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University of Idaho

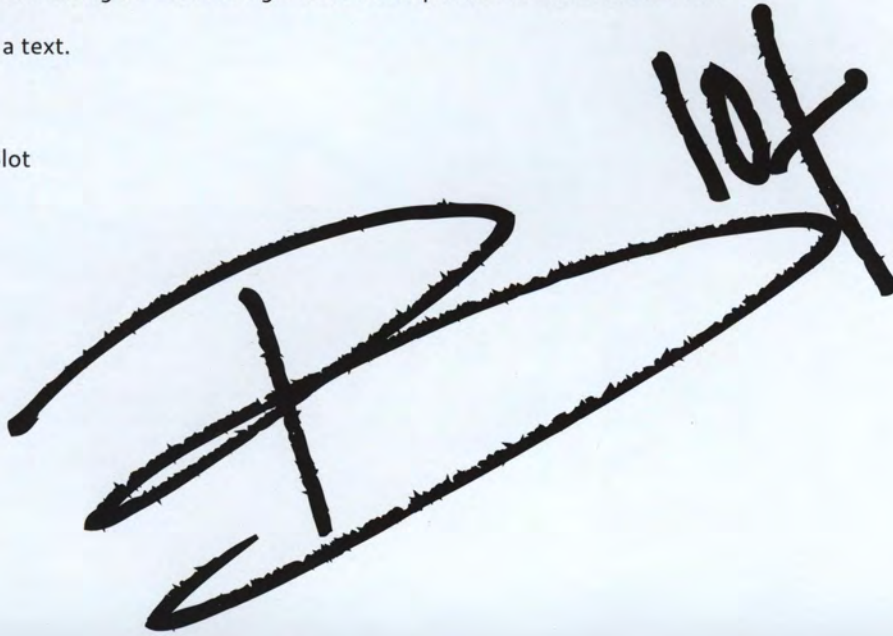
Hey you!

What are you doing this summer? Are you coming back next year or are you graduating? You know what? Some time before you leave, we should hang out. We could grab a beer at the Alehouse and chat it up. We can talk about sex and cage fighting. We can reminisce about old friends — like that AKL guy who's coming back next fall after surviving cancer, or that football player who's spot on the team gave him a whole new life. And can you believe what people are wearing around here these days? It's amazing how much it's changed — and I've got some cool photos to share about that.

Shoot me a text.

Peace.

- Blot



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BLOT ONLINE:

Visit blot.uidaho.edu to read about beer and drag shows. Read about the journey from inside the workings of Coeur d'Alene Brewing to Moscow's Alehouse and learn about the process of making the area's popular microbrews. Also, take a glimpse at one of Moscow's rising subcultures when a Blot reporter goes through Drag 101 and debuts as a drag king.

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STEPPING INTO THE OCTAGON

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI CHASE DREAMS OF
PROFESSIONAL CAGE FIGHTING

story by KEVIN OTZENBERGER
photography by JAKE BARBER
illustration by SCOTT OBERT





■ Being put in the guillotine choke by Reid Hazelbaker is likely the closest feeling to being strangled by an anaconda one can experience outside the jungle. The move makes an opponent's head feel like a grape being pulled from its stem, and is precisely the Brazilian Jiu-jitsu maneuver that won Hazelbaker his first Mixed Martial Arts cage fight.

On the evening of March 20, 2010, two University of Idaho alumni fought career-changing matches. The Thunder and Lightning "Combat in the Cage" event at the Clearwater River Casino and Resort in Lewiston was Hazelbaker's first, and may have been fellow Vandal alum David Velarde's last.

Hazelbaker has fought in boxing and Brazilian Jiu-jitsu competitions before, but until the "Combat in the Cage" event had never before been in an MMA cage fight. His opponent for the evening was a seasoned veteran, coming back from some 15 fights.

"I was able to out-box him and force him to try to shoot on me, and I got him in a guillotine choke, which is a classic anti-takedown defense," Hazelbaker said. "I was pretty excited to be able to manage the storm with my Jiu-jitsu and control him without taking any serious punishment."

Hazelbaker said because of his long background in Jiu-jitsu, his ground game is the strong point of his combat, but that he still has much to learn and hopes to pursue more intensive training with an MMA group in Portland called Team Quest.

"I'm going to take it as far as I can," Hazelbaker said. "The quality of training matters a lot — who you train with and how they push you — that's one of the reasons I want to get to a bigger area with bigger gyms to train with possibly professional athletes and try to make it there, and I believe that I can."

Velarde's fight went differently.

At 30 years old, Velarde has graduated from UI twice with degrees in communications and public relations, but has thus far only been able to find menial labor work in the area, and his family is considering relocation. As a husband and father, Velarde questions whether MMA fighting is still worth the physical risk.

"Do I really need this anymore?" Velarde asked. "It might have been different in my late teens or early 20s. Now, I don't know how much more punishment I can take."

Velarde suffered a laceration above the left eye and a minor concussion that resulted in a technical knock-out after the official called the fight due to his bleeding. The match was his third loss of six fights, and the injury required stitches.

