



Honoring the Past to Inspire the Future

Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation
Newsletter — May 2005

Hall of Fame selects 12th induction class

Olympic basketball player among a dozen athletes selected

Twelve of Nebraska's greatest all-time athletes, five coaches, a contributor and an official will be inducted into the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame at its induction ceremony Sept. 25 at the Lied Center in Lincoln.

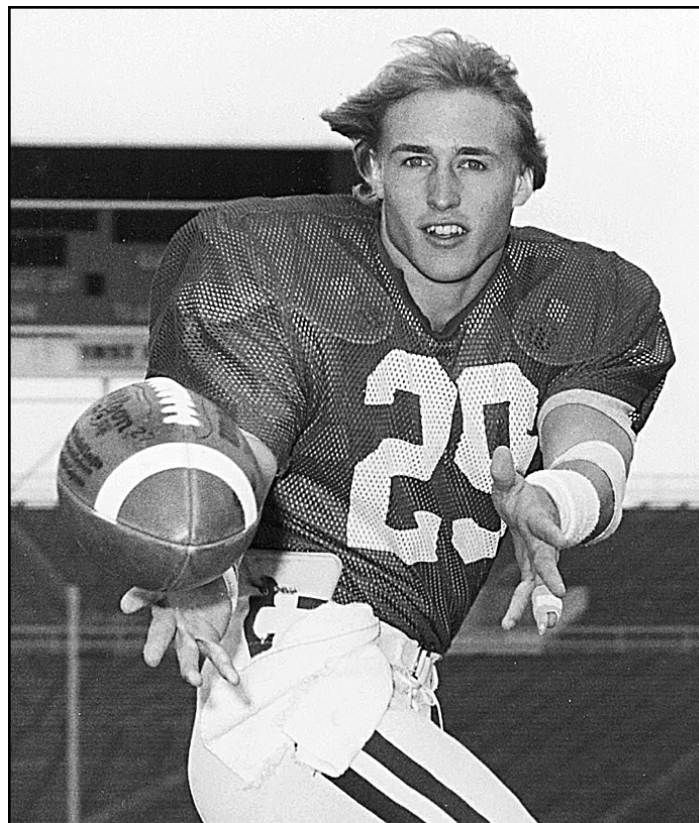
This will be the 12th Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation induction ceremony, bringing the total number of athletes, coaches, officials and contributors inducted to 239.

The athletes scheduled to be inducted this year are:

—**Shelly (Block) Tvrdy, Gothenburg Class of 1983:** A standout in track, cross country and basketball. She went on to play basketball for the Nebraska Cornhuskers and a career as a successful high school coach.

—**Todd Brown, Holdrege Class of 1978:** The first triple jumper in the state to surpass 50 feet, he still holds the state record at 50-2¼. A 1977 all-state defensive back and Shrine Bowl selection, he played wide receiver for the Nebraska Cornhuskers and professionally in the Canadian Football League.

—**Mike Cielocha, Columbus Scotus Class of 1979:** Won or shared six all-class gold medals at the state track meet in 1978 and 1979. Scotus won the Class B team titles those years as he finished with nine Class B gold medals. He was a three-year starter in football, making the Class B all-state team in 1978. He also played basketball and was the captain of the University



Todd Brown of Holdrege, a standout in high school athletes and a wide receiver for the Nebraska Cornhuskers is among this year's Hall of Fame inductees.

of Nebraska track team.

—**Don Erway, Lincoln High Class of 1953:** Was named the Omaha World-Herald and Lincoln Journal-Star Athlete of the Year in 1953. He played on the undefeated Links football teams of 1951 and 1952, averaging 6.85 yards per carry. He was a two-year letterman in basketball, averaging 19.5 points per game his senior year while earning all-state honors. He also

played catcher on two state championship teams and went on to play football and baseball for the Nebraska Cornhuskers.

—**Mike Fultz, Lincoln High Class of 1973:** Won the all-class gold medal in the shot put (58-8¼) as a senior and played defensive tackle, running back and linebacker in football. He lettered eight times in football, basketball and track. He was a three-year starter at defensive

tackle for the Nebraska Cornhuskers and a second-round draft pick of the New Orleans Saints.

—**Ken Geddes, Boys Town Class of 1966:** A starter on Boys Town's 1966 Class A state championship basketball team, he earned all-state football honors as a senior and ran on the all-class, gold-medal winning mile relay team as a junior. He was an All-Big Eight football for the Nebraska Cornhuskers and played eight seasons in the NFL.

—**John Kirby, David City St. Mary Class of 1960:** A two-time Class C all-state football player and Wigwam Wise Man of America All-American. He was a two-year starter in basketball, leading the team in rebounding. Also had the best discus throw in all classes in 1960. He played football at Nebraska and was captain of the Nebraska team that defeated Auburn in the Orange Bowl. He played in the NFL for the Minnesota Vikings and New York Giants.

