

1980 SHALER AREA VARSITY BASEBALL TEAM



The 1980 Shaler Area Varsity Baseball Team was perhaps the most dominating baseball team in the history of Shaler Area. Their 30-3 record included three pre-season losses and a 25 game winning streak throughout the regular season, the WPIAL playoffs, and the PIAA state playoffs. They won three WPIAL playoff games by a combined score of 26-1 and five PIAA state games by a combined score of 42-15. They outscored opponents 218-53 throughout the season.

Two seniors, Doug Maggio and Wayne Schuckert, were drafted in the first nine rounds of the major league draft. Three other players, Rich Schleiper, Chip Peluso, and Matt Stennett were drafted out of college. Ken Karcher played professional football for the Denver Broncos, and every player on the team played college baseball.

Coached by 2002 Shaler Area Sports Hall of Fame Inductee, Jerry Matulevic, and his assistant coach, Dave Fortun, the players include:

Ed Bodnar
Ken Karcher
Mike Lang
Chip Peluso
Matt Stennett
Ken Yurek

John Della Valle
Tim Kotkevich
Doug Maggio
Rich Schleiper
Kevin Walsh
Ed Zimmerman

Tim Fieldhouse
Keith Knaus
John Miller
Wayne Schuckert
Tom Weider
Nick Zozos

FORREST FORD
Shaler Coach/Teacher



Forrest Ford was instrumental in building Shaler's athletic program after WWII. Forrest was a strict disciplinarian and math teacher who started the wrestling and baseball programs at Shaler in 1947-48 and was the first coach for these teams. He ended his wrestling career in 1956-57 with a 92-43-2 record.

The highlight of Forrest's wrestling coaching career was to have Ed Peery (2001 Hall of Fame Inductee) be a two-time gold medal champ and a one-time silver medalist for Pennsylvania.

Forrest was a very successful football coach at Shaler, leading the team in 1947 to an undefeated season and the championship game. Hall of Famers coached by Forrest include:

- * Dick Dixon
- * Ducky Elter
- * Joe Kopnisky
- * Jerry Matulevic
- * Ed Peery

The Forrest A. Ford Scholastic Athletic Award is given to the senior boy and girl varsity letter winners with the highest scholastic grade point average.

JAN KEPPLER
Shaler Area Coach/Teacher



Jan taught Spanish at Shaler Area High School for more than 30 years. During this time she coached extensively. Jan coached the girls' varsity basketball team from 1969 to 1980. Her teams always had a winning record. Jan coached the varsity girls' softball team from 1973-1983.

Her teams won several section titles, and the 1982 team was runner-up in the PIAA tournament where they defeated powerhouse State College in the semi-finals. Jan has always taken great pride in the accomplishments of female athletes.

In the 1970's, Jan and her assistant basketball coach, Ruth Duerstein, won a landmark decision with a lawsuit they filed with the EEOC based on Title IX. Through their efforts, coaches of Shaler Area girls' sports received equal pay and future female athletes and coaches throughout Pennsylvania were guaranteed equal conditions, equipment, and practice time.

Jan worked as an interpreter at the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid. She was a photographer for U.S. Team Handball at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, and received a byline in "Vanity Fair" magazine for her pictures on Team Handball. Jan has participated in hundreds of racing events, including half marathons, biathlons, triathlons, bicycle races and cross country skiing.

JERRY MATULEVIC
Athlete/Coach/Teacher
Shaler/Shaler Area



Jerry was a three-sport letter winner in football, basketball, and baseball at Shaler High School. During his undergraduate years at Pitt, he was a three-year letter winner in baseball, captaining and winning MVP honors for the 1961 Panthers.

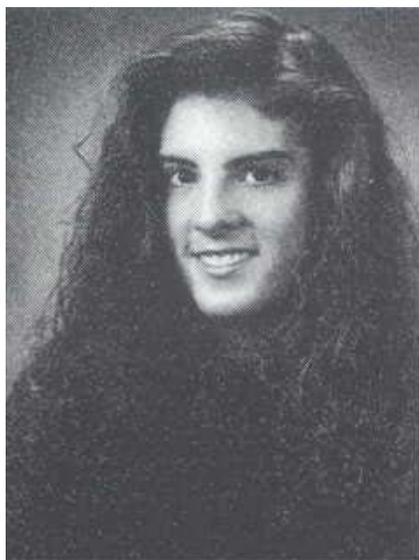
Jerry is best known for establishing a very successful baseball program at Shaler Area. His overall record of 519-189 includes nine section championships and three WPIAL championships. Shaler Area won the 1980 PIAA State Championship and finished as the state runner-up in 1999.

Jerry has been inducted into the Western Pennsylvania and Pitt Sports Halls of Fame. He has been the recipient of two Commonwealth of Pennsylvania House of Representatives Citations for Baseball Coaching Excellence and has been recognized in the Pennsylvania High School Sports Record Book of Excellence in Coaching. Jerry has had 25 former players sign professional contracts, and 80 percent of his graduating seniors have played college baseball.

The new Shaler Area High School baseball field has been named "Matulevic Field" in honor of his many coaching accomplishments. The Jerry Matulevic Championship Baseball Camp has instructed over 7,000 young ball players over the last 20 years.

JULIE DEER KEENAN

Shaler Area
Class of 1992



Julie excelled on the Shaler Area girls' basketball, track, and soccer teams. She was a two-year starter on the 1991 and 1992 Section champion girls' basketball teams. In track, she was a WPIAL Finalist in the 800, 1600, and 3200 meter relays and was a Baldwin Invitational Medalist.

