

# Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance

## 65<sup>th</sup> Gold Key Dinner

Ron  
Francis

Charles  
Smith

Dave  
Strong

Judy  
Deeb

April 23, 2006 • Aqua Turf Club, Southington



## TONIGHT'S LINEUP

**INVOCATION:** Rev. Daniel Sullivan, St. Margaret Mary Church, South Windsor

**NATIONAL ANTHEM:** Father Gregory Galvin, Xavier.

**WELCOME:** CWSA President Sean Barker.

**SPECIAL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RECOGNITION AWARDS:** Honoring Yale lightweight crew; UConn women's polo; Trinity men's squash, Yale women's squash, presented by Brian Girasoli.

**MICHAELS CUP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:** Presented by Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers.

**BILL LEE MALE ATHLETES OF THE YEAR:** James Blake, Fairfield, 2005 Pilot Pen Tennis champion; Dwight Freeney, Bloomfield, Indianapolis Colts defensive end, presented by John Silver.

**HANK O'DONNELL FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR:** Tiffany Weimer, North Haven, Penn State soccer.

**JOHN WENTWORTH GOOD SPORT AWARD:** Tom Chiappetta, Norwalk; Robert Johnson, Hamden; Francis Mullins, Bristol; Dave Nowakowski, Jewett City; Larry Pelletier, Meriden; Ed Wilcox, Middletown, presented by Matt Buckler.

**BO KOLINSKY SCHOLARSHIP:** Matthew Ehalt, Shelton, presented by Jill Kolinsky.

**DOC McINERNEY FEMALE SPORT COACH OF THE YEAR:** Dick Hawks, Greenwich High girls swimming, presented by Bob Ehalt.

**DOC McINERNEY MALE SPORT COACH OF THE YEAR:** Steve Filippone, Hand High football, presented by Hal Levy.

**BOB CASEY COURAGE AWARD:** Pam Malcolm, presented by Brian Girasoli.

**ART McGINLEY AWARD:** Randy Smith, Manchester Journal Inquirer, presented by Mike DiMauro

**GOLD KEY:** Charles Smith, presented by Sean Barker.

**GOLD KEY:** Judy Deeb, presented by Vickie Fulkerson.

**GOLD KEY:** Ron Francis, presented by Jeff Jacobs.

**GOLD KEY:** Dave Strong, presented by Sean Barker.

**BENEDICTION:** Father Gregory Galvin, Xavier.



John Steady

2005 Bill Lee Award winner Dan Orlovsky with CSWA president Sean Barker.

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

On behalf of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance I would like to welcome you to the 65th Gold Key Dinner.

Since 1940, the Alliance has presented 205 Gold Keys to the very best administrators, athletes and coaches at the amateur, high school, college and professional ranks.

Tonight, four more distinguished honorees enter what we like to think of as Connecticut's Sports Hall of Fame.

Halls of Fame are nothing new to Judy Deeb, who is in her 35th season of coaching softball at East Lyme High School, and belongs to four.



Sean Barker

Ron Francis remains the face of the Hartford Whalers, 15 years after he was traded to the Pittsburgh Penguins and nine years since the franchise left the state.

Charles Smith has proven to be a winner throughout his life, from Harding High School in Bridgeport, to the University of Pittsburgh, to the NBA and now in the business world.

Dave Strong has a state record slate of 637-110 since 1976 as high school girls basketball coach at Masuk of Monroe. Masuk is the only school to reach the state tournament in each of its 30 years of existence.

The Gold Key is one of the state's oldest sports banquets, and without question, its most unique.

There are no boundaries to the Gold Key Dinner. It is not restricted to one town or geographical region, to one sport or even one level of competition.

We honor your neighbors and your heroes, and often they are one and the same.

We hope you enjoy the evening.



John Steady

Last year's John Wentworth Good Sport Award winners, from left, are George Burr, Christopher Everone, Mike McLaughlin, Jody Sheeley and Bob Watson.

## PAST PRESIDENTS

1940: Jack O'Brien, Bridgeport Times-Star  
1941: William Harding, Journal Courier, New Haven  
1942: Bill Lee, Hartford Courant  
1943-44: Alliance inactive due to World War II  
1945: William O'Donnell, Waterbury Republican  
1946: Robert Wilson, Bridgeport Herald  
1947: Sam Cohen, Meriden Journal  
1948: John Kelly, Waterbury American  
1949: Louis Black, Associated Press  
1950: Robert Zaiman, Hartford Courant  
1951: John Leary, New Haven Register  
1952: Fred Post, Middletown Press  
1953: Francis McInerney, Waterbury American  
1954: William Butler, Waterbury American  
1955: Arthur B. McGinley, Hartford Times  
1956-57: Gerald Crean, New Britain Herald  
1958: William Newell, Hartford Courant  
1959: Earl Yost, Manchester Herald  
1960: William Cruickshank, Norwich Bulletin  
1961: Howard Holcomb, Torrington Register  
1962: Pat Bolduc, Hartford Courant  
1963-64: Don Clerkin, Hartford Times  
1965: Frank Birmingham, Sportsweek  
1966-67: Bill Guthrie, New Haven Journal-Courier  
1968: Milt Northrop, Waterbury Republican

1968: Gordon Smith, Hartford Courant  
1969: Don Harrison, Waterbury Republican  
1970-71: Ray Andresen, New Haven Register  
1972: Frank Cline, Hartford Times  
1973: Brian Willette, Groton News  
1974: Tom Hine, Hartford Courant  
1975: Pat Drewry, Waterbury Republican  
1976: Randy Smith, Manchester Journal Inquirer  
1977: John Bozadjian, Willimantic Chronicle  
1978: George Smith, Hartford Courant  
1979-80: Bohdan Kolinsky, Hartford Courant  
1981: Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald  
1982-83: Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers  
1984-85: Jerry DiPietro, New Haven Register  
1986: Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers  
1987: Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald  
1988-89: Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer  
1990-91: Lou Brodersen, The (Norwalk) Hour  
1992-93: Scott Gray, WTIC Radio  
1994-95: Ted Moynihan, Meriden Record-Journal  
1996: Lou Pintek, Connecticut Post  
1997-99: Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer  
2000-03: Ken Lipshez, The Herald (New Britain)  
2004-06: Sean Barker, New Haven Register

# Smith entertaining fans for 35 years

By Mike DiMauro

Day of New London

Randy Smith, who tells stories almost as well as he's written them for 35 years, was listening to a tale once from UConn women's basketball coach Geno Auriemma.

Smith, one of the coach's favorite verbal sparring partners, couldn't resist cutting off Auriemma in mid-sentence like a New York City cabbie. "Your looks," Smith told the coach, "are so overrated."

"I wish I had a mirror for YOU to look into right now," the coach shot back ... and laughs were heard all around.

And that's Smith: always in the middle of the entertainment, with quick wit, an outspoken demeanor and insight many of his colleagues can only wish they had.

Smith, the sports editor of the Journal Inquirer of Manchester for the past 35 years, is this year's recipient of the Art McGinley Meritorious Service Award by the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance. The award, named after the long-time sports editor of the Hartford Times, is presented annually to an Alliance member for service to the organization and service to the community.



Randy Smith

Smith began work at the JI as a one-man sports staff in 1971. Since, he has seen and experienced more Connecticut sports on local, regional and national levels than virtually any of his colleagues.

There are many "R. Smith Stories" many in the state sports media tell and retell fondly, but two qualify as the greatest hits:

Smith wrote a prediction column about the 1987 Kentucky Derby and nailed the trifecta in print. It was the year upstart Alysheba came from 14th place to edge Bet Twice at the finish.

At the end of the race, when bettors were digesting the surprise outcome at Teletack in New Haven, someone picked up Smith's column from the Journal Inquirer, raised it high and said to anyone and everyone, "Look, it was all right here in the paper!"

To this day, Smith is fond of saying that "here comes Alysheba" are his three favorite words in the English language.

There's also the day Smith informed Whalers coach Jack Evans that his team had made a deal right before the trade deadline.

Smith: "Jack, what do you think of Charlie Bourgeois?"

Evans: "Charlie Bourgeois? He stinks."

Smith: "Well, you just traded for him."

Evans: "Whaaaaat?"

Smith is fond of how sports used to be played, more than how they're played today. Ask him how many minutes Wilt Chamberlain played and he'll reply, "All of them. Why would you ever take him out?"

Ask him his favorite World Series statistic and he'll reply, "27, 27, 27." Further inquiry would prompt Smith to tell you that "27, 27, 27" are the number of innings Bob Gibson pitched in the three times he played in the World Series. In other words, Gibson pitched three complete games in three different seasons. His all-time favorite baseball player, however, is undoubtedly Mickey Mantle, about whom Smith has narrated over the years.

Smith is a fixture at UConn sporting events, frequently asking entertaining questions of Auriemma, Randy Edsall and Jim Calhoun. His columns are often controversial and fodder for much discussion, not to mention award-winning. He's been honored seven times as the Connecticut Sportswriter of the Year by the National Association of Sportswriters and Broadcasters.

Smith is a graduate of Manchester High and Clark University in Worcester.

## Shelton High's Ehalt scholarship winner

Matthew Ehalt, a senior at Shelton High School, is the 2006 winner of the Bohdan "Bo" Kolinsky Memorial Scholarship given by the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance.

He was chosen in a statewide competition among high school and prep school journalists seeking careers as sports writers.

The scholarship provides \$1,000 toward the cost of the student's freshman year in college and is renewable annually.

The award honors the memory of Bohdan Kolinsky, longtime scholastic sports editor of the Hartford Courant who served as president and treasurer of the Alliance. He died in December 2003 at 49.

Ehalt plans to enroll in Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications in the fall.

A high-honor student with a 3.99 grade-point average, he is sports editor of the Shelton High newspaper, Gael Winds. He is also a varsity wrestler who compiled a 34-10 record this past winter and finished fourth in the 140-pound class at the state Class LL meet. He tied his school's season record for victories and was Shelton's first wrestler to win a match in the State Open tournament.

He made the Southern Connecticut Conference all-academic team twice and also made the Class LL all-academic team this year.

He is a member of the National Honor Society and Italian National Honor Society and represented Shelton at the annual Boys' State program.

He is the son of Carylanne Rice-Ehalt



Matthew Ehalt

### ART MCGINLEY AWARD

**1976:** Bill Lee, Hartford Courant  
**1977:** Willard Williams, The (Norwalk) Hour  
**1978:** Lou Black, Associated Press  
**1979:** Hank O'Donnell, Waterbury newspapers  
**1980:** Sam Cohen, Bridgeport Herald  
**1981:** Bill Ahern, Jackson Newspapers  
**1982:** Joe Cassano, Hartford Times  
**1983:** Charles Kellogg, New Haven Register  
**1984:** John DeGange, New London Day  
**1985:** Earl Yost, Manchester Herald  
**1986:** Fred J. Post, Middletown Press  
**1987:** Frank Corkin, Meriden Record-Journal  
**1988:** Don Clerkin, Hartford Times

**1989:** John Kershaw, Hartford Courant  
**1990:** Bohdan Kolinsky, Hartford Courant  
**1991:** Jack Cruise, The (New London) Day  
**1992:** Lou Brodersen, The (Norwalk) Hour  
**1993:** Fred Vercini, Bridgeport Post-Telegram  
**1994:** Howard Holcomb, Hartford Courant  
**1995:** Pat Drewry, Waterbury newspapers  
**1996:** Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald  
**1997:** Tom McCormack, New Haven Register  
**1998:** Owen Canfield, Hartford Courant  
**1999:** Mike Caruso, Hartford Courant/  
Hartford Times  
**2000:** Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers

**2001:** Pete Zanardi, Hartford Times/New Haven Register/Shore Line Newspapers  
**2002:** Bob Barton, New Haven Register  
**2003:** Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer  
**2004:** Tom Hine, Hartford Courant  
**2005:** Bruce Berlet, Hartford Courant  
**2006:** Randy Smith, Manchester Journal Inquirer

*Arthur B. McGinley was a long-time sports editor and columnist of The Hartford Times; and also a popular toastmaster in Connecticut. The McGinley award is given to a current or former Alliance member for meritorious service.*

# Journal Inquirer

Your home for area, state and national sports

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# Blake enjoyed career year in 2005

By John Silver

Journal Inquirer

The James Blake that showed up at the Connecticut Tennis Center last August for the Pilot Pen Tennis Tournament was a changed man.

