
Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County



Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

December 2011

2012 CSHOF INDUCTEES SELECTED

The Board of Directors of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame has chosen six outstanding individuals for enshrinement at its 31st Annual Induction Banquet, February 20, 2012 at the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club.

Betty Bartkowiak: Nicknamd “Burke”, the Dunkirk native was an outstanding high school and collegiate athlete. Betty was inducted in the WNY Softball Hall of Fame in 1984 and the SUNY Brockport Sports Hall of Fame in 1988. She is a professor emeritus from SUNY Oswego where she taught health and physical education as well as coached a variety of sports.

Ben Bishop: A scratch golfer, Ben was the Moon Brook Country Club champion twelve times and the Chautauqua County amateur champion four times. He established the MBCC amateur record with a 66. While attending Wooster College, he set four school records in track. An accountant in the firm Ruland and Bishop, Ben died in 1970 at the age of 54.

Jim McElrath, Sr.: During a seven year coaching career at Panama, “Mac” won four sectional basketball titles in the days before state championships were contested. A stellar high school and college basket ball player, Jim was inducted into the Mercer County (PA) Sports Hall of Fame in 1994 and the Mercer High School Hall of Fame in 2002. Upon his retirement as principal at Jamestown High School, the students requested the newly constructed gymnasium be named in his honor.

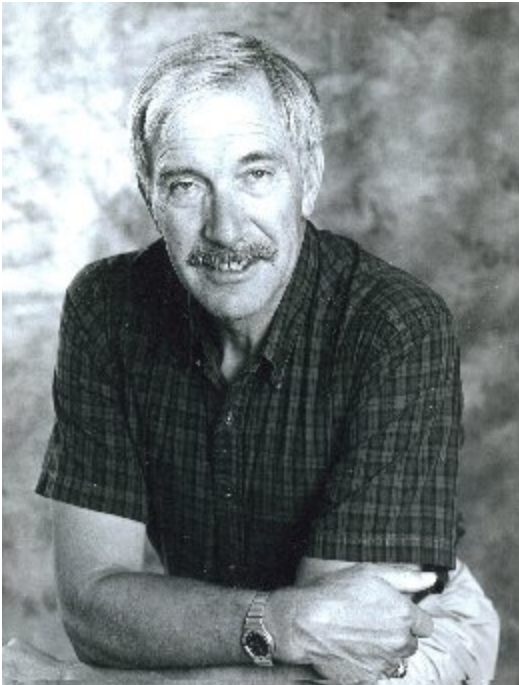
John O’Neil: Originally from Kentucky, John first made Jamestown his home when he played for the 1941 Jamestown Falcons. He went on to play at every level of professional baseball from the Class D Falcons to the Major League Philadelphia Phillies. He also served as a manager, general manger and scout in a baseball career that lasted 45 years.

Greg Peterson: Greg, along with his friend Russ Diethrick, was the driving force that convinced Rich Baseball to locate their franchise in Jamestown as the Jammers in 1994.

He was the impetus for the 1998 book Across the Seams that chronicles the history of professional baseball in Jamestown. Greg is well-known as an advocate and historian of local sports. He has interviewed hundreds of sports personalities and shared their stories on the local cable channel. Greg is a partner in the law firm Phillips Lytle and president of the Robert H. Jackson Center.

Bob Schmitt: In thirteen years as baseball coach at Frewsburg Central School, Bob compiled a remarkable 239-82 record and led the Bears to three New York State Championships. An outstanding basketball and baseball player at Jamestown Community College, “Schmitty” also played for the powerful Jock Shop softball squad that won the national title in 1984 and ’85. Bob is a retired teacher from Frewsburg Central.

Phil Gravink Elected to U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame



CSHOF inductee Philip T. Gravink is one of eight skiing greats who will have their names added to the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame's Honor Roll.

Joining Gravink in the class of 2011 are 2002 Olympic silver medalist Joe Pack, 1985 World Championship bronze medalist Eva Twardokens, fellow ski area pioneer the late Nick Badami, ski historian Mason Beekley, speed skier and author Dick Dorworth, ski show pioneer Harry Leonard and World Cup and Pro Ski Racer Tyler Palmer.

