



Walter “Smokey” Moser



Walter “Smokey” Moser’s legendary CYO coaching career began in the early 1950’s, when he guided the St. Joseph boys’ basketball team in the Panther Valley Parochial League.

He coached St. Joseph’s for 14 years beginning in the 1953-54 season. Assisted at first by Mickey Hodor, and later William “Reds” Schmidt. Moser’s teams compiled a 160-74 won-loss mark during those 14 years seasons, although his first two teams enjoyed the most success.

Moser’s first team, led by Joe Duffy, not only won the league title, but also captured the Philadelphia Archdiocesan crown by beating Allentown’s Our Lady Help of Christians. Representing the Philadelphia Archdiocese, St. Joseph’s was entered in the Mid-Atlantic States Tourney, where they defeated the Baltimore Diocesan champion in two overtimes. The locals were eventually eliminated by the Washington

D.C. Diocesan champion, 33-26.

The very next season, St. Joseph’s returned to the playoffs after repeating as the Panther Valley League champion. The Hammers went on to defeat St. Jane’s of Easton for the Up-State Philadelphia Archdiocesan title before falling to Most Blesses Sacrament of Philadelphia in the Archdiocesan championship game.

Moser developed much talent during his tenure at St. Joe’s. Among some of his leading scorers, who went on to outstanding careers in high school were: Bill Gmitter, Bill Bechtold, Pip Radar, Tom Klitsch, George Armbruster, Paul, John, Ron, and Hal Hydro, Jack Kmetz, Mike Tessitore, Joe Lazorick, and Walt Schlenner.

Moser was inducted into the Panther Valley Parochial League’s Coaches Hall of Fame in 1972 during ceremonies observing the 25th anniversary of the league in Lansford.

He graduated from East Mauch Chunk High School in 1844, where he played four years on the basketball team. After serving and enlistment in the U.S. Navy, he returned to the area and played baseball for the Mauch Chunk AC’s, where he was switch-hitting catcher. He played semi-pro basketball for the East Chunk Warriors in the Allentown and Stroudsburg areas.

Moser was inducted into the Carbon County Chapter of the Pennsylvania State Hall of Fame in 1996.





Gary Hiller



Gary Hiller a 1960 graduate of Jim Thorpe High School, joins his grandfather, Harvey Hiller and his father, Stroud Hiller, as an inductee in the Jim Thorpe Area Sports Hall of Fame.

Hiller was an outstanding high school athlete and during his years at Jim Thorpe he accumulated 10 varsity letters; four in football; and three each in basketball and baseball. Playing various positions on the gridiron, he finally “settled in” at the halfback slot. Despite missing most of his senior year due to injury, he was offered scholarships at Penn State, Tulsa, Wichita State, and Muhlenberg and he settled for the latter. During his Muhlenberg football career he earned three letters playing at the halfback/defensive back positions. He scored eight touchdowns and was the team leader in the interceptions his junior and senior years.

In basketball he led the junior high team to the Panther Valley League title, averaging 19 points per game. He started as a varsity point guard his sophomore through senior years and in his junior year his team went to the Eastern Regional Class “C” finals before losing to West Reading. During his senior year he was the team captain and leading scorer, averaging 18.5 points per game. He was selected scorer, averaging 18.5 points per game. He was

selected to play in the Carbon/Schuylkill County All-Star game.

His high school baseball career encompassed his sophomore through senior years during which he played second base. His team won the Mountain League Championship his junior and senior years during which his batting average was .455. From 1957 to 1960 he played American Legion Baseball for Jim Thorpe, Leighton and Palmerton. In 1959 he was the leading hitter and averaged .333 in 1960. In 1960 he was selected for the Lehigh Valley League All-Star Game and was selected to play for the team against the Schuylkill Valley All-Stars. He continued playing baseball at Muhlenberg where he started at second base his sophomore year when he batted .255. He decided not to play his junior and senior years secondary to his demanding academic schedule.

Gary received his B.S. in Chemistry from Muhlenberg College in 1963 and his Masters in Chemistry from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1967. He and his family reside in Rochester, NY, where he has been employed as a Research Scientist for The Eastman Kodak Company for the past 33 years.





Jack Stemper



Jack Stemper, a 1945 graduate of East Mauch Chunk High School, was a multi-talented athlete. A standout basketball and soccer player, Stemper also participated in gymnastics, baseball and volleyball.

As a sophomore, Stemper earned the starting shortstop position with the Mauch Chunk AC's. He later hooked up with Mauch Chunk Warriors. Stemper had tryouts with the Brooklyn Dodgers, the Detroit Tigers, and the St. Louis Browns at Shibe Park in Philadelphia. Tiger scout Ed Katalinas offered to sign him to Class "D" ball, and play in Nazareth. He also played American Legion ball for the legendary Mickey Hodor.

