


CHECKPOINTS

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A photograph of a family of four—two adults and two children—standing on an airfield. They are all wearing olive green flight suits. The man is carrying a young boy on his shoulders, and the woman is carrying a young girl on her shoulders. They are all smiling. The background shows the tail section of a fighter jet with some technical markings like "1. PUSH BUTTON" and "2. PULL RING OUT".

Fighters & Love

Three couples on life
as married fighter pilots.



AFA Quarterback Club of Denver

Supporting the Falcons for 54 years

By Ray Haygood '69

It's a sunny fall day in Centennial, Colo. and avid fans of your Fightin' Falcons are gathering for an Air Force Academy Quarterback Club (QBC) luncheon. Graduates, World War II fighter pilots, parents of cadets, businesspeople and other supporters of the Academy return year after year for these special events. These are patriots who cherish the traditions and values of our country, our military, and our Air Force Academy.

The Air Force Academy Quarterback Club of Denver (originally named The Falcon Quarterback Club) was founded in 1960 by a group of Denver business leaders who wanted to actively support the new Air Force Falcons.

The mission of the QBC is to foster interest in and support the Air Force Academy Intercollegiate Athletic Program. The QBC was the first non-military organization to support intercollegiate athletics at any service academy. Now in its sixth decade, the QBC is recognized as the longest established private organization in the United States to support a service academy sports program.

The Early Years

In August 1958, Academy facilities were sufficiently complete for the Wing to move into its permanent location in Colorado Springs. However, Air Force home football games were played at the University of Denver's stadium until Falcon Stadium—built entirely from donated funds—was dedicated for the 1962 football season.

The QBC was established when the Academy moved from Lowry AFB to Colorado Springs. The football team, under Head Coach Ben Martin, had already developed a strong following among Denver supporters, especially after their inaugural, undefeated season in 1958 and their subsequent appearance in the Cotton Bowl where they tied Texas Christian University 0-0 earning a top 10 national ranking.

Founding club members wanted to do everything possible to encourage support, not only for football and other Academy athletic teams, but also for the institution itself. They recognized that Coach Martin had a formidable task. His job, and that of other intercollegiate coaches, was to field a team that would compete against elite national programs while also being one of the "public faces" of the Academy. Martin was integral to raising funds for the construction of Falcon Stadium and lobbying in Washington for additional funding for the athletic program. Thus, the QBC became a welcome advocate, not just for athletics, but also for the fledgling institution itself.

Club Activities and Contributions

The Quarterback Club contributes the Outstanding Football Player of the Year Award, supports the football team's end-of-season dinner banquet and also supports the Athletic Department with occasional donations for special purposes. The club financed the formation of the AFA Athletic Foundation, staffing that organization's officer positions for several years. To date, the foundation has raised over \$250,000 for the AFA Athletic Department.

The QBC has provided additional contributions including:

- Co-funding construction of a trophy case to display the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy
- Contributing funding towards the Air Force Academy Athletic Hall of Fame
- Contributing to the purchase of a new uniform for "The Bird," expansion of the press box at Falcon Stadium, Mountain West Conference banners for the weight room, and caricatures of each football player receiving All-Conference recognition
- Funding for honorariums to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes on behalf of Coach DeBerry

During football season club members meet weekly for lunch at Valley Country Club in Centennial, Colo. Additionally, club members gather at regular intervals throughout the off-season. Luncheons feature a social hour, door prizes, a wonderful meal and featured talks. Speakers have included Air Force Academy leadership, coaches, local sports media members and other distinguished guests.

Membership

Membership in the Air Force Academy Quarterback Club is open to all who wish to support the Air Force Academy and the intercollegiate athletic program.

If you would like to be a part of this special group, please join and enjoy the luncheons and the fellowship to come during this upcoming football season.

For more information on the QBC please visit www.afaqbc.org. 

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