



THE TEMPLE CHALLENGE

DAY 1 OF 10 (August 4, 2014)

On this day, August 4, 2014, a Challenge is being issued to the entire gymnastics community (Including all Men's and Women's Programs) in the United States to make a unified statement to the Administration of Temple University to re-instate the Temple University Men's Gymnastics (TUMG) Team to full varsity status.

This Challenge is inspired by successful ventures in the past to bring back threatened NCAA Varsity Men's Gymnastics teams at places like the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota, the University of Nebraska and the University of California-Berkeley. It is also inspired by a personal belief that if we don't take a stand and challenge ill-advised, ill-informed, disinterested or wrongly motivated college and university administrators who indiscriminately slash men's gymnastics teams from campus, we will need to look into the mirror and accept responsibility for the demise of a National Treasure.

On this day, August 4, 2014 (Day 1 of a 10 day Challenge), I can tell you that my goal is twofold:

1. The first and most important is to send a very clear and strong message to the Temple University Administration including the University President, the Athletic Director and the Board of Trustees that the national gymnastics community disagrees with their errant decision to eliminate TUMG from varsity status on campus. Furthermore, we strongly recommend the re-instatement of the TUMG to varsity status and we will help raise necessary funds to keep the program financially self-sustaining.
2. The second is to help generate financial support for the re-instatement of TUMG through the sale of Temple Edition "College Gymnastics Forever" t-shirts and banners.

My goal is to raise a minimum of \$25,000 to present to Fred Turoff for the Temple University Men's Gymnastics (TUMG) Team at the Bill Cosby Benefit scheduled for August 14 in Philadelphia. As of this date, I have been able to generate approximately \$12,500 through the sale of "College Gymnastics Forever" (Temple Edition) T-Shirts and Banners through the Men's Intercollegiate Gymnastics Support Program (MIGS Program). So, I am half way to my goal.

But I don't want it to be just my goal. I want it to be your goal as well. So, I plead my case...and hope you will listen...and hope you will buy in...intellectually...emotionally...and help TUMG...and help college gymnastics...and help everyone involved in gymnastics in this country...including you.

While I don't know how you feel about the situation, I can tell you this. I am tired of having the NCAA Men's and Women's Gymnastics Programs being kicked around by people who don't know anything about the sport. I am tired of lack of respect.

In my mind, we create and develop some of the best athletes in the world in the “World’s Toughest Sport”. Our gymnasts (male and female) are typically exceptional students as well as exceptional athletes. As such, it is my opinion that **current and future generations of gymnasts deserve an opportunity to compete at colleges and universities across the country just like any other athlete in any other sport**. In addition, we need these talented, well-educated, and competitively experienced individuals to come back into the sport as coaches, judges, clinicians, club owners, program administrators, etc. to enhance the “Life Cycle” of our sport and to strengthen our national program as we move into the future.

Furthermore, it is my opinion that the NCAA Varsity Gymnastics Program is a National Treasure that we must preserve, protect, enhance and expand. Regardless! It is my most humble opinion that the expansion of collegiate gymnastics opportunities will benefit everyone involved in the sport of gymnastics, including but not limited to:

1. Athletes
2. Coaches
3. Parents
4. Club Owners and Employees
5. Men’s Program
6. National Team
7. Women’s Program
8. Gymnastic Judges Associations
9. Colleges and Universities
10. USA Gymnastics
11. NCAA
12. Gymnastic Equipment and Apparel Manufacturers & Suppliers
13. Local Communities and Businesses
14. Equal Opportunity Advocates

Personally, I am tired of college administrators making the wrong decision for all the wrong reasons relative to our sport. I am tired of administrators using Title IX as an excuse to cut “Olympic Sports” so they can channel their resources into football, basketball and hockey in hopes of becoming an ever elusive “Top 25” team. Most horrifically, they do this without ever consulting with the very people whose lives they are going to adversely affect (the coaches and student-athletes).

Unfortunately, we have not done a very good job of standing up for ourselves relative to the destruction of the collegiate gymnastics program. Over the past 40 years, Men’s and Women’s teams have been cut in wholesale fashion from campuses across the country for a variety of manufactured reasons. But, I have to believe, one of these reasons is that College and University Administrators believe that it is a path of least resistance and the gymnastics community will whimper and whine...but they won’t really put up much of a fight. So far, they have been right.

Fortunately, we have some examples of situations where resistance was generated and the destruction of some programs was averted. (See second paragraph.) In each case, alumni and interested parties sent a message to the Administration and provided financial support to preserve the program.

We need to do the same at Temple University relative to TUMG. We need to firmly stand our ground and let the Administrators know and understand that the relegation of the Temple University Men's Gymnastics Team to club status is not acceptable. We need to send a very strong message that re-instatement of the program to varsity status is essential...not only to the Temple gymnasts and coaches but to the national program as well.

Henceforth, the 10 Day TUMG Challenge.

The TUMG Challenge is quite simple but it will send a very strong message if we all get on board and participate. It is a three step process:

1. Order a "College Gymnastics Forever" Temple Edition t-shirt (see attached order form).
2. When you receive the t-shirt, take a picture of you (your team) and add the caption "[*Your name or Team Name*] Proudly Supports the re-instatement of Temple University Men's Gymnastics Team to varsity status." (See attached photo.)
3. Send the picture and a brief message supporting this effort to the Temple University Administrators including the President, Athletic Director and Board of Trustees. (See attached contact list.)

Your participation in this effort will perform two valuable functions:

1. It will send a very strong and unified message to the Temple University Administrators that they have made a mistake and need to reverse their decision relative to TUMG.
2. It will generate some valuable revenue that can be directed toward the TUMG in an effort to help the TUMG program become self-sustaining in the future.

Imagine each person on that list receiving 100,000 letters, hand delivered via USPS to their respective offices with a very strong message seeking re-instatement.

The Temple University Men's Gymnastics Team was downgraded from a historically successful team to club status without reasonable justification by the University Administrators. WE (the National Gymnastics Community) should not, cannot, MUST NOT allow this to happen. We must stand up for TUMG and for current and future generations of gymnasts all across the country. We must not allow the TUMG Team or any other NCAA Varsity Gymnastics Team to fall victim to the craziness of ill-informed, disinterested or ulterior motivated administrators who choose to destroy opportunity for our gymnasts.

As John Paul Jones once said during the American Revolution (Google it), "I have not yet begun to fight."

To that end, I seek your help.

Onward and upward,

Bob Wuornos, Ph.D.

Founder

Men's Intercollegiate Gymnastics Support Program

www.MIGSP.org

