



**JANUARY 31, 2015**

*Ironton Fighting Tiger Hall of Fame Inductions*

January 31, 2015

**Welcome** ..... Rick McKnight  
Secretary/Treasurer HOFC

**Master of Ceremony** ..... Jason Philyaw

**Blazer Presentations**

**Blazer Presentation** ..... Bobbi Ann Hunt-Triplett  
presented by Linda Gagai

**Blazer Presentation** ..... Dr. John Leach  
presented by Mike Burcham

**Blazer Presentation** ..... Phil Rice  
presented by Paul Fugitt

**Blazer Presentation** ..... Bill Washburn  
presented by Mike Burcham

**Blazer Presentation** ..... Carl White  
presented by Butch Deere

**Closing Remarks** ..... Jason Philyaw



**Dr. John Leach**

Dr. John Leach was a 1957 graduate of Ironton High School who played football and basketball for the Fighting Tigers. An All-Ohio quarterback, Dr. Leach earned a scholarship to the University of Cincinnati where he lettered his senior year.

After graduation, Dr. Leach entered the service and later attended medical school and became an orthopedic surgeon. Dr. Leach served for 34 years as the Ironton team physician despite living in Columbus. He was also team physician for Ohio University and Otterbein College and often spent his weekends driving to Ironton on Friday, Athens on Saturday afternoon and then Westerville on Saturday night.

Dr. Leach was named to the Ohio High School Athletic Association Physicians Hall of Fame and was the recipient of the Columbus area's Dr. Gregory Brooks Award presented during ceremonies at the Buckeye Hall of Fame and was the 2004 recipient of the prestigious Dr. Thomas A. Brady Community Service given annual to orthopedic doctors who are instrumental in improving the care of high school athletes. The award was presented in Quebec, Canada. He was nominated by Columbus physician Randy Wroble. Dr. Leach was the 1985 Ironton Sports Day honoree.



**Phil Rice**

Phil Rice is remembered for his long-time coaching career as one of the most successful basketball coaches in Ironton history. During his 20 years as head coach, Phil guided Ironton the boys' first-ever state tournament appearance in 1994.

But Phil was also an outstanding basketball player for Ironton who also played two years of varsity baseball and helped the Fighting Tigers win the SEOAL title in 1968. Phil averaged 23.7 points per game his senior year, helped Ironton to the Class AA district tournament — the Fighting Tigers first appearance since 1959 — and was named All-Ohio by the Associated Press and United Press International.

Rice scored 468 points his senior year (1967-68), the second most points in a single season without the 3-point line. Ralph Snead scored 527 points during the 1957-58 season. Rice was the Ironton team captain, team MVP and first team All-SEOAL.

After playing at Marietta College, Phil was an assistant coach at Rock Hill under Carl Large in 1972-73. He also coached cross country and girls' softball. He came to Ironton the next year as the junior varsity coach and his 1976 jayvee team was 16-0. He took over as head coach in 1978 and guided Ironton to its only SEOAL championship in 1979 when he was the Coach of the Year.

The 27-year coaching veteran was selected to coach the South team in the annual North/South All-Star Game. His teams won six sectionals, four district titles, one regional and had a Final Four appearance.



## **Bobbi Ann Hunt Triplett**

Ironton Native, Bobbi Ann Hunt, started competing and winning by the age of 5. Bobbi Ann was a natural in the sport of gymnastics. By the age of 11, she had caught the eye of one of the nation's top coaches, Cap Caudill. He added her to his team of Olympic hopefuls and quickly went to work with the young star. While attending Ironton Middle School, Bobbi Ann spent her days traveling by plane between school and training, living summers and weeks during school away from home. She finished in the top 15 in the country in the Olympic Trials at the tender age of 12. She also won the bronze medal in the "All-Around" at the Junior Olympics at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO. She had suffered a knee injury 2 weeks prior to this competition and had knee surgery shortly after.

