

# “THE SKIP SHOT”

## THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BISON WATER POLO PROGRAM



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### A NOTE FROM HEAD COACH JOHN MCBRIDE



Greetings from Lewisburg and the Bucknell Polo program!

After a runner-up finish at Southern's our men's team worked very hard to prepare itself to compete for a team title at the CWPA Championship held at Brown University on November 22-24. Making the title game a year ago was a huge step for our program, but falling short left unfinished business for our men. Unfortunately, the season did not end where we all wanted it to as we finished a disappointing fourth at the event.

The men began Eastern's with a big 9-8 win over host Brown in its brand new pool, which was obviously especially gratifying for me. We battled the defending champion St. Francis Terriers in the next game, and after a slow start fell by a 10-6 score. On the final day of the championship we again started slowly, and lost the third-place game to Navy, 10-7.

We hoped that we could bring everyone a championship as a holiday gift but we fell way too short this year. What we did bring everyone was a team that you can be very proud of. They represented the University, their families, their teammates, and themselves with character and toughness. We had athletes who couldn't play because of injury and others who had to play with the flu but no one ever quit. They showed up every day ready to win but it just wasn't our year.

Going forward our goals remain the same in both programs. Recruit high level athletes that will have success academically and athletically. We have had a lot of success doing that with my first two recruiting classes here at Bucknell and looks as though that trend will continue as each team grows and gets stronger. The freshman classes for both teams have integrated well and are really learning quickly what it means to be a Bucknell Water Polo player. The first thing they learn is that it is a privilege to be a Bucknell athlete and not a right. This privilege comes with very large expectations and responsibilities. These expectations and responsibilities are to themselves, their teammates, Bucknell, and the community. These expectations were something that was in place upon my arrival in Lewisburg. The bar was set by the athletes that came before them and hopefully that bar will continue to rise which will challenge these young Men and Women to aspire to be great in all facets of their lives.

The women's schedule is included within this newsletter, so please check it out. It is going to be an exciting year for the women. We are hosting the women's Eastern Championships in 2014. The goal is to qualify and then challenge for the title. I hope your Thanksgiving Holiday was happy and healthy. All my best! See you on deck.

GO BISON!

John McBride  
Head Water Polo Coach

### ELSE & ALEKSIC GARNER POSTSEASON HONORS

Bucknell men's water polo senior Jack Else (Lansdale, Pa./North Penn) and sophomore Stefan Aleksic (Belgrade, Serbia/Sport Gymnasium) were



*Senior Jack Else, a first-team selection*

named to All-CWPA Southern Division, the league office announced prior to the first game of the newly renamed CWPA Championship. A second-team selection each of the last two years, Else was named to the first team, while Aleksic earned a second-team nod.

Bucknell has now had multiple all-conference selections every year since 2003. At least one Bison has been on the first team each year since 2007.

Else is Bucknell's first three-time all-conference pick since Richie Hyden was a first-team selection in

*See HONORS, pg. 2*

### Water Polo Office Contact Information

Head Coach: John McBride  
Phone: 570-577-1777  
E-Mail: [jwm035@bucknell.edu](mailto:jwm035@bucknell.edu)  
Asst. Coach: Kyle Gorham  
Phone: 570-577-1833  
E-Mail: [kwg006@bucknell.edu](mailto:kwg006@bucknell.edu)

Water Polo Fax: 570-577-1660  
Web Site: [www.BucknellBison.com](http://www.BucknellBison.com)

## HONORS, cont. from pg. 1

2008, 2009 and 2010.

An Honorable Mention All-American in 2012, Else leads the Bison with a career-high 57 goals this season. He ranks second on the squad with 59 points and his 66 ejections drawn are tops on the team by a wide margin.

