

Santa Clara Magazine

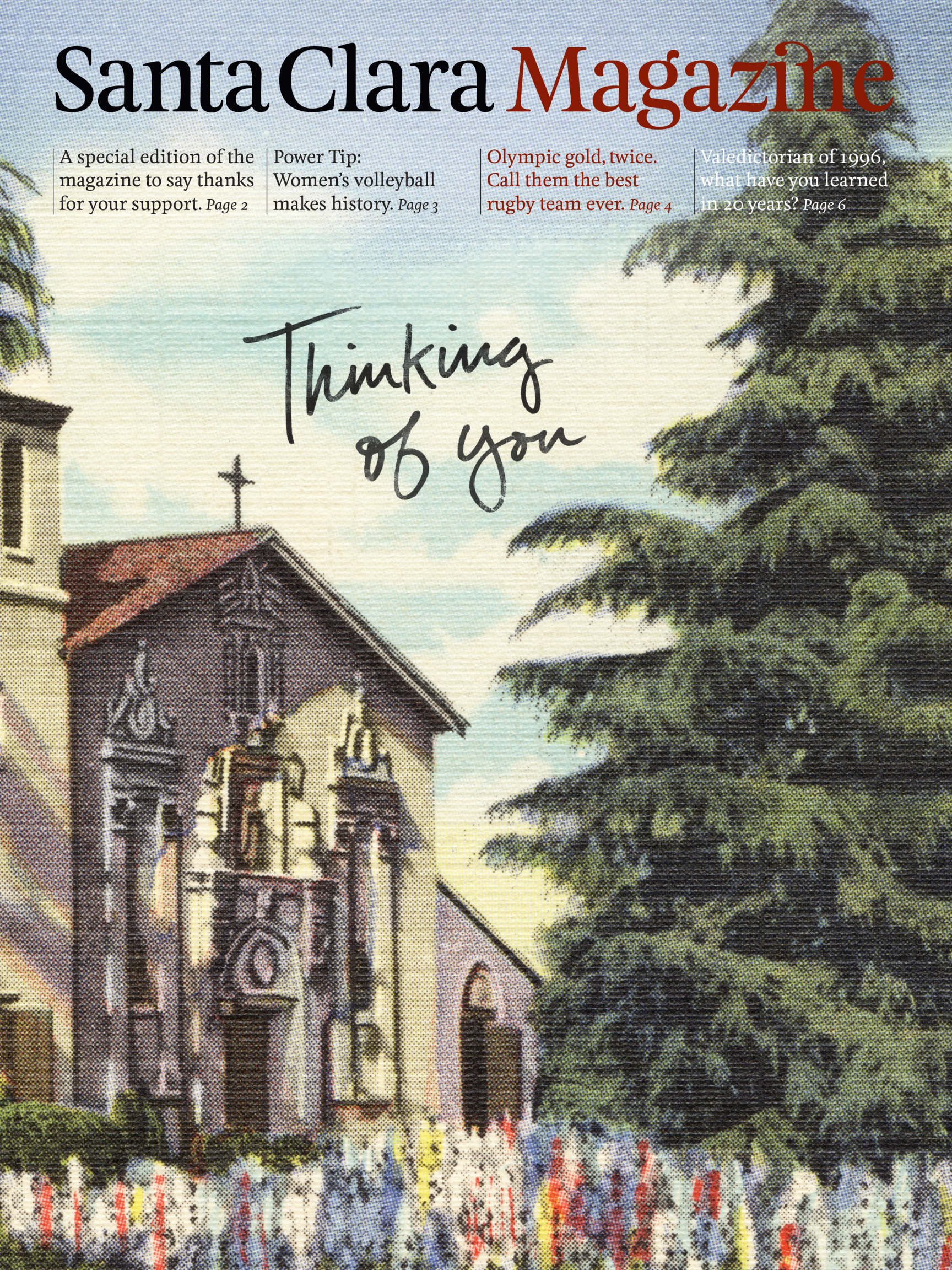
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Olympic gold, twice. Call them the best rugby team ever. *Page 4*

