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Central Washington University Athletic Hall of Fame Biographies

Central Washington University Athletics

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Gary Frederick **Athletic Director**

Gary Frederick, a native of Raymond, was Central Washington University's athletic director for 19 years (1980-99) and was instrumental in developing the school as an NAIA small-college power. He also played a major roll in their move from NAIA to NCAA Division II.

Frederick, who graduated from CWU in 1959 with a bachelor of arts degree in education, was also a standout football player for the Wildcats.

He was a three-year letterman (1956-58) and earned second team all-conference honors in 1957 and first team honors in 1958 at offensive center.

Frederick then coached basketball and baseball at Thorp High School (1959-60); football, basketball and track at Waitsburg High School (1960-63) and football and baseball at Central Kitsap (1963-67).

He returned to Ellensburg in the fall of 1967, taking on the dual roll of assistant football coach and head baseball coach.

He held the baseball coaching position for 11 seasons (1968-78), winning a school-record 234 games and leading the Wildcats to the NAIA World Series in 1968 and 1970.

He was an assistant football coach for 17 seasons, then later coached women's basketball coach for 11 years (1983-93). His basketball teams won 164 games, including a school-record 31 during the 1987-88 when they advanced to the NAIA national tournament.

For the past five seasons, he has served as CWU's softball coach.

Frederick was named District Coach-of-the-Year five different times in baseball (1969,1970 and 1971) and basketball (1986 and 1988). In 1997, the NAIA recognized his accomplishments when they inducted him into their Hall-of-Fame.

Debbie Gray **Swimming**

Debbie Gray, a native of Ellensburg, is one of the most highly decorated swimmers in Central's history, winning 15 All-American awards in her four seasons (1985-88).

She won eight individual All-American awards in breaststroke competitions, including NAIA national titles in both the 100 breast (1:08.97) and 200 breast (2:31.03) in 1986.

She also finished second in the 100 breast three times (1:09.28 in 1985, 1:07.46 in 1987 and 1:07.42 in 1988). She placed second in the 200 breast in 1985 (2:29.17), fourth in 1987 (2:30.83) and third in 1988 (2:28.89).

Gray also won seven All-American awards in relays, winning five national titles (in the 200 medley relay in 1985 and 1987 and in the 400 medley relay in 1985, 1986 and 1988) and finishing second once (in the 1988 400 medley relay) and third once (in the 1986 200 medley relay).

Growing up in Ellensburg, she was coached and influenced by CWU athletes from a very early age.

"From age eight I was coached by Central swimmers," said Gray, a newlywed with husband Dan

Snyder. "Having experienced coaches allowed me to grow every year and it made me feel a part of the school from a very early age."

After her graduation from CWU in 1988 with a degree in Spanish, she enrolled at Washington State University to work on a degree in Agriculture.

Since June 1993, she has worked for the Wenatchee Farm Service Agency.

Ron vanderSchaaf **Basketball**

Ron vanderSchaaf led the Wildcats to four consecutive NAIA national basketball tournament appearances (1984-87), including semifinal berths in 1985 and 1987.

A native of The Netherlands, he was the 161st player selected overall by the Los Angeles Lakers in the 1987 NBA draft. He is the last Central player to be selected in the NBA draft.

He was named to the NAIA All-American second team his senior season (1987) and was an honorable mention selection in his junior season (1986).

In addition, he earned first team all-district honors in both his junior and senior seasons.

VanderSchaaf dots nearly every major statistical category in the Central record book. He ranks fourth in career scoring (1693); second in rebounding (918); third in blocks (126), first in games played (140) and seventh in field goal percentage (.546).

On the single season charts, he ranks third in scoring (695 in 1987), fourth in rebounding (320 in 1987) and fifth in blocked shots (44 in 1987).

Twice vanderSchaaf was voted CWU's team captain (1986-87) and he Most Inspirational award winner (1986-87).

He led the Wildcats to 107 victories in his four seasons, including a school record 32 wins in 1987.

