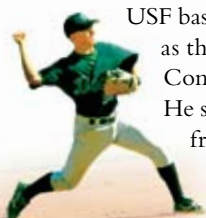


## Diamond Don Named WCC Scholar-Athlete of the Year



USF baseball player Tavo Hall was selected as the 2008 Mike Gilleran West Coast Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Year. He shares the honor with Stephanie Cox from the University of Portland.

The award recognizes accomplishments in athletics, academics, and community service by student-athletes who have completed their collegiate eligibility. Hall is the fifth

USF student to receive the honor and the first USF male to win the award since basketball player Joe DeBartoli won it in 1990. The last USF student to earn the honor was Brittany Lindhe in 1999.

Hall was voted 2007 class valedictorian for the College of Arts and Science and won the 2007 Charles Harney Award given to the USF senior with the highest grade-point average (3.88).

On the field, Hall was instrumental in guiding the Dons to their first-ever NCAA Baseball Tournament appearance. In the final two weeks of the 2006 regular season, Hall returned from a hand injury to hit .333 with three doubles, nine runs scored, and three stolen bases. Despite missing parts of three seasons with injuries, Hall ranks seventh on USF's all-time stolen base list with 49. He finished his career at USF with 173 hits, 32 doubles, and 76 RBIs. **USF**

## USF Recognized for Gender Diversity

The NCAA recently recognized the University of San Francisco's athletics department for its gender diversity and presented it with a Diversity in Athletics Award.

The award recognizes the NCAA Division I athletic departments that excel in different areas of diversity. USF was one of 12 schools recognized in the category of gender diversity of department employees.

"As an institution that highly values gender equity in athletics and beyond, we are extremely pleased that we were one of just 12 schools that earned the NCAA Diversity in Athletics Award for gender diversity," said Debra Gore-Mann, USF athletic director. "As proud as we are to be recognized for our efforts, we will continue to strive for diversity and excellence in all aspects of athletics, academics, and university life." **USF**

## Walters Era Begins

**R**ex Walters, 38, a former University of Kansas star and an NBA veteran, is hard at work rebuilding the University of San Francisco's men's basketball program. After three years as head coach at Florida Atlantic University, Walters took over as USF head coach in April.

He sat down with *USF Magazine* for a pre-season interview to answer questions about his "harder, smarter, and more together" approach to the game, and what fans can look forward to.

**Q:** What does "harder, smarter, and more together" mean?

**A:** "Harder" means winning loose balls, diving on the floor, and sprinting back on defense to make a play that wouldn't have been made otherwise. "Smarter" means knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses, and making your teammate's job easier. "More together" means sharing the ball more and supporting each other in good times and bad times.

**Q:** What will surprise fans about this year's team?

**A:** It's going to be a different year, from the standpoint that we'll have 11 scholarship players that haven't been coached by me before. But, I hope fans will see a big improvement as the season progresses.

**Q:** What will be USF's toughest conference game?

**A:** Gonzaga, because they are not a one-hit wonder. They know and understand what it takes to be successful. I want that to be a big game for us, because I want it to be a true rivalry game that draws fans. I want Gonzaga to know that they are in for a fight to the end.

**Q:** What has been the training focus leading up to the 2008-09 season tip-off?

**A:** I'm trying to walk the line with training smarter, rather than overtraining. That means keeping it to one practice a day during the academic year, but ramping up to two practices a day, and maybe a film session, when we have time off from school.

**Q:** Where do you see room for improvement?

**A:** I want the team to play with more confidence, to take care of the ball, pressure the ball defensively, and get the high-percentage shots.

**Q:** What are you pleased with?

**A:** We are very athletic. Our team can run and jump with anyone in the league, but that's the easy part.

**Q:** Having coached most recently at Florida Atlantic, what do you think about USF fans so far?

**A:** We have got to build a true fan base with our students. We want to give USF students, alums, and the San Francisco community something to be excited about. It's not going to happen overnight, but we're working hard to make that happen.

**For the complete men's basketball schedule and updates on USF athletics, visit [usfdons.com](http://usfdons.com).**