Though he said it may be time to "hang up the gloves," Velarde plans to continue training for the exercise and has now set his sights on competitive body building.

Mixed Martial Arts fighting brings together multiple combat styles

to create a sort of "anything goes" fighting sport. Such events have existed for centuries, but fights of the specific MMA nature seen in today's sport began to appear in Brazil about 80 years ago, according to the Web site for the Ultimate Fighting Championship organization. The UFC brand brought the sport to the U.S. in 1993, as its popularity also began to blossom in Brazil and Japan. In 2001, UFC was bought by Zuffa, LLC, which converted MMA fighting into a more tightly-regulated and organized competition, and the popularity of UFC's pay-per-view events has dramatically increased since. UFC's influence has resulted in a sudden rise of amateur and semi-professional MMA events, which act to stage fighters for entry into the UFC professional arena.

While a wide variety of fighting skills are needed to succeed in "the octagon" (the UFC-trademarked octagonal ring), Brazilian Jiu-jitsu instructor Wesley Peterson said most MMA fighters usually come from a history of one particular focus. One of the most common and crucial martial arts staples in MMA fighting is Brazilian Jiu-jitsu.

"It's the base of the food pyramid of MMA," Peterson said, "the foundation of everything else."

Peterson, a UI sophomore in studio art, is also the owner of Peak

Balance Jiu-jitsu, and a co-founder of the UI Brazilian Jiu-jitsu club. The club has existed since 2002, but since last semester has been forced off campus and into a large finished garage in the hills five miles north of Moscow. The club has not been officially affiliated with the university since renovations in the Student Recreation Center eliminated the group's combat room.

In true Idaho fashion, the Jiu-jitsu club's studio lies within a huge, red, aluminum barn atop the crest of a hilly wheat field that descends into forests to the east and vast swells of tilled earth to the west. Inside, the old dog-eared SRC mats cover the improvised floor space, curling up against undecorated white walls in a room where they don't rightly fit. The club's training nights usually bring in a crowd of around 10 regulars for technique training and light sparring. Peterson said Brazilian Jiu-jitsu can make all the difference in an MMA fight, as a platform where technical mastery can overcome brute strength.

"This idea of masculinity, of toughness, goes out the window when a 200-pound guy gets tossed around by a guy who weighs 135 pounds," Peterson said.

For a number of past UI students, the Jiu-jitsu club has been a foot in the door for those hoping to pursue cage fighting. Peterson said the club has given some students the

"You just get a cup, a mouth-piece and those gloves. It's like the gladiator days, fighting in the coliseum."

David Velarde



chance to meet and train with professional MMA fighters in large facilities in Seattle and Portland. One example is Washington State University alumnus Bristol Marunde, who is now a professional MMA fighter with a 9-5 record and is regarded by Peterson as one of five-time UFC champion Randy Couture's favorite sparring partners. Peterson has also trained with Couture.

"Being choked by the world

champion of UFC fighting over and over and over again while still trying to destroy him — that's memorable — that's why I want to do this," he said.

But while interest in MMA appears strong in Northern Idaho, many fighters believe the opportunities are still limited in the area. Peterson believes the problem lies with the sport's legal status, as amateur events can only be held legally on reservations. Velarde

blames the lack of legitimate MMA training facilities. Hazelbaker cites a scene that is too big for small towns to support.

"It hasn't really developed to the level where you can be serious about it here and get very far," Hazelbaker said. "You need to move somewhere else to advance, like I'm doing. You just don't have the population base here to really get a lot of competition going."

The sport of MMA also struggles with its image — that of a brutish, violent spectacle characterized by arrogant hot-shots.

"Some fighters definitely perpetuate that," Hazelbaker said. "... They go in there and try to brawl, to have that attitude. But the majority of fighters do treat it as a sport, have a lot of camaraderie with their fellow fighters and are very laid back — not out there trying to smack people around, beat people up. ... They don't use it to put themselves on a pedestal."

Peterson noted that despite common presumptions, MMA actually maintains a lower serious injury

rate than comparable sports. In recent MMA history, only three deaths have been unanimously attributed to professional cage fighting, one in Ukraine in 1998, another in South Korea in 2005 (both involving pre-existing conditions), and the most publicized in 2007, when pro fighter Sam Vasquez died from blood clots around his brain 10 days after being knocked out by Vince Libardi in Houston. "Stitches are the worst injury (UI Brazilian Jiu-jitsu members) have had," Peterson said. "Instances are a lot lower than you'd think, definitely lower than rugby, lower than football ... the statistics are common with any combat sport. Some MMA events have lower injury rates than soccer."

UFC regulates its rounds with 31 rules of fighting conduct, giving hidden structure to what may look like an unharnessed brawl. But the intensity of the combat remains, and is precisely the draw that keeps the athletes in the game.

"You just get a cup, a mouthpiece and those gloves," Velarde said. "It's like the gladiator days, fighting in the coliseum." ❗

CAMPUS RECREATION






A new landscape
for sexual diversity


DISCOVERING

story by TANYA EDDINS

photography by NICK GROFF

modeling by CAITLAN KOLB and BRENT DUNCAN



 In 1964, the girls in Ridenbaugh Hall at the University of Idaho were locked up by 10 p.m. Dean of Women Marjorie Neeley presided. The girls would flit from room-to-room giggling with friends as they examined stiffly-starched dresses to wear the next day.

