



## From BC Eagles to USA Eagles

Anyone who thinks rugby ends with a college diploma couldn't be more wrong. Just ask Joe Hughes ('03). The former Boston College Eagle has been selected to be part of the United States National Rugby Team as they look to qualify for the Rugby World Cup in 2008.

Hughes, a double major in Finance and Information Systems, played flanker for the Eagles during his four-year career at BC. After leaving the Heights, Hughes joined New York City's Old Blue Rugby Club where he played flanker and led his team to the Super League semi-finals last year. During the summer Hughes also plays for the New York Knights. This fall he will join the other players of the National Team to gear up for the qualifying tournaments. "It's been pretty awesome. I get to travel for free," Hughes jokes, "It's taken a lot of work, but now that I'm here I'm glad I put the time in." Since college Hughes has added even more muscle to his hard-hitting frame, and will play prop for the U.S. The team's first qualifying tournament is this fall when the U.S. travels to Jamaica to take part in The America's Cup. From there it's on to Northern England in 2007, where a strong finish may secure the U.S. one of the sixteen spots for the World Cup.

Competing with other elite rugby players around the nation for international prestige isn't the only thing that's filling Hughes' plate these days, he's also working at Hughes Barge and Tugboats. It must be hard to relate to middle managers complaining about working overtime or coming in on weekends when you're putting in forty hours at the office and *then* smashing into men the size of U-Haul trucks, but Hughes takes it all in stride. After all, he is still a BC Eagle.

"BC taught me a lot about the overall commitment that it takes to be a part of something bigger than yourself," Hughes said, "I was up for the Alumni Game last year and was really impressed with the direction that the team has been moving in. It's so much more organized than when I was playing, it's encouraging to see the Club going in a positive direction."

But as far as the Club has come over the years, some things still haven't changed. "The commitment is still there. I remember the guys coming down everyday, rain, snow- whatever. It just showed me what I had to do if I wanted to play after college. I loved playing with those guys- it's definitely the greatest team sport."

We couldn't have said it better ourselves.



Joe Hughes (crouched, far right)