Valedictorian of 1996, what have you learned in 20 years? *Page 6*

Thinking
of you



STAFF

Editor

Steven Boyd Saum

Literary Editor

Ron Hansen M.A. '95

Creative Director

Linda Degastaldi

Assistant Editor

Matt Morgan

Associate Editor, Digital

Clay Hamilton

Photographer

Joanne Lee

Contributors

Charles Barry
Harout Dmijian '96
Alicia K. Gonzales '09
Don Jedlovac
Sam Scott '96

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Eryn Olson '16

Interns

Devin Collins '17
Maura Turcotte '17
Esther Young '18

Design

Cuttriss & Hambleton

Design Consultant

Pentagram Austin

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here:

magazine.scu.edu/
contact
scmagazine@scu.edu
@santaclaramag

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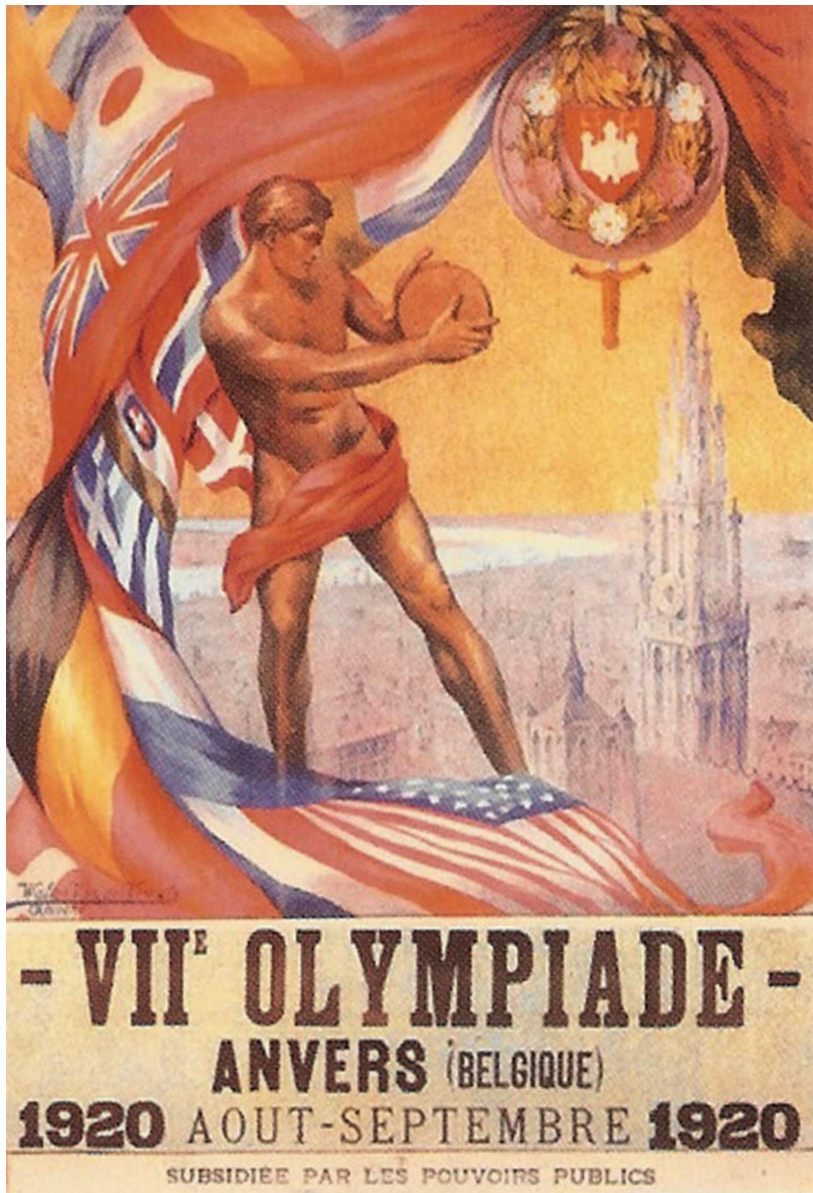
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rugby wins*