The men who walked them to their dormitory for check-in would stare longingly toward the brightly-lit windows before heading to the Student Union Building to meet up with friends, drink a Coke and discuss the evening's events.

Dick Wilson, class of '68, leans back in his chair reminiscing, while a smile plays at the corners of his mouth.

"The deans of women were powers to be reckoned with in those days," Wilson said, "and I don't think a university president would have dared cross Dean Neeley."

Wilson said changes could be measured by viewing a map of campus and analyzing it. "Sometime after 1928, the campus grew in size and the first men's and women's dormitories were built. But before that, men at UI lived in attics and basements around town," Wilson said.

Wilson pointed at locations of the dorms to note that they were built on opposite sides of campus to segregate the populations.

"The goal back then was education, not freedom," he said.

Wilson said it took 70 years from the founding of the university for men and women to live on the same side of campus. This was achieved when the Wallace Complex was built in 1963 as a co-ed dormitory.

The scene at UI today is very different than the one painted by Wilson.

College life gives students the chance to discover who they really are. Students face choices about how much debt to accumulate, how to pay their power bill, how to increase their GPA, how to maintain an abundant social network and which professional path to take.

And then they have to make decisions about sex.

College experiences

Lauren McConnell, a first-year law student at UI, has made the decision to remain single and is not sexually active.

"I have to feel really comfortable with the person I am with. I had a relationship of three years so it's not a flippant decision for me," she said.

McConnell said she worries that not having experiences before commitment could be a



“I would rather have good sex than a lot of sex.”
JeyJey Giguere



setback, yet also worries that intimate experiences come at a cost. She said while there is constant pressure in today's society to have sex, she prefers to wait.

Some students at UI choose abstinence and some view college as a time of sexual experimentation.

David Duarte, sophomore, said he is not abstinent but has standards when it comes to sex. Duarte said he chooses to be sexually active for personal enjoyment.

"We should be able to freely have sex," Duarte said, "but we need to keep it under control and keep our number of partners limited."

Sexual stigmas

JeyJey Giguere, senior, considers herself gender-neutral and said she came to this realization a few months ago. She said she does not feel the terms "male" and "female" can define who she is. Giguere said she has always been aware of her masculine tendencies, and came to question her gender.

Giguere said she went to a couple of school dances while in high school, but dating men never felt natural to her. She said she realized her sexuality while in college and has to have a personal connection in order to have sex.

"I would rather have good sex than a lot of sex," Giguere said.

Brianne Tice, senior, said some of the most pertinent issues in today's society are the stigmas that surround sexual preference. "I believe that for some people, sexuality can be fluid and is not defined simply by preferring men or women," Tice said.

Tice comes from a Christian background but discovered philosophy at a young age. When she brought philosophical questions to her pastor, he urged her to be steadfast in her faith. She said this was not a suitable response for her and chose to redefine her values outside of a religious system.

Tice said it's most important for students to be honest with themselves about what they desire, and not to think they are weird or odd if they want something their friends don't.

"There are so many stigmas, assumptions and expectations surrounding sex and you have to get past those, because your own sexuality is such a part of who you are," Tice said.

Giguere said while there are student support groups and an accepting community at UI, she still braves homophobic insults flung at her from passing cars on occasion.

"Fear is the origin of hate. I think those that don't understand my choice feel threatened," Giguere said, "and we may have a different set of values than you, but at the core we are

all the same. We all want to be happy, to love and be free."

Valerie Russo, violence prevention director with the Dean of Students, said the lesbian, gay and transgender movement is really about simple human rights and advocating for the rights of all people.

"When certain people are being marginalized, we need to stand up for their rights and place an umbrella of protection over them," Russo said.

There are safe places on UI campus for students seeking a support system. Brotherhood Empowerment Against Rape is in the Dean of Students' office, located at the UI Commons, and hosts male advocates that are prepared to help sexual assault victims. There are also several groups through the Women's Center, located in Memorial Gym, that support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered students with support groups and events.

Safe sex

Russo said an important safety issue to address when talking about sex is the epidemic of sexual violence and rape.

"We have about 250 women each year that are victims of rape and attempted rape on this campus," Russo said.

She said the mission of B.E.A.R. is to promote the message that silence is not consent. B.E.A.R. aims to educate both men and women about "danger zones," or placing oneself in circumstances that perpetuate rape. B.E.A.R. encourages men and women to be safe and cognizant of their surroundings at all times.

Russo said it is also crucial to inform victims of rape that no matter the circumstances, rape is never their fault.


Russo started college at a time that was slower-paced than the rapid-fire technological environment of today. She said people were exchanging themselves in a different way during the free-love movement than what she sees today, and said modern sex is much more "me-focused."

"Sex today feels consumerist, it's random-casual," Russo said, "but people need to realize that any time you have casual sex, there are consequences."

McConnell agrees with Russo.