Already the owner of the top two spots on the program's single-season ejections drawn list with 133 and 78 the last two years, Else needs to draw just four ejections at this weekend's CWPA Championship to move into third place on that ledger. Else entered the year with the career ejections drawn standard and is now 118 ahead of second-place Hyden with 304 in his four-year tenure in Lewisburg.

Else has scored 182 career goals to rank first among current Bison, while he is one of just two current Bucknell players to be over 200 points (203). Else is just five goals shy of moving into the top 10 in program history in goals scored. This season Else has posted 14 multi-goal outings and has found the back of the net at least once in 16 of the last 17 games.

Aleksic, the 2012 Eastern Cham-



*Stefan Aleksic, a second-team selection*

pionship Rookie of the Year, leads Bucknell in assists (33) and points (69). He ranks second to Else in goals scored (36). Not just an offensive player, Aleksic is first on the squad in steals (38) and field blocks (19).

Bucknell's leading scorer with 101 points as a freshman, Aleksic is now up to 87 goals and 83 assists in his career, which has spanned just 52 games.

## MEN'S RESULTS

### Navy Invite -- Annapolis, Md.

Sept. 7	vs. Notre Dame (OH)	W, 15-14
	vs. Mt. San Antonio (Exhib)	20-7
Sept. 8	vs. Gannon	W, 17-8
	vs. Iona	W, 12-7

### Bison Invite -- Lewisburg, Pa.

Sept. 13	vs. Diablo Valley (Exhib)	13-11
Sept. 14	vs. Salem International	W, 19-4
	vs. Mercyhurst	L, 9-8
Sept. 15	vs. Toronto (Exhib)	10-6
	vs. Fordham	W, 14-7

Sept. 21	at Navy*	W, 8-6
	at George Washington*	L, 15-14
Sept. 22	at Johns Hopkins*	L, 14-12
Oct. 6	at #13 Princeton*	L, 14-9
Oct. 12	vs. Navy*	W, 11-10
	vs. George Washington*	W, 12-9
Oct. 13	vs. Johns Hopkins*	W, 13-6
	vs. #12 Princeton*	W, 12-5
Oct. 25	at #3 Pacific	L, 18-8

### Santa Clara Rodeo -- Santa Clara, Calif.

Oct. 26	vs. Fresno Pacific	W, 16-6
	vs. #11 UC Davis	L, 8-7
Oct. 27	vs. #10 Concordia	L, 15-6
	at #16 Santa Clara	L, 14-12

### Southern Championships --

#### Annapolis, Md.

Nov. 9	vs. Washington & Jefferson	W, 12-5
	vs. Mercyhurst	W, 8-6
Nov. 10	at Navy	L, 9-8

### CWPA Championship --

#### Providence, R.I.

Nov. 22	at #19 Brown	W, 9-8
Nov. 23	vs. #13 St. Francis	L, 10-6
Nov. 24	vs. #16 Navy	L, 10-7

\* - Conference opponent

## WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

### Bison Invitational -- Lewisburg, Pa.

Feb. 14	vs. UC San Diego	TBA
Feb. 15	vs. Villanova	11:45 a.m.
	vs. Hartwick	4:45 p.m.
Feb. 16	vs. Princeton	10:30 a.m.
	vs. Marist	3:30 p.m.

### CWPA/MAAC Crossover

#### Cambridge, Mass.

Feb. 22	vs. Villanova	1:30 p.m.
	vs. Iona	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 23	vs. Wagner	8:00 a.m.
	vs. Siena	2:15 p.m.

Mar. 11	at Cal Baptist	8:00 p.m.
Mar. 12	at Pomona-Pitzer	10:00 p.m.
Mar. 13	at Long Beach State	10:00 p.m.

### Aztec Invitational -- San Diego, Calif.

Mar. 15	vs. TBA	TBA
Mar. 16	vs. TBA	TBA

Mar. 29	vs. Princeton* (Erie, Pa.)	3:00 p.m.
	at Mercyhurst*	7:00 p.m.
April 5	vs. Harvard*	10:00 a.m.
	vs. George Washington*	5:30 p.m.
April 6	vs. Brown*	11:30 a.m.