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A Little Something

BY STEVEN BOYD SAUM

CALL IT OUR way of saying thanks: a special slender edition of *Santa Clara Magazine* for you and other select readers. The gifts you've made to support the magazine enable us to tell marvelous stories about the ideas and people that populate our pages—so here are a few more. Some of what

you find here hasn't been published anywhere yet—and some of these stories appear here in print for the first time.

Also call it our way of taking note of some cool and timely stories that our digital magazine publishes week in and week out. At magazine.scu.edu, in between the big editions of the mag, we offer features, interviews, slideshows, videos, and more. The digital environs also provide the quickest way for you to share the stories with friends far and wide. Plus, that digital realm is where you'll find expanded class notes with lots more photos.

Occasionally we hear from readers who would like to send a print subscription to friends and family. We're delighted to add them to our mailing list. If you'd like us to add a subscription for someone else, just let us know; we'll start a free subscription and include a note that it's courtesy of you. And if you'd ever like to encourage others to support the magazine, that's welcome, too! Gifts reach us through the mail or via magazine.scu.edu/give.

A decade ago I came on board as editor of this magazine, and it's been a pretty fantastic journey so far. In just a few pages we can bring together tales of history being made in present and past, and we can offer a little perspective: how the lessons revealed by a simple story change with the passing decades. Particularly as we've shown in the past year, the bigger, expanded mag opens up room for vibrant images and complex stories. In the world of magazines, we try to build on what's come before to make something remarkable and always new. With support from readers like you, it's fair to say that the best is yet to come.

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Mission Matters

NEWS FROM SANTA CLARA

Power Tip

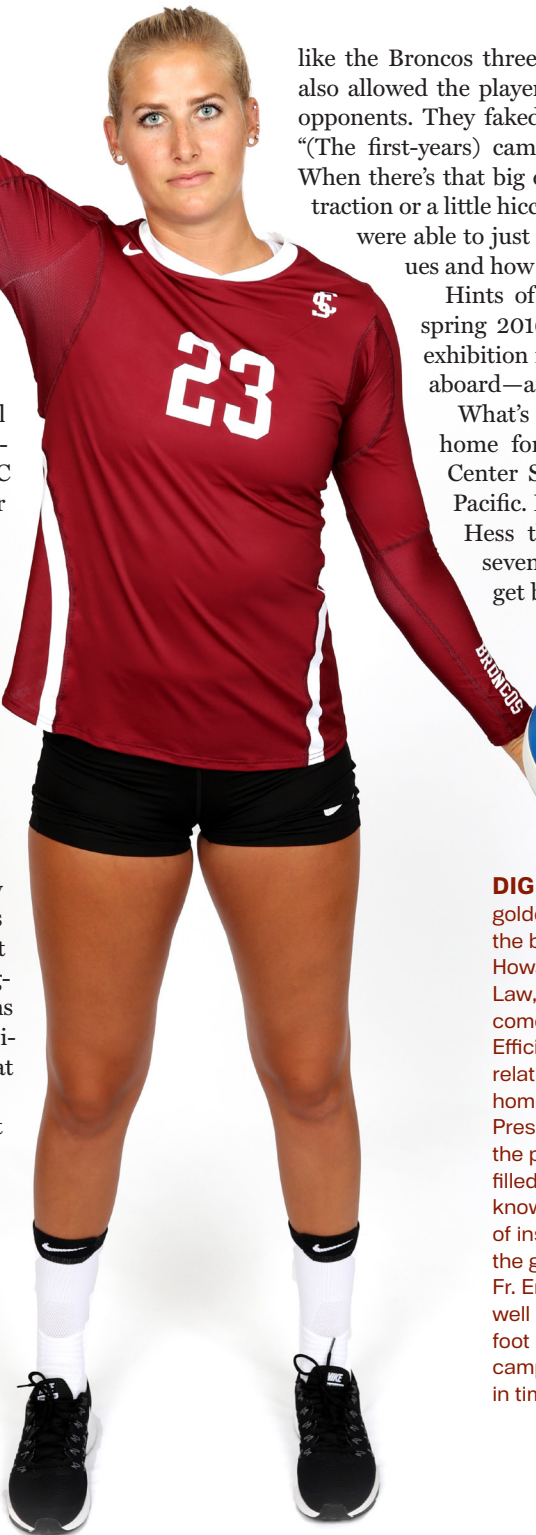
WHAT'S NIGH BETTER than perfect? Historic. Or more simply, Santa Clara volleyball this year. With nine road wins to start the season, these Broncos (9–3 as we go to press in September) own the best start in school history and did it against a brutal schedule: Auburn, Cal, West Virginia, No. 21 Louisville, and No. 7 University of Southern California. USC is the highest-ranked opponent Santa Clara has ever beaten in the regular season. All this while only losing a total of six sets.