During the 1985-86 season, his shot at the buzzer enabled the Wildcats to defeat NCAA Division I Gonzaga 64-63.

"Ron improved as much as any player I ever had," said CWU's all-time winningest (609 wins) basketball coach Dean Nicholson. "And for a big man he was a great shooter from the outside."

Prior to enrolling at CWU, vanderSchaaf played one season of basketball for former CWU head coach Gil Coleman at Onalaska High School.

Willie Strange **Football/Booster**

Willie Strange, a life-long Ellensburg native, is one of the most supportive and involved Central Wildcats of all-time.

In 1950, he and Robert Bonjorni started the Merchant Patrol. The Merchant Patrol employed Central athletes to patrol the business community of Ellensburg.

With Strange's help, the program lasted for twenty-five years and provided approximately \$150,000 of assistant to Central athletes.

Although the Merchant Patrol may have been his most distinguished contribution to the university, it was by no means his only.

He sponsored the men's basketball "Hustle Award" from 1940-76 and often employed athletes at his local sporting goods store. Not seeking notoriety for his contributions, he has served the university quietly and consistently.

Before his graduation from Central in 1939, he played football for two seasons and was President of the "W" Club (1937).

Robert Bonjorni Football/Booster

Robert Bonjorni was instrumental in creating the Merchant Patrol with Willie Strange. Working for the police department at the time, the Ellensburg native oversaw the everyday operations of the program.

Bonjorni was a four-year letter winner in football (1946-49) and also lettered in track. From his defensive tackle slot, he helped anchor down – along with fellow Hall-of-Famers Bob Osgood, Bud Hake and Jim Satterlee - one of the best small-college defenses in the country.

"I was always too busy on the farm growing up to play sports," said Bonjorni who is retired with his wife of 33 years in Mt. Vernon. "So I learned a lot from those guys and I couldn't have accomplished what I did without them."

After his graduation from Central in 1950, Bonjorni was a successful mortgage banker and top ranked football and basketball official. He officiated football and basketball at the high school and college levels for 26 years. He was a regular official in the high school state basketball tournament and NAIA playoffs.

1968 Baseball Team

CWU's 1968 baseball team, which was coached by Gary Frederick, is the most successful team in school history, winning two games and placing third in the NAIA World Series in St. Joseph, Mo.

The team, which included future major leaguer Billy North, finished with a record of 24-11. North, who earned first team All-American outfield honors in 1969, batted .322 and led the team in home runs (4) and stolen bases (17).

Second baseman Harvey Klep (Bellevue) led the team in batting with a .343 average. First baseman Bill Walker (Bremerton) was the team RBI leader with 29.

The pitching staff was anchored by Butch Hill (Kennewick), who posted a 9-2 record and had a 2.13 earned run average.

Harvey Kochel (Ventura, Calif) had a 7-4 record and a team-leading 1.87 earned run average, while Rob Hippi (Toledo) posted a 5-2 record.

Four individuals – North, Walker, Hill and pitcher-outfielder Dave Benedict (Yakima), have previously been inducted as individuals into CWU's Hall-of-Fame, though Benedict's election was mostly due to his basketball exploits.

Other members of the team included Wayne Gibson (Bremerton), Greg Smith (Port Gamble), Bill Fugate (Enumclaw), Larry Kupp (Sunnyside), Warren Craig (White Swan), Doug Nelson (Bremerton), John Craig (Seattle), Chuck Basteyns (Enumclaw), Ron Hopkins (Chehalis), Kim Hammons (Snohomish), Marshall Virgil

(Bellevue), Jerry Johnson (Bremerton), Lee Day (Naramata, B.C.), Bill Driver (Seattle), Dennis Ward (Puyallup), Brian Groesbeck (Vancouver) and manager Don Fenton (Silverdale).

Hammons and North earned all-tournament honors at the NAIA World Series. Hill was voted the team captain and Gibson was selected the team's Most Inspirational Player.

Day later served a term as CWU's head baseball coach (1979-81) and also coached at Kittitas High School.