### Southern Championships --

#### Cambridge, Mass.

April 12	vs. TBA	TBA
April 13	vs. TBA	TBA

### CWPA Championship --

#### Lewisburg, Pa.

April 25	vs. TBA	TBA
April 26	vs. TBA	TBA
April 27	vs. TBA	TBA

\* - Conference opponent  
All times Eastern

## FORMER BISON RICHIE HYDEN '12 INDUCTED INTO YWCA GREENWICH AQUATIC HALL OF FAME

Former Bucknell standout Richie Hyden was recently inducted into the YWCA Greenwich Aquatic Hall of Fame. A Bucknell-record three-time Honorable Mention All-American, Hyden was also a three-time first-team all-conference selection, becoming the first Bison to accomplish that feat since the mid-1980s. He finished his career seventh at Bucknell in goals (232), fifth in assists (161) and sixth in points (393), becoming the first player to join any of those top-10 lists since Kevin Permisohn in 2000.

As a senior, Hyden led the team with 89 points on 52 goals and a team-high 37 assists. He also drew a team-high 57 ejections, a figure that ranks fifth on the Bison single-season list, and recorded 20 steals while seeing action in all 29 contests.



# CAPTAINS REFLECT ON FOUR YEARS GONE BY



**JACK ELSE, Lansdale, Pa./North Penn**

Four years with Bucknell water polo has gone by quicker than I could have ever imagined. At the start of my freshman year I was very nervous, as I did not know what to expect. I knew the expectation to be in shape at our California trip but past that I was not sure what the team dynamic was. I quickly learned that the team was a great group of guys that always strived to win an Eastern Championship. While it did not happen that year, it was a great experience nonetheless and I knew that I still had three years to get that elusive title.



In the transition to my sophomore year there were a lot of changes and I was filled with uncertainty again. Coach Abdou had left and Coach McBride filled the position. In our first year with him we had tremendous success but it was a still a learning year, as we were a young team still figuring out

the new system that we found ourselves in. That year went just as fast as the last and by junior year we found ourselves at the Easterns championship game. While we did not win last year, it was a learning experience for the team. Through that game we became accustomed to that environment so that the next time we found ourselves in that position, we would win.

My plan, as well as the rest of the team, was to extend our season into December. While that has not been done for thirty years I truly believed that this year would be different. It is finally hitting me that there will not be a next year. Four years go by so fast and I am grateful for the experience that I have had with Bucknell water polo. The life lessons that McBride has taught us through water polo will continue to carry through to my life after Bucknell. Bucknell water polo has given me so many memories.

Unfortunately our weekend at Easterns did not go as planned. However, it is not all negative. We came together to pull off a win against Brown at their own pool and got McBride his first win against his former team. I can't believe that its over now but I look forward to following the team in the future.



**MIKE KIMBLE, Lafayette, Calif./Acalanes**

Coming to Bucknell as a freshman student-athlete, you hit the ground running considering that water polo training begins before orientation or classes. Being in this position, freshman water polo players need their teammates to help them acclimate to the new surroundings and to ensure that they don't miss anything. Essentially, a freshman is very reliant on his team and one of the biggest team responsibilities would be to help there freshman with any trouble they are experiencing.

This changes as you get older; once you become a sophomore then you have a bigger responsibility to the team and to help the freshman because you most recently went through this process. As each year progresses, you put more and more into the program and thus your responsibilities on the team and your commitment to the team grows.

When I became a captain I wanted to ensure that all the freshman felt very accepted

*See CAPTAINS, pg. 4*

## COMPLIANCE CORNER

### Compliance Booster Q & A

#### Game Awards

**Q:** Can a player receive a game ball from the coach for an accomplishment in a single game?

**A:** Yes, a student-athlete can receive a memento of nominal value (i.e. game ball, t-shirt, hat) in recognition of an accomplishment in a particular contest or event.

