

Gothenburg, Lex athletes named to Hall of Fame

Written by Gothenburg Times
Friday, 09 April 2010 14:16 -

A Gothenburg hurdler, who actually went on to more fame following his college career, is one of the athletes chosen for induction into the 17th Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame class.

Twelve athletes, five coaches, two contributors and an official will be inducted into the hall of fame at the foundation's induction ceremony Sept. 26 at the Lied Center in Lincoln.

Added to the list of Gothenburg honorees in the hall of fame is Gary Power. He finished in a dead heat for first place in his final state meet 60-yard high hurdles race in 1960 and was given second. He placed fifth at state as a junior.

Power competed at Omaha University in college and went on to a distinguished career internationally.

Lexington's Ted Harvey, a 1974 LHS graduate, will also be inducted. He was a multi-sport athlete at Lexington and started at cornerback for three years at Nebraska.

In addition, the hall's selections for the Ron Gustafson Inspiration Award, the Fischer Family Award, the Dominant Dynasty Award, the Great Moments in Nebraska Sports Award and the golden and silver anniversary teams will be honored at the induction ceremony.

Individuals

Dennis Albers (athlete), Hastings High School Class of 1960: Won 13 of a possible 16 gold medals in leading Hastings to state gymnastics titles in 1959 and 1960. He lettered two years at Nebraska.

Dan Brand (athlete), Bellevue High School Class of 1953: An Olympic bronze medalist in wrestling in 1964 and a fifth-place finisher in 1960, he never competed in the sport until college

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at Nebraska. He played football and basketball and ran track at Bellevue.

Don "Moose" Cooper (athlete), York High School Class of 1944: A two-time state high school champion in the pole vault, he was the first collegian to clear 15 feet at the Kansas Relays in 1951.

Ahman Green (athlete), Omaha Central High School Class of 1995: After a prep career in which he was all-state in football in 1993 and 1994 and won the 100 and 200 meters at the 1995 state track meet, he rushed for nearly 4,000 yards at Nebraska and more than 9,000 yards in the NFL, becoming Green Bay's all-time rushing leader.

Herb Grote (athlete), Omaha Benson Class of 1938: A four-time conference javelin champion at Nebraska and a two-time high school state champion in the event, he was also a standout in football and basketball.

Barb (Harris) Bruce, (athlete), Lincoln High School Class of 1977: An NCAA champion swimmer at North Carolina (butterfly), she never lost a race in high school, winning six individual state meet gold medals.

Ted Harvey (athlete), Lexington High School Class of 1974: All-state in football in 1973 and all-state tournament in basketball for the Minutemen in 1974, he started at cornerback for three years for the Nebraska Cornhuskers.

Angee Henry (athlete), Bellevue West High School Class of 1993: A two-time NCAA champion in the long jump, a three-time conference champion and a 10-time All-American at Nebraska, she holds the state record in the 400.

Jodi (Janssen) Harper (athlete), Papillion-LaVista High School Class of 1994: The only four-time state high school girls diving champion in Nebraska, she competed four years at Texas A&M with a best conference finish of third place.

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Clarence Mitchell (athlete), Franklin High School Class of 1908: Called “the last left-handed spit-baller in captivity,” he pitched for six major league teams from 1911 to 1932, pitching in the World Series for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1920 and St. Louis Cardinals in 1928.

Gary Power (athlete), Gothenburg High School Class of 1960: A “late bloomer,” he turned into a world-class hurdler after graduating from Omaha University, Competing internationally in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he became a well-known rival of Olympic champion Willie Davenport.

Ed Thompson (athlete), Cambridge High School Class of 1995: The first NCAA Division II football player to rush and pass for 1,000 yards in a season at UNO, he led Cambridge to the Class C-2 state football championship in 1994 and was a basketball and track standout.

Gary DeBoer (coach), Lawrence-Nelson: His 319 victories in football rank second all-time. His teams qualified for the playoffs 21 times, winning three state championship and three runner-up trophies.

Ted Larson (coach), Southeast and Southwest: His boys and girls cross country teams won 23 state championships, four runner-up trophies and 28 conference championships in 21 seasons. He also coached Southeast to the 1992 Class A boys state track title.

Chuck Mizerski, (coach) Lincoln Southeast: In nearly 40 years as a football coach in Illinois and Nebraska, he posted 274 coaching wins in his career, including 230 at Lincoln Southeast. His Knights won six state championships and three runner-up trophies.

Larry Pritchett (coach), Grant: The caretaker of the Plainsmen basketball program from 1964-73 and again from 1987-2007, his teams won three state championships, two state runner-up trophies, 22 conference titles and played in the state tournament 14 times. He compiled a coaching record of 476-147.

Howard Zook (coach), Fairfield: In 28 years at 10 schools, the 1930 Peru State graduate from Tecumseh coached three mythical state championship teams in football, the 1950 Class D

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basketball champions at Glenvil and the 1960 Class D track champions at Fairfield. He had 356 wins in basketball, including other Nebraska stops at Ewing, Davenport and Ohioa.

Tom Hallstrom (contributor), Omaha: A physical education teacher and administrator in Omaha Public Schools for 40 years, Hallstrom directed the state track meet from 1973 to 1979 and was a national chairman for the AAU's Junior Olympics in Track and Field.

Rex Jones (contributor), Chadron: Completed a 50-year career in Nebraska high school athletics in 2002 after 27 years as associate director of the Nebraska School Activities Association. He served on national rules committees in football, wrestling and track and field.

Willie Weisbrook (official), Lincoln: A football and basketball official for the past 45 years, he has worked 14 state basketball championship games and 14 state football playoff seasons, including two Class A finals. He also umpired baseball for nearly 20 years.

Honorees

Great Moment in High School Sports: Jacob Ramsay, Lincoln Pius X, A Magic Night of Kicking: In a 26-7 win over Ralston, Ramsay was 4-for-4 on field goals of 32, 50, 50 and 22 yards. He also was 2-for-2 on extra points.

Dominant Dynasty: Omaha Marian, 33 state championships from 1998 to present, including eight straight in swimming (2000-07), six straight in soccer (1998-2003), five straight in golf (2005-2009) and cross country (2003-2007).

Ron Gustafson Inspiration Award: Jason Branigan, Papillion-LaVista High School: A two-time state wrestling champion and an all-state linebacker diagnosed with testicular cancer, brain cancer and cancer of the lymph nodes while a high school senior, his competitive career was over but he remains in sports and education as the wrestling coach and a social studies teacher at Papillion-LaVista South High School.

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Fischer Family Award: Roger and Donna Higgins family of Omaha: Roger, a decorated athlete at Schuyler and coach at Omaha Cathedral, had four sons and four daughters and several grandchildren whose taken them to numerous college teams as well as professional basketball, the NFL, athletic administration, coaching and officiating.

Golden Anniversary teams: Fairfield football, basketball and track, 1960-61; McCook football, 1960

Silver Anniversary teams: Grand Island Northwest football, 1985; Creighton Prep football, 1985.