## MALE ATHLETE AWARDS

Blake was different.

The long dreadlocks that once famously graced the cover of GQ magazine were gone. In their place was a clean-shaven Blake who didn't look anything like the player who was once tabbed as a possible heir to the great Pete Sampras' throne as top American player.

Yes, it was a new look for Blake and with that look, a rebirth of a career.

The hair was cosmetic, but it symbolized a change in course of a tumultuous 2004 season.

Blake's career went into a tailspin in May 2004 when he suffered a neck injury during practice that kept him out for two months. Later that summer, Blake fell ill with Zoster, a form of the shingles that left his face partially paralyzed along with some hearing and vision loss.

Blake saw his top 30 ranking fall into the 200s and as he began 2005 he was out of sight and out of mind.

Blake shaved off his trademark dreadlocks and with it all the unfulfilled prom-

ise, pressure and disappointment that had yielded only one ATP title, 2002 in Washington.

Blake went back on the ATP Tour's Challenger Series, its minor league, and began to work on his game.

By the time the hardcourt season came Blake began to show flashes of his old self.

The big-time serve topping 130 mph was back and the ground strokes were quick and powerful.

He lost in a final to Andy Roddick in Washington D.C. and played Roger Federer tough at Indianapolis in mid-August, losing in a semifinal. But Blake needed to come back home to jumpstart his career.

In the first men's tennis tournament in almost a decade in New Haven, the 1996 Fairfield High graduate lit the Pilot Pen on fire.

Blake, carried by the raucous cheering from his fans in the "J-Block," took his wildcard entry all the way to the championship, defeating Spain's Feliciano Lopez in three sets.

It was Blake's first ATP title in three years, and it came less than 20 minutes away from family and friends, making it even more special.

"This is a dream come true," Blake said after the match. "For a while, you never know if you're going to be at the level before you got sick. My career won't last

forever. A moment like this is not guaranteed. I'm going to appreciate this."

Blake was confident and playing the best tennis of his career. He continued his run at the U.S. Open the following weeks and reached the quarterfinals of the Grand Slam, defeating No. 2-ranked Rafael Nadal along the way.

The run ended in dramatic fashion when Blake faced off with his idol Andre Agassi in the quarterfinals. In perhaps the most memorable match of 2005, Blake and Agassi played a five-set, five-hour marathon, with Agassi winning in a tiebreaker in the fifth set.

If that had been the end for Blake, it still would have been an incredible story. But it was just the beginning.

Blake's run at the U.S. Open only bolstered his confidence. Blake was named to the U.S. Davis Cup team and captured his second ATP title of the year, winning in Stockholm, Sweden.

Blake saw his ranking plummet to below 200 in the spring, but by the end of 2005 he was once again in the top 25.

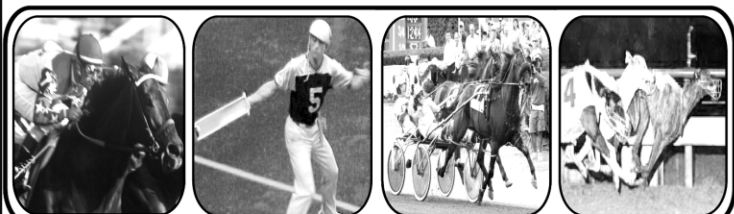
So far this year, Blake hasn't missed a beat. He has won two ATP titles already this season in Las Vegas and Sydney and was a finalist at Indian Wells. Blake's ranking has skyrocketed up to No. 7 in the world.

It was a difficult ascension for Blake, but now that he's on top he shows no signs of slowing down.



James Blake captured the Pilot Pen tournament in New Haven in 2005.

## Congratulations Gold Key Winners & Award Honorees



Autotote Enterprises, owner and operator of the Connecticut Off-Track Betting System, wishes all the best to this distinguished group of winners



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Bloomfield native Dwight Freeney is one of the best defensive ends in the NFL.

## Freeney's sack attacks part of NFL lore

By John Silver

Journal Inquirer

It doesn't matter what level Bloomfield native Dwight Freeney is playing at — the quarterback had better beware.

At Bloomfield High as the linchpin to Jack Cochran's championship teams in the 1990s, Freeney made life miserable for opposing offenses.

He took his act to Syracuse, where not much changed. Freeney went on to become one of the most celebrated sack masters in college football history, leading the nation in his senior year.

If anyone thought Freeney was going to have trouble adjusting to the NFL, they haven't watched him carefully.

A first-round pick of the Indianapolis Colts in 2001, Freeney has reached double digits in sacks in each of his four seasons. Freeney has earned three Pro Bowl berths and has been named first-team Associated Press All-Pro the past two seasons.

Freeney is the Colts' career leader in sacks with 51. Freeney moved into the NFL's elite in 2004 with 16 sacks, and followed that with 11 sacks in 2005.

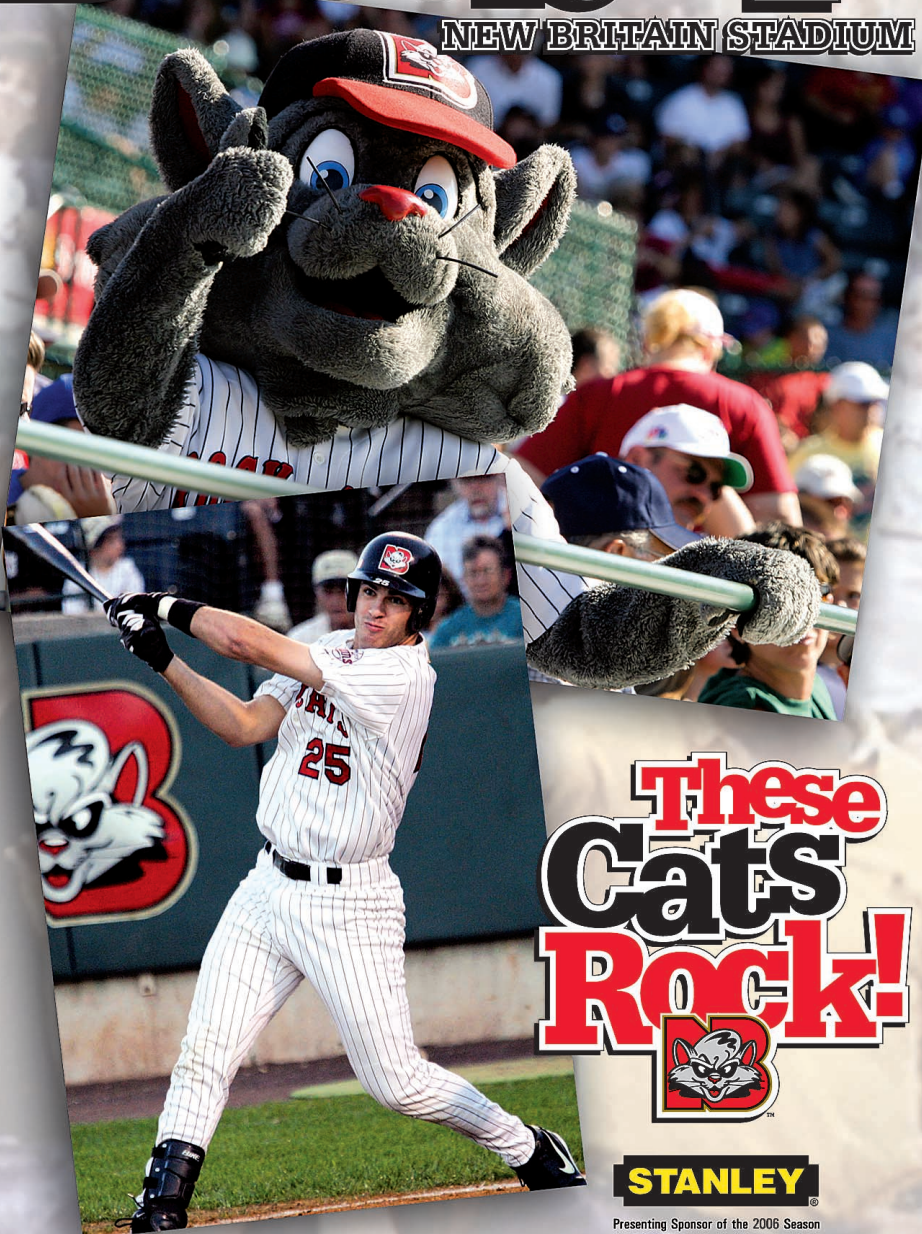
His 51 career sacks are the third-most all-time by a player in his first four years, trailing only Reggie White's 70 and Derek Thomas' 58.

Freeney is already among the top players in the NFL and if his first four years are any indication, it is only going to get



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APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6 NH 10:35	7 NH 6:05	8 NH 1:35
9 NH 1:35	10 PO 6:35	11 PO 6:35	12 PO 10:35	13 NH 6:35	14 NH 6:35	15 NH 1:05**
16 OFF	17 PO 4:00	18 PO 6:00	19 PO 12:00	20 RE 6:35	21 RE 6:35	22 RE 5:35
23 RE 1:35	24 TR 6:35	25 TR 6:35	26 TR 10:35	27 OFF	28 TR 7:05	29 TR 1:35
30 TR 1:35						
MAY						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 HA 6:35	2 HA 6:35	3 HA 6:35	4 HA 10:35	5 PO 6:35	6 PO 6:35
7 PO 1:35	8 BO 7:05	9 BO 7:05	10 BO 11:05	11 DF 6:35	12 DF 6:35	13 DF 2:05
14 DF 2:05	15 OFF	16 NH 6:35	17 NH 6:35	18 NH 11:05	19 DF 6:35	20 DF 6:35
21 DF 1:35	22 TR 6:35	23 TR 6:35	24 TR 6:35	25 TR 10:35	26 PO 7:00	27 PO 1:00
28 PO 1:00	29 PO 1:00	30 HA 6:35	31 HA 10:35			
JUNE						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 HA 6:35	2 BO 6:35	3 BO 6:35
4 BO 1:35	5 OFF	6 AK 7:05	7 AK 7:05	8 AK 7:05	9 HA 6:35	10 HA 6:35
11 HA 1:05	12 OFF	13 BI 7:00	14 BI 7:00	15 BI 7:00	16 AK 6:35	17 AK 6:35
18 AK 1:35	19 OFF	20 BO 7:05	21 BO 7:05	22 BO 7:05	23 BO 7:05	24 RE 7:05
25 RE 1:05	26 RE 7:05	27 PO 6:35	28 PO 6:35	29 PO 11:35	30 DF 6:35	
JULY						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 DF 7:05
2 DF 1:35	3 DF 7:05	4 NH 6:35	5 NH 11:05	6 NH 6:35	7 DF 7:05	8 DF 7:05
9 DF 2:05	10 DF 7:05	11 ALL-STAR BREAK	12 ALL-STAR BREAK	13 NH 7:05	14 NH 7:05	15 NH 7:05
16 NH 1:35	17 RE 7:05	18 RE 7:05	19 RE 7:05	20 ER 7:05	21 ER 7:05	22 ER 7:05
23 ER 1:05	24 TR 7:05	25 TR 7:05	26 TR 11:35	27 NH 6:35	28 NH 6:35	29 NH 5:05
30 NH 1:05	31 OFF					
AUGUST						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 BI 7:05	2 BI 7:05	3 BI 11:35	4 AL 7:05	5 AL 7:05
6 AL 6:05	7 OFF	8 ER 7:05	9 ER 7:05	10 ER 7:05	11 AL 7:05	12 AL 7:05
13 AL 1:35	14 OFF	15 ER 7:05	16 ER 7:05	17 ER 7:05	18 RE 7:05	19 RE 7:05
20 RE 1:05	21 DF 7:05	22 DF 7:05	23 DF 7:05	24 PO 7:05	25 PO 7:05	26 PO 7:05
27 PO 1:35	28 RE 7:05	29 RE 7:05	30 RE 7:05	31 RE 7:05		
SEPTEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 HA 7:05	2 HA 7:05
3 HA 1:35	4 HA 1:35	5 OFF	E.L. PLAYOFFS			