Want more history? Santa Clara entered the AVCA Top 25 for the first time in three years, and its No. 17 ranking on Sept. 12 was its best in more than a decade. **Kirsten Mead '18**, **Jensen Cunningham '18**, and **Nikki Hess '17** have each snagged a tournament MVP this year, with **Hailey Lindberg '19**, **Taylor Odom '19**, and **Taylor Laugero '20** adding all-tournament team honors to their résumés.

The key for SCU is tempo. Santa Clara is a skilled passing team and excellent with the serve, but the Broncos don't waste time with their attack. Hailey Lindberg has been one of the best initiators of SCU's frantic pace. Playing middle blocker and on the right side, her quick attacks have made the Broncos the aggressor, even as underdogs. "It's harder for other teams to keep up with us," Nikki Hess says. "It really helps either get a kill or get the other team in trouble. In that case we can defend them the way we want to."

Lindberg is also a leader of the youth movement at SCU—one of nine underclasswomen making an impact and one of four who appeared in the starting lineup. The team's inexperience trips it up at times—

Jensen Cunningham '18 has stood tall for the Broncos since transferring from San Diego State in 2015. The 6-foot-4 middle blocker holds SCU single game records for blocks and assists.



like the Broncos three-loss weekend Sept. 16–17—but it also allowed the players to be confident against tougher opponents. They faked it until they made it, Hess says. "(The first-years) came in really great, ready to work. When there's that big of a class, there's sometimes a distraction or a little hiccup, but they came in smoothly and were able to just get going and understand our values and how we work."

Hints of this season's success flickered in spring 2016 with a win over Stanford in an exhibition match. Then the new players came aboard—and they clicked as a team.

What's next for the Broncos? They came home for their first game in the Leavey Center Sept. 27 against University of the Pacific. From there, maybe a WCC crown? Hess thinks it's possible. A team with seven first-year students is only going to get better.

DIG LAW The ceremonial crack of 10 golden shovels on August 17 announced the beginning of construction on the Howard S. and Alida S. Charney Hall of Law, offering a reminder of what's to come. A unified home for law students. Efficient spaces for collaboration. New relationships with tech and business. A home for the Law School of Silicon Valley. President **Michael Engh, S.J.**, blessed the project, calling for students to be filled with wisdom, understanding, and knowledge in service. "May it be a place of inspiration where students learn of the good and the noble and the ethical," Fr. Engh said. Construction in earnest is well underway on the 96,000-square-foot building on the North entrance of campus with the expected completion in time for the 2017–18 academic year.

THE BEST RUGBY TEAM EVER

Rudy Scholz '18, LLD '20 and SCU teammates won Olympic gold—twice. That's only half the story.