He was recruited by Gettysburg College and spent five days with the basketball team courtesy of Larry Morris, civics teacher and principal. He chose Slippery Rock State College. At the "Rock" he earned 11 varsity letters, and was named the schools' Senior Athlete of the Year in 1954. He received four letters in soccer, three in track, three in gymnastics and one in basketball. As a freshman, he saw considerable action as a shortstop but did not receive his monogram.

Stemper was two-time All-American soccer player, named to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware teams. During his senior year at Slippery Rock, he was named to the First Team All-American Squad.

He credits his long time soccer coach at East Mauch Chunk and Slippery Rock, John "Bud" Eiler, for his great success. During his track career, he ran the 440, 880, mile relay, and threw the javelin and discus.

Upon graduation from Slippery Rock, he became a health and physical education teacher at Bainbridge Junior High in Richmond, VA, coaching baseball, basketball, and gymnastics. He was inducted into the Carbon County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame in 1994.





Jack Kmetz



The tandem of Jack and Scott Kmetz represents the second annual dual induction into the Jim Thorpe Are Sports Hall of Fame (the first, Joe and Fran O'Donnell-1977).

They are the first, and thus far the only Father-Son combination to "each" score 1,000 points on the hardwoods in the history of the Lower Anthracite Area.

Jack played during "the golden era" of Jim Thorpe basketball, becoming a starter as a sophomore on the 1963 Eastern State Championship Basketball Team.

Scott Kmetz



He was the second player in Jim Thorpe history to score 1,000 points (Bill Bechtold was the first) and the second player to be named to the All-State team two years in succession (George Armbruster was the first).

In 1965, he set the scoring record at Jim Thorpe (1,109) – a record which stood for 25 years. During his high school career, he averaged 20.9 points per game and was the first player at Jim Thorpe to average over 20 points per game for two consecutive years. He scored 41 points on February 16, 1965; scored 30 or more points in 10 games; and scored 25 or more points 20 times during his career. In 1964, Jack won two scoring championships; the Black Diamond League averaging 28 points per game and the Carbon County crown averaging 23.1 points per game, becoming the only player to win two championships in one season.

His talents also extended to the baseball field where he started and won varsity letters for three years. As a sophomore he was named to the PV/Carbon County Dream Team as the second team catcher.

A "chip off the old block", Scott was an outstanding basketball player. A varsity player for three years (1982-84), he scored 1,043 points becoming only the fifth player to reach this goal.

His 597 point total for the 1984 season ranks second to Billy Bechtold (1959) as the most points scored in one season. In 1984, he was selected to the Schuylkill League All-Star first team, to the first ever District 11 team and the UPI All-State team. His baseball accomplishments were equal or exceeded those in basketball. He received four letters (1981-1984) and set school records in pitching for the most wins (16) in a career and the most wins in one season (10).

Scott also set school records in: Innings pitched, strikeouts, ERA, home runs (11), runs scored (54) and RBI (47). His batting average in 1984 was .408 and his career average was .535.

In 1938 and 1984, he was MVP for Jim Thorpe and was selected to "The Best in PA sports Team". He had tryouts with the Pittsburgh Pirates and was listed in the New York Yankees scouting system.

Scott attended the University of Miami and East Stroudsburg University. He also played one year at Delaware Valley College.





George Armbruster



George Armbruster began his outstanding athletic career as a “CYO hoopster”.

Playing for the St. Joseph’s “Hammers”, he was selected to the first team Panther Valley Parochial All-Stars in 1959

He continued his basketball career at Jim Thorpe Area High School where he was the starting forward on two of the finest teams to ever grace “the hardwood”; the 1961-62 State Championship and the 1962-63 Eastern State Championship Basketball teams.

During the 1961-62 season he was the second leading scorer (averaging 22 points per game) and led his team to the Eastern State Championship title. His outstanding play earned him a berth on the “6th Team All-State Team” (selected from all the players in the state-A,B, and

C) and to the “3rd Team All-State Team” (including players from B and C schools).

