

## Hotshots: This Choirboy Packs a Punch



### Mustang Fullback Jon Hall Can Carry a Football – and a Tune

By Mary McNally

You wouldn't expect to find a football player and an opera singer in the same place, never mind the same person.

Jon Hall is that person – the hardest-charging tenor on the gridiron.

An uncommon combination of interests and abilities, Hall is equally likely to be lifting weights and hanging with best friends and fellow football players Alex Lee and Ryan Shotwell as he is to be on stage in a toga, singing opera, or composing songs about love and longing for his longtime, long-distance girlfriend, Danielle.

Recently at an Academic Game Plan meeting – daily counseling sessions to help players stay on top of academic responsibilities – Hall said his coaches don't always know how

to help him with his classes, because his studies are out of the ordinary.

"They don't know what they're looking at with my stuff, 'cause I'm the first music major they've ever seen in their lives," he said, laughing. Where other students take notes during a lecture, he said, "I'm actually writing real notes – musical notes."

The whole Hall family sings, including Jon's parents and three siblings. At church they were called the Von Hall family, a nod to the famous Von Trapps from "The Sound of Music."

Jon was discovered by family friends. His first professional gig was in fifth grade as part of a children's choir backing Michael Jackson. Hall's credits include Mowgli on the album "Jungle Book 2," the movie "High School Musical," and "Shamu Rocks" at Sea World.

With a 6-foot-2, 240-pound frame, Hall seems a natural for the football field. But he got started on the sport much later than he did music.

He played one year in eighth grade, but didn't suit up again until he was a junior in high school. That season, he said, was unexceptional. But he applied himself and returned for a stand-out senior year that brought several scholarship offers.

He picked Cal Poly because it provided the opportunity to play football and study music,



### Let's Hear It



Click photo to hear Jon Hall sing in this YouTube video

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a tough combination because both are so time-intensive.

"Music is like a different language. It's not like you can just understand it; you have to practice it," he said. "And you have to practice football. So that's a tough thing to put together – to organize my time."

But he studies hard. The music theory he's learned at Cal Poly has prepared him to intern this summer for Golden Globe-nominated composer Christopher Young, known for scoring movies such as "Spider-Man 3" and "Hellraiser."

And he plays hard. His favorite game so far was last season's nail-biter against Wisconsin, decided on the final play. "It was a really fun game to play in. I think I broke two ribs."

Hall likes football and music because they satisfy different aspects of his personality.

"I love to be with people, so that's one thing I like about football," he said. But he needs his "solo time," when he can contemplate the vast, varied opportunities ahead.

He'll be back at Cal Poly for the 2009 season, though. So you can catch him on stage and on the field.

[Hear Jon Hall sing on YouTube](#)

*Photos courtesy Cal Poly Athletics and Cal Poly Music Department*

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