BY SAM SCOTT '96

WHEN CAMILLE GRASSINEAU flew across the goal line in the opening game of rugby in Rio in August 2016, she was making history—and perhaps amends—as the first rugby player to score at an Olympics in nearly a century. The last person to do so, **Caesar Mannelli '22**, had been putting the screws to Grassineau's ancestors in one of the great upsets in Olympic history—the USA's 17–3 rout of France in the gold medal game 92 years earlier.

Mannelli's name may not mean much to most modern ears. But in the early 1920s, he was known as the “patriarch of Santa Clara athletics,” a hulking football captain who also excelled in basketball and baseball before being recruited for the new sport. And he was far from the only Missionite among the unlikely victors.

All told, five Santa Clara ruggers won gold in 1924, none more important than the smallest of them all—the speedy scrum half, **Rudy Scholz '18, LLD '20** whose quick passes kept the American offense moving. “We played the French off their feet,” he wrote in his diary. “We fought with such fierceness and determination and together, that I don't think any team could beat us.”

FRENCH HUNGRY FOR REVENGE

The extent of the upset is hard to grasp now, but one American journalist likened it to a French baseball team going to America to take on the pennant winner. “Their victory and their conduct under fire is the brightest entry that had been scored on all the pages of America's international sport records.”

True, the Americans, including Scholz and five other Santa Clara players, had won gold in Belgium in 1920, beating the French 8–0. But in the interim, rugby had virtually disappeared in America. Many of the U.S. veterans had barely played in years—and this time they were competing against France in Paris in front of a revenge-hungry crowd of 40,000 that began the game booing the American national anthem and ended it in virtual riot.

“An American photographer, while attempting to take a picture of the American flag at the top of the Olympic pole, was hit by various missiles thrown by the enraged spectators,” the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on its front page.

It's a great David-and-Goliath story that, for SCU fans at least, comes with a curious question: Why was Santa Clara such a factory for rugby talent in the early 20th century? In all, eight Santa Clara players won at least one gold and three won two—more double winners than any other school.

In the 1924 Paris Olympics, local odds-makers had the French favored 20 to 1. And French fans booed the national anthem.



*Rugby side 1920: They went to Belgium and brought back gold. Four years later, they won gold in Paris. At the heart of the teams: **Rudy Scholz**, middle row, fourth from left.*

The answer goes back to 1905, when national concerns about the savagery of American football reached a boil. Figures vary, but approximately 20 high school and college players across the country died as a result of game injuries, a ghastly toll that, prorated to account for how many students play now, would be the equivalent of nearly 100 players dying in 2016.

The spate of deaths struck home that November when an 18-year-old student at Santa Clara High School collapsed during a game, dying hours later with a fractured skull. The nearby tragedy brought a swift reaction from the college. President **Richard Gleason, S.J.**, cancelled the forthcoming football game against the University of the Pacific while the faculty moved to do away with the sport altogether, or at least until they could allow students “to enter into it without such fearful danger to life and limb.”

The following year, for similar reasons, Stanford and Cal also dropped football, agreeing on rugby as their collision sport of choice. The “English game” was hardly gentle, but in comparison to the mauling tactics of football of the day, it was indeed less brutal.

Other schools jumped on the rugby bandwagon, including Santa Clara, which began to field a rugby side in 1907. Soon the West Coast, and particularly the Bay Area, was a hotbed of the sport, even as the rest of the country kept its eyes glued to the gridiron.

The Missionites quickly rose in prominence, achieving their greatest glory during the undefeated season of 1916, which was punctuated with a resounding 28–5 victory over Stanford in front of a packed house in San Francisco. Even the *Stanford Daily* tipped its hat to “probably the best rugby team that has ever been put together in California.”

The bottom, though, would soon fall out, with interruptions related to World War I providing the final straw. By 1919, football was king again around the Bay while rugby was left to languish. Scholz, who had driven Santa Clara's renowned victory over Stanford before leaving for military training, was now the school's quarterback.