Julie was a starter on the 1989, 1990, and 1991 soccer teams where she was voted best offensive player and named to the WPIAL All-Section team all three years. From 1989-1991, Julie played for the Coaches All Star Olympic Development Team and won bronze, silver, and gold medals in the Keystone Games where she scored the winning goal in a playoff game resulting in her team making it to the finals.

Julie attended college at St. Francis of Loretto where she lettered in soccer all four years and was team captain for three years. At graduation, Julie was the fifth all team leading scorer in St. Francis history, and she was selected as a GTE Academic All American and named to the NEC Academic Athletic Team. Julie is currently a CPA for Malin Landis.

- Shaler Area Soccer 4 year letter winner
- Shaler Area Basketball 3 year letter winner
- Shaler Area Track 2 year letter winner

KEN NELLIS

**Shaler Area
Class of 1981**



A premier wrestler, coach, and person, Ken has earned the distinction of being one of the most dominating wrestlers in Shaler Area history. He posted a career high school record of 124-3, winning four Section 7 championships, three WPIAL Championships, and two PIAA Championships.

Ken's success on the mat continued in his college career at Clarion University where he amassed a record of 113-28-5 and was a four-time NCAA Division I National Qualifier and three-time PSAC Champion. As co-captain of Clarion's 1986 squad, Ken led the Eagles to a 17-0-1 dual meet record, earning them a #3 ranking in the NCAA Division I poll.

Ken returned to his alma mater in 1990 as an assistant coach and was named Clarion's head coach in 1997.

Ken's other honors include being inducted into the Pennsylvania Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame in 2000. In 2001, he was inducted into the Western Pennsylvania Wrestling Classic Hall of Fame.

Ken and his wife Cindy, daughter Brianna, and sons Luke and Seth currently live in Clarion where he is preparing to begin his sixth season as head wrestling coach.

LEO "DUCKY" ELTER

Shaler

Class of 1947



Leo was a basketball and All-Conference football and baseball player at Shaler High School. Leo most distinguished himself as a running back on the football team where his backfield prowess earned him a Big 33 nomination.

Leo continued his football career in college at Duquesne University and Villanova University. He then enlisted in the Marine Corps where he continued playing football and was named All Star and was voted the Most Valuable Player in 1952.

Leo played seven seasons in the National Football League for the Pittsburgh Steelers and Washington Redskins. He was the Redskins' leading ground gainer in 1956 and was selected for the Pro Bowl where he played under the legendary Vince Lombardi.

Leo was inducted into the Duquesne University Sports Hall of Fame in 1984, the Western Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame in 1994, and has been honored by Shaler Township because of his personal accomplishments and contributions to the community.

For many years, Leo coached Little League baseball. In 1995, the Shaler Area School District awarded him the Athletic Achievement Award.

MARY BUKOVAC

Shaler Area
Class of 1985



Mary starred on the 1982-85 Shaler Area All-Section champion girls' basketball teams and was named to the WPIAL All-Section teams three years. She was an All-State Honorable Mention in 1984-1985. Mary is first in Shaler Area history in career rebounding and third in career scoring.

Mary also distinguished herself on the court at Kent State where in 1988 and 1989 she was captain and was named All-MAC First Team and MAC Player of the Week, and in 1989 was named Mid Atlantic Conference Player of the Year. She is first in Kent State history in career-blocked shots, second in career rebounding, and seventh in career scoring. In 2001, Mary was inducted into the Kent State Hall of Fame.

After college, Mary played professionally for Clube Independente de Basquetbol Feminino in Porto, Portugal. As the first American to play for this team, she led the team in rebounding and was second in scoring.

Mary is currently a sixth grade teacher and an assistant varsity girls' basketball coach.

MIKE McDERMOTT

Shaler Area
Teacher/Coach



Mike has influenced countless lives as a Shaler Area teacher and as a swimming coach. Mike served the varsity swim team as assistant boys' coach from 1971-1976, head boys' coach from 1976-1990, and head girls' coach from 1976-77 and 1982-1990.

Mike built his swimming program into one of the elite in the state. His teams won Section championships in 1977, 1979, and 1983, won WPIAL Championships in 1976 and 1977, and were WPIAL Runners-up in 1978 and 1979. The 1977 and 1979 teams were crowned Pennsylvania State Champions. Mike received a nomination as a National High School Coach of the Year in 1979.

Mike coached two individual state champions, five individual state runners-up, and seven high school All Americans or Honorable Mention All Americans. His swimmers still hold 19 of the 24 Shaler Area swimming records.

Mike currently teaches social studies at the Shaler Area Intermediate School.

ROBERT J. KOPNISKY

Shaler

Class of 1961



Robert's sensational high school wrestling career (58-4) concluded in 1961 when he was crowned the 154-pound PA State Wrestling Champion.

At the University of Maryland he wrestled his way to a 46-6 record.

He was a three-time ACC champion and earned the Outstanding Wrestling Award as well as the university's award for Outstanding Achievement in Athletics. In 1964, Robert was named an NCAA All-American, and in 1965, he was the NCAA National Champion at 157 pounds.

Robert served as assistant wrestling coach at the U.S. Naval Academy (1967-1973) with a 67-12-3 record and a World Champion and an Olympic Silver Medalist. From 1973 to 1986, Robert worked as the head wrestling coach at the University of Missouri and compiled a 124-74-4 record, finishing in the top 20 in the nation 7 times and the top 10 twice. He served as the chairman of the NCAA Wrestling Committee from 1983-1986.

Other honors include being a PA Wrestling Hall of Fame Inductee in 1984, the USA Wrestling Development Coach of the Year in 1986, an inductee of the University of Maryland Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997, a University of Missouri Hall of Fame Inductee in 2001, and an inductee in the Southwestern PA Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2001.