



Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

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My Opinion

By Randy Anderson



Cheering crowds can be heard throughout Chautauqua County this fall. And why not? Student-athletes from our high schools are accomplishing some remarkable feats on the gridiron, in the gym, on the pitch, on the cross country course, on the tennis courts and in the pool.

There's also plenty to cheer for off the playing fields. Many of our county's athletes are also our county's top students. That's no surprise. Study after study has confirmed the positive aspects of interscholastic sports when comparing athletes to non-athletes.

- ✓ Higher mean grade point averages
- ✓ Higher mean scores on year-end exams
- ✓ Fewer discipline referrals
- ✓ Better attendance records
- ✓ Lower drop-out rates
- ✓ Higher graduation rates

And it's not just athletics. Studies looking at art, music and drama programs show similar results. These results are not a surprise to those of us who cheer from the sidelines and applaud in school auditoriums.

School boards in our county have been faced with some very difficult decisions as they struggle to balance budgets. In some cases, sports and/or teams have been eliminated, particularly at the modified and junior varsity levels. In other instances, art, music and drama activities have been curtailed.

Fortunately, some forward-thinking school boards have found ways to continue to provide athletics and extra-curricular activities by combining with neighboring districts. These school boards are to be commended.

Those of us who enjoy and support our students on the playing fields and in the auditorium know it's not just all fun and games. Not only are athletics and after-school activities a source of pride and entertainment in our cities, towns and villages, they help to produce the well-rounded students who will lead Chautauqua County forward.

Spotlight on Volunteers



Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame. The officers and directors of the CSHOF give freely of their time without compensation, yet there is also another group of exceptional individuals, without whom the organization could not exist. The following people donate several hours each month to help keep our exhibition hall doors open: **Vi**

Rewers, Dee Rewers, Patty Rewers, Nancy Huckabone, Don Long, Louise Long, Del Seekings, Larry Marvell, Bruce Widen, Sheila Brinkley and Nancy Schuyler. To them we say thank you. You are sincerely appreciated.

The CSHOF is in need of additional volunteers to be at the hall during the day to greet visitors Monday through Friday, from 12-3 PM. If you can help out, even one day a month, kindly contact Randy Anderson at 716-763-2173.

Class of 2014 Inductees

The Board of Directors of the CSHOF has voted to select eight inductees for the Class of 2014. With 115 excellent nominations currently on file and with more arriving each month, the Directors have decided to increase the number of inductees from six to eight, of which three will come from the legacy (deceased) category.

The names of the eight members of the Class of 2014 will be announced on December 1. The 2014 Induction Banquet will be held Monday, February 17, at the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club.

CSHOF on Facebook



Thanks to the efforts of Board member Scott Kindberg, the CSHOF has established a presence on the social media giant **Facebook**. You are invited to take a look and be sure to “like” us.

Lakewood Rod and Gun Club Donates to CSHOF Project



The Lakewood Rod and Gun Club recently made a generous donation to the expansion project currently underway at the CSHOF. The project involves creating additional exhibition space and archival storage capabilities.

Larry Dorler (left), president of the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club made the presentation to Russ Ecklund (right), secretary of the CSHOF.

Ecklund stated, “We sincerely appreciate the generosity of our friends at the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club. We enjoy a fine working relationship with the Club. They always do a fabulous job as the host site of our annual induction banquet. This monetary donation has allowed us to purchase slot wall, paint and other materials for our expansion project.”

Inductee of the Month: Swat Erickson

Eric "Swat" Erickson was born in Gothenberg, Sweden in 1892. He moved to the United States and spent his early childhood in Johnsonburg, PA, before moving to Jamestown where he received all his education.



He began playing pro baseball for Leo's Semi-pros at Celoron in 1912 for \$3 a game. Soon Dallas of the Texas League offered him a contract of \$60 a month in 1913 and he moved into organized baseball. At Dallas the young pitcher Erickson won 20 games in 40 days.

In 1914 he pitched one game for the New York Giants before joining the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League. The Giants then sold him to Detroit, but his career was interrupted in 1917 because of World War I.

When he returned to the United States, Erickson pitched for Detroit in 1918 and then was traded to Washington in 1919 where he spent four seasons. His best season was 1920 when he had a 12-16 record.

Erickson left the major leagues in 1922 and played semi-pro ball in Falconer and later with Billy Webb's Celoron Spiders where he had his last great game.

On Aug. 8, 1930, at Celoron, the Boston Braves, managed by Bill MacKechnie, took on the Spiders in an exhibition game. Erickson set the Braves down on one hit and helped win the game by rapping a bases-loaded triple, which showed some people where the nickname "Swat" came from. The only Boston hit came with two outs in the ninth inning by a player MacKechnie had summoned from the Hotel Samuels. The player had been given the day off and was catching up on his sleep until a teammate, sent by MacKechnie, brought him to Celoron. He hit a weak bouncer between first and second that the second baseman failed to reach.

Erickson continued to live in the Jamestown area until his death in 1965. Swat Erickson was inducted into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.

Additions to CSHOF Archives

Coralyn Boehler, widow of Chuck Boehler, 1989 inductee, has donated a large collection of photographs, scrapbooks, medals, personal items and other memorabilia from his outstanding motorcycle racing career.

<http://chautauquasportshalloffame.org/chuckboehler.php>

Akos "Ike" Kuhl and Gabriel Fehrer have contributed pictures, player's cards, newspaper clippings, correspondence and related memorabilia of the Jamestown Soccer Club, 1960-1962.

Both donations will help us meet our mission: To honor and preserve the sports history of Chautauqua County.

Who?

This CSHOF inductee played on championship teams in two professional sports. He played professional basketball on the championship Chicago American Gears team of the National Basketball League. One teammate was NBA Hall of Famer George Mikan.

Then switching sports to baseball, he won three World Series rings as a player and three more as a coach. As a veteran baseball player, he was assigned a roommate who ultimately played in twelve World Series and earned a bust in Cooperstown.

Our inductee is also an honoree in the same hall of fame as Jackie Robinson. Who is he?