I think they are going to respond well.”

At first blush, the team’s area of strength is on the back line where Coelho, Korie Bozart, and Abbie Jones all return as starters. Sutton expects Jazmine Carranza and Kylie Martinez—two of the three true freshmen she has been especially impressed by—to contribute there as well.

Jones anchored the middle of the defense last season as a true freshman and will do so once again. A starter since her freshman season, Coelho patrols the right side relentlessly. Bozart started 11 matches as a sophomore last season and posted three goals and three assists.

They will be the last line of defense for a brand-new goalkeeper. The competition for that starting job has been fierce between true freshmen Claire Abele and Madison Burke and Butte College transfer and Pleasant Valley High School (Chico) product Brenna Meier.

The midfield remains a work in progress, but Sutton is confident the pieces are there to build a successful unit.

“There are a lot of great players in the mix,” said Sutton. “We’re still figuring out the best fit in terms of style and personnel.”

Sharrah, Morones, and Ikeda are the most experienced players of the group. St. Mary’s transfer Juliana Los and seven freshmen are also listed at that position. True freshman Lia Kilgore is one that has caught Sutton’s eye. A number of forwards might also see time in the midfield.

Considering that the Wildcats have outscored the opposition 14-3 through four matches (one exhibition and three during their trip to Trinidad), it isn’t surprising that the team’s offensive firepower is something that has excited Sutton early on.

“We really like what we’re seeing up top,” said Sutton. “The movement is very good. We have a lot of creative players. We are very young but we have a lot of depth. We’re really excited about the offensive weapons we have.”

With career totals of 13 goals and 16 assists over her first three seasons in the program, Patel leads the charge up front. She was the CCAA Offensive Player of the Year and a Second Team All-American in 2015. Brielynn Tovani (two goals last season), René Weiler (three assists), and Olivia Williams also return. A quartet of freshmen could see playing time there as well.

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