## NORTHERN DIVISION

BI BINGHAMTON METS (METS)  
 DF DEFENDERS (GIANTS)  
 NH NEW BRITAIN ROCK CATS (TWINS)  
 NH NEW HAMPSHIRE (BLUE JAYS)  
 PO PORTLAND SEA DOGS (RED SOX)  
 TR TRENTON THUNDER (YANKES)

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 AL ALTOONA CURVE PIRATES  
 BO BOWLING GREEN (GIANTS)  
 ER ERIE SEAWOLVES (TIGERS)  
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# Hawks' program riding tidal wave of success

By Bob Ehalt

Stamford Advocate

Dominance is a term that gets used far too often in sports. A team may have two successful seasons and suddenly there's a rush to ordain it as "dominant."

## FEMALE SPORT COACH OF YEAR

Yet if there's a program in the state of Connecticut that is truly befitting of that glorious term, it is coach Dick Hawks' Greenwich High School girls swimming team.

Under Hawks' direction, the Cardinals have become one of the premier athletic programs of any kind in the state.

This past fall, the Cardinals swept to Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference (FCIAC), Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) Class LL and CIAC State Open championships to prove their, yes, dominance in the state.

Delving into this year's championships reveals numbers that explain why Hawks was selected by the Connecticut Sports Writers Alliance to be honored at the Group's Gold Key Dinner as this year's recipient of the Doc McInerney High School Coach of the Year for girls sports.

For the Cardinals, the 2005 season featured their 15th FCIAC title in Hawks' 17 years at Greenwich and eighth in a row. They ran their dual meet record under Hawks to 180-4 and remained unbeaten since 1997. It was a year that also included

their eighth Class LL state crown and fifth State Open championship.

In the process of edging Cheshire, 847-804, to win the Class LL state title, the Cardinals snapped the Rams' streak of capturing 23 straight state crowns while avenging runner-up finishes to Cheshire in both the 2003 and 2004 Class LL and State Open meets.

Call it whatever you'd like. But don't be afraid to label the Cardinals as a dominant program in the state.

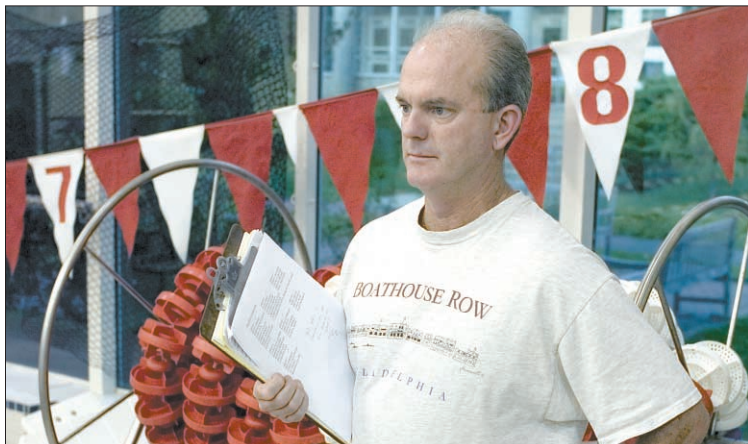
While Hawks is one of the most knowledgeable swim coaches in the state, a large part of his success stems from methods that are not often seen in scholastic programs.

This past fall, for example, Hawks' team spent a preseason weekend at The Austine School in Brattleboro, Vt., for the 10th straight year. There the Cardinals bonded as a team through a regimen of military-style conditioning programs and strategic activities.

"The trip is a very important part of our season," Hawks told the Greenwich Time. "It's good for the team to spend a few days out of the water and bond. Everyone supports and helps each other while we're there and when we come back we're ready to rock and roll."

"The girls stayed in cabins with each other," he added. "It was interesting to see a group of girls who really didn't know each other that well come together."

This year, in particular, the Cardinals needed every possible edge to add more hardware to their already jammed trophy case.



Dick Hawks has led the Greenwich girls team to swimming dominance.

For Hawks, the challenge inherent in winning the 2005 state and Open crowns, knowing that his team had to beat a stellar Cheshire squad, made his squad's most recent accomplishments among the most enjoyable of his richly successful tenure at Greenwich High School.

"In the beginning of the year, we knew the challenge for us would be to overtake Cheshire," Hawks said to the Greenwich Time. "They won two Opens in a row and they had a veteran team with plenty of swimmers that competed at the state level, so we knew it would be tough."

"It was the best LL meet I've ever been involved in. I was't really sure if we were going to win the meet, because Cheshire had that 23-year streak going. But our team shocked me with every event. We had best times in 41 out of 43 swims that night."

Maybe Hawks was shocked, but anyone who has kept tabs on the Cardinals' fortunes under the veteran coach would have known better. A dominant performance from Hawks' team has become as commonplace as visiting Vermont — be it for recreation or team unity — and seeing the leaves changing color in the fall.

Greenwich Time  
salutes  
Greenwich High School Coach  
Dick Hawks  
and all  
Gold Key Awards Honorees

Greenwich Time

www.greenwichtime.com | www.FCIAC.net

# Many repeat performances for Michaels Cup winners

By Hal Levy

Shore Line Newspapers

Some familiar names return to the top of the leaderboard for the annual Michaels Achievement Cup awards.

The awards, named for the sponsoring Michaels Jewelers and the late Roy Michaels, the Cup founder, are presented annually to state high schools that show overall excellence in athletic programs.

Criteria include not only wins and losses but student participation and school commitment to programs including scholastics, sportsmanship, drug and chemical awareness, athletic training and non-CIAC programs as well as Unified Sports programs. The Cup is administered by a group including chairman John Michaels and representatives from the Connecticut High School

Coaches Association, Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors, the CIAC and the Connecticut Sports Writers Alliance.

Schools are grouped by size in six divisions and there are special divisions for regional vocational-technical schools and city schools.

This year's winners are as follows:

Class LL: Trumbull, William Hall-West Hartford and Fitch-Groton.

Class L: Farmington, Staples-Westport and Amity Regional-Woodbridge.

Class MM: Hand-Madison, Darien and Branford.

Class M: Weston, Northwestern Regional-Winsted and Avon.

Class SS: Mercy-Middletown, Northwest Catholic-West Hartford and Haddam-Killingworth.

Class S: Shepaug Valley-Washington,

Portland and Litchfield.

The top three city schools were Hamden, New London and Crosby-Waterbury.

The top tech schools were A.I. Prince-

Hartford, Windham Tech and Kaynor Tech-Waterbury.

The overall winner will be announced tonight.

## MICHAELS CUP WINNERS

**1985:** Class L, Holy Cross; Class M, Avon; Class S, Granby Memorial; overall, Avon.

**1986:** Class L, tie, Conard and William Hall; Class M, Ledyard; Class S, Haddam-Killingworth; overall, Ledyard.

**1987:** Class L, Wilton; Class M, Avon; Class S, Gilbert; overall, Avon.

**1988:** Class L, Staples; Class M, Wilton; Class S, Shepaug Valley; overall, Wilton.

**1989:** Class L, Staples; Class M, Avon; Class S, Housatonic Valley Regional; overall, Housatonic Valley Regional.

**1990:** Class LL, Staples; Class L, Amity Regional; Class MM, Wilton; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Housatonic Valley Regional; Class S, Shepaug Valley; overall, Avon.

**1991:** Class LL, Newington; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Darien; Class M, Farmington; Class SS, Avon; Class S, Shepaug Valley; overall, Shepaug Valley.

**1992:** Class LL, Manchester; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Hand; Class M, tie, Tolland and Avon; Class SS, Haddam-Killingworth; Class S, Lyman Memorial; overall, Staples.

**1993:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Hand; Class M, Notre Dame (West Haven); Class SS, tie, Housatonic Valley Regional and Northwestern Regional; Class S, Shepaug Valley; overall, Simsbury.

**1994:** Class LL, Cheshire; Class L, Guilford; Class MM, Hand; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Housatonic Valley Regional; Class S, Canton; overall, Cheshire.

**1995:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Conard; Class MM, Staples; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Haddam-Killingworth; Class S, Weston; overall, Simsbury.

**1996:** Class LL, South Windsor; Class L, Simsbury; Class MM, Avon; Class M, Hand; Class SS, Weston; Class S, Gilbert; overall, Simsbury.

**1997:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Hand; Class M, tie, Barlow and Tolland; Class SS, Haddam-Killingworth; Class S, Litchfield; overall, Simsbury.

**1998:** Class LL, Trumbull; Class L, Farmington; Class MM, Hand; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Haddam-Killingworth; Class S, Litchfield; overall, Trumbull.

**1999:** Class LL, Trumbull; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Hand; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Weston; Class S, Litchfield; tech schools, A.I. Prince; city schools, New Britain; overall, Trumbull.

**2000:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Darien; Class M, Notre Dame (West Haven); Class SS, Weston; Class S, Shepaug Valley; tech schools, Wright Tech; city schools, New Britain; overall, Shepaug Valley.

**2001:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Xavier; Class M, Avon; Class SS, Weston; Class S, Shepaug Valley; tech schools, Kaynor Tech; city schools, New Britain; overall, Simsbury.

**2002:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Darien; Class M, Notre Dame (West Haven); Class SS, Weston; Class S, Shepaug Valley; tech schools, A.I. Prince; city schools, New Britain; overall, Shepaug Valley.

**2003:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Holy Cross; Class M, Hand; Class SS, Weston; Class S, Shepaug Valley; tech schools, Prince Tech. Overall, Simsbury.

**2004:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Staples; Class MM, Daniel Hand-Madison; Class M, Notre Dame-West Haven; Class SS, Weston; Class S, Shepaug Valley, Washington. overall, Simsbury.

**2005:** Class LL, Simsbury; Class L, Amity Regional-Woodbridge; Class MM, Darien; Class M, Holy Cross; Class SS, Haddam-Killingworth; Class S, Shepaug Valley, Technical school, Kaynor Tech; Urban School, New Britain; Overall: TBA

## Special thanks

■ To Andy Yelenak, who for the 23rd consecutive year, has designed the cover of the Gold Key Dinner program. His work has drawn rave reviews and this year is no exception as evidenced by his portraits of Gold Key recipients Bill Mignault, Jake Salafia and Bruce Webster.

Yelenak, 47, is a freelance artist who lives in North Haven with his wife, Merrill. He has designed the official posters of the Boston, New York and Hartford marathons.

For more of his work, you can visit his Web site at [www.runningpast.com](http://www.runningpast.com)

■ To the staff of the Journal Inquirer of Manchester, and graphic designer Jason Zahner, who edited and designed this souvenir program.