**Q:** Could they receive a gift card for the same accomplishment?

**A:** No, they could not receive cash or the equivalent of cash.

#### ABC's of Compliance

**F – Financial Aid**

Financial aid is funds provided to student-athletes from various sources to pay or assist their cost of education at the institution.

*If you have any questions about this column, please contact the compliance office at 570-577-3070 or talk with your head coach.*



on our team because coming from California I knew first hand the feelings of not knowing a single person on campus. Teammates will be the best friends that you will meet during your time at Bucknell and we wanted to foster this type of environment on our team.

Becoming captain of the Bucknell water polo team has truly brought the entire experience full circle. As a freshman on the team you look up to every other player not only for tips and tricks on how to become a better athlete but the older players are your source of information on how to become a better student and person as well. It occurred to me during the pre-season training in my junior year that I was no longer learning from those above me but instead I had become the example that the younger kids would look to during drills and games. This in itself is very inspiring because you soon realize that you are playing this sport for not just yourself but for every other player in the pool. This also made me realize that if I was truly the example to which the younger kids would model themselves after then their actions in and outside of the pool are a direct response of my actions. This made me hold myself to a higher standard in order to push the rest of the team to adhere to a higher standard.

The last and most fulfilling part of being a captain and having over three years of experience on this team is that as captain you have the opportunity to instill an unconditional love and dedication for the program on to the other teammates. They don't understand the hours of practice and games that the seniors have put into the program and the loyalty that comes along with that immense commitment. Being able to instill that type of dedication onto everyone on the team breeds a better team atmosphere because then everyone is playing for their teammates instead of for themselves. As captain, you become the glue of the team and you are also the first person that everyone looks to during conflicts inside or outside the pool. This has made me more dedicated to the program because it has essentially put my name in line with the actions of the program and thus I am now invested in every player's actions throughout the season.



***ALEX NOWLIN, Coto de Caza, Calif./Tesoro***

It is strange to think back to when I first arrived at Bucknell and the senior captains that I looked up to then. While the team had a similar feel, there was a lot that was different about us. The biggest thing that I can remember is the way that we compared ourselves to other teams in our League. Even though I was only a freshman, I could feel a difference about the way we talked about teams like Princeton and Navy, and the way we talked about ourselves. There was a sense of superiority with those teams, and early in the season I felt as if we were not really expected to beat them. By the end of the season we were 0-4 vs. Princeton and 1-2 vs. Navy. This had to change if we ever wanted to be successful.



When the season ended I remembered distinctly thinking that my class had more talent than any other team on the East Coast and that we were bound to win an Eastern Championship together. Little did I realize that talent alone would never be enough to achieve our goals. Sophomore year came around and things changed. With McBride as our head coach there was a higher expectation from every single member of the team. For myself and many others in my class we were called upon to be leaders of the team and to be starters. We came out and started the season better than anyone else on the East Coast and I think we became complacent. The seniors on our team were some of our best friends, and I am sure that they wanted to be successful. What I think we lacked though was a sense of accountability and of urgency from the seniors to make this our best season yet. We finished the year and the loss to Brown stung, but I knew that our team would only be stronger the next year. We had plenty of time.

Junior year was as good of a chance as any for it to be our year. We had the chemistry, the coaching, and all the tools we needed to be successful. Unfortunately, the end result was a mistake or two short of brilliance. Seeing this though made me realize that even when you may have everything you need to be successful, there is absolutely no

guarantee that it will come to fruition. You need something else, a combination of confidence and urgency starting with the seniors and ending with freshman, that this season was the only one that mattered. A mindset to forget about the years you had left and only on the opportunity that was in front of you at that time and place.