Phil Gravink was a key player for 35 years at the national level in ski area management.

After graduating from college he started out helping run his family's farm in New York State before founding an area known as Peek N Peak. Such was his success that the state appointed him as General Manager of Gore Mountain and later held the same post at Loon Mountain in New Hampshire from 1977 to 1991 where, under his leadership, he developed Loon into a leading modern resort. He was also a key player in influencing the policies of the U.S. Forest Service. Gravink was on several key committees of the National Ski Areas Association serving as a director for 18 years and then as its Chairman in 1979-1980. In 1993, the NSAA presented him with its Sherman Adams Award for his contributions. Other honors have included the NSAA Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000 and the BEWI Award in 2006. He contributed significantly to several skiing safety innovations. For many years he was a Senior Associate with Sno-Engineering and continues to this day as a ski area consultant.

The U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame is located in Ishpeming, Michigan, the birthplace of organized skiing in America in 1905. It is dedicated to providing respected and lasting national recognition to the great achievers and contributors to skiing and snowboarding in the United States. Its 20,000 square foot building is a museum preserving and providing public access to an extensive collection of artifacts, archives, photographs and films that record the colorful history of these sports. It is also the headquarters of the International Skiing History Association.

For more information and pictures about Phil, please visit his CSHOF webpage:
<http://www.chautauquasportshalloffame.org/philgravink.php>

CSHOF Participates in Continuing Legal Education Program



CSHOF secretary Russ Ecklund (standing in photo a left) joined a large number of lawyers and other community leaders at a continuing legal education seminar held November 1 at the Robert H. Jackson Center. Among the highlights was a luncheon presentation by former Buffalo Sabres great Danny Gare (seated). The CSHOF provided photos of Gare which he autographed for attendees.

Jamestown Ironmen Jersey to Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame



In the collaborative effort with the Jamestown Ironmen, Mike Ferguson (center in photo), general manager of the Jamestown Savings Bank Arena donated an authentic Ironmen game jersey to President Randy Anderson (left in photo) and Secretary Russ Ecklund (right in photo) of the Hall of Fame.

“This is more than just a hockey team,” explained Ecklund. “These young men are on their way to collegiate hockey and have very bright futures.”

The Jamestown Ironmen are combining with the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame in a fundraising effort to benefit both parties. For every Ironmen ticket purchased this year, customers can use the code “CSHOF”, and \$2 from that ticket will go back to the Hall. Fans can enter the code manually when purchasing tickets online at www.jamestownarena.com, or a Jamestown Arena representative can enter the code upon request when fans purchase tickets by phone (716-484-2624) or in person at the Arena Box Office.



“We are very excited that the Hall of Fame has welcomed us to Chautauqua County in this way and shown us so much support,” said Ironmen Head Coach Dan Daikawa. “Giving them a jersey and a hand in raising some money is the least we can do.”

In photo at left, Jamestown Ironmen players Nick Bingaman (19) and Anthony Stempin admire the autographed jersey of former NHL star Kevyn Adams, speaker at the 2011 CSHOF Induction Banquet.

CSHOF to Screen Top Sports Movies

Hoosiers, The Natural, Field of Dreams, Blind Side, Brian’s Song, Radio, Remember the Titans, Pride of the Yankees... these are just some of the all-time great sports movies the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame plans to show beginning in January at the Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown. The CSHOF movie nights will be held on the first and third Wednesdays, from January through April at 7 pm.

The films will be shown free of charge to the public on January 4 & 18, February 1 & 15, March 7 & 21, and April 4 & 18. The complete schedule of films will be announced in December by CSHOF director Scott Kindberg, chairman of the movie night project.

Jamestown Holiday Parade

The Hall of Fame will be open Friday, December 2, for the Jamestown holiday parade. CSHOF members and their families are invited to watch the parade from our ring-side seats on Third Street. The parade steps off at 6:30. Cookies, coffee and hot chocolate will be available at no cost. Join us as we celebrate the beginning of the holiday season.