"I wish our culture focused more on being sexually smart rather than what type of choice you are making. It is smart to wait or to know your partner before you are intimate," McConnell said. "It's also important to know who you are before you start making those choices."

"Sex is no
intoxicate



ot as enjoyable when you are
d. It's one-dimensional."

David Duarte

Sex is often a touchy subject for people. There is not a single person unaffected by it in one way or another. Every human being has instinctual drives, whether they choose to satisfy those urges or not. Naturally, when there is an issue that affects everyone in this way, they worry about it.

Of those interviewed, both men and women expressed concern about sexual safety. The main issues are unwanted pregnancies and STDs. These concerns are avoidable with proper measures.

According to an annual survey conducted by the Counseling and Testing Center, only 53.4 percent of UI students use a condom or other protective barrier when engaging in intercourse. This question excluded students that responded with, "never did this sexual activity" or "have not done this during the last 30 days."

Duarte said he is selective about the number of partners he engages in intercourse with, but has chosen to have intercourse without a condom in the past. Duarte said usually that decision is made while intoxicated. He said when sex happens under the influence it can be negative for both men and women.

"Sex is not as enjoyable when you are intoxicated," Duarte said. "It's one-dimensional."

Tice is currently in a committed relationship, but had a variety of experiences in the past. She said her fears about sex are the same as anyone else's.

"I can deal with the regret of a random hookup," Tice said, "but you can't rationalize herpes away once you have it."

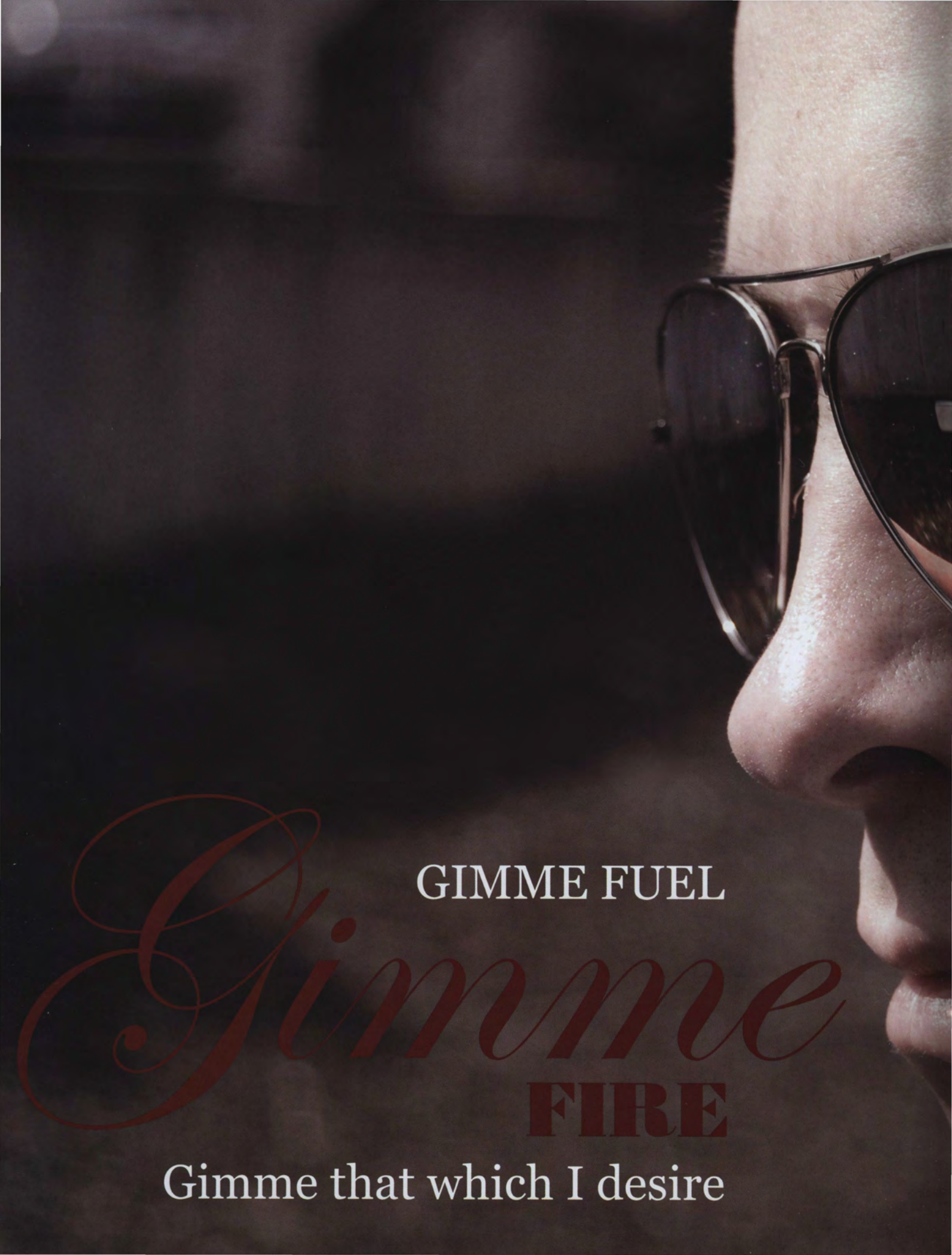
Giguere said she was not aware until a year ago that there were female condoms, because people don't talk about them in conversation or the media.

