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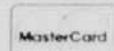
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In Touch with Club Sports

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Teams rely strictly on skills

Cynical followers of collegiate sports these days seem to believe that the team with the most money and prestige will end up with a marked advantage when it's time to hand out trophies.

Those skeptics, however, may want to take a look at some of the University's Club Sports teams. None of the 23 teams in the program have flashy, flamboyant coaches, high priced trainers or star players. Yet some of the groups, such as men's volleyball, Tae Kwon Do and the cycling team are excelling primarily on the basis of the teams' athletic merit and perseverance.

The men's volleyball team, which placed fifth in the nation last year, will be traveling to Knoxville, Tenn. on April 20-24 to compete again for a national title. Todd Robertson, the team's student coordinator, said their record for the year so far is 25-8.

Travel expenses for the upcoming competition, however, will have to come partly from the team members themselves, Robertson said.

"It's going to cost us lots more money this year, so we'll probably be paying around \$200 or \$300 out of our pockets," he said. "But it's important for us to go. We think it's worth it since we did so well last year."

The Club Sports' crew team competes every year in the Pacific Coast Championships, which will be held in Sacramento, Calif., in May. Dean Knutson, one of the team's coordinators, feels optimistic about the group's chances for placing high.

"I think we'll do pretty well this sea-

son," he said. "We have both a man and a woman coach now, and we haven't had that for a couple of years."

Knutson said the team doesn't hold tryouts per se, but they don't have to worry about ending up with too many team members simply because of the sport's high intensity.

"We don't have to cut people; it's the nature of the sport for people to usually cut themselves," Knutson said. "When they see that we get up to train at 5 a.m. six days a week, and that we run stairs and have a lot of weight workouts, we usually end up with only the people who are really committed."

"We'll have over 80 people in the fall to join, and then after Christmas that number mysteriously drops to about 35," he said.

The Tae Kwon Do team has also enjoyed prestige on the national level recently. Roger Wolff, coordinator for this year's team, said they sent two people from the team to the national competition last year.

Wolff said that Tae Kwon Do sport seems to be more mysterious and obscure than others in the Club Sports program, but that shouldn't hinder potential team members who are interested in the activity.

"It just takes a while to develop the coordination and flexibility that the sport demands," Wolff said. "Tae Kwon Do competitions are similar to boxing. It's a full contact sport that involves almost all footwork."

The coach for the Tae Kwon Do team, a graduate student at the University, was a Korean national champion

and does an excellent job training the team, Wolff said. "The practices are somewhat demanding, but I'd like to stress that beginners are more than welcome in our program."

The women's ultimate frisbee team just returned from a competition in Davis, Calif., where they placed fifth out of 18 teams at the meet, said student coordinator Becky Watkins.

Last year's ultimate team was tied for second place in the regional competition and had a chance to go for the national title, Watkins said. But the team realized they wouldn't be able to cover the cost of flying to the nationals, which were held on the East Coast.

"We knew we couldn't go because people couldn't afford that kind of money or the time commitment," Watkins said. "So we settled on a tie with the other (second place) team, and we kept the trophy and let them go to the nationals."

The sport of ultimate frisbee is very demanding physically, Watkins said. She compared it to soccer and basketball in regards to playing style.

"It's played by completing passes down a field, and you have to make a pivotal stop like you would in basketball," she said. "You're running in the game the whole time, so it does require a pretty good deal of physical endurance."

The sport is gaining in popularity all over the world, Watkins said. "Ultimate has only been around since 1969, but it's currently being played in 21 countries."

—Darla Jackson



Photo by Sean Pridan

Women's Ultimate team members Deana Swearingen, left, and Becky Watkins display the coordination and technique required to be successful at the sport.

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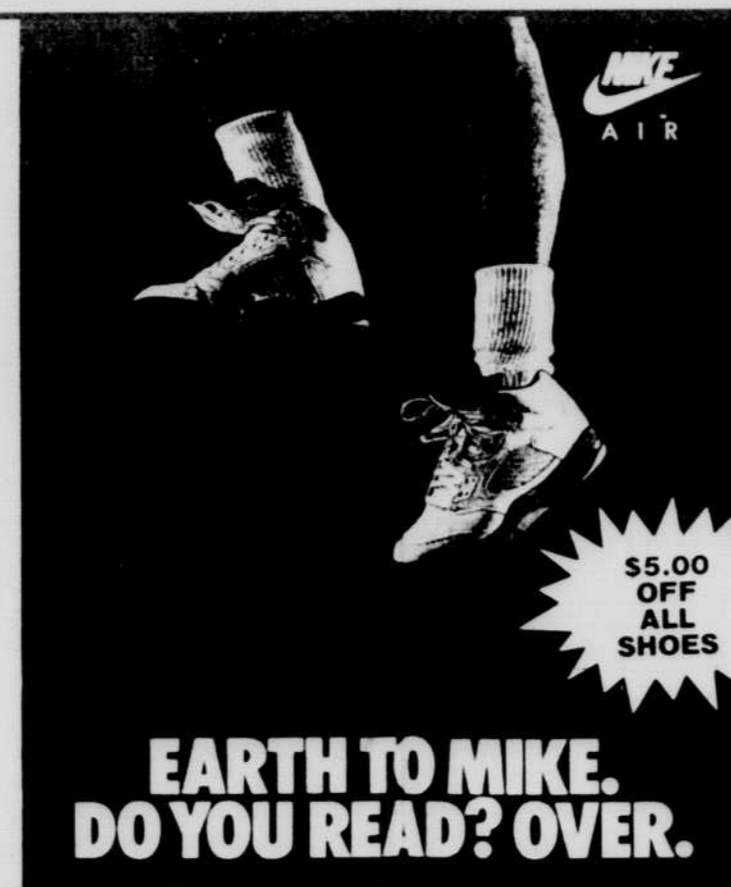
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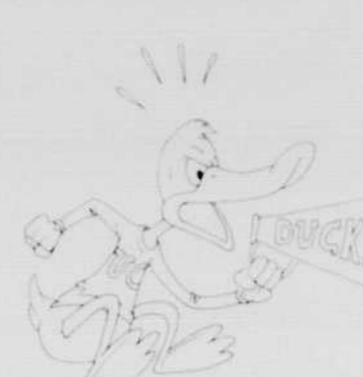
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