But rugby's fans weren't willing to let go so easily. Momentum built toward the 1920 Olympics. In California, it was the emphatic 1916 victory over Stanford, as much as anything else that resulted in so many former Santa Clara players making the team, says **Dave Scholz MBA '70**, Rudy Scholz's youngest son. Only Stanford accounted for more men on the roster.

MORE THAN A STAR

Rudy Scholz wasn't just a star player. He was instrumental in helping beat the bushes for scarce funds to get the team to Europe, taking on the title of chairman of the Santa Clara Olympics Games Rugby Track committee.

“For the first time in the history of Santa Clara there is an opportunity to send representatives from here to

the Olympic Games,” Rudy Scholz wrote in a fundraising letter to the city's chamber of commerce, trying to reach \$1,000, Santa Clara's share of the cost. “[I]t will make Santa Clara known not only through Europe but also throughout the United States.”

In 1924, Scholz would again shoulder a significant portion of the planning and fundraising efforts, serving as secretary of the newly formed Northern California Rugby Association to raise a team to defend the American gold, despite little interest from the American Olympics organizers.

For the rest of his life, rugby would have a hold on his heart. Scholz played competitive rugby until he was 47 and made his final cameo in a game in his 80s.

And while the American gold-medal winning ruggers are now mostly forgotten, Rudy Scholz's name proudly lives on in the sport. Earlier this year, the Washington Athletic Club of Seattle gave out the inaugural Rudy Scholz Award, recognizing the best college player in the country.

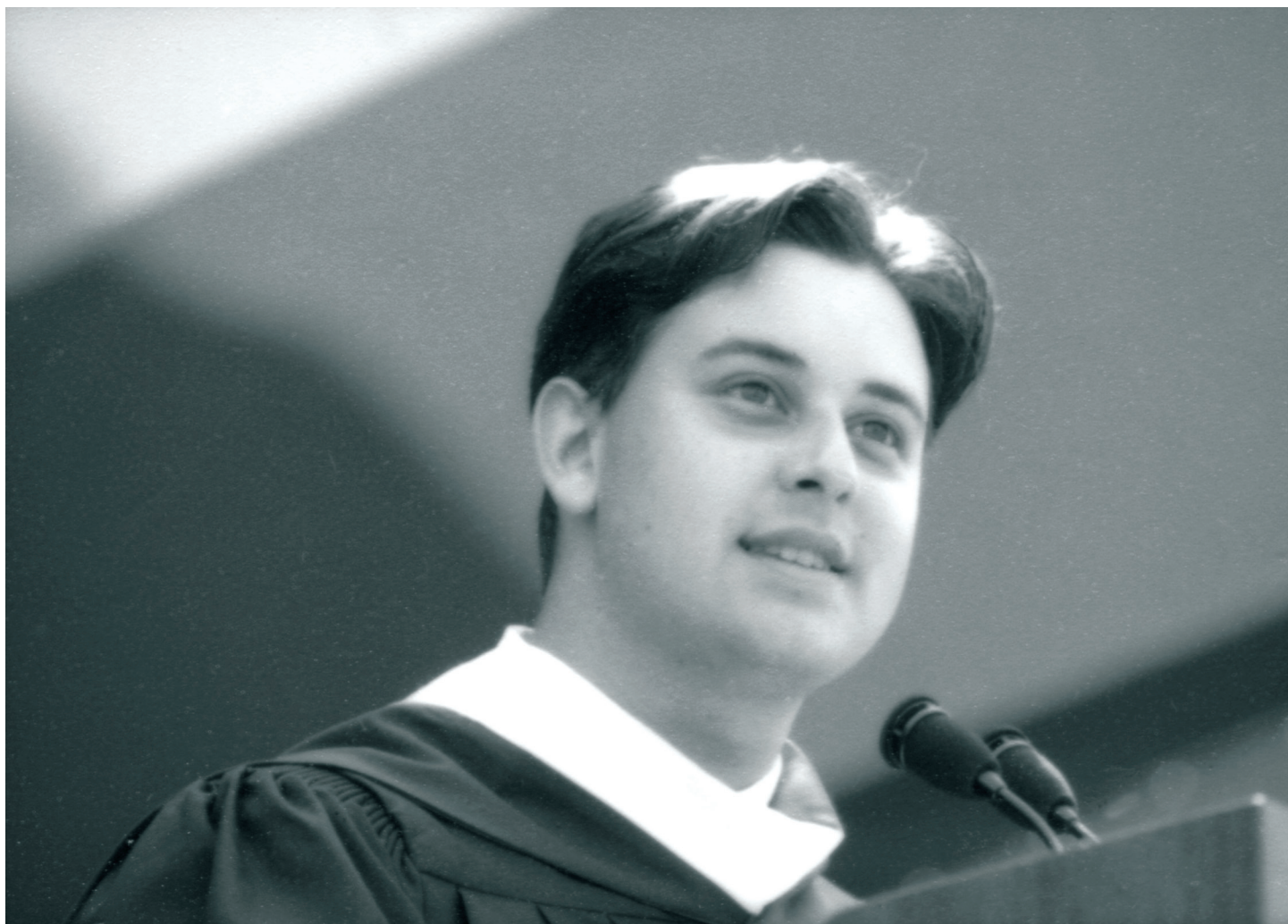
Ironically, a St. Mary's player won, which prompted Dave Scholz—in his speech at the award ceremony—to quote from an old telegram to his father, then a senior in high school and already an athletic star. “Would you consider going to St Marys if better terms are offered you?” the message read.