■ To photographer John Steady for shooting tonight's dinner.



*Congratulations to the past winners of the Michaels Achievement Cup:*

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1986 Ledyard	1992 Staples	1998 Trumbull	2004 Simsbury
1987 Avon	1993 Simsbury	1999 Trumbull	2005 Shepaug Valley
1988 Wilton	1994 Cheshire	2000 Simsbury	
1989 Housatonic Regional	1995 Simsbury	2001 Simsbury	
1990 Avon	1996 Simsbury	2002 Shepaug Valley	

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# One key hoop symbolized unforgettable inspiration

By Brian Girasoli

Norwich Bulletin

1-1, 0-0, 2.

This is what appeared next to Pam Malcolm's name in the box score of the Bryant University women's basketball game against Merrimack on Feb. 22. It reads she went 1-of-1 from the floor and finished with two points.

## COURAGE AWARD

From the outside, two points may not seem like much. But these are the two most important points of Malcolm's college career — and maybe her life.

Malcolm, of Colchester, has spent almost the last four years recovering from a near-fatal car accident. Despite not playing a minute, Malcolm has instead brought inspiration and pride to the Bryant basketball team and school community by being at every practice and game, cheering on her teammates.

After a ceremony honored the seniors on the team, Malcolm scored the first basket for Bryant on a set play.

"Basketball's been a part of my life since I was like 9. It's kind of like the end of basketball (for me)," she said.

It was the culmination of a college basketball career that began in a wheelchair and ended on the basketball court, in front of thousands of fans, scoring the first basket to help her team.

An exclamation point to Malcolm's career comes tonight when she receives the Bob Casey Courage Award, named after the late Bob Casey, former New Haven Register sports writer and public relations director of the National Hockey League and the Hartford Whalers who died of cancer in 1997.

"Obviously, she's been a huge inspiration to the team because we all knew and thought coming out of high school she would be in a different kind of situation being able to contribute and be a part of the program, as far as being on the court," Bryant women's basketball coach Mary Burke said. "After the accident, and the rehabilitation she had to go through, I think the players really saw her continue to make progress over the years. She never quit, she never felt bad for herself."

### Change in a flash

Malcolm was primed for a successful basketball career in college. She was a force at Bacon Academy, setting the state record for blocks in a career with 563, which ranks third nationally. She was also a two-time All-Area and All-State selection in 2001 and 2002, and ranked in the top 100 prospects nationally by, among others, Street & Smith's basketball magazine.

"Besides having outstanding basketball ability and potential, she was always a positive person," said her high school coach, Dave Shea. "Very friendly, easy to smile."

On the night of April 16, 2002, Malcolm was

in a car driven by a friend and teammate. The car veered off the eastbound lane of Route 16 in Colchester and struck several trees across the roadway and came to rest against a tree.

Malcolm, who was wearing the shoulder strap of her seatbelt but not the lapbelt, was found by EMS personnel partially outside the vehicle with her legs pinned between the dashboard and passenger seat.

She was rushed to the hospital with a spinal cord injury, rendering her paralyzed from the waist down. Her basketball career, at least playing-wise, was over.

The university, however, never wavered in its desire to have Malcolm keep her full scholarship.

"The prognosis from the doctors early on was she would never walk again, so her mom (Joyce) had concerns there for our program, and for Bryant," Burke said. "I just reassured her from the beginning Pam was always going to have a place at Bryant."

For the next year, Malcolm went through intensive rehab to get her to be able to walk. She at first was in a wheelchair, and then was able to gain enough strength and move her feet to pull her wheelchair along.

Malcolm also benefited in her recovery from having a close support group around her, such as Bryant teammate Lauren Glenney, who had been friends with Malcolm since their days playing AAU basketball for the Connecticut Storm.

"She never wanted to really dwell on anything," said Glenney, who also played basket-

ball at NFA. "She'd say, 'So, what have you been doing? Tell me stories.' And we'd tell her stories, and make her laugh."

Today, she is able to use crutches to get around school. Burke feels it's Malcolm's happy-go-lucky and upbeat attitude that has allowed her to get to where she is.

"I think she looked at the situation as, 'I feel bad for myself and get down, I'm never going to make progress,' " Burke said. "I think just the spirit of the person that she is has really allowed her to get through this whole situation."

Athletes at Bryant have also taken to Malcolm. Burke said during a game at St. Anselm in New Hampshire a few years ago, the players picked up Malcolm and brought her down the stairs to the locker room because the arena was not handicap accessible.

Another game at St. Michael's in Vermont had the team stuck in a blizzard. The bus could not make it up a hill to get to the school's cafeteria, so members of the men's basketball team carried Malcolm to the cafeteria.

"She's at everything. I guess a lot of people would say she's our comic relief," Glenney said. "She's definitely the funniest person I know. ... I think as far as basketball, even if it's unsaid or if it is said, she's definitely an inspiration."

Said Malcolm: "It's hard, of course, but I don't really get down about it. I mean, I'm not trying to cover up being sad by being funny. This is how I am."

■ SEE MALCOLM / PAGE 10

# Congratulations

to the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance and their Award Winners

Judy  
Deeb



Dave  
Strong



Dick  
Hawks



Steve  
Filippone



## East Lyme Softball

## Masuk Girls Basketball

## Greenwich Girls Swimming

## Hand Football

Connecticut High School Coaches Association, Inc.



# Ron Francis: The ultimate Hartford Whaler

By Randy Smith

Manchester Journal Inquirer

*Editors note: The following column about Gold Key winner Ron Francis appeared in the Journal Inquirer on Sept. 15 2005, the day after Francis announced his retirement from the National Hockey League.*

"Do you know what you've done?"

The day after the Whalers traded Ronnie Francis, that was my question to GM Eddie Johnston. He looked at me as if I had asked him to list the presidents of the United States in order.

Ronnie was No. 10 in the

program, but No. 1 in the hearts of fans. He was the main reason they rooted for the Whalers. Hartford didn't have much of a reputation in NHL circles during the team's early years, but as long as Ronnie was there, fans could dream. He arrived with a bang, but left with a whimper.

"Kaitlyn, our oldest, was born on Feb. 5," Ronnie said. "She was my parents' first grandchild, so they wanted to drive down to see her. I told them to hold off because I thought I was going to be traded, but they came anyway."

At 9 p.m. on March 3, 1991, a Sunday night, the phone rang. It was Johnston. "We had just finished eating dinner," Francis said. "We were clearing the table. The funny thing is, they were telling me

weeks before they wanted to redo my contract, but I was suspicious. I told them, 'After the trade deadline.' I was on a plane to Pittsburgh the next day at 6 in the morning."

On March 4, 1991, the Whalers announced they had traded Francis, Ulf Samuelsson, and Grant Jennings to Pittsburgh for John Cullen, Zarley Zalapski, and Jeff Parker.

"Three months later, we won the Stanley Cup," Francis said. "And then we won it again the next year."

I always told Ronnie the thing I liked best about him was his father.

"We were at Ronnie's place when he got the phone call from Eddie Johnston," Ron Sr. said from his home in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. "We stayed up pretty much the whole night discussing things. Toward morning, I remember Ronnie saying, 'This could be the best thing for me.' He was right."

In June 1981, the Whalers drafted Francis fourth overall as an 18-year-old centerman from the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds. After 23 incredibly productive NHL seasons that will carry him to the Hall of Fame, Ronnie, at 42, announced his retirement.

"We were sort of expecting it because of the off-year," Ron Sr. said. "That made it pretty hard on the senior players."

Ronnie has just one immediate future plan.

"I'm coaching my son's team," he said, referring to 12-year-old Michael.

Ronnie and his wife Mary Lou have three children. Kaitlyn is 14 and a freshman in



**Gold Key winner Ron Francis with goaltender Richard Brodeur.**

high school. Michael is 12 and Connor turns 9 in November. Two years ago, they built a house in Raleigh.

Francis was just a kid himself when he came into our lives.

"It seems like yesterday," he said.

The draft was held in Montreal in 1981 and the Whalers had big, big plans. After Bobby Carpenter appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated as a Massachusetts schoolboy sensation, head honcho Howard Baldwin decided the Whalers had to get him. So sure was Baldwin that Carpenter

would be available when the fourth overall pick rolled around, he invited the player's father to sit at the Whalers' draft table. Talk about tipping your hand.

But the Washington Capitals made an unexpected trade and selected Carpenter No. 3, behind Dale Hawerchuk and Doug Smith. Baldwin slammed the table, Carpenter's father stormed off, and the Whalers were left with, well, Ronnie Francis.

"When I got to the table, the only guy who was excited was Bill Dineen," Ronnie said. "He showed me his list. 'We had you right behind Hawerchuk,' he said. Larry Pleau told me he had never seen me play, but that Billy says I'm a good player. Can you imagine a GM telling the No. 4 overall pick that he had never seen him play?"

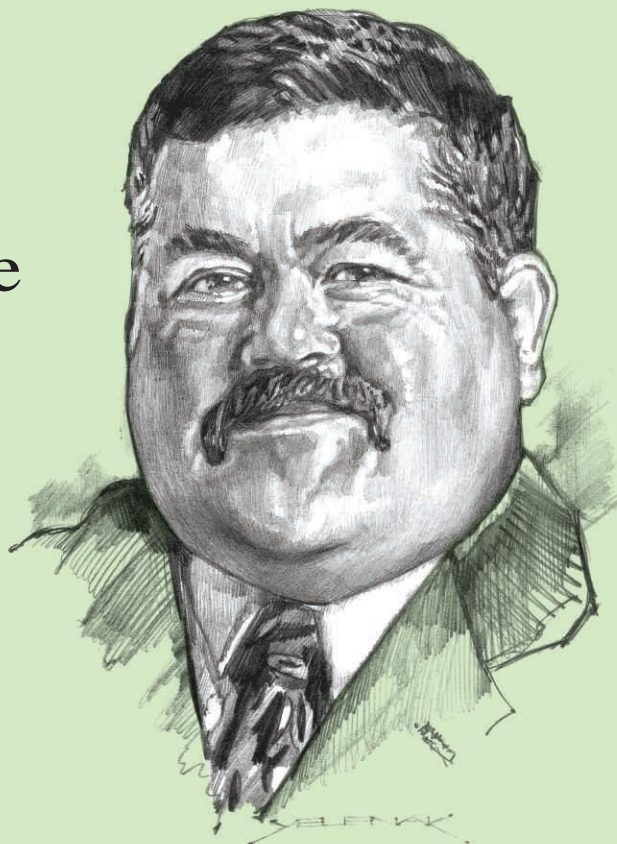
The Whalers always did move in mysterious ways. Former Whalers coach Harry Neale, who was running the Vancouver Canucks at the time, summoned me from the press gallery.

"Listen, you should know this," he said. "My guys tell me that the Whalers just drafted a beauty."

Ronnie Francis turned out to be a beauty. He was The Boy Scout Who Could Play. He didn't smoke or drink and rarely used profanity. He came in a gentleman and walked away a gentleman. In between, he played 1,731 games, third behind Gordie Howe (1,767) and Mark Messier (1,756), accounted for 1,249 assists, second to Wayne Gretzky's 1,963, and 1,798 points, fourth behind Gretzky (2,857), Messier

■ SEE FRANCIS / PAGE 11

The  
Connecticut  
Interscholastic  
Athletic Conference  
congratulates  
tonight's  
award winners  
*And remembers  
a special friend  
of the CIAC*  
Bo Kolinsky





# Deeb looks ahead to more softball success

By Vickie Fulkerson

The Day of New London

She was preparing to coach in her 35th season opener a few weeks ago, 10 games away from coaching in the 700th of her career, and here's what East Lyme High School softball coach Judy Deeb was thinking:

"I got a lot of work ahead of me," she said emphatically.  
No nostalgia.  
No looking back.