"If you don't use protection you are playing with a loaded gun," Giguiere said. "If you are with someone new and are unaware of their status, you should definitely use protection."

Choosing for yourself

With the diversity of options at hand, it becomes important for students to prove their ability to make safe choices – the right choices for themselves.

"When you are going to consider being sexually active, you should look at your values or religious beliefs and weigh that with your life here – going to class, living on your own and having a social life," Russo said. "When you get STDs or get pregnant, it is a life-changing issue. Give yourself the chance to grow, because these are the years you get to know yourself." ●



GIMME FUEL

Gimme
FIRE

Gimme that which I desire



Jake Barber



THE 20S WAS THE TIME WHEN SOCIETY BEGAN TO LET ITS HAIR DOWN IN THE FASHION WORLD. CLOTHING BECAME LESS FORMAL AND MORE MODERN, WITH DRESSES AND LEISURE SUITS ASSOCIATED WITH THE "ROARING 20S," WHICH EVEN CARRIED OVER INTO THE EARLY 30S



MODEL: MISTY BLYLEVEN



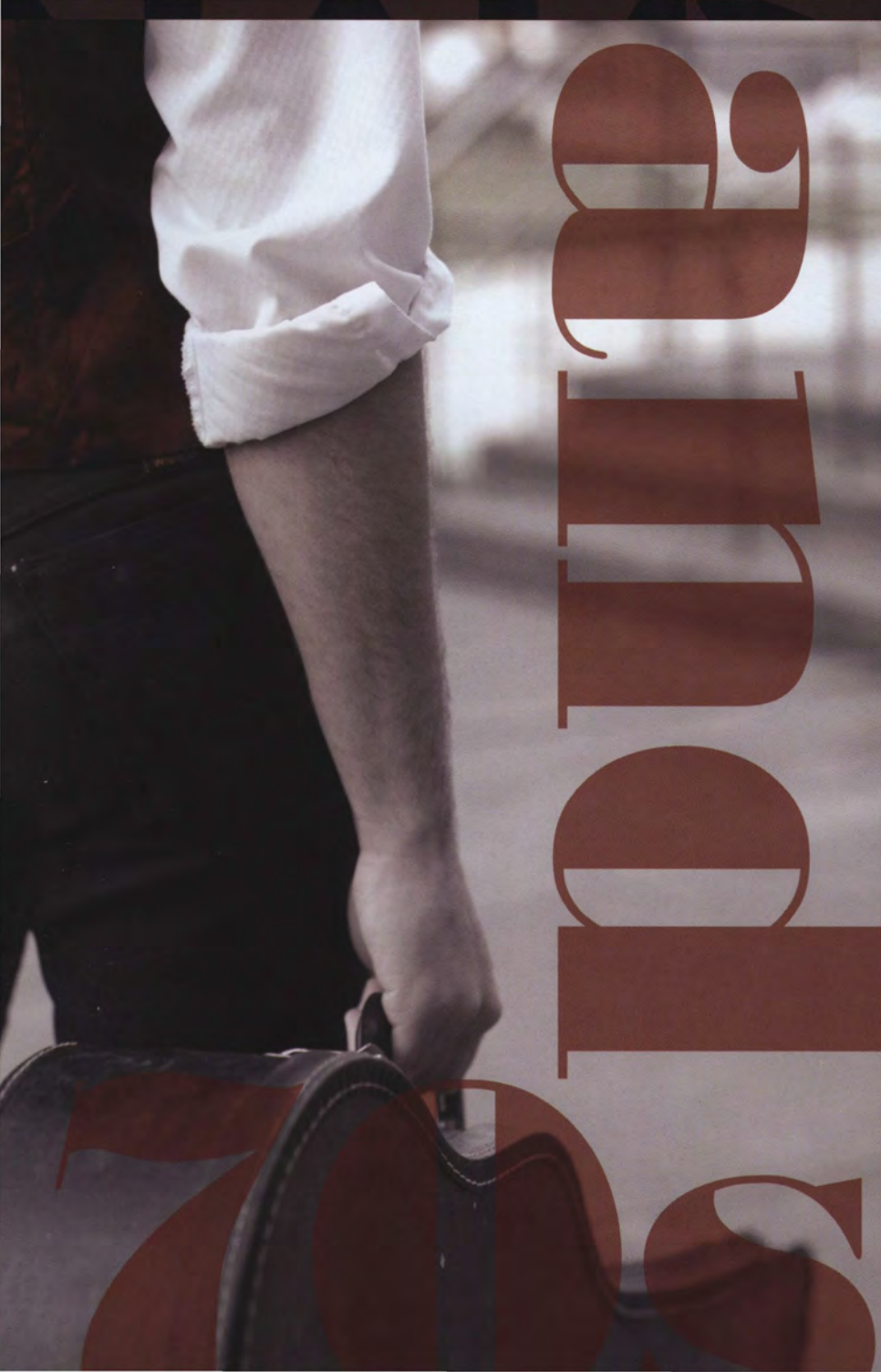
FASHION OF THE 50S WAS FAIRLY UNIFORM AND DRAB, WITH WOMEN IN HIGH-WAIST SKIRTS AND MEN IN DARK WOOL SUITS. IN THE LATTER PART OF THE DECADE, MUCH OF THE YOUTH BEGAN TO WEAR CLOTHING INSPIRED BY POPULAR CULTURE ICONS OF THAT TIME, SUCH AS JAMES DEAN AND ELVIS PRESLEY.

