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**San Jose State Adds Six Greats, Two NCAA Championship Teams And Legend
To Sports Hall Of Fame**

A pair of United States Olympians, two NCAA championship teams, an eight-year NBA player, one of the most successful coaches in NCAA Division I wrestling, the university's first All-America softball player, a 12-year National Football League kicker, and one of the greatest professionals in women's golf will be recognized at the 2008 San Jose State University Sports Hall of Fame banquet and induction ceremony.

Dedy Cooper, the 1976 NCAA 110-meter high hurdle champion and a member of the 1980 U.S. Olympic track and field team; the **1959 and 1960** NCAA champion **San Jose State boxing teams**; **Tariq Abdul-Wahad**, who led the Spartans to a 1996 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament appearance and became a 1997 first-round draft choice of the Sacramento Kings; **T.J. Kerr**, who coached the San Jose State wrestling team to all of its top-25 NCAA Championship finishes in the 1980's; **Sharon Cafini Niedhoff**, a two-sports star who was an All-America outfielder in 1990; **Liliko Ogasawara**, a 1996 Olympian and the first American woman to win two medals at the World Judo Championships, and **Joe Nedney**, a kicker who established the San Jose State football career scoring record and is in his 13th season in the National Football League, are the 2008 Hall of Fame inductees.

Golfer **Juli Inkster**, a San Jose State Sports Hall of Fame member, is this year's Legend.

This year's festivities take place Friday, September 12, at the University's Barrett Ballroom on the main campus and the honorees will be recognized the following afternoon at the San Jose State-San Diego State football game in Spartan Stadium that starts at 5:00 p.m.

Reservations are required to attend this year's induction ceremony and banquet. Individual ticket prices start at \$70.00. Tables of 10 are available for \$750.00 and \$800.00. Contact Laurel DeMaria at (408) 924-1692 or by email at laurel.demaria@sjsu.edu to make a reservation. Reservations should be made by September 4.

(pick up biographies that follow)

2008 San Jose State University Sports Hall of Fame Inductees

Tariq Abdul-Wahad, men's basketball, 1996-97

This native of France dreamed of becoming the first player from his country to enjoy a National Basketball Association (NBA) career. As Olivier Saint-Jean, he fulfilled his dream with San Jose State serving as the bridge in two dynamic seasons as a Spartan.

Saint-Jean transferred to San Jose State from the University of Michigan. The 6-foot-6, 220-pound forward was the catalyst in the Spartans' late-season dash in 1996 to the University's first post-season appearance in 15 years. Saint-Jean was the Big West Conference Tournament Most Valuable Player averaging 26.7 points a game. The Spartans went on to play eventual NCAA champion Kentucky in a first-round game in Dallas.

The only San Jose State player to be named a first-team all-conference selection in two different conferences led the Spartans into the Western Athletic Conference in 1997 and turned in one of the University's top seasons ever. Virtually unstoppable with his array of perimeter jumpers and powerful moves to the basket, he was seventh nationally in scoring with a 23.8 points per game average.

Saint-Jean was the 11th player selected in the 1997 NBA draft as the Sacramento Kings first-round pick. His career included stops in Orlando, Denver and Dallas. He is currently pursuing his master's degree in art history at San Jose State.

Sharon Cafini Niedhoff, Softball, 1987-90

As Sharon Cafini, she was a two-sport star at San Jose State. Cafini was one of the Spartans' top field hockey players during the 1985 through 1987 seasons and a star outfielder on the 1987 through 1990 San Jose State softball teams.

She became the first San Jose State player to hit two home runs in a game during a 1988 game against the University of San Francisco. Cafini set four career and two single-season records as a Spartan. San Jose State was 10 games above .500 in her 1989 junior season and posted its first plus-.500 winning percentage in Big West Conference action.

As a senior, she was a first-team All-Big West and NCAA All-West Region selection and a third-team All-America pick. She led the team in doubles, triples, home runs, RBI and total bases en route to a .318 batting average. The Spartans made their first trip to the NCAA Tournament and finished 1990 as the #11-ranked team in the country. Cafini is just one of three Spartans to earn All-America honors in the program's 23-year history.

Dedy Cooper, track and field, 1976-79

1980 U.S. Olympic team member Dedy Cooper was an established track and field star when he enrolled at San Jose State in 1975. The Richmond, Calif., resident ran a 13.48 in the 110-meter high hurdles as a high school senior and was featured in Sports Illustrated's Faces In The Crowd.

As a freshman, he was the 1976 NCAA champion in the high hurdles. Cooper set a world record for the 60-meter high hurdles during the 1977 indoor season with a blazing 7.54 clocking. With Cooper running sprints, leaping hurdles and handling the baton in relays, the Spartans were a top-10 team nationally in dual meet action. From 1976 through 1981, he was ranked between third and ninth in the world rankings in the high hurdles by Track & Field News. The Waco, Texas native won three conference championships in the high hurdles and dabbled briefly as a wide receiver on the 1978 San Jose State football team.