Apparently, Scholz wasn't interested—and Santa Clara's athletic and Olympic history is all the richer for it.

PHOTO COURTESY DAVE SCHOLZ



So, valedictorian Harout Dimijian '96, what words would you change? My 1996 Santa Clara University valedictory address revolved around a story my father often told—one handed down from his barber in Lebanon when my father was a young man. The story centered on a downtrodden king in search of a magic ring that had the power to make a depressed person happy and a happy person depressed.



After a lengthy and fruitless search that unearthed many rings without this power, a servant brought the king the last ring he could find. The desperate king's mood instantly became jovial. But at a party that evening, while the king was happier than he had been in years, he glanced at the ring and suddenly was saddened. When asked why the ring had this magical power, the king revealed an inscription on the ring that read: "This Too Shall Pass."

The moral of that story formed the theme of my address: All things in life shall pass. The bad times pass; the good times pass. My father was a serial storyteller, but this particular story always stood out.

Twenty years ago, I focused on the first half—that the bad times pass. I spoke of a trip in which I participated as a cast member of SCU's production of *The Grapes of Wrath*. We spent a weekend with members of the United Farm Workers in the Central Valley. I noted the difficult circumstances in which they lived and marveled at their hopefulness. I spoke of the uncertainty fellow graduates and I faced as we left the comforts of academia for the unknowns of the "real" world.

Now my focus has shifted to the second half of the moral: The good times pass as well. When I gave that speech, my father proudly looking on, little did I know that he would unexpectedly pass away seven years later at age 66. I became much more

grateful for our trips to the Silent Movie Theatre in Los Angeles, where my father and I saw old Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin movies together. Until his passing, I'm not sure I had realized that my father's story was as much about savoring those happy moments as it was about not dwelling too much on the darker times.

In the years since, my friends, family, and I have experienced loss, challenges, and disappointment. However, I find that I focus more on how quickly the good times pass. At 41, perhaps I have stumbled into the deeper point of my father's story—every stage in life has its own lessons, nuances and perspective, and in time each stage will pass. So relish each one for what it has to offer before it is behind you.

The view from '96: Harout Dimijian now lives in Los Angeles and is an attorney at O'Melveny & Myers LLP and teaches at Southwestern Law School.

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