MODEL: AUSTIN NICHOLS



MODEL: JACOB MILLER

WAR, DRUGS, SEX, DISCO, LOVE ... THE 60S AND 70S HAD IT ALL. THE TIE-DYED COLORS, BEADS AND POET SHIRTS OF THE 60S TRANSFORMED INTO THE BELL-BOTTOMS AND SWAGGER OF THE 70S, AND MUCH OF THE FREE-SPIRITED IDEALS CARRIED OVER.





MODEL: JEYJEY GIGUIERE

THE 80S AND 90S WERE A PERIOD OF BIG HAIR AND BRIGHT COLORS WHEN PEOPLE DONNED NEON LEG WARMERS AND LARGER-THAN-APPROPRIATE SWEATERS. WITH THE EMERGENCE OF PUNK ROCK IN MAINSTREAM CULTURE, A NEW SUBCULTURE OF FASHION WAS BORN.





WINNING THE BATTLE

story by KELLI HADLEY
photography by NICK GROFF

■ The story of Lance Armstrong's battle with testicular cancer is widespread and well-respected. Twenty-year-old Nathan Rench may not be a world-famous cyclist, but he has beaten the same cancer, and to many students at the University of Idaho his story is just as inspirational.

In January 2009, the member of Alpha Kappa Lambda knew something was wrong when he couldn't recover from pulling an all-nighter. He couldn't get his energy back, felt sick and couldn't eat anything. After hours of blood work and tests at QuickCARE in Moscow, Rench saw a urologist and was diagnosed with testicular cancer. Within 48 hours, he had surgery and his left testicle was removed. The doctors told Rench and his family that if he hadn't seen the doctor in the next three or four weeks, his situation could have been much worse.

"It didn't really sink into me at first," Rench said. "I thought I was pretty impervious, like there was no way I was going to have cancer. It hit me after about a week, once I realized I couldn't go to school and wouldn't have all my friends around anymore."

Rench's friends and family were shaken to hear he was sick. But within 24 hours, his fraternity brothers had a Facebook support group for him that eventually had almost 500 members. Rench said the Dean of Students would call to check on him, and he received presents from the sororities and other campus groups.

"So after everyone does all that, you don't want to let them down. It's really good motivation," he said. "I have really good family and friends and that's why I did so well. My mom and dad were there every second."

Rench's mother, Tammi Rench, said she knew he wasn't feeling well but thought it was only the flu. The news of Rench's sickness was devastating, but she said being with him through his chemotherapy

and doctor visits was the best way to cope.

"I thought if I could do it for him, I would have in a heartbeat. When they told us, (we didn't) even want to believe it," Tammi Rench said. "His poor life changed in less than a week's time. Being diagnosed, moving home, starting a life that nobody would want."

AKL adviser Tim Helmke said the news of Rench's sickness was shocking, but it has been a good indicator of all the people who care about him and the lives he has touched.

"NATE IS THE IDEAL BROTHER. HE'S ALWAYS THERE TO LEND A HELPING HAND, A HUG, ENCOURAGEMENT."

Tim Helmke

There were two teams dedicated to Rench at the Relay for Life last year, and three of Rench's AKL brothers, Riley Flanigan, Drew Flerchinger and Grayson Stone walked for him the entire night. Helmke said Rench's attitude and caring nature has inspired many Vandals, especially his fraternity brothers.

"Even though he hasn't been at AKL, he's brought the chapter together because of who he is," Helmke said. "A lot of people say, 'This is what Nate would do.'"

Testicular cancer is fast-growing, but is also one of the easiest kinds of cancer to kill. After Rench's surgery, he had chemotherapy treatments from February until June. The chemotherapy left him feeling electrical shocks though his body

every time he looked down or moved his head. He also lost feeling in his hands and feet, and it is just now starting to return.

"One day my little sister went to hold my hand and I couldn't even tell she was holding my hand," Rench said. "I couldn't button up my pants. It was hard for me not to be able to do the stuff I used to do before. It almost got a little depressing."

Helmke said Rench's family threw a "Testicle Festival" for him in the summer of 2009 when he was cleared from the doctors. To make light of a scary situation, the party included Rocky Mountain Oysters and a variety of foods containing nuts.

But in October, Rench had another scare when he flew to Lance Armstrong's doctor in Indianapolis to have most of his left lung removed. His last PET scan had been positive for a tumor in the lung. Fortunately it turned out to be a bad infection, but part of his lung still had to be removed.

Rench is now cancer-free and recovering in Sandpoint until next fall when he will return to Moscow. Before the cancer, he studied ecology and forest productions, but the cancer changed his prospective plans and he is thinking of going into nursing because of the great nurses he had while he was sick.