## GOLD KEY WINNER

Just looking ahead.  
"It's a challenge for me," Deeb said.  
"How do you develop these kids and get them to come together and be successful? My goal every year is to get them to feel like they've accomplished something.  
"You gotta take your strengths and you've got to build around it. Take the weaknesses and make them better."

And after 35 years, why change things now?

### Won 1994 state title

Deeb, of Niantic, began the 2006 season with a career record of 469-221 (.680), with the Vikings going 17-7 in 2005.

With her, East Lyme has won several Eastern Connecticut Conference championships and the 1994 Class M state championship, which completed a run of 17 straight victories that season.

Deeb is also currently active as a field hockey referee and as an observer of col-

legiate basketball officials at the Division I level, having been involved in both sports for more than 30 years as well, and officiating numerous high school state championship games.

She is a member of the New Agenda Northeast Hall of Fame (1993), the Connecticut High School Coaches' Hall of Fame (1995), and in 2005 was inducted into the state's women's basketball and field hockey halls of fame as a referee.

Among her career highlights, Deeb lists coaching her sister, Karen, and having the ability to fortify her 13-year-old nephew Michael's love of sports.

### Second generation coaches

Also, Deeb has had the opportunity to see several of her players go on to coach, including Waterford High School's Liz Sutman, who is now an ECC rival of Deeb's — if you can call the relationship they have a rivalry.

"There's no doubt in my mind that Judy has had a great impact on my life and in my personal and professional success," Sutman said. "I can't even imagine how many lives she has touched.

"... She always tells me how proud she is of me in victory or defeat. That is her message to all of her players, make her proud by loving and respecting the game and yourself and have fun doing it."

Nearly 700 lineup cards later, Deeb is still enjoying herself.

"Absolutely," she said. "I enjoy the kids. I enjoy the challenge.

"It changes every year. When you have a

young team, you have to spend more time on certain things. You spend a lot of time teaching the basics. Or if you have older kids, you can start in midseason form and work on advanced things."

Either way, Deeb, a Danbury native and Southern Connecticut State University graduate who teaches elementary school physical education at the Lillie B. Haynes School and the Niantic Center School, both in the East Lyme school system, sees herself strictly as a teacher, a coach, and a referee.

She leaves the big picture, in which she is one of the most influential figures in state history for the growth of girls and women in athletics and a prominent role model, to other people.

"I'm so proud of her for all her success and I am so proud to have been coached by her," said Sutman, who still has the game ball given to her by Deeb from her first win as a high school pitcher and the one from her first win as a high school coach (which came against East Lyme).

"I learned so much about the game, but I also learned how important team-building and camaraderie are for long-term success," Sutman said.

"I try to do the same for my players, knowing they become more invested in the program if you invest in each dimension of them."

So if you're looking for Judy Deeb this season, that's where she will be: getting her investments in order and facing the rhyme of yet another season.

## Determination on court and in the classroom

■ MALCOLM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

It is also because of these close-knit ties that have allowed Malcolm to succeed in her rehabilitation, as well as the classroom.

"She's done really well at school, academically," Shea said. "She went to summer school and is getting her degree on time, (and) she is very proud of that."

During Senior Day activities, Malcolm was the final senior presented and walked down the court with her family.

But the highlight came soon after. Merrimack was allowed to score, followed by Malcolm taking a pass from Glenney and scoring an uncontested basket to tie the game at 2-2. Burke called a 30-second timeout, replaced Malcolm and the game continued.

The plan that night was one that had been in the works since her early stages of rehab.

"I said, 'You know, Pam, if you continue to make progress, (on) Senior Day I'd like to get you out on the floor, if that's what you want to do,'" Burke said. "We used it as motivation to get her through the rehab she was doing during the summertime as a goal."

Burke said she doesn't know if there's been a more inspired comeback during her 15 years as coach at Bryant than Malcolm's.

"I think not only myself, but I think the whole team has just learned that it's been so inspirational, the fact that she's never felt bad about herself and has brought that positive outlook," Burke said. "I think as a team, and me as a coach, you just learned that you never take things for granted and cherish

JudyDeebJudyDeebJudyDeebJudyDeeb



Judy –

We are honored by all that you have given over the years to our athletes and to East Lyme High School.

We salute your spirit, commitment, and love for East Lyme Viking Softball and thank you for your dedication to our community.

Congratulations!  
Your friends at

East Lyme High School





# Masuk's Strong song includes 630 wins, 3 state titles

By Sean Barker  
New Haven Register

It doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that when it comes to girls basketball in the state of Connecticut, Dave Strong and Masuk equal success.

## GOLD KEY WINNER

Strong, 61, who has taught algebra, geometry and calculus at the Monroe high school since 1969, has won more games than any girls high school coach in state history. He was the first coach to reach 300, 400, 500 and 600 wins and is currently 637-100 in 30 seasons.



Dave Strong

Writers' Alliance's Doc McInerney coach of the year.

Tonight, the Alliance recognizes Strong

Masuk is the lone school to reach the CIAC state tournament every year since its formation in 1976, winning state tournament titles in 1990, 1991 and 1995. Strong was also named Teacher of the Year in Monroe in 1995 and was the recipient of the Connecticut Sports

for his contributions to athletics in the state with the Gold Key.

Masuk has made seven appearances in state title games, advanced to the semifinals 11 times and quarterfinals 24 times, including this past season. Only twice have his teams been defeated in the first round, and not since the 1984-85 season.

Twenty-three of Strong's teams have won 20 or more games, including two undefeated teams. Masuk was 27-0 in 1989-90 and 26-0 in 1994-95.

From 1994-97 Masuk won 50 straight games, and from 1993-97 Masuk won 93 straight regular-season games.

Strong, who lives in Watertown with his wife, Mary Jane, has led Masuk to 19 con-

ference titles, 14 in the Western Connecticut Conference and five in the South-West Conference.

A three-sport athlete at Woodbury High School, Strong also served as athletic director at Masuk from 1995-2005. Since starting his teaching career at Masuk in 1969, Strong has served as a head coach or assistant coach for the following programs other than girls basketball: chess (1969-89), boys basketball (1969-76), golf (1973-77), cross country (1978), softball (1980-82 assistant, 1983 head coach), girls soccer (1986-94), girls tennis (1988-90) and boys tennis (2004).

A member of the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame (2004), Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2000) and New England Basketball Hall of Fame (2002), Strong was named national coach of the year in 2002.

An avid coin collector and baseball historian, Strong is on the selection committee for the New England Basketball Hall of Fame and has served on the boards of several committees, including the CHSCA, CIAC and South-West Conference.

His girls basketball teams have been presented the Sportsmanship Award by the Board #9 Certified Basketball Officials nine times, including this past season. Fifty-two of his players have played college basketball, including 15 at the Division I level. Also 25 have earned All-State honors and 30 have gone into coaching, including five at the collegiate level.

Strong has three children: David (35), Julia (33) and Jennifer (32).

## Francis answered all questions with exclamation points

■ FRANCIS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

"I played much longer and did much better things than I ever dreamed," he said.

Best memory?

"It's easy to say your first game or your first goal, but one of my best memories is returning to Hartford a week after the trade," he said. "The signs fans put up and the way they responded to me ... the whole scene. I've still got a picture of it in my mind. It was very, very special."

Best player you played against?

"The guy I thought was incredibly tough and could do it all was Bryan Trottier," he said. "My first All-Star Game down on Long Island, a reporter told me I was going to play

on a line with Trottier and Mike Bossy. I thought, 'Great. I'll happily play left wing next to those two.' 'No,' the reporter said. 'You're going to play center. Trottier's moving to left wing.' It was awesome."

Best teammate?

"He's coaching in Hartford," Ronnie said, referring to Samuelsson. "Ulfie and I are best friends."

The day Ronnie got drafted, his father said to me, "Don't be afraid to give it to my son if he messes up." How many fathers of today's athletes would ever tell a sports writer to criticize his son if criticism was warranted? I didn't know Ronnie would turn out to be special, but I knew from the first day his father was.

"My son had a whale of a career," Ron Sr.

said. "He made us proud."

A whale of a career, huh? Let's leave it at that as we say goodbye and good luck to one "Ronald Q. Francis," the Q standing for questionable. After 23 years with a bid to the Hall of Fame pending, it's high time we dropped the Q.

"I'll always be Ronald Q. Francis, won't I?" he asked.

Mmmm.

The reason it was funny is because there never were any questions about Ronnie. He was the best. If things had worked out differently, he would be one of the most beloved athletes in Connecticut history. But on March 4, 1991, Eddie Johnston traded him.

"Do you know what you've done?"

## Congratulations to all Award Winners!

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# Smith had slam-dunk career both on and off the court

By Lou Pintek  
Connecticut Post

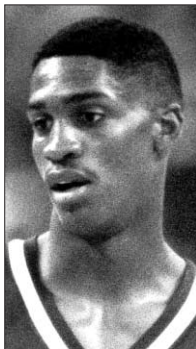
High school super star, collegiate stand-out, NBA player, entrepreneur.

Charles Smith has accomplished quite a bit in a little more than 40 years. But it is for his graceful presence and gifted athleticism on the basketball court that the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance honors the Bridgeport native today with a Gold Key.

Smith was born on July 16, 1965 to Dorothy J. Kenyatta and the late Charles D. Smith Sr. and first came to prominence at Harding High School in Bridgeport under

coach Charles Bentley. Smith scored over 1,400 career points and led the Presidents to consecutive state championships in 1983 and 1984. At 6-foot-10, he was the dominant post player in the state with a deft shooting touch as well.

During his stay at the East Side school, Harding compiled a streak



Charles Smith

of 55-1.

He was heavily recruited and chose to attend Pittsburgh, and in his first season was named Freshman of the Year in the Big East Conference, averaging 15 points per game. By the time he graduated in 1988, he established school records for points (2,045) and blocked shots (346), was second in rebounds (987) and led the Panthers to a pair of Big East titles. He was named Big East Player of the Year as a senior in 1987-88, averaging 18.9 points and 7.7 rebounds.

He was named an honorable mention All-American by the Associated Press and was the third pick overall (by Philadelphia) in the 1988 NBA draft. His rights were immediately dealt, however, to the Los Angeles Clippers, where he played for four seasons

before being traded to the New York Knicks.

During his four-season stint on Broadway, the Knicks made the playoffs each year. Smith was traded to the San Antonio Spurs in 1996, but retired the following year due to chronic knee problems.

Smith has served as vice president of the NBA Players Association and has been involved in several successful business ventures. But his biggest off-court accomplishment has occurred in his hometown, helping the needy and underprivileged through the Charles Smith Jr. Foundation, which has been in operation for nearly 15 years.

If anyone depicts the definition of the well-rounded athlete, it's Charles Smith. Connecticut is proud to call him one of its own.

## Good Sports bring out the best in state athletics

*Tom Chiappetta of Norwalk, Robert Johnson of Hamden, Francis Mullins of Bristol, David Nowakowski of Griswold, Larry Pelletier of Meriden and Ed Wilcox of Middletown will each receive Good Sport awards, presented to those individuals who unselfishly devote their time and resources to the promotion of athletics in their communities.*

### Tom Chiappetta

Chiappetta, a Stamford native, spent two years as volunteer president of the Fairfield County Sports Commission before being named its executive director in January.



Chiappetta helped launch the Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame and the naming of Sportsperson of the Year in 15 towns and cities.

