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From Dream to Team

By Mikaela Cowles



Brian Detrick Photo provided

The first Saint Mary's team Detrick put together was made up of three members. In one year it grew to 14. In a competition that is based on points, lacking team members makes success difficult. The team placed in the top five in all their tournaments but failed to qualify for Nationals. Now with 25 men and women, the team has Nationals in its sight. Detrick said, "The goal is to win. I know with us being a new team with lots of beginners it's tough, but we have been taking on the challenge and been competitive with teams that have been around for over 20 years or so." Adding her skills to the girl's line up is graduate student Kelly Bay. Having competed one year at Chico State University, Bay brings an added level of talent and experience to the water. Despite Bay's experience, the Gaels are primarily made up of members like freshman Gary Mancini, who has just begun skiing competitively. Detrick said Mancini's "a natural and a huge asset for the team." On October 10th and 11th the Gaels hosted the Western Regional Collegiate Waterski Championships at Shortline Lake, in Elk Grove. This was the Gaels' first time hosting a tournament, which brought top skiers from the Western Region to compete in Slalom, Trick and Jump skiing. Thirteen teams competed in the event; the Gaels finished in 7th place.

The Saint Mary's Waterski and Wakeboard team was created from nothing, but the team's small beginnings are proving to be no indication of where they are headed.

Turning down multiple waterskiing scholarship offers, Brian Detrick enrolled in Saint Mary's in 2007 for the academic rigors. However, he has still managed to hold on to his dream of competing at the collegiate level. With a lot of hard work in the spring of 2008, Detrick became the founder and captain of the Saint Mary's Waterski and Wakeboard team.

Detrick has been successful at his sport since he got on the water. Detrick first competed at the age of four and by 1998 was ranked first in the U.S. Under-9 Boys 1 Slalom in the United States. In the 2009 Collegiate National All Stars, Detrick ranked sixth over all. Slalom is a water skiing event similar to downhill skiing in which competitors must navigate a course weaving in and out of buoys. His slalom skiing reached a new level on September 11, 2009 when he competed in the Diablo Shores ProAM Waterski Tournament in Brentwood, CA. Taking "39 off," Detrick competed with 36 foot rope and scored an impressive one and half bouys at 36 MPH. This score qualifies Detrick as a Men's Open Division skier, raising him to the professional level.



Brian Detrick Photo provided



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