"Everybody says I'm so strong, but really, it's just about being patient," he said. "It's kind of like being run over by a train. You don't have to be strong to be run over by a train. It just happens to you and you have to deal with it."

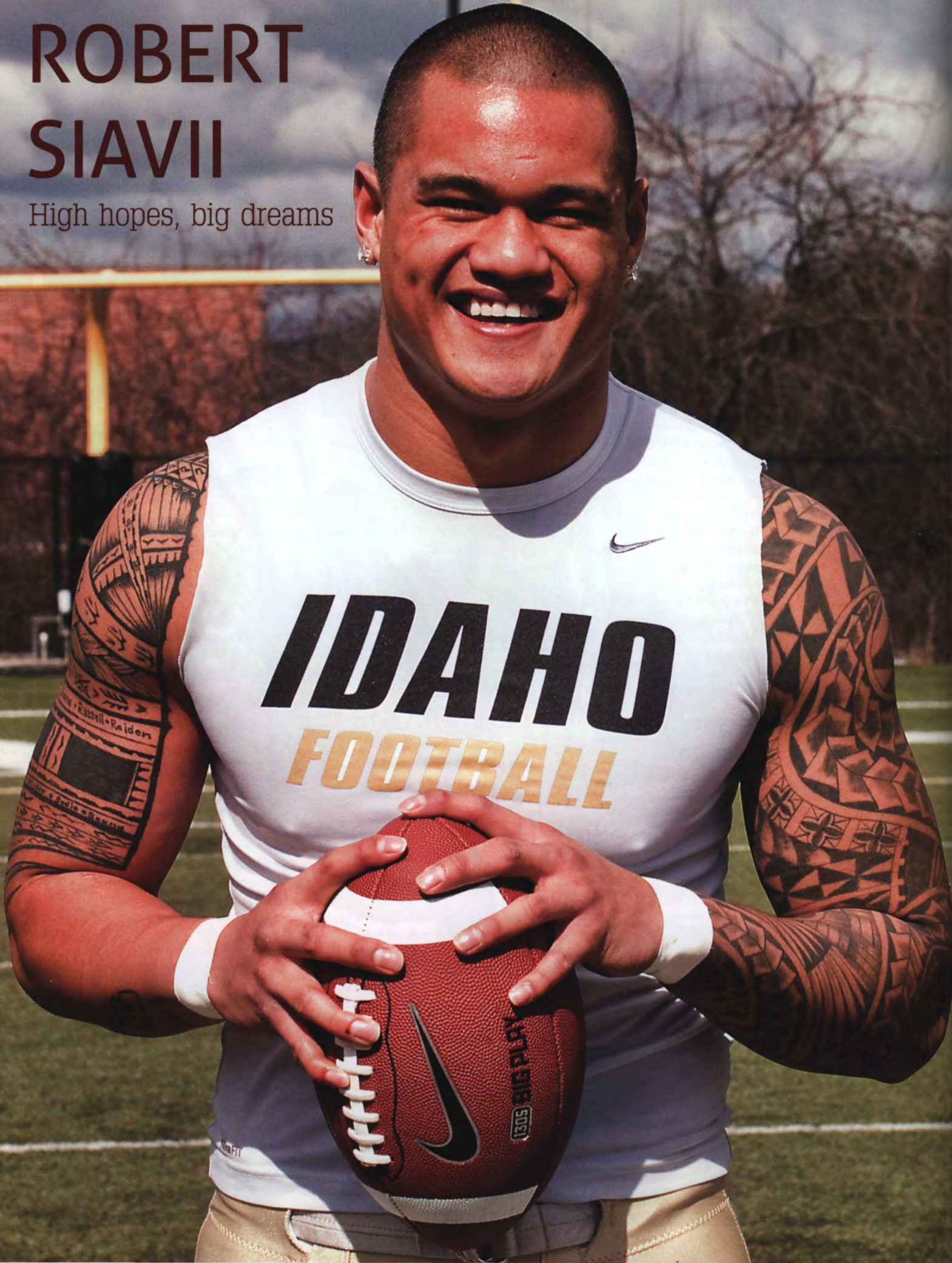
Rench's mom said he recently spent a week fishing, and returned the best he's been since before the cancer.

"I think he's finally really recovering," Tammi Rench said. "He looks good, he acts good, he laughs, he has a nice smile on his face. It feels so nice to know that he's come a long way. He makes me very proud." ●



ROBERT SIAVII

High hopes, big dreams



story by JENNIFER SCHLAKE
 photography by ILYA PINCHUK

■ A large smile is enough to cover the pain and hardship University of Idaho football linebacker Robert Siavii suffered in his childhood. To bystanders, a healthy, successful man moves on the field. But to him, there's a troubled child that strives to be better.

In Waipahu, Hawaii, Siavii was born into a family of little wealth. He lived in a home crowded together with his brothers, mom and dad and grandmother. His family lived paycheck-to-paycheck, bringing in as little as \$10 each month, and for Siavii, this childhood life seemed to be all there ever was.

