Thursday, November 17, 2022

Dear MAST Alumni Athletes and Families:

As the twenty-third season of training and competition opened this week for our 113 athletes, memories of seasons past have flooded my head and filled me with a deep sense of gratitude for all the wonderful people who have contributed to our existence, growth, and success over the years. As I introduced the 10 paid coaches to the team at our first dryland training, I was a bit taken back by the surge of pride I experienced as I told the team that 8 of our coaches were former MAST athletes and that the only one who was not had been with us since 2008. MAST has more than survived. It has thrived. And I remain convinced that we continue to have the most gracious, generous, intelligent, and hard-working athletes on our team ...anywhere... in any sport. Two quick stories to illustrate.

Yesterday, the six captains and I were talking as we were setting up for dryland. We were talking college and potential areas of study. I casually inquired about the GPA of one captain. “3.99”, she sheepishly replied. “Still underachieving”, I replied. So now they all got the question, one at a time. 3.80... 3.98... 3.89...3.97... 3.99. The world will be okay.

A month after our season ended last winter, we got a call from the State Fair. Your team does a great job cleaning the goat barn every year, would you like to earn money for MAST by cleaning up after a circus? Sure. Thirty athletes and three adults do a bang-up job and learn a life lesson: cleaning up after humans is much more disgusting than cleaning up after goats. (Those of you who used to spend 12 hours walking around the fairgrounds emptying trash cans already knew this.) Two months later comes another call. Would you be willing to clean out horse stalls after a horse show? Sure. Another stellar job completed by thirty-five athletes and eight parents. A month later, another horse show. This time forty athletes and twelve adults stepped forward to practice their entry level cowboy skills. When the State Fair rolled around, we found that we had earned a promotion: Can you clean the poultry barn at the same time you are cleaning the goat barn? Sure. One hundred twenty athletes, parents, coaches, and alumni showed up for that one. And in October, Mr. Paul’s Supper Club opened its doors to MAST with another opportunity to raise money --as long as we could provide the labor: hosting, bussing, serving, dishes. Within an hour of sending out the volunteer sign-up, all positions were filled. The world will be okay.

Today is Give to the MAX Day. We are trying to raise money to cover the cost of a new tent that will serve the next generation of MAST racers at the big events. If you would like to make a contribution in support of our hard-working, goal oriented, and grateful athletes, just click on this link: MAST Give To The Max Day.

If you would prefer to send a donation by check, just mail it to MAST Headquarters.

Mpls Alpine Ski Team

4800 Harriet Ave

Mpls, MN 55419

And if you have any desire to get involved with MAST in any capacity (coaching, board membership, fundraising, outreach, etc.), please reach out to me directly. You can help us keep ski racing alive for Minneapolis students for many more generations of ski racers.

Be well and thank you for all the years of support you have given our team.

Mark Conway

Head Coach (yup, still)

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