—**Joe Orduna Omaha Central Class of 1966:** The winner of three gold medals (long jump, low hurdles, 880 relay) at the 1966 state track meet, he was a starting halfback for the Eagles and a two-time state qualifier in wrestling. He was a three-year letterman at Nebraska, rushing for 1,968 yards and 26 touchdowns. He played professionally for the New York Giants and Baltimore Colts.

—**Randy Reeves, Omaha**
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Memories bring Cozad players together in support of Hall of Fame

The Cozad Haymakers had a season to remember in 1969-70.

The 1969 football team went 9-0 and allowed only three points.

The 1969-70 basketball team, coached by Nebraska High School Hall of Famer Bill Ramsay, went 22-0, winning the Class B state championship.

The golf team that school year finished third in the state, the wrestling team was fourth and the track team was ninth.

The players who made up those teams, individually, have donated nearly \$2,000 to the Hall of Fame over the last few months.

"High school athletics was awfully important to our class," said Scott Maline, the quarterback on the football team and one of the leading scorers on the basketball team.

The class has had a couple of reunions - about 35 attended Coach Ramsay's induc-

tion ceremony in 2001.

On the occasion of their 35th anniversary, the athletes turned their attention to all of their former coaches and the Hall of Fame.

"I said, 'Let's donate for this cause supporting the Nebraska Hall of Fame in honor of all our coaches,'" said Maline, now superintendent of Minden High School. "So we took it upon ourselves to challenge ourselves to be No. 1 in donations.

"We got talking old stories over the internet and it kind of snowballed."

Maline said the donations are to honor all the coaches they had from seventh grade to high school.

"Maybe other classes will do this. That's what it's going to take to honor a lot of these people," he said.

Cornhusker State Games helping distribute induction ceremony tickets

Cornhusker State Games will assist the Hall of Fame in distributing tickets for this year's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony Sept. 25 at the Lied Center in Lincoln.

Tickets can be purchased by writing to the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame care of Cornhuskers State Games, P.O. Box 82411, Lincoln, NE., 68501.

Tickets may be purchased by credit card by calling 1-402-471-2544 or toll free in Nebraska by calling 1-800-304-2637.

Tickets for the Hall of Fame's induction ceremony are \$20 for adults, \$10 for elementary and high school students. Preschool students will be admitted free.

The ceremony begins at 1:30 p.m.

Donations help Hall of Fame function

Your donations are important to the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation.

The Hall has a stated goal of occupying a building to house memorabilia and provide an outlet for people to relive the glory of Nebraska high school athletics.

The foundation's board of directors

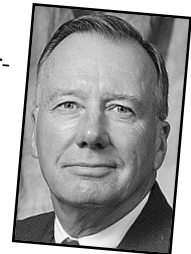
has pursued purchasing or building a structure for the Hall of Fame - a structure that could easily cost more than a million dollars.

The Hall of Fame also produces the annual induction ceremony that cost more than \$17.5 thousand to produce in 2004. Ticket sales covered approximately half of the ceremony's expenses.



Executive Director's update

Time flies by so fast and here we are approaching the end of another school year and that means in the fall we will be having our 12th Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Lied Center in Lincoln on Sept. 25.



Dick Beechner

We are trying to make sure that the categories are well represented in the Hall of Fame. In order for this to happen, a person needs to be nominated. I hope as you read this that you will go back into the history that you know and make sure that the outstanding athletes are nominated. If you need a nomination form, you can e-mail me at golopers@aol.com or go to the Web site, which is nebhallowfame.org

Before long, you will have the opportunity to become a member of the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation. We feel that there are many folks that are interested in supporting the Hall of Fame and this will be one way that they can do it. For \$40 or more, you can become a member. For being an annual member, you will receive two newsletters, one program from the inductions ceremony, one ticket to the induction ceremony and a Hall of Fame Decal.

More importantly, you will be supporting the Hall of Fame and allow the Hall of Fame to continue to "Honor the Past to Inspire the Future."

Until next time, be a good sport.

Want to nominate someone?

Nomination forms are available by contacting the Hall via e-mail at golopers@aol.com or by checking our Web site at www.nebhallowfame.org.

Inductees

Benson Class of 1966: A three-year starter in football who earned all-metro, all-state and all-american honors. The Omaha World Herald Athlete of the Year, he was a two-year starter in basketball and a two-time gold medalist in the pole vault where he was the first Nebraskan to clear 14 feet. He played football at Nebraska, lettering in 1967-69.

—**Willard Schmidt, Swanton Class of 1928:** The first Nebraskan to play on an Olympic gold-medal basketball team (1936), he led Swanton to the Class L state championship in 1927 and the Class F title in 1928. He was a three-time All-Missouri Valley selection while playing for Creighton from 1931-34 and led the Bluejays to the conference championship. He died in 1965.

—**Theresa (Stelling) Gosnell, Auburn Class of 1990:** A distance runner who won all-class gold medals in the 1,600 meters and three in the 3,200. She won the Class B cross country championship as a senior. She was at Wakefield for two years, then finished her career at Auburn. She was a four-time All-American in track and cross country at Nebraska.

