



BY SHERI GRIMES

On September 26 during the break at the Women's Volleyball game against Long Beach State, Pacific's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics officially retired the jersey of Jennifer Joines '93 — number 6. Did she ever see herself getting to this point? "No way," says Joines. Driving from her family's home in Milpitas to the Stockton campus for the event, Joines reflected on her journey to this moment and what it meant to her.

Above: "Here it is, Stockton!" Joines shows her medal to the guests gathered at a pre-game reception.

Right: Joines at the ceremony retiring her jersey.

Opposite page: Team USA receives the silver medal. Joines is 4th from the left.

Jennifer Joines Silver Medal, Heart of Gold

Jennifer Joines wanted to play basketball. "I was all about basketball in the 7th and 8th grade," she says. Then one day her best friend told her about volleyball tryouts and wanted her to go. "No, way," she says. "I'm not playing volleyball." But her friend prevailed. "I was pretty bad," says Joines. She went home with bruises all over her forearms, a common occurrence for the novice volleyball player, much to her mother's horror. Basketball was history; Joines wanted to go to college and play volleyball.

"I can't explain it. I just fell in love with it." She liked the team, the coaches and the game. It fit her personality. "I'm aggressive, but I like having a net between me and my opponent," she says. Whatever it was, something just clicked.

When Joines heard about Pacific in 1999, Pacific Volleyball was on the rise. Under coach John Dunning and assistant coach Jayne McHugh '82, the team won the Big West championships and tied for third in the nation at the NCAA Tournament. Dunning was head coach through her freshman year and McHugh took over in her sophomore year. "I don't think you realize your potential unless you have a good coach," Joines says. "I was just so lucky to go to a college that loved volleyball, where the coaches really worked with me and saw my potential — even before I saw it."

The coaches encouraged players to excel academically as well, making sure they studied on the road. "The professors were at our matches also," she says. "They pushed you in the classroom, but they celebrated with you, too."

Joines clearly thrived during her career at Pacific. She was Big West Player of the Year and became Pacific's first four-time All-American. It was another teammate who first saw Joines' promise. "I remember Michelle Kelly (now Hackett) came to me after practice and said, 'Jen, you have the potential to be a four-time All-American.' From then on she really rode me to be sure I never slacked off," Joines says.

Joines credits Pacific for her hardworking attitude. "We treated our coaches and teammates with a lot of respect," she says. They had a lot of fun too. "We loved the game and had a good time playing it. That's never changed."

Quickly snatched up by the USA Women's National Volleyball Team, Joines played in the Pan American Cup while still in college. Over the past five years she has racked up an



impressive international career, culminating in the Silver Medal at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

So, what was it like being an Olympian? It was off the court and during the opening ceremonies when she realized the significance of wearing USA on her back. "You realize there is a whole country behind you," she says. "You're not doing it for yourself, or even just your team, but for your community, for Pacific, for your country, for everyone you've been mentored by."

Another member of the USA team, Nicole Davis, was born and raised in Stockton. Joines says when they stood on the medal stand, she turned to Davis and said, "Hey, Nicole, this is for Stockton."

Joines says her mother was diagnosed with cancer right before the Olympics. After that it was also about family, "about saying thank you, Mom, for all your support and everything you've done."

For Joines, coming back to her alma mater to have her jersey retired was an "unbelievable feeling." All through her career at Pacific she had walked past the jerseys of her volleyball role models, Elaina Oden '90 and Jayne McHugh. McHugh played in the 1988 Olympics and Oden was a member of the 1992 team that won the Bronze Medal, the last time the USA team made the podium. To have her jersey up next to theirs was a dream come true. "It's one of the coolest things that's happened to me," she says.

Joines says Oden and McHugh have been a tremendous support for her throughout her Olympic experience, keeping in contact by e-mail and phone. Joines was also excited that both Oden and McHugh were coming to see her jersey go up next to theirs. "It just shows what a tight-knit family Pacific is," she says.



Lynn King, Pacific's Athletics Director

Orange and Black Ball

The 2008 PTAA Orange and Black Ball reached all-time highs by attracting 723 Pacific fans and raising \$105,000. Over the past nine years, the Ball generated approximately \$635,000 for athletics operations and academic achievement programs.

Special thanks go out to the 2008 Honorary Chairpersons, Dean and Kathy Janssen, plus the Bill Erickson Trio and Sarah St. Pierre with the Partime Band.

*2008 honorary chairpersons
Dean and Kathy Janssen*



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