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Syracuse University Magazine (USPS 009-049, ISSN 1065-884X) Volume 20, Number 2, is an official bulletin of Syracuse University and is published four times yearly: spring, summer, fall, and winter by Syracuse University, Syracuse NY 13244. It is distributed free of charge to alumni, friends, faculty, and staff. Periodical postage paid at Syracuse, NY, and additional mailing offices.

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OTHER MAGAZINE BUSINESS: *Syracuse University Magazine*, 820 Comstock Avenue, Room 308, Syracuse NY 13244-5040. Telephone: 315-443-2233; Fax: 315-443-5425. E-mail: jacox@syr.edu. Web site: sumagazine.syr.edu.

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POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to 820 Comstock Avenue, Room 009, Syracuse NY 13244-5040.

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Cox: Opening Remarks

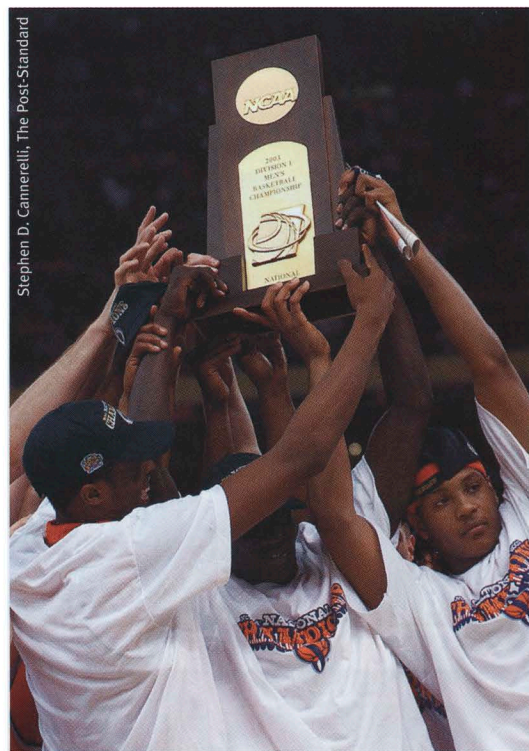
Opening Remarks

A Sporting Perspective

Hello from NCAA Basketball Title Town. Sure it's been a couple months since the Orangemen cut down the nets in the Big Easy, but I've been waiting a lifetime to write that. As a native Central New Yorker, I can't begin to tell you how elated I am that Coach Jim Boeheim '66, G'73 and this phenomenal team brought the national championship home to Syracuse. It's a truly amazing accomplishment that juiced the spirits of Orange alumni and fans around the globe. And it was great to see the 'Cuse shining bright in the national spotlight. In recognition of the team's achievement, we produced *Championship Journey* for you to enjoy.

For me, one of the beauties of sports is the power they have to transcend barriers and bring people together through a "common language" of sorts. And that goes for both the athletes and fans. A team, in the truest sense of the word, melds through a shared sense of responsibility, a recognition of roles, unwavering dedication, and commitment to a common goal. In essence, a team creates its own personality—for better or worse. We've all heard stories of locker-room brawls and bickering among teammates and coaches (What Yankees fan doesn't remember Reggie Jackson and Billy Martin going at it?), but we've also witnessed the splendid sight of what happens when a team comes together, hits its stride, and makes magic. This is often—but not always—a key ingredient for championship teams. I'll remember the 2002-03 SU basketball team not only for its ultimate accomplishment, but also for the way the players united as a team and for the sense of fun and excitement they shared and brought to the game.

While athletic success is often quantified in terms of wins and losses, collegiate sports involve so much more than what happens on the court or playing field. Cynics may believe that today's student-athletes lead coddled lives, but that's a misperception. These kids work incredibly hard. For a look at what life is



like for many of SU's student-athletes, I encourage you to read "Cross Training" (page 32) by Margaret Costello. You'll see that, day in and day out, they persevere through grueling schedules, juggling responsibilities in the two arenas they inhabit. Like all students, they attend classes, study, take tests, and face the worries and pressures of academic life. They also train, practice, travel, and compete. They answer to coaches and professors, teammates and classmates. Their days often stretch from early morning to late night. During the season, there is little time for much else beyond athletic and academic obligations. It's demanding no doubt, but through their experiences they learn a great deal about time management, priorities, discipline, teamwork, and more.

Only a select few will go on to professional sports careers. The rest, like their classmates, will either continue with their schooling or enter the working world. No matter where the future leads them, the lessons of sports should serve them well down the road.

JAY COX
Editor