Her gymnastics came to a standstill with the injury. As an Ironton High School student, she became a majorette, all the while coaches at the national level wanted her to return. Bobbie Ann began helping Ironton's gymnastics team. By her senior year, she decided to return to competition. That year, she won the All-Around Gold Medal in the Ohio State Gymnastics Championship, defeating all divisions of high school while representing Ironton High School. She won Gold in balance beam, uneven bars, and vault, and silver medal in floor exercise. She was considered by many as the surprise of the tournament.

While offers from many Division 1 colleges came, she selected the University of Louisville and received a full athletic scholarship. Louisville was one of the top 6 colleges in gymnastics. She got to travel the country and compete with Ohio State, UCLA, Penn State, Florida State, LSU, SIU and many more. While attending U of L, Bobbi Ann was a two time "All-American." Individually, she won the All-Around Gold Medal in the Regional Intercollegiate Championship 3 or 4 years. She also won the All-Around gold medal in the Kentucky Women's Intercollegiate Championship 3 separate years. Bobbie Ann was ranked 16th in the country as a freshman and then finished as high as 6th nationally. She graduated from U of L with a Bachelors degree in Political Science.

Bobbi Ann has since taught many kids in gymnastics. She has done choreography over the years both for gymnasts and for high school plays. She taught fitness for years and has helped with conditioning for other ports, including the Dallas Cowboys off season work outs and her husband's football teams, assisting with advances in off season conditioning and training. She enjoys photography now, especially of sports, families, seniors and weddings and as an Intensive Care RN at Cabell Huntington Hospital.



## **Bill Washburn**

Bill Washburn is yet another outstanding Ironton athlete who enjoyed great coaching success. However, Washburn's coaching career was in a sport he did not play competitively in high school.

A 1970 graduate of Ironton and 1975 graduate of Ohio University, Washburn played football, basketball, baseball, track and cross country in high school. He did golf during the summer when not participating in other sports. Bill was a Tiger Clan winner was All-SEOAL in baseball and basketball and was a three-year starter in football. In baseball, he started all four years and played four different positions.

He took over coaching the Ironton golf team in 1989 when his oldest son Brian was a senior and head coach John Gagai was faced with scheduling conflicts due to teaching at another school. Bill remained the head golf coach until 2002. His teams made seven state tournament trips and won three straight Class AA state championships and had one state runner-up.

Bill guided his teams to eight district titles and seven regional championships. He coached 17 golfers who signed to play college golf including Tony Brown who became the first All-American athlete for Shawnee State University.



**Carl White**

White was a four-sport star in football, basketball, baseball and track at Ironton. He served as team captain in both football and basketball his senior year. The 1949 Ironton High School graduate was an All-Ohio selection who played in the North/South All-Star Game and was named the Robert E. Christian winner as the best senior athlete.

White played football and baseball at Eastern Kentucky University. He was a three-year starter as a defensive back and was the backup quarterback. Following his senior year, he was contacted by the Green Bay Packers about committing to the NFL draft. However, White was enrolled in the ROTC program and entered the U.S. Army upon graduation.

While in the service, White played football and baseball for the First Infantry in Germany and was player-coach for the baseball team. The baseball team advanced to the G.F. World Series and lost the series in seven games.

After the service, White served as an assistant football coach from 1955-56 at Coal Grove. He was an assistant football coach at Ironton from 1957-60 and was the head coach the next three seasons. White was the head baseball coach in 1961 when Ironton resurrected its baseball program and won the sectional title. Ironton lost 2-1 in the district tournament to Gallipolis and future Major League Baseball pitching standout Dave Roberts.

The 2014-2015 Hall of Fame Committee Members:

Linda Gagai

Mark LaFon - Chairman

Dean Nance

Rick McKnight- Secretary/Treasurer

Tom Phillips

Tim Thomas

John Wolfe

Jay Zornes

The Hall of Fame Committee would like to thank the following people who helped contribute to the success of our induction ceremony:

Mrs. Kristina Billing, program

Ms. Valerie Freeman and Mrs. Angela Malone, caterer

Jason Philyaw, Master of Ceremony

Mr. Jim Walker, biographies of inductees

Mr. David Phillips, sponsor of HOF program.

We would also like to thank you for attending the reception and look forward to seeing everyone at next year's induction ceremony.