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Dan Tripps is leading a charge at SU to infuse ethical sports leadership into a variety of disciplines. (Photo by Anil Kapahi)

Good Sportsmanship

Programs use holistic approach to ethical sports leadership.

By Ashley Blazina, '09
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When it came time for Seattle University to develop a top-notch, graduate-level sports education program—one that melds sports and ethics with SU's mission of educating the whole person—the university went to Dan Tripps.

With 40 years of teaching and athletic credentials, Tripps is a genuine sports authority. His resume is rich with experience, from a four-year stint in the 1980s as president and executive director of the Olympic Scientific Congress for the 1984 Los Angeles Games to executive director of Sport for Understanding and Athletes for a Better World, organizations bent on reaffirming the values of teamwork and individual character through sports.

“...This program is providing me with the tools to do just about anything [in the world of sports].”—
Matt Franck

Tripps, who came to SU in January 2006, is leading a movement to infuse athletics into various academic offerings. For undergraduates, this means courses that focus on sports within disciplines of philosophy, theology and sociology. A minor in sports studies is also in development. In addition, Tripps oversees the Center for the Study of Sport and Exercise (CSSE). The center hopes to serve the greater Seattle community through programs and facilities designed for coaches, athletes and parents.

The faculty at the Center for the Study of Sport and Exercise matches the high-caliber quality of the

center. The latest addition is Patrick Kelly, S.J., hired as an assistant professor for the center, who will be teaching an undergraduate core program called Sport and the Game of Life.

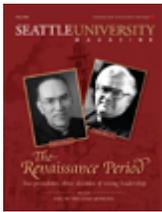
“As a Jesuit, [Kelly] lends credibility to the notion that sport is a part of the education of the whole person,” says Tripps. “He will be our liaison with the Vatican and other global organizations addressing the role of sport and spirituality.”

Graduate-level programs make up the largest chunk of the sports leadership educational opportunities at SU. The university offers a master's degree in Sport Administration and Leadership (MSAL), which welcomed its first class last January. The two-year program caters to mid-level professionals with classes on evenings and weekends.

Among the 55 students currently enrolled is an ex-professional soccer player, a Fox Sports Net news reporter, the director of the Seahawk's official drum line, the Blue Thunder, and Matt Franck, an assistant cross country and track and field coach at SU.

“I have realized the myriad of sports leadership opportunities there are,” Franck says. “...This program is providing me with the tools to do just about anything [in the world of sports].”

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