On the Scoreboard

USA Gymnastics and Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell announced in late July that the city of Hartford and the University of Hartford will host next year’s gymnastics national championships. State economic development officials expect at least 25,000 people to attend the event, which will be held Aug. 11–14, 2010.

The men’s and women’s championships will be held at the 15,000-seat XL Center, while the rhythmic, acrobatic, trampoline, and tumbling competitions will take place on campus at the Chase Arena, which seats about 3,500.

“We are fortunate to welcome Rick Brunson to our coaching staff,” said men’s basketball Head Coach Dan Leibovitz. “Our student-athletes will benefit greatly from his work ethic, expertise, and vast experience in our sport.”

Former NBA player Rick Brunson has been hired as assistant men’s basketball coach. He comes to the Hawks after two seasons as director of basketball operations with the University of Virginia Cavaliers. Brunson played college basketball at Temple University, then played nine seasons for various teams in the NBA, including the Chicago Bulls, Houston Rockets, Los Angeles Clippers, New York Knicks, Portland Trail Blazers, and Seattle SuperSonics.

USA Gymnastics in Chase Arena in 2010

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“Weart, you got it,” shouted former Olympic coach Béla Károlyi, who played the role of fight promoter at the news conference, billing the event as a clash between the old guard of gymnasts, who won 10 medals at the Beijing Olympics, and the next crop of champions. “You got the best coming up,” he said.

Left to right, Chuck Steedman, senior vice president and general manager of the XL Center; legendary women’s gymnastics coach Béla Kárölyi; and Hartford Athletics Director Patricia Meiser.
Get Your Tickets Early!

Hawks Host 2010 AE Basketball Championships

For the first time in America East Conference history, the University of Hartford will host a combined men's and women's basketball championship.

“It is an enormous honor for the University of Hartford to have been chosen to host the first-ever combined America East Conference men's and women's basketball tournament,” said University President Walter Harrison when the news was announced. “It's a thrilling format—four straight days of jam-packed basketball action that will bring thousands of America East fans from all over the Northeast to Hartford. For those four days, we will be the basketball capital of New England, and basketball fans from the Greater Hartford region can catch all the action. Personally, I can't wait.”

The 2010 America East Men's and Women's Basketball Championship will be played on campus at the Chase Arena in the Reich Family Pavilion, March 4–7, 2010. Nine institutions and 18 teams will compete for a conference title and a chance to represent the conference at the 2010 NCAA Tournament.

The schedule includes men's and women's first-round games on Thursday, the women's quarterfinals on Friday, the men's quarterfinals on Saturday, and both semifinals on Sunday. The championship games for both men's and women's basketball will be held on the home court of the highest remaining seed the following week.

Tickets are scheduled to go on sale Oct. 1. “All-session ticket prices will be $75 for chair-back tickets (all 14 games), and we are strongly encouraging people to get their tickets early as we have only a limited number of chair-back seats available,” says Dan Ruede, director of athletics communications. “There will also be a package for all 14 games in the VIP section that includes food and beverages for $300.”

For tickets to Hawk basketball and the 2010 AE Championships, call 860.768.HAWK (4295) or visit www.hartfordhawks.com.

Meiser Named AD of the Year

Patricia H. Meiser, director of athletics and special assistant to the president, was selected as the 2008–09 Northeast Region Division I Under Armour Athletics Director of the Year. The awards program recognizes athletics directors who have shown administrative excellence within the campus and/or college community for that academic year. This year, 29 awards were presented, four per division in the U.S. regions and one cross-divisional winner in the international region, at the annual National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics convention in June.

Meiser is one of only 22 female directors of athletics among the 329 institutions competing at the Division I level. During her tenure, seven sports (women's basketball, men's soccer, women's soccer, men's golf, women's golf, men's tennis, and women's volleyball) have won America East Conference championships and either reached the NCAA Division I tournament or national postseason play.

Women's basketball in particular has emerged under her leadership. It was Meiser who hired Jennifer Rizzotti, former University of Connecticut and WNBA star, as head coach of women's basketball. Since then, the women have won four conference championships and two NCAA tournament games, upsetting Temple in 2006 and Syracuse in 2008.

“Pat Meiser has been devoted to our student-athletes for the past 17 years,” said University President Walter Harrison when the award was announced. “She has brought great leadership to the University’s athletics department, raising money, building facilities, attracting highly qualified coaches, and supervising a great staff. Most of all, however, she has been unfailingly dedicated to improving student-athlete welfare, and for that all of us are grateful.”

Patricia H. Meiser

2009 Alumni Athletics Hall of Fame

President Walter Harrison (far left) and Patricia H. Meiser (far right) present The A. Peter LoMaglio Award to Stan and Susan Harris, longtime supporters of the lacrosse program and the Department of Athletics. The Harrises received the award at the 2009 Alumni Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

The 2009 inductees are Justin Bailey ’99, men’s basketball excellence; Candace Bintner-Schlaht ’90, women’s tennis excellence; Maureen DiJulia-Sadoff ’99, women’s basketball excellence; Dr. Mark Greenberg ’77, football and wrestling excellence; Chris La Monica ’97, men’s lacrosse excellence; and Steve Scheerer ’88, men’s basketball (1971–75) and men’s soccer (1971–74) excellence.

Other special awards were also presented. Joe Zubretsky ’79 received the Vincent Brown Coffin Award, and Jack Phelan, the Pioneer Award.