As president of the Sports Commission, Chiappetta played an active role in

many local events the Commission has supported, including the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament and the Nutmeg State Games. Most recently, Chiappetta and the Sports Commission hosted the Park City FanFest in Bridgeport, home of the NCAA women's basketball tournament regional. The event coincided with open practices during the tournament and included autograph sessions and several interactive events and exhibits.

Other upcoming events coming to Fairfield County with the support of the commission are: 2006 Atlantic League All-Star game, 2007 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference men's and women's basketball tournaments, 2008 NCAA women's basketball first and second rounds, and NCAA East Regional men's hockey tournaments in 2009 and 2011.

### Robert Johnson

Johnson, 90, has spent much of the past 70 years volunteering in swimming, certifying an estimated 20,000 through the American Red Cross Water Safety program. He has organized and instructed Red Cross Water Safety Programs for Hamden since 1948, teaching more than 28,000 students.



**Robert Johnson, left photo, served as Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy. Shown today at right, he has served 70 years as a volunteer.**



A former high school state champion at Hillhouse, he has also worked as an instructor and official with AAU, Senior Olympics, and Special Olympics. Johnson has been chairman for several organizations, including for swimming in Connecticut AAU.

An All-American swimmer as a member of Ohio State's NCAA national championship teams in 1938, '39 and '40, he served as captain his final two seasons. Johnson was the recipient of the International Swimming Hall of Fame's Paragon Award in 2005 for service to the sport.

Johnson, who served as a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy, served for 24 years on the Yale University physical education and aquatics faculty. He was a volunteer assistant for legendary Yale swimming coach Robert Kipphut.

### Frances Mullins

Mullins has been involved with American Legion baseball since 1950, starting as a business manager for a Bristol team that won four straight state titles from 1949-52, and eventually running the state tournament



for more than 25 years. He was Connecticut's state chairman for American Legion for five years. Born in Bristol on Feb. 29, 1924, Mullins is chairman of Zone I and has been a member of Post 2 for 55 years. He served as assistant

national director for the 1989 Midwest Regional held in Danville, Ill. He is also a past president of the Forestville Boys Club and business professional bowling league. He served on the Parks and Recreation Commission from 1996-2004.

He is a former First Selectman, fire commissioner and police commissioner in Bristol.

### David Nowakowski

Nowakowski has been active in the promotion of wrestling for more than two decades, starting high school programs at both Grasso Tech and Griswold High, where over 16 years he compiled a record of 116-83-2.

Eight years ago he founded the Griswold Youth Wrestling program along with David Fisher and James Gladue. Since stepping



down as high school coach at Griswold, Nowakowski has run the Eastern Connecticut Conference and CIAC Class S championship meets.

This year, he began weekly rankings of the top 16 wrestlers in the state in each weight class for Connecticut Wrestling Online.

Nowakowski helped found the Griswold Mid-Season Invitational in 2001 as a fundraiser for the Griswold Youth Wrestling program and the high school team. Part of the tournament is a junior varsity event on Monday, and it has included a youth tournament on the same weekend.

### Larry Pelletier

Pelletier, 41, has been running Meriden's Beat the Street Community Center, which includes the Silver City Boxing Club, on virtually a full-time basis since 1994. The club serves as everything from an after-school study hall to a training center for Golden Gloves boxers. Pelletier's boxers regularly compete in state, regional and PAL events. He's a Level III coach, which means he can work with Team USA at national events. In 1998, he helped coached the U.S. in bouts against Russia at Foxwoods.



Pelletier was a Silver City Boxing Club fighter in his own right. At age 16 he won a state title in the 147-pound division. In the late '80s he spent a year studying theology with the Archdiocese of

Hartford and briefly became a youth minister.

"It wasn't as fulfilling as I wanted it to be," Pelletier once told the Record-Journal. "Instead of getting involved with the church as a youth minister, I developed this organization and made this kind of my own mission."

Pelletier's works full time as a technician with SBC. He is married and lives in Meriden. His first child is due this year.

### Ed Wilcox

Wilcox is the historian of youth baseball in Middletown.

Wilcox, who also has served as a coach in the Ahern Whalen League, has written the following books chronicling youth baseball



in the state: Middletown Little League City Championship Series 1948-1996; Middletown Little League All Stars Vol. One 1948-1983; Connecticut 1951 Little League All Stars - District, State & World Series Tournaments;

Ahern Whalen League Invitational Baseball Tournament 1953-1986; and Ahern Whalen League Baseball League 1975-1998.

From 1953 to 1986, the Ahern Whalen Invitational Baseball Tournament was considered the premier postseason event for players between the ages of 13 and 15 and drew teams from across the state to Palmer Field.

He also has compiled summaries for each baseball game in the Middletown High-Woodrow Wilson series.

# Weimer has style, flair and plenty of Big Ten records

**Scott Cacciola**  
New Haven Register

Penn State's Oct. 10 home game against Iowa was "Tiffany Weimer Headband Day," which means the first 500 fans who arrived at Jeffrey Field could be part of the latest fashion trend to sweep State College, Pa. Like the little girls who wore their hair in tight buns when Diana Taurasi played basketball at the University of Connecticut, young children wear headbands — just like Tiff — at Penn State women's soccer games.

## FEMALE ATHLETE OF YEAR

Growing up in North Haven, Tiffany Weimer emulated soccer stars who played in South America and Europe.

She sat before her television set for hours and wore out video cassettes that featured flamboyant scorers who appreciated artistic value on the field just as much as good results, namely sending the ball into the goal. These players were exciting and exotic, infusing a simple game with bolts of electricity any time a soccer ball touched their feet.

"I always wanted to be different," said Weimer, recipient of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance's 2006 Hank O'Donnell Female Athlete of the Year award. "I wanted to be fun to watch."

Weimer turned out to be everything she had hoped to be. As a senior forward she set Big Ten single-season records with 32 goals, 69 points and 13 game-winning goals, leading the Nittany Lions to a 23-0-2 record and a trip to the NCAA College Cup semifinals. Seven of her 13 game-winning goals came against nationally ranked

opponents. A three-time All-America selection and two-time Hermann Trophy finalist for the top player in women's college soccer, Weimer scored in an NCAA record 17 straight games this season and in 23 of 25. Her 214 career points rank 15th in NCAA history and her 91 goals ninth.

"She is magic with the ball," said Aaron Heifetz, a spokesperson for U.S. Soccer.

Gaudy statistics can obscure what makes Weimer unique: It's not what she does, it's how she does it. Penn State coach Paula Wilkins said Weimer plays the game with flair. More than her headband and flashy white cleats, she has a sense of style all her own.

"At a school like Penn State," Wilkins said, "where everything is blue and white and pretty Plain Jane, she stands out."

Weimer's mother, Michele Gates, who has made nearly every road trip this season in her Mitsubishi Montero — and that includes a jaunt to Wisconsin, where her daughter scored the game's first goal in Penn State's 2-1 win — can still recall the moment she realized her daughter was different. Tiffany was 6, and her youth league coach approached Gates after a game.

"He said, 'This girl's going to get a scholarship to college,'" Gates said. "That's what he said, honest to God."

Tiffany cried if it was raining and her coaches canceled practice. She never watched cartoons on weekend mornings. Instead, she popped soccer videos into the VCR. Then she told her mother, "I'm going to score a goal like that in my next game."

At North Haven High, where she scored 109 goals and was the Register Girls' Soccer Most Valuable Player in 2001, Weimer made her strongest statement to coach Michael DeBaise during one of her final games. On senior night



**Tiffany Weimer has a lethal right foot.**

against Amity-Woodbridge, North Haven trailed 3-1 at halftime. Before DeBaise could even address his players during the break, Weimer spoke up.

"She goes, 'Look, we're not going to lose tonight. Just get me the ball,'" DeBaise recalled. "And she literally went out and scored four goals in the second half. We won 5-3."

At 5-foot-4, Weimer is undersized for an elite college forward, but what she lacks in stature, she compensates for with skill. DeBaise says Weimer is faster with the ball than she is without it. Penn State assistant Michael Coll gave her some words by which to live.

"He told me that the closer your brain is to your feet, the better," Weimer said, laughing. "So

I go with that."

Wilkins said Weimer keeps her composure even when she struggles to find daylight amid clusters of defenders.

"Unfortunately for Tiffany," Wilkins said, "when things aren't going so well, she has to shoulder a lot of the blame. And when things are going well, she shoulders a lot of the attention. But she's grown in that aspect, understanding those two roles, the good and the bad."

The knock against Weimer is that she can be one-dimensional, a goal-scoring machine and little else. She acknowledges that she probably could have worked harder on her conditioning last summer, rather than focus on her already strong footwork — which is kind of like Renoir painting stick figures.

"Everyone likes to work on the things they're already good at," Weimer said.

For all her apparent bravado on the field, Weimer says she often feels insecure, so she relies on a simple powder-blue bracelet for inspiration. It is embossed with a single word: CONFIDENCE. Weimer looks at the bracelet during games, especially when defenders are draped across her back and the ball is somewhere else.

"What people see are my stats," Weimer said. "But I haven't had the best games. It's getting harder for me. Being shut down isn't the most thrilling thing for me, and getting only one shot in a game is not something I'm proud of — and it's not something that should happen. So when I don't get shots, I do lack confidence and I do realize there's a lot I need to work on."

Weimer's soccer ball was her security blanket as a child. It went where she went, an extension of herself. Little has changed. These days, when so many young kids are wearing headbands and studying her moves and dreaming of the great-

**Congratulations Tiffany Weimer**  
on your accomplishments  
at North Haven High School  
and Penn State.



*The North Haven High School Administration  
and Athletic Department*

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# Championship banners continue to add up under Filippone

By Hal Levy

Shore Line Newspapers

In its storied history, Hand High has had only two football coaches: Larry Ciotti and Steve Filippone.

## MALE SPORT COACH OF YEAR

Award as the Connecticut High School Coach of the Year, presented by the Connecticut Sports Writers Alliance. Only one other coaching duo in the same sport at the same school has been so honored: Ansonia football coaches Bill McAlister (1980) and Jack Hunt (2004). Ciotti was the

Now, both of them have earned the Doc McInerney



Steve Filippone

1984 honoree.

A third Hand coach, Bob Faulkner, was honored in 1995 for boys soccer.

Branford, Guilford, Cheshire and Ledyard have had two McInerney Award winners, but no one else in the state has three.

Hand won its third straight CIAC state championship in 2005, taking the Class M title with a 34-0 victory over Hillhouse to finish with a 10-2 record. Since he took over in 1989, Filippone has compiled a 137-43-6 record with 12 league or divisional champi-

onships, five state titles and two state runners-up. In addition to 2003 and 2004, he also won titles in 1997 and 1989.

A native of Brick Township, N.J., and a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University, Filippone has been a special education teacher at Hand since 1980 and was an assistant football coach as well as the head baseball coach from 1980-1989.

Chairman of the Connecticut High School Coaches Association football committee and

coaches' chair of the CIAC football committee, he serves as a liaison to the Governor's Cup all-star game. Filippone has been honored as a coach of the year by the CHSCA, the New Haven Register and the Gene Casey-New Haven County chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame. He also has been honored by the New Haven County Football Officials.

Filippone and his wife, Paula, have two sons, Tommy and Kevin.