—**Charlie Toogood, North Platte Class of 1945:** An all-state tackle in 1944, he was the all-class gold medalist in the shot put at the state meet in 1945. He played for the Cornhuskers, earning All-Big Seven honors in 1949 and 1950. He played for the NFL Champion Los Angeles Rams of 1951, and played for the Chicago Cardinals and New York Giants. He died in 1997.

Coaches who will be inducted include:

—**Fred Bessler:** Coached football at Brule, Madrid, Cozad and Chase County and compiled at 248-81-1 record with 206 wins and a pair of Class C-1 runner-up finishes at Chase County

before he retired in 2001. He coached Madrid to a 9-0 record and a No. 1 ranking. He was the Shrine Bowl head coach in 1995. In track, he coached the Longhorns to 26 consecutive conference championships.

—**Dale Bubak:** Coached at St. Paul, Hayes Center and Tekamah-Herman, guiding Hayes Center's boys to five consecutive Class D state track championships from 1968-72. He also coached undefeated football teams in 1961 and 1962 at Hayes Center and was an assistant coach on the Class C-1 Tekamah-Herman state championship team of 1976.

—**Al Gaston:** Coached at Farwell, Stockville, Haigler Grant and Ogallala. In football, he compiled a 163-68-1 record and led Grant to five state championships from 1975-85 three No. 2 rankings. He also coached track for 30 years, winning state track championships at Grant in 1975 and 1976. He died in 1998.

—**John Johnette:** the first basketball coach at Omaha Burke (and its predecessor, Beveridge), he led the Bulldogs to state titles in 1977 and 1986 and compiled a career record of 292-251 before retiring in 1988. He also was Burke's first baseball coach, winning Class A in 1970.

—**Phyllis Rice-Honner:** Only one of her 34 volleyball teams at Centennial had a losing record as she put together a coaching record of 459-151 in 1984, 1985 and 1987 and reaching the finals in 1989. She also coached track for 16 years and basketball for one.

Other inductees are long-time referee and NSAA director of officials **Bill Lewis**, and long-time NSAA Executive Director **Jim Riley**. Riley is being inducted as a contributor.

Riley coached basketball at Norfolk and Omaha Westside before being hired as an assistant executive director for the Nebraska School Activities Association in 1970. In 1976 he

became the executive director. During his tenure, the number of NSAA-sanctioned sports grew from six to 21. He retired in 2001.

Lewis began officiating junior high basketball games in 1961, while still in junior high. He continued to officiate until hired in 1988 by the NSAA to be supervisor of officials. As supervisor of officials, he has conducted rules meetings, clinics and camps, observed officials throughout the state and assigned officials for state tournaments and playoffs. He retired in 2004.

Other awards that will be presented at the induction ceremony include:

—**The Fischer Family Award,** presented this year to the Leon and Mayme Dostal family of Scribner and the families of their sons (Bob, Larry, Ken, Norm, Rich, Dave and Don) and daughters (Irma Dostal, Mary Ann Johnson, Janet Bailey and Rosie Hanna).

—**The Ron Gustafson Inspiration Award,** presented this year to Neil Halford of Fort Calhoun who, despite blindness, placed fourth in the state wrestling meet in 1992 and was a state qualifier in 1991.

—**Great Moments in Nebraska High School Sports,** presented to the Columbus Scotus volleyball team, whose record winning streak reached 114 matches, and Wayne pitcher Molly Hill, who last fall posted state records of a 0.00 ERA and 543 strikeouts with a 34-0 record in a state-championship season.

—**Silver Anniversary Team** awards to the 1980-81 state champion Grant football (11-1) and boys basketball (26-0) teams and the Fremont boys cross country and track teams that won Class A state titles.

—**Golden Anniversary Team** awards to the Holstein basketball team of 1955-56 that went 27-0, and the Omaha Creighton Prep football team of 1955 that was 8-0-1.

Hall thanks those who lend a hand

The Hall of Fame would like to thank the following people and organizations for their financial contributions from Sept. 26, 2004, to Feb. 16, 2005:

Dick and Barbara Beechner
Ken and Betty Fischer
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Donation Form

The Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame is a non-profit, tax-exempt (IRC Section 501(c)(3)) organization that relies on contributions from individuals, organizations, foundations, etc. Please consider making a contribution. You can copy this form or simply send your donation to:

Sports Hall of Fame
1123 Delmar Street
Papillion, NE 68046

Make checks payable to the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation

Contribution enclosed for \$ _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone _____

Our mission:

The Board of Directors of the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation pledges to establish a continuing program to honor athletes for outstanding careers during their high school years, pioneers of high school athletics, administrators, coaches, officials, and community members who have made significant contributions to high school athletics, and athletes who have made significant impact on their chosen field or society after completion of their high school career. The board also desires to establish an appropriate repository for all memorabilia associated with Nebraska high school athletics.

Please share this newsletter with as many high school sports fans as possible by placing it in an accessible area.

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