T.J. Kerr, wrestling coach, 1973-84

T.J. Kerr came to San Jose State as a wrestler and became the Spartans' wrestling a year after he graduated in 1972. Kerr built a West Coast powerhouse in his 12 seasons as the San Jose State head coach. The Spartans won 10 conference championships, sent wrestlers to the NCAA Championships eight times and placed in the top-25 on four occasions. The 1982 team was ninth – the best finish by the Spartans at a NCAA Wrestling Championship.

Seven times, he was named the Pacific Coast Athletic Association Coach of the Year. The Spartans averaged more than 15 dual meet wins a season, captured 50 individual conference titles, and earned All-America recognition five times.

Kerr has been the head coach at Cal State Bakersfield since 1984. Cal State Bakersfield won the 1987 NCAA Division II championship and has placed in the top-10 at the NCAA Division I Championship four times. He is a three-time Pac-10 Conference Coach of the Year.

The California Wrestling Hall of Fame member was the National Wrestling Coaches Association's 1996 National Coach of the Year. He was the association's president from 1993 through 1996 and served as the organization's spokesman before Congress on issues connected with the implementation of Title IX.

Joe Nedney, Football, 1991-94

Joe Nedney parlayed a strong left leg into complete kicking careers at San Jose State University and in the National Football League. A member of the Spartans from 1991 through 1994, he set the school career scoring record of 236 points that still stands today.

He was an immediate sensation as a freshman rising to second in the country in field goal kicking by midseason. As a sophomore, he set a school record with 10 consecutive made field goals. Two of them were game-winners. A 24-yard boot at Utah State gave the Spartans their third win in a row in 1992 and capped a three-game winning streak that began by, arguably, the most exciting field goal in San Jose State history. Nedney's 60-yard field goal to win the Wyoming game was named one of the 10 most exciting plays of the 1992 season.

The three-time All-Big West Conference selection also handled the punting chores in his 1994 senior season. Nedney began his National Football League career as a Green Bay Packers free agent in 1995. His 13-year career has taken him to more NFL teams than any other San Jose State player. Oakland, Miami, Arizona, Baltimore, back to Oakland, Denver, Carolina, and Tennessee preceded his current team, the San Francisco 49ers. Nedney enters the 2008 season with 858 regular-season points, the most scored by a San Jose State player in the NFL.

Liliko Ogasawara, Judo, 1990-93

One of the top American women to compete in the sport of judo, Liliko Ogasawara was well known in her sport before she enrolled at San Jose State. Trained by her father, she was a national champion at age 16. Ogasawara won National Collegiate Judo championships for San Jose State in 1992 and 1993. Overall, she is a nine-time national championship judoka.

Ogasawara is the first American woman to win two medals at the annual World Championships. She was a silver medalist in 1993 and the bronze medalist in 1995, both in the 145-pounds and under weight class.

The San Jose State graduate represented the United States in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. She went on to earn a master's degree from Montclair State University. The multi-talented Ogasawara is the lead vocalist for the musical duet group, Sessomorte.

1959 and 1960 Boxing teams

San Jose State became the first school since official scoring was kept in boxing to win three consecutive NCAA Championships with team titles in 1959 and 1960 to go along with a 1958 championship. Julie Menendez crafted lineups for the 1959 and 1960 championships that allowed the Spartans to edge Idaho State for the top spot in 1959 and then run away from all competitors including host Wisconsin in 1960.

In 1959, Ron Nichols at 119 pounds and Nick Akana at 132 finished first in their weight classes. San Jose State more than doubled itself in the winners' circle the next year. Nichols became the NCAA's only repeat champion at 119 pounds and made it three straight years a Spartan topped the victory stand at that weight with Bob Tafoya starting the run in 1958. Dave Nelson at 125, Steve Kubas at 139 and Stu Bartell at 165 picked up their first NCAA championship in 1959. Archie Milton, the 1958 NCAA heavyweight champion, regained his crown in 1960 rounding out the list of top-flight Spartans in the final NCAA Boxing Championship.

In all, the Spartans won a NCAA individual title 17 times – 11 of them during San Jose State's run as the number-one college boxing program.

Juli Inkster, Legend, women's golf, 1979-82

One of the most successful players in the history of women's golf, Juli Inkster exemplifies a legend in her sport. In her 25th year as a professional, her college and amateur career accomplishments are unmatched. For San Jose State, she was a three-time All-American with a school-record 17 career tournament victories. Inkster was named the 1982 Broderick Award winner signifying the number-one college golfer in the country. Concurrently, she became the second player in history to capture three consecutive United States Women's Amateur championships with wins in 1980, 1981 and 1982.

On the Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour, Inkster has 31 career victories including seven major championships. The 1984 Rookie of the Year was the first rookie in Tour history to win two 'major' championships in one year capturing the Nabisco Championship and the duMaurier Classic. She earned inclusion into the exclusive LPGA Hall of Fame in 1999 and became the second woman in Tour history to complete the Grand Slam of women's golf consisting of the Nabisco Championship, the LPGA Championship, the United States Open and the duMaurier Classic.

Inkster has represented the United States in seven Solheim Cup competitions against the best players from Europe. She ranks fourth on the all-time earning list with more than \$12-million in official tour earnings. Inkster also was named one of the game's top-50 golfers in history when the LPGA celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2000.