## DOC McINERNEY AWARD

**1974:** Wally Camp, Coginchaug basketball  
**1975:** Gary Palladino, St. Paul basketball  
**1976:** Lou DeFilippo, Derby football  
**1977:** Lou Astorino, Hamden hockey  
**1978:** Rod Leyland, Ledyard wrestling  
**1979:** Tom LaBella, Middletown basketball  
**1980:** Bill McAlister, Ansonia football  
**1981:** Bob Michalski, Xavier track, cross country  
**1982:** Bill Reagan, Old Saybrook boys and girls basketball  
**1983:** Charlie Sharos, South Windsor basketball and soccer  
**1984:** Larry Ciotti, Hand football  
**1985:** Frank Hauser, Glastonbury football  
**1986:** Bob DeMayo, North Haven baseball  
**1987:** Pete Shuler, Westbrook girls basketball  
**1988:** Charles Bentley, Warren Harding basketball  
**1989:** Marty deLivron, Avon soccer  
**1990:** Carl Snihtkin, NFA wrestling  
**1991:** Don Bates, Berlin golf  
**1992:** John O'Connor, Branford swimming  
**1993:** Lou Gagliardi, New Britain track and cross country; Nancy Grace, Canton field hockey  
**1994:** Burt Leventhal, Cheshire baseball; Ellen Mahoney, Ledyard softball

**1995:** Bob Faulkner, Hand-Madison boys soccer; Dave Strong, Masuk-Monroe girls basketball.  
**1996:** Steve Addazio, Cheshire football; Kathleen "Cookie" Bromage, Enfield field hockey  
**1997:** Jim Penders, East Catholic-Manchester baseball; Ed Aston, Cheshire girls swimming  
**1998:** David Hodge, Weaver-Hartford football; Joe Grippo, Morgan School-Clinton volleyball  
**1999:** Charles Wolfe, Old Lyme baseball/Valley Regional-Deep River soccer; Abe Breslow, Trumbull girls soccer  
**2000:** Jim Day, Berlin wrestling; Joe Piazza, Southington softball  
**2001:** Joe Maher, Guilford boys soccer; Dot Johnson, Granby field hockey  
**2002:** Ed Lynch, Simsbury boys golf; Cathy McGuirk, Branford field hockey  
**2003:** Ed McCarthy, West Haven football; Jim Rooney, Guilford basketball  
**2004:** Jack Hunt, Ansonia football; Theresa Napolitano, Amity softball.  
**2005:** Rick Geremia, North Branford boys soccer; Lou Milardo, Hale-Play girls soccer.  
**2006:** Steve Filippone, Hand Football; Dick Hawks, Greenwich girls swimming.

## College champions honored

Connecticut continued its tradition of producing some of the top collegiate teams this past year. Four more national champions were crowned from Connecticut, bringing the number of national team titles to 44 won by state universities since the Alliance began honoring champions in 1981.

Since last year's dinner, the Trinity men's squash program, Yale women's squash program, Yale men's lightweight crew program and Connecticut women's polo program have each won national titles.

This is Yale's third straight national title in women's squash. The Trinity men, under the direction of coach Paul Assaiane, won the national title for the eighth straight year and have won 144 straight matches dating back to 1998. Yale, under the direction of coach Dave Talbott, won its sixth overall national title in women's squash.

Yale's lightweight crew team, under the direction of coach Andy Card, won its sixth Intercollegiate Rowing Association national title and third in the past five years. The team also competed at the Henley Regatta.

### Past National Team Champions

- Eastern Connecticut Baseball, 1982, 1990, 1999, 2002
- Eastern Connecticut Softball, 1982, 1985, 1986, 1990
- Sacred Heart Men's Basketball, 1986
- Southern Connecticut Men's Soccer, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 1997, 1999.
- Trinity College Men's Squash: 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
- Trinity College Women's Squash, 2002, 2003.
- UConn Men's Basketball, 1999, 2004.
- UConn Men's Soccer, 1981, 2000.
- UConn Women's Basketball: 1995, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004.
- UConn Women's Field Hockey: 1981, 1985.
- University of New Haven Women's Basketball, 1987.
- Yale University Men's Lightweight Eight, 2000, 2002.
- Yale University Women's Squash, 2004, 2005, 2006.

### Individual Champion

- 1992: Brian Brophy of Manchester, University of Tennessee, NCAA Decathlon.



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## GOLD KEY HONOR ROLL

**1940:** Connie Mack, baseball's Grand Old Man; Edward Reilly, Bridgeport Central High basketball coach; Hubert Sedgewick, dean of state sports writers; Bobby Jones, golfing legend

**1941:** Louis "Kid" Kaplan, world featherweight champion; Robert Pryde, state golf official; George Weiss, New York Yankees and Mets executive

**1942:** Emmons "Chick" Bowen, Hillhouse (New Haven) High coach; Gene Sarazen, U.S. Open and Masters champion; Bill Slocum, New York sports writer

**1943-44:** No awards because of World War II

**1945:** Pete Foley, Naugatuck High coach; Dan Parker, New York sports columnist; Ken Strong, New York Giants and New York University star

**1946:** Joseph McCluskey, Olympic track star; Thomas M. Monahan, Bristol High coach; Ed Walsh, Hall of Fame pitcher

**1947:** Jack Barry, Holy Cross College coach and American League shortstop; Bobby Grant, state amateur golf champion; Raymond "Ducky" Pond, Yale football star and coach

**1948:** Joseph E. Cronin, American League President and Hall of Fame shortstop; Dr. Frank Mongillo, New Haven physician; George Sparring, Brooklawn Country Club golf professional

**1949:** Norm Daniels, Wesleyan University coach; Robert Kipphut, Yale athletic director and swim coach; Ken Smith, New York sports writer

**1950:** Larry Amann, Hartford Public High coach; Albie Booth, Yale football star; George Mulligan, Waterbury sports promoter

**1951:** Neal Ball, made baseball's first unassisted triple play; Ray Oosting, Trinity College athletic director; Red Rolfe, New York Yankees third baseman

**1952:** Gustave "Gus" Broberg, Dartmouth basketball All-American; William J. Prince, state athletic commissioner; Jack Rourke, Colgate trainer

**1953:** Julius Boros, golfing great; Frank S. Hogan, New York district attorney; Danny Murphy, Philadelphia Athletics

**1954:** Joe Dugan, American League third baseman; Dennis T. McMahon, state athletic commissioner; Nick Tronsky, duckpin bowler

**1955:** Tim Cohane, Look Magazine sports editor; Hugh Greer, UConn basketball coach; Johnny Newell, Hartford Public High coach

**1956:** Tad Jones, Yale football coach; Frank McGowan, major and minor league outfielder and scout; Frank Ross, state golf champion

**1957:** Charles Clare, state golf champion; Dr. John E. Stoddard, Meriden physician; Pete Wigren, Manchester High coach

**1958:** James E. Coogan, New Haven sports official; Dan Jessee, Trinity College football coach; Paul Kuczo, Stamford High coach

**1959:** Christopher "Bat" Battalino, world featherweight champion; J.O. Christian, UConn athletic director; Briggs Cunningham, prominent racing figure

**1960:** Sam Bender, Hillhouse (New Haven) High basketball coach; Edwin F. "Ted" Blair, Connecticut's "Mr. Yale"; John "Clipper" Smith, Notre Dame football player and coach

**1961:** Willie Pep, world featherweight champion, Charlie Petрино, basketball official; Andy Robustelli, New York Giants' defensive end

**1962:** George "Kiddo" Davis, major league outfielder; Maurice Podoloff, NBA commissioner; Frank "Spec" Shea, New York Yankees pitcher

**1963:** Connie Donahue, Torrington High coach; Arthur "Dutch" Forst, football official; Jordan Olivar, Yale football coach

**1964:** Frank Barnikow, Meriden High; Emil "Mim" Daddario, Wesleyan University football star; Ed Feustel, state bowling official

**1965:** Joe Cosgrove, Eastern League outfielder; Bill O'Brien, New London High coach; Steve Witkowski, Wesleyan University and U.S. Olympic trainer

**1966:** Tom Callaghan, Windham High coach; Jess Dow, Southern Connecticut State College coach; H.H. Mandy Jr., state amateur golf champion

**1967:** Ralph Erickson, Loomis School athletic director; Harry Jacunski, Yale freshman football coach; Smokey Joe Wood, Boston Red Sox pitcher and Yale baseball coach

**1968:** Joe Fontana, Southington High athletic director; John Kelley, marathon runner; Murray Murdoch, Yale hockey coach

**1969:** Sam Hyman, Eastern League pitcher; Jimmy Lee, Crosby and Wilby (Waterbury) High coach; Art McGinley, dean of sports writers; Bill Steinkraus, Olympic Gold Medal equestrian winner

**1970:** Charles "Boots" Jarvis, Ansonia High athletic director and coach; Nels Nitchman, U.S. Coast Guard Academy coach; J. Ray Ryan, chairman, Albie Booth Memorial Game

**1971:** Joe Drabowsky, major league pitcher; Walter Kennedy, NBA commissioner; Nick Pietrosante, Detroit Lions and Notre Dame fullback

**1972:** Steve Blass, Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher; Sumner Dole, UConn coach; Lindy Remigino, Olympic gold medal winner

**1973:** Rev. Robert Keating, sportsman and pastor of St. Jude's Church in Derby; Tom Kelley, Manchester High coach; Floyd Little, Denver Broncos and Syracuse University running back

**1974:** Joan Joyce, softball pitching great; Dick McAuliffe, major league infielder; John Merriman, U.S. Coast Guard Academy coach

**1975:** Walt Dropo, UConn and Boston Red Sox first baseman; Dick Siderowf, state amateur golf champion; Bob Skoronski, Green Bay Packers' standout

**1976:** Carmen Cozza, Yale football coach; Ray Legenza, Naugatuck High baseball coach; George D. Ritchie, Wethersfield High soccer coach

**1977:** Johnny Egan, NBA and Providence College basketball player; Joe Gargan, Kingswood School (West Hartford) coach; William H. "Widdy" Neale, state golf official

**1978:** Frank Crisafi, East Haven High coach; Dee Rowe, UConn basketball coach; Frank "Porky" Vieira, University of New Haven baseball coach and Quinnipiac basketball standout

**1979:** Arthur "Babe" Allen, Bulkeley (Hartford) High three-sport coach; John "Whitey" Plurek, West Haven High athletic director and baseball coach; Jerry Courville, state amateur golfer

**1980:** Albie Loeffler, Staples (Westport) High soccer coach; Bill Detrick, Central Connecticut basketball coach; Larry Panciera, UConn baseball coach

**1981:** Salvatore "Red" Verderame, Wilbur Cross (New Haven) High basketball coach; Dick Danielson, Manchester High soccer coach; Otto Graham, U.S. Coast Guard Academy athletic director, NFL player and coach

**1982:** Abie Grossfeld, Southern Connecticut gymnastics coach; Bertha Ragan Tickey, softball pitching great; Tony Apisno, New Britain High football coach

**1983:** Bob Saulsbury, Wilbur Cross (New Haven) High basketball coach; John Toner, UConn athletic director; Bobby Valentine, New York Mets manager

**1984:** Lou DeFilippo, Derby High football coach; Waino Fillback, Middletown High three-sport coach; Thomas R. Monahan, Bristol schools athletic director

**1985:** Ray McKenna, East Hartford sportsman; Larry McHugh, Xavier (Middletown) High football coach; Andy Baylock, UConn baseball coach

**1986:** Burt Kahn, Quinnipiac basketball coach; Bill Loika, Central Connecticut football coach; Bernie O'Rourke, Middletown sportsman

**1987:** Ivan Wood, Plainville High coach and administrator; Marcia Dolan, amateur golfer; Hank Majlinger, Central Connecticut baseball coach

**1988:** Brenda Reilly, Central Connecticut women's basketball coach; Calvin Murphy, NBA player; Joe Morrone, UConn men's soccer coach

**1989:** Bill Holowaty, Eastern Connecticut baseball coach; Nick Zeoli, Wilton High coach/athletic director; John Fontana, Southington High baseball coach

