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*Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County*

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## **Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame**

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*15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701*

*January 2025*

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### **CSHOF Banquet February 17**

The Board of Directors of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame will enshrine nine individuals at its 43rd Annual Induction Banquet, Presidents' Day, Monday, February 17th, at the Lakewood Rod & Gun Club. The inductees are **Jessica Anderson, Tom Anderson, Anthony Barone, Stephen Carlson, Mark Edstrom, Ron Frederes, Nick Kahanic, Aaron Leeper and Nick Sirianni.**

Notable accomplishments by our Class of 2025 enshrinees include:

1. A NYS volleyball Player of the Year and an inductee of the Niagara University Athletics Hall of Fame, **Jessica Anderson.**
2. An exceptional administrator and the face of the Lakewood YMCA for more than 30 years, **Tom Anderson.**
3. The manager of the Milwaukee Milkman of the American Association and formerly at Jamestown Community College and Jamestown Jammers, **Anthony Barone.**
4. A tight end for the Cleveland Browns and Chicago Bears of the NFL, **Stephen Carlson.**
5. The only athlete in Alfred University history to be the leading scorer in both basketball and football in a single season and an AU Hall of Famer, **Mark Edstrom**
6. An outstanding basketball coach, fast-pitch softball pitcher and inductee of the WNY Softball Hall of Fame, **Ron Frederes.**
7. A world record holder and world amateur champions in Highland Games competition, **Nick Kahanic.**
8. A NYS Class AA Football Player of the Year and Connolly Cup winner, **Aaron Leeper.**
9. The extremely successful head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles, **Nick Sirianni.**

Tickets are available for \$50 by calling Chip Johnson at 716-485-6991 or online at <https://www.chautauquasportshalloffame.org/banquettickets.php>.

## Beichner Honored For Career Achievements

by Scott Kindberg, *Post-Journal*, October 4, 2024



Jim Beichner paid a visit to the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame a few years ago. To suggest he was impressed by the museum in downtown Jamestown would be an understatement.

“This is an unbelievable place, and there’s more things here than I even thought,” the Sinclairville native and Cassadaga Valley Central School graduate (Class of 1982) said that July day in 2021. ” ... You can come here 10 days in a row or 100 days in a row and pick up new information

about all kinds of great things that Chautauqua County (athletes) have done.”

Beichner, who is a 2004 CSHOF inductee himself, added a significant entry in his voluminous athletic resume last Saturday when he was enshrined into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame during its Upstate New York State Chapter ceremonies at the Doubletree Hotel in East Syracuse.

“The individuals being honored here today are members of a great mission and legacy, not just in their state, but in our sport,” said Lee Roy Smith, the National Wrestling Hall of Fame executive director Lee Roy Smith. “They are heroes to the people they have impacted through their work in the sport and beyond, and provide an inspiration to future generations. Their dedication, service and leadership build and sustain our sport one individual, one program and one community at a time.”

Beichner certainly belongs in that company.

The former collegiate All-American and former University at Buffalo head coach had quite a career in the sport, capturing multiple honors and awards — on and off the mat — that have already earned him entry into the Cassadaga Valley Central School, the Eastern Wrestling, the Clarion University and the Chautauqua Sports halls of fame.

In recent years, Beichner, who now lives in Salisbury, North Carolina, has traded in his wrestling coaching talent for a critical role for Penske Racing.

“As (Penske’s director of athletics), it’s like working for a small college,” Beichner said during his visit to Jamestown three years ago. “You have strength coaches, equipment room people and trainers. You hire, you fire and you manage. ... You surround yourself with the best people and try and win with the best people.”

Beichner has certainly been up for that challenge.

Over a nine-year period, he has trained pit crews that have been chosen as No. 1 10 times in races that include the Indianapolis 500, Daytona 500, Brickyard 400, Monster Energy Cup and the Xfinity Owners Championship. And all those accomplishments have their foundation rooted on Route 380 in central Chautauqua County. “If it ended today, I’d be the luckiest guy in the world,” Beichner said in 2021. “If it lasts another 10 to 15 years, I’d be even luckier.” Anyone who has known him, though, wouldn’t consider any of his accomplishments “lucky.”

In his National Wrestling Hall of Fame recommendation letter, Cliff Blom, Cassadaga Valley’s wrestling coach from 1976-86, describes Beichner’s track record on the mat as “astounding and impressive.”



**Jim and wife Delaney at the CSHOF**

Then Blom added: “However, even the most passionate of us finally move on from wrestling. The mat finally wins, and we are replaced by younger, more talented, athletes. The years of grappling with life’s challenges have taught each of us valuable lessons.

“Jim continues to use the principles of hard work, honesty, teamwork, humility and sacrifice. And he intentionally builds solid relationships using the concept of helping others achieve.”

Few in Chautauqua County history have done it better than Beichner has.



True to his humble nature, he offered his gratitude to those who have helped him along his athletics journey.

“I would like to thank my family, friends, college teammates and all the student-athletes and coaches that I worked with during my time as a coach and competitor,” Beichner wrote in the NWHOF Upstate New York Chapter program. “I am a very fortunate person to have been surrounded by so many great people. I feel blessed many times over for what you have all done for me. Thank you all so much. Wrestling is truly the world’s oldest and greatest sport, and it’s also a bond that lasts a lifetime and beyond.”

### Paul Cooley Honored by Gerry Rodeo

Gerry Rodeo chairman Tom Atwell announced a newly created award named the Cooley-Hall Award in honor of Paul Cooley (second from left) and David Hall, both of whom have served the Gerry Fire Department and the rodeo for more than 60 years. They were the recipients of this first year award which will be awarded annually in their names to the top rodeo volunteer.

**Cooley, a 2017 CSHOF inductee, is the long-time publicity chairman for the rodeo.**