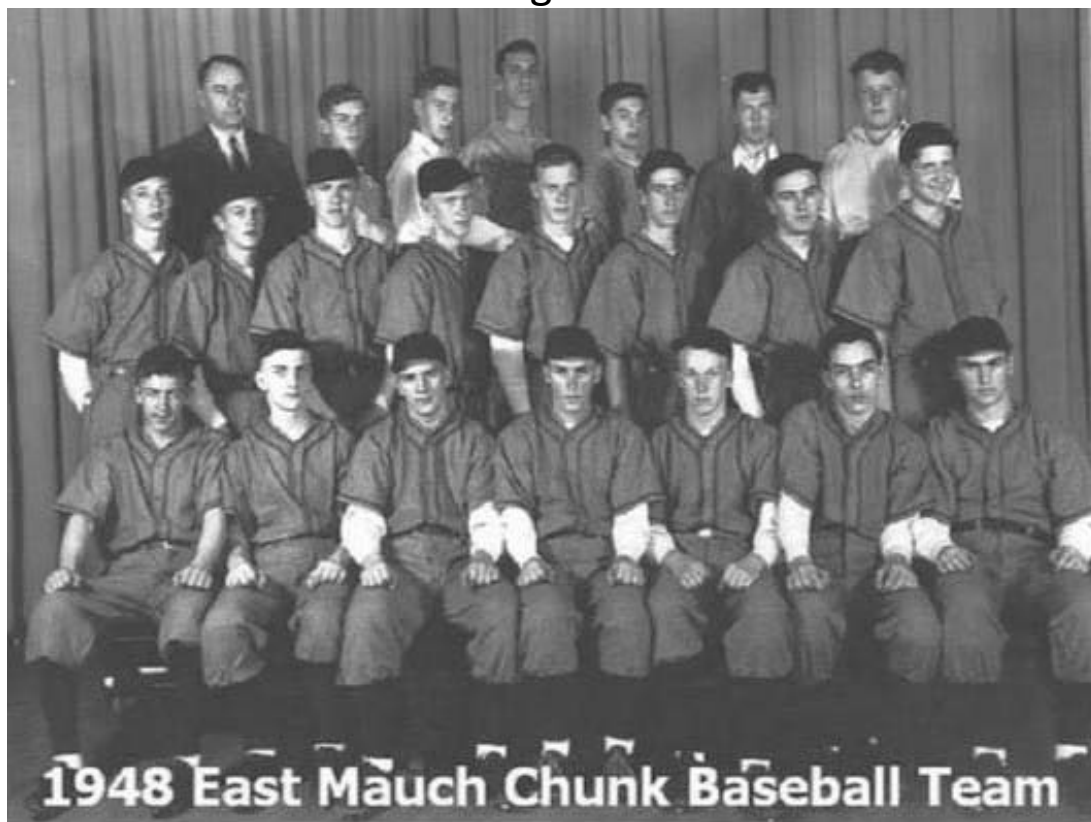
Armbuster’s success on the court are even more impressive when the following facts are considered: as a starter his teams compiled a record of 45-7 -- the best two year won/lost record ever; he was the only player in the history of Jim Thorpe sports to start in two consecutive State Championship games; he played in more championship games (league, district and state) than any other players – a total of ten – of which his team won nine; he scored 882 points in only two years; and, he is only one of tow players in Jim Thorpe basketball history to be named to two consecutive All-State Teams.

His prowess extended beyond the basketball court and on to the “baseball diamond”. In 1960-61-62 he received 3 varsity letters in baseball, playing at first base. He was a starter on the 1960 undefeated Black Diamond League Championship Team and the Panther Valley Carbon County Championship Team.





1948 Mauch Chunk High School Baseball Team



“Undefeated”, Mountain League Championship Baseball Team. During the teams first year of baseball at East Mauch Chunk High School, the team compiled a 12-0 record competing in the strong Mountain League. The team, under the coaching of Mr. Lawrence B. Morris, rode the strong arm of pitcher James Steidle, to win the league championship. The pitching staff of Steidle, and Richard Dick allowed (3) runs or less in nine of the twelve league games, including (4) shutouts, (2) one run games, and (1) two run game. The two hurlers allowed (23) runs in the (12) games, for a 1.91 ERA. James Steidle pitched a no-hit, no-run game against Weatherly. Richard Dick also pitched superbly with 4 wins and no losses. Fritz Watto, fiery, little backstop led the hitters with a .432 batting average. Goerge Kroculick hit for a .369 average, followed by John Smith with a .349 average and Vincent Huber finished up with a .317 average.

Pictured left to right, first row: Joseph Clewell, Trevor Bruch, Francis Watto, Richard Dick, George Eck, Joseph Walck, James Brosious. Second row: Vincent Huber, Joseph Kuhla, George Kroculick, James Steidle, John Smith, Donald Sheehan, Francis Mulligan, Bertram Steidle. Third Row: Mr. L.B. Morris (Head coach), William Carter, Kenneth Reis, Ernest Knauss, Bernard Kuhla, William Behan, Robert Blum.