**1990:** Matthew "Pop" Shortell, Ansonia sportsman; Dom Perno, UConn basketball player and coach; Bob Steele, longtime WTIC radio announcer

**1991:** President George Bush, Yale baseball captain; Susan Saint James, supporter of Connecticut Special Olympics; Patricia O'Sullivan Lucey, state amateur golf champion; Wally Camp, Coginchaug (Durham) High basketball coach/athletic director

**1992:** Gordie Howe, NHL Hall of Famer; Lowell Lukas, Central Connecticut golf coach; Herb Kenny, Wesleyan men's basketball coach

**1993:** Charlie Sharos, South Windsor High basketball coach/athletic director; Dave Bike, Sacred Heart men's basketball coach; Tracy Claxton, high school/collegiate basketball standout from New Haven

**1994:** Barbara Young, amateur golf champion; Bill Rodgers, Boston Marathon winner; Dan Sullivan, Windsor Locks High three-sport coach

**1995:** Donna Lopiano, Women's Sports Foundation executive director; Joe Buzas, minor league baseball owner; Don Miller, Trinity College football coach; Bruce Hutchinson, Southern Connecticut swimming coach

**1996:** Howie Dickman, Central Connecticut men's basketball coach; Edna Fraser, Milford High three-sport coach and administrator; Earl Lively, Fairfield Prep football coach; John Williamson, pro basketball player from New Haven

**1997:** Lou Bazzano, Bulkeley (Hartford) High basketball coach and Hartford schools' athletic director; Lida Tingley, amateur golf champion; Jerry McDougall, Trumbull High football coach and athletic director; Joe Vancisin, Yale basketball coach

**1998:** Jack Arute Sr., owner of Stafford Motor Speedway; Paul "Frosty" Francis, retired IAABO executive director; Vito Montelli, St. Joseph High boys basketball coach and athletic director; Dr. William Moore, N.E. Collegiate Conference commissioner and former Central Connecticut athletic director

**1999:** C. Donald Cook, Sacred Heart athletic director; Ken Kezer, New Britain High baseball coach; Bill O'Brien, New Haven area sportsman; Fay Vincent Jr., former Major League Baseball Commissioner

**2000:** Bob DeMayo, North Haven High baseball coach; Tony DiCicco of Wethersfield, U.S. Women's World Cup Soccer championship team coach; Bob Dikranian, Southern Connecticut men's soccer coach; Bob Kay, golf professional emeritus at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford

**2001:** Geno Aurilemma, UConn women's basketball coach; Dr. Rich Diana, Yale and Miami Dolphins running back; Jean Hunt, Farmington High School multi-sport coach; Frank Robinson, Hall High School football coach

**2002:** Irv Black, New Britain High track and field coach; Walter Luckett, Connecticut and New England boys basketball scoring champion from Bridgeport; Jennifer Rizzotti, University of Hartford women's basketball coach and UConn All-American; Charlie Sticka, Trinity College football All-American

**2003:** Rico Brogna, retired major league baseball player from Watertown; Jim Calhoun, UConn men's basketball coach; Don Hoenig, professional golfer and Thompson Speedway owner; Mike Savage, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Schools/Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference



John Steady

## The 2005 Gold Key winners, from left, were Bruce Webster, Bill Mignault and Jake Salafia.

ketball coach; Don Hoenig, professional golfer and Thompson Speedway owner; Mike Savage, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Schools/Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

**2004:** Rebecca Lobo, UConn women's basketball; Bob McKee, Conard High football, wrestling and baseball coach; Gene Reilly, Bulkeley High and Central Connecticut State University basketball standout, Portland High basketball coach; Cory Thompson, basketball standout for Middletown High, UConn men.

**2005:** Cromwell High basketball coach Jake Salafia, Ledyard High football coach Bill Mignault, University of Bridgeport basketball coach Bruce Webster.

## BILL LEE AWARD

**1973:** Dick Jauro, Yale football

**1974:** Eric Torkelson, UConn football

**1975:** Joan Joyce, softball player

**1976:** Bruce Jenner and Dorothy Hamill, 1976 Olympic gold medal winners

**1977:** Jan Merrill, world-class runner

**1978:** John Hanson, UConn basketball

**1979:** Bill Rodgers, marathon champion

**1980:** Randy LaVigne, UConn basketball and baseball

**1981:** Joe Morrone, UConn soccer

**1982:** Rich Diana, Yale football

**1983:** Garry Pearson, UMass football

**1984:** Bill Dawley, Houston Astros pitcher

**1985:** Steve Young, professional quarterback

**1986:** Harold Pressley, Villanova basketball and Ken Green, PGA Tour

**1987:** Craig Janney and Brian Leetch, U.S. Olympic hockey team

**1988:** Marlon Starling, world welterweight boxing champion

**1989:** Kevin Giancola, state amateur golf champion

**1990:** Bob Dibble, Cincinnati Reds pitcher

**1991:** Jeff Bagwell, New Britain Red Sox third baseman

**1992:** James Lane, Trinity College quarterback

**1993:** Chris Smith, UConn basketball

**1994:** Mo Vaughn, Boston Red Sox first baseman

**1995:** Jeff Bagwell, Houston Astros first baseman; Brian Leetch, New York Rangers hockey

**1996:** Jerry Courville Jr., state amateur golf champion

**1997:** Jesse Showers, University of New Haven football

**1998:** Reggie Greene, Siena University football

**1999:** J.J. Henry, state amateur golf champion

**2000:** Jeff Bagwell, Houston Astros first baseman

**2001:** Chris Gbandi, UConn soccer

**2002:** Dwight Freney, Syracuse University football (Bloomfield)

**2003:** Ryan Bak, Trinity College cross country/track All-American (Suffield); Ben Michaelson, Southern Conn. State University swimming All-American (Seymour)

**2004:** Carl Pavano, Major League pitcher.

**2005:** Dan Orlovsky, UConn quarterback.

**Bill Lee was a longtime sports editor of the Hartford Courant. Prior to 1984, both male and female athletes were eligible for the award.**

## HANK O'DONNELL AWARD

**1984:** Julie Bolduc, Southington High pitcher

**1985:** Terry Kix, UConn field hockey

**1986:** Caroline Keggi, amateur golfer

**1987:** Danielle Benoit, Mercy (Middletown) High School runner

**1988:** Maryanne Torrellas, race walker from Clinton

**1989:** Tracy Lis, Killingly High girls basketball

**1990:** Kris Karlson, world rowing champion from Weston

**1991:** Kerry Bascom, UConn basketball

**1992:** Sarah and Karen Josephson, world champion synchronized swimmers

**1993:** Liz Mueller, Waterford High School runner

**1994:** Terry Roy, UConn heptathlete

**1995:** Rebecca Lobo, UConn basketball

**1996:** Jennifer Rizzotti, UConn basketball

**1997:** Kerry Connors, UConn soccer

**1998:** Sara Whalen, UConn soccer

**1999:** Nykesha Sales, UConn basketball

**2000:** Kristine Lilly, U.S. Women's World Cup Soccer

**2001:** Liz Janganelo, CSWGA 4-time defending champion

**2002:** Maura Danahy, Connecticut College track and cross country All-American (South Windsor)

**2003:** Suzy Whaley, golf professional (Blue Fox Run GC, Avon)

**2004:** Diana Taurasi, UConn women's basketball.

**2005:** Olympic gymnast Anna Hatch; state golf champion and Duke University student Liz Janganelo.

**Hank O'Donnell was executive sports editor and columnist for the Waterbury newspapers. His award is presented to the female athlete of the year.**

## WENTWORTH GOOD SPORTS

**1988:** Frank McCoy, Vernon; Bernie Fields, Middletown; Lou DeBenedictis, Hartford

**1989:** Rene DeSaulniers, Putnam; Joe Barber, Stratford; Lew Kelley, Vernon; Matthew "Popy" Shortell, Ansonia; John Welch, Windsor; Jerome "Buzzy" Lovell, Middletown; Herb Sheintop, Hartford

**1990:** Skip Cunningham, Vernon; Frank DeLuca, Stratford; Albert Hamrah, Middletown; Frank Nistico Sr., Westport; Bill O'Brien, Branford; Dave Sacco, Newton

**1991:** Joe Budwitz, Meriden; Dave Bolio, Wallingford; Ben Dodge, Vernon; Walter "Doc" Hurley, Hartford; Tom Corbo, Norwalk; Bob Boss, Milford

**1992:** Joe Samoska, Waterbury; Rick Sheldon, Hartford; Jack Repass, East Hartford; Jerry Dunnack, Columbia; Dave DeRosa, Fairfield; Jim O'Neill, New London; Joe Trapasso, Branford; Jim Bransfield, Middletown

**1993:** Dot and Fred Bondi, Norwalk; Fred Hammick, South Windsor; Bill Pomfret, Middletown; Bill Romanowski, Vernon

**1994:** Fran and Fred Ahbin, Fairfield; Jim Gallagher, East Hartford; John Michaels, Southbury; Dick Nassiff, Willimantic

**1995:** George Cocores, Middletown; Syd Conn, West Hartford; George Cruz, Hartford; Art Nelson, Plainville; Mike Marella, Bridgeport; John Pelletier, New London; Ron and Valerie Shushanovsky, Milford

**1996:** Lou Bogash, Stratford; John Cesario, Hartford; Ralph Giansanti, South Windsor; Bill Heintz, Torrington; Julie Larese, Bristol; Frank Marietta, New Britain; Art Miller, Middletown; Irene Smith, Manchester

**1997:** Thomas Altieri, Meriden; Lou Ernst, Niantic; Jim Foster, Wallingford; Bill Lynn, Middletown; Munere Haddad, Willimantic; Marty Paganini, Torrington; Bill Slater, Manchester

**1998:** Don Berger, Vernon; Bill Cahill, Durham; David Huntington, New Haven; Bob LaBrecche, South Windsor; John J. Murphy, Farmington; Karlene Sullivan, Suffield; Warren Whitehouse, East Lyme; Hubie Williamson, Waterbury

**1999:** Ed Beardsley, Bristol; Dick Gunn, Ellington; Bob LaBranche, Plainville; Herb Lawton, Wethersfield; Jim MacVeigh, Guilford; Bob McPhan, Norwich

**2000:** Paul Criscuolo, Branford; Steve Daniels, Southington; Dave Greenleaf, Bristol; Ken Hungerford, West Hartford; Stan Jablonski, Somers; Dick Teed, Windsor

**2001:** Dennis Beatty, New Britain; Richard Gano, Franklin/Willimantic; Mary Fuller and Cathi Rappi, Waterbury; Bill Hardy, Portland; Pete Kokinis, Wethersfield; Dr. Mike Lantieri, Southington; Billy Lynch, Windsor

**2002:** Fred Levesh, Guilford; Bill Ryan, Waterbury; Bill Sullivan, Norwich; George Tomalinis, Enfield; Byron J. Treddo III, Plainville; Bill Walsh, Windsor

**2003:** Marc Allard, Daville; George DeMaio, North Branford; New Haven; Brother Robert Houlihan, Middletown; Peter Kiro, East Hartford/Manchester; Tom Sullivan, Guilford

**2004:** Ricky and Lisa Bottalico, Rocky Hill; Bill Pettit, Berlin; Bob Greenwood, West Haven; Ethel Maturo, Branford; Ralph Giansanti Jr., Avon; Don MacKenzie, Old Lyme

**2005:** George Burr, Trumbull, Christopher Everone, West Haven, Mike McLaughlin, New London, Jody Sheehy, Norwich, Bob Watson, Bristol

**John Wentworth was sports editor of The Herald in New Britain and specialized in writing about local sports figures. The award is given to those individuals who unselfishly devote their time to the promotion of athletics in their communities.**