His mother had him when she was 15 years old, and immediately his teenage parents had to learn to be adults.

"His dad and I tried our best to make ends meet," Shana Siavii said.

Working two jobs, Shana missed family dinners and reading books to her son, but said she looks at him as a blessing in her life.

Shana said every time she thinks of her son, she thinks about what he went through in his childhood and what he has accomplished so far.

"I don't regret having him, I never did — he actually opened our eyes," she said. "We may have been teenagers, but we had to become adults at a young age, and I'm always in his face, 'You do not want to go through the path me and your dad went through.'"

Though known for its lands of paradise, Hawaii only caused trouble for Siavii as the lifestyle of his neighborhood spelled out his future.

"Hawaii seems like it's paradise to some people, but there's areas where there ain't

paradise at all," Siavii said.

Like others in the neighborhood, Siavii's home lacked carpet and tile. The floor was made of dirt, where he slept and dreamed of the future he wanted.

In a reoccurring dream, Siavii said he comes out of the locker room wearing a Pro Bowl jersey. Sitting in the stands to his right is his entire family cheering him on.

As drugs, domestic abuse and gun violence ran through his streets, Siavii turned to football as a release. Siavii first heard about football when he was 11 years old, but never knew where the sport would take him in life.

"During that time, all I could do to get my mind off all that stuff was rely on football," he said.

"HAWAII SEEMS LIKE IT'S PARADISE TO SOME PEOPLE, BUT THERE'S AREAS WHERE THERE AIN'T PARADISE AT ALL."

Robert Siavii

Siavii was offered a full-ride scholarship to UI and had no other choice but to take it. His mother cried and sometimes still does — finally Siavii would have a chance at a life his family could never offer him.

"It was a dream for him to go to college," Shana

said. "I knew in my heart I would never be able to pay for it, and when he got that offer it was like a godsend for me and my family."

Looking back, Siavii said he is not ashamed of what he went through.

"I never regret growing up that way," he said. "Being raised that way made me into the person I am today."

Even now, Siavii has not forgotten the struggles of his childhood, holding onto every penny he earns and remembering the

path he always intended to take.

"As soon I came up here, life has become so easy," Siavii said. "We get \$720 a month, and \$720 a month is like a million dollars to me. You give me \$30 — that's more than I'll ever need for a week or even a month."

Although his financial situation has changed, Siavii's lifestyle has not. He buys what is needed and doesn't take anything for granted. Siavii spends his money on food and rent and sends the rest home to his family. He lives without the luxuries of cable, video games and Internet.

He said he uses his paycheck to mostly stock up on food and hasn't bought new clothes in the past five months.

Back in Hawaii, Siavii said he only ate dinners consisting of two eggs, bread and some chicken. Sometimes his meals would contain bugs and he was forced to ignore them and eat anyway. His family would live each month off a dozen eggs and spoiled milk. Instead of toilets, they were forced to use buckets, one for each form of bathroom use, which Siavii would have to dump outside and clean each time.

"It was very hard just to see my family struggle so bad," he said.

Siavii said he was so frustrated with their financial situation, he turned to shoplifting to support his family. He said he needed to do whatever he could to take care of his family, and at that time stealing was the only choice.

Siavii was caught shoplifting once, and while he was filled with fears of being thrown in jail or put into a juvenile center, he instead was let go with a warning and some inspiration.

The arresting officer recognized Siavii from the football field and was impressed with his talent.

"His positive motivation was telling me, 'You know, you could always make it out of here, you'll go far,'" Siavii said.

People were constantly telling him Hawaii was as far as he would get. People told him he'd never make it out of the neighborhood, just like everyone else, raising his family on welfare. Siavii promised himself he was going to graduate high school, graduate college and finally buy his grandmother a large house. "Anything is possible," he said.

Focusing hard on football and school, Siavii is determined to make his dream a reality.

"I try my best to be perfect," he said. "I know that nobody's perfect, but I know if you come close, it's nearly perfect and it's better than average."

As a journalism major and acting minor, Siavii said he hopes to walk in the footsteps of his cousin, moving on to play in the NFL and later settling down as a sports announcer.

"He played with a great motor," football coach Robb Akey said. "As we started recruiting and got to meet the kid, (we fell) in love with him."

Akey said Siavii is a first-class man who is sincere about everything he does on and off the field, and Akey expects great things from him in the future.

"I'm challenging him right now to see how much better he can get in the next 15 practices," he said.

Siavii compares the obstacles he's experienced with his obstacles on the field.

"Every play that I go through, I think about what I have done to get me to where I am today, can I beat that?" he said.

Even meeting major immediate goals, Siavii said he is not yet satisfied.

"I always want to live a lot, live better," he said. "As long as I get that goal for Grandma, that's when I'll be satisfied with everything. I guarantee there's always someone out there having a way harder life than what I had, so I always take advantage of what I get."



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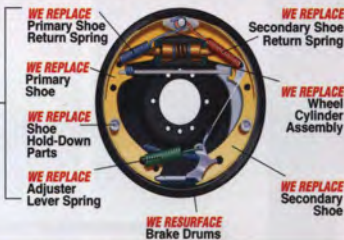
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