So here we are. Eastern Championships came and went and we had just as good of a chance as anyone else there. We lost to a good St. Francis team and an incredible goalie but still there is no reason to make excuses. At the end of the year it comes down to the team that has the attitude and the confidence to believe nothing stands in their way. This year unfortunately that just was not us. I know that Bucknell has the talent and coaching to soon win an Eastern Championship. It is just going to take a mentality change of believing Bucknell has returned to the years when winning was expected and losing unacceptable. The year that happens Bucknell Men's Water Polo will dominate the East Coast.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT WITH JASON RECHEL '08

*Jason Rechel was an honorable mention All-American and a two-time All-CWPA Southern Division player for the Bison. He was the team's rookie of the year in 2004 and the offensive MVP in 2006. Rechel finished his career ranked among the school's all-time leaders in games played (2nd-123), sprints won (2nd-169), shots (7th-369) and steals (9th-116). A team captain in 2007, Rechel was named to the All-Eastern Championship team in both 2006 and 2007.*



## **1. Update us on your life since graduating from Bucknell in 2008?**

I moved immediately to New York after graduating in the Spring of 2008. I used the network that Bucknell provided to lock down a financial analyst job and was fortunate enough to be co-workers for a couple years with fellow water polo player Mark Masterson and soccer player Kevin Holmes (Bucknell '08). I transitioned to Needham & Company as an investment analyst in 2010 (where I actually worked with fellow BU Polo Alum Chris Retzler - you don't realize how small a world it is until you're in it!). In the summer of 2011, I had the opportunity to again transition my career to Oppenheimer and at the same time move back home to the Midwest. I've since settled in Chicago, closer to friends and family and finally "home" after college. I plan on continuing to build my career/life here in Chicago.

## **2. How much polo have you played since you officially hung up your Bison cap?**

After hanging up my BU cap, I played a lot of polo living in NY as a member of the New York Athletic Club. Lot's of veteran BU players were there and it was a great collection of other guys I used to play against while in college. We made trips annually to compete at the highest level. However, staying in shape while working 80 hours a week can be challenging!! When I moved to Chicago, I played for a masters program for a year, but have since hung up my speedo aside from official BU Alumni tournaments. Last February (2012), I competed with a great group of alums and we plan on going back for the tournament championship in Florida this February (2013). Since I hung the speedo up, I've gotten my athletic/competitive fill from running. I've ran in several half marathons, two marathons and recently qualified for the Boston Marathon - I'll be running in Spring 2015! I get my water polo fill by staying involved in the Bucknell Water Polo mentoring program and being involved on the Alumni Committee. Both are great ways to stay involved and give back to the program that has given so much to me! I hope to become more involved in both over the years.

## **3. How did your experience as a student-athlete help prepare you for your professional career?**

How DIDN'T it prepare me?! As a student-athlete, I think there were three very important lessons that translated directly to my professional career. 1) Time Management - waking up at 6am for practice, going to class and doing schoolwork all day and then going to practice again is a lot like waking up at 6am and working all day. You've got to know what to prioritize, how to get your duties done efficiently and how to maximize your time. I find my professional life far less stressful than some of my peers who did not have the opportunities to learn this in college. 2) Working with people - Being successful professionally, at the end of the day, is all about relationships and dealing with different personalities. You've got to be able to manage and get along with every type of personality and there was no better way to learn this than being in a tight-knit locker room of guys with big personalities. And 3) Setting goals for yourself - As an athlete, I was never content. I constantly set goals for myself and my team and worked hard and efficiently every day to achieve those goals to the best of my ability. It's the same with your career. If you're content and don't constantly evolve your goals and raise the bar for yourself, you won't go very far. You've got to get better at what you do and how you do it each and every day. Whether that's mastering your 6-on-5 passing skills or better understanding how to analyze the cash flows of a company, the result is the same. If you can manage your time, learn to work with every personality type and constantly make yourself better to reach your goals, whether you are playing water polo, analyzing businesses or selling furniture, you're going to be pretty successful.

