

# A Coach's Dream Come True

by "Coach" McEwen

My friends always laugh and ask me when I'm going to grow up and get a "real" job. I have to laugh, too, because they know how much I love teaching here at Salem. One of the main reasons is the students, particularly those involved with the Athletics Program.

There are many joys in coaching as well as adversities. Some coaches find that the hardest part of their job is in recruiting, personnel, student eligibility, etc. The hardest part of my job, however, especially this year, is having to say "goodbye" to several athletes who I've watched grow over the past four years. Women who have been the backbone of the Salem Athletic program, and who have made the past four years of my life the most enjoyable of my professional career. It is to these women that I dedicate this article.

Many thanks to Casey, Myrna and Strat. Your efforts and involvement in the Salem Recreation Association and the Field Hockey and Soccer programs have been greatly appreciated and will be sorely missed. The talent and leadership you gave to these programs have been an integral part in the growth of the total athletic program here at Salem.

An additional heartfelt "thanks" goes to Laura Morrison, who has worked in the Athletic Department and has been my link to the Equestrian team for the past two years. There have been many times that I've handed her something to xerox right after she has just come from there, or that I've given her something to do that "needs to be done yesterday" five minutes before her time to leave. Laura always smiled even though inside I know she was saying, "I'm going to kill this woman!", or something close to that effect.

If I could, I'd give Julie Meyer a solid gold volleyball for all the physical abuse she took during practice sessions - and she wasn't even playing! You're the best manager a coach could ever have, and you helped me more than you'll ever know! Sue Ellen Crocker deserves a huge round of applause and hugs from me and the Volleyball and Tennis teams. Her enthusiasm, spirit, and exceptional "artwork" have been an inspiration to all of us, especially when we really needed encouragement and a "true fan"!

To Sally Lemmon goes an eternal note of gratitude to the day she walked into my office and asked,

"How do we start a Swim Team?" Little did she know what she was letting herself and many others in for over the next three years. You deserve a gold medal for your dedication and love to your sport and Salem.

This leads me to the last seven women whom I have worked the closest with over the last four years. At times they have been my arms, my legs, and above all, each in her own way have won my heart and respect. In the future, whenever anyone comes up to me and says, "Guess what Coach?" I'll always think of Heather Lewisohn. Many interesting moments and conversations between us started out this way. Your hard-work and playing ability helped me to make the Volleyball team a success during your tenure at Salem, and I know that these traits, as well as many others, will help you make a success in the field of your choice. Don't ever forget that, and don't ever give up on what you want. Thank you SO MUCH for NOT transferring when you had the chance.

Valerie Steinier, if a Medical School doesn't take you, their loss will affect all the people in that third-world country of yours who may never get the opportunity to have a person of your caliber and compassion give them the care they so desperately need. I wish you all the best in the world and hope that dream of yours becomes a reality some day. Don't give up! I can breathe a little easier knowing that my bank account is now in the competent hands of Ashley Neill. I know you will be a success in your chosen profession, because you work hard and diligently at whatever you do and your leadership qualities will take you far. Virginia Edmondson, don't ever lose those "earrings" of yours - look at the luck it brought us these last four years. When you become the next anchorwoman for a major network, just remember who taught you to play net! You, too, will go far based on your outgoing personality and your willingness to work long and hard to achieve success. Another person I have to thank for not transferring is Leigh Cubbitt. Leigh your talent, tenacity and sheer "guts" are some of the reasons our Tennis team has been so successful. Even though you feel that you "complained" a lot, you never once wavered when I asked you to do something. That meant a lot to me and to the team. Your drive and determination will take you far. Just remember to always

keep things "in perspective" and you will never fail.

I have saved the last two of the seven because it has taken me the longest to think of a way to thank both of them for the past four years they have spent here at Salem. Galen Miller and Katherine Livermon are two of the most talented, "coachable" and unselfish athletes I have ever worked with in my many years in sports. The dedication and love for your sport and Salem has been an inspiration, not only to me but to your peers and all those who have had the pleasure of watching you perform during your years at Salem. Rudy and Topper, you are two of the most "team-oriented"

individuals I have ever had the pleasure to coach. Your athleticism, dedication to your sport, and the team concept you have so obviously displayed have won the respect and admiration of all who have come in contact with you, and I know that with the "people" skills both of you possess, your future success is immeasurable.

Thanks again to all those mentioned for a truly pleasurable four years. I wish each of you the best of everything life has to offer. And to the latter seven women, a special "Thanks!" for making a coach's dream come true by helping to make that undefeated season come true - you truly are the biggest part of my DREAM TEAM!



Photos courtesy of Patricia Earnhardt