## **4. Describe some of your most memorable experiences as a member of the Bucknell water polo team?**

Hands down my most memorable experience was the summer trip our team took to Hungary. For two weeks, the team traveled through the water polo capital of the world playing water polo, eating great food and building team chemistry. There is a reason that was the closest team of my four years at Bucknell, and that reason was the late nights and early mornings we spent together in Hungary. It's funny, I have never forgotten something Scott Schulte said to our team my sophomore year: When you're older, you won't remember all the practices or the classes or the social events, they will all blend together. But you will remember with specific clarity the best games that your team played. And thanks Schulte, because in retrospect, that couldn't be more true. Our team had some great trips, parties and events together. We went to Hawaii for a week before my freshman year and California for a week each summer before preseason. Those were all incredible trips and experiences as part of the team. But, Outside of Hungary, my best memories are our Friday Night, home game shootout victory over Princeton my senior year. We played our asses off and that was the best home crowd I've seen. Or our wild, roller coaster shootout in Johns' Hopkins (terrible) shallow-end pool also my senior year. Or whacking heavily-favored Pacific to kick off our senior year season. Or losing a 4 goal second half lead at Navy my junior year. I could go on for hours, but you get the idea - the best memories and the ones that will stick with me forever, are the games for which we trained and prepared all year.

## **5. If you had one piece of advice to give to the current Bucknell players, what would it be?**

One piece of advice?! Enjoy the ride. When you're at Bucknell its easy to drive yourself too hard, or focus too much on the future or what you will do in the future. Those four years at Bucknell are unlike any four years you'll ever have, so don't waste any time, don't get lost on outcomes and don't focus too much on what's going to happen when you leave. If you enjoy the ride while you're there, everything will come together exactly as you could hope.

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## **BUCKNELL WATER POLO NEEDS YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT**

*Looking to make an end of the year charitable tax deduction?*

*Please consider supporting Bison Water Polo.*

The student-athletes in our water polo program benefit from a top-notch, highly competitive, Division I experience. In addition to competing at the highest level in one of the finest facilities in the nation, our student-athletes will graduate from a prestigious academic institution with all the tools they will need to be successful in life. *None of this is possible without your continued annual support.*

While endowments such as the Russell Endowment and the Canonica Family Water Polo Endowment provide resources to allow Bucknell to maintain the polo programs, it is the annual support that provides on average 40% of our yearly operating budget each year. Those funds provide for many of the essentials of the daily operations for both the men's and women's teams, and if we do not meet our fundraising goal each year our student-athletes will not have the quality experience that has come to be expected from the Bucknell program. In our case, our California trips become jeopardized which hurts our recruiting and prevents an opportunity for many of our student-athletes to compete in their home state in front of family and friends.

Our fundraising goal this year, as set by the administration, is \$85,000. As of the end of November we sat at \$28,700, or 34% of goal. If you are looking to make a end-of-year charitable deduction now is a perfect time to support YOUR BISON WATER POLO program. Our student-athletes appreciate what you do for them, and your support makes the entire program one we can all be very proud of. Thanks in advance for your support, and happy holidays from Bucknell and your Bison Water Polo program.

### **Methods of Giving**

**Check or Cash:** This is the most common way to give. When writing a check, make it out to Bucknell University and in the memo section note "Water Polo," or "Men's Water Polo," or "Women's Water Polo."

**By Credit Card:** The university accepts most major credit cards.

**Gifts of Stock/Securities:** To arrange a stock transfer, call the Office of Development & Alumni Relations at 570-577-3200.

**Pledges:** You can set up a payment schedule when you make a pledge, and payment reminders will be sent to you.

**Corporate matching gifts:** Many corporations match their employees' charitable donations to nonprofit institutions. Check with your benefits department for matching gift information and to see if they will match gifts to athletics.

**You can give on-line:** [www.BucknellBison.com](http://www.BucknellBison.com).