

Ernest A. “Prof” Blood*

Passaic HS Basketball Coach



Prof Blood very well might have been the first truly great basketball coach in the annals of high school sports. He coached the Passaic High School basketball team, also known as the “Wonder Teams,” from 1915-1924 and then at St. Benedict’s Prep for the next twenty five years. His numbers speak for themselves. Between the two schools, he won 159 consecutive games, a national record that still stands today (the first 147 wins at Passaic). At Passaic High his record was an unbelievable 200 victories, with only one loss. His overall coaching record stands at 621 wins, 129 losses. Under Prof’s leadership, Passaic captured seven state championships and St. Benedict’s won five. His 1921 Passaic team went 33-0 and outscored their opponents 2293 – 612. In 1960, Prof was inducted into the Naismith National Basketball Hall of Fame located in Springfield, Massachusetts. He was also the

subject of a book “Prof Blood and the Wonder Teams – The True Story of Basketball’s First Great Coach” by Dr. Charles “Chic” Hess.

And of course, one couldn’t talk about Prof without mentioning his pet bear cub Zep. Prof would bring his bear to the basketball games to sit the bench, only to wrestle him at half times. At one point, the taxi cab driver wouldn’t allow the bear in the cab after a game so he had to walk home from Paterson with Zep. The headlines the next day read “Blood Walks Home with Bear Behind.” Eventually the bear became too big to continue to live in his house in Passaic and had to be given away to live on a farm.

Prof Blood died in February 1955, leaving behind wife Margaret Thomas and his three children, Ernestine, Paul Thomas, and Ernest Benjamin.

**Posthumous Award*

Peter Hall

Bound Brook HS / Ridge HS Baseball Player and Coach



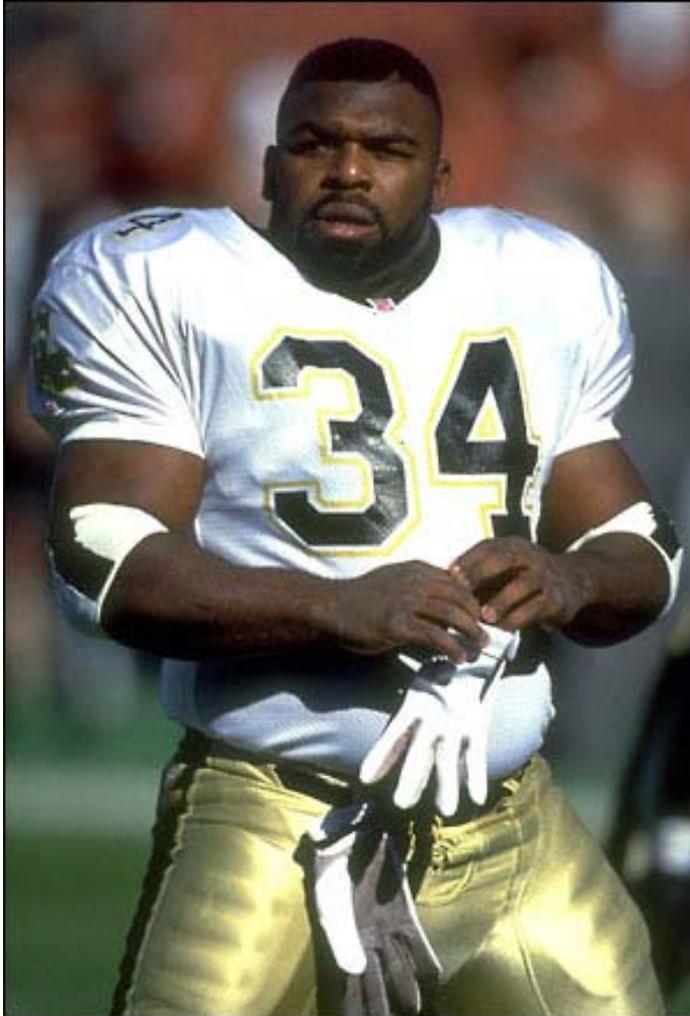
As a high school athlete, Pete earned an impressive nine varsity letters in football, basketball and baseball at Bound Brook High School. He was the high scorer on the Group III state basketball championship team and was the leading hitter on the 1957 and 1958 teams, which earned Peter all-state honors in both sports. Peter went on to Division 1, Rutgers University, where in 1961 and 1962 he was named an All-American in baseball. Next step, Peter moved on to the NY Yankees farm system for three years, before returning home to New Jersey to coach baseball at Ridge HS, which he did successfully for 26 years. At Ridge, Peter racked up over 400 wins and coached four Central Jersey championship teams. Peter is very proud to have played on a state championship team in 1957 and then coach a state championship team in 1987, when Ridge HS won the Group II baseball championships.

In addition to numerous coaching awards, Peter has been inducted into three Halls of Fame: Bound Brook HS, Rutgers University Olympic, and NJSCA. In addition to his remarkable playing and coaching career, Peter has made significant marks on the sport of New Jersey baseball through his service to several committees. He was on the NJSIAA Baseball committee that authored the pitching limitation rules and helped initiate the Senior All-Star games. He was President of the NJ

Baseball Coaches Association for at least four years and currently works with DAANJ retirees to run the annual convention for the past twelve years.

Craig “Ironhead” Heyward*

Passaic HS Football Player



During his four years at Passaic High School, Craig led the football team to a 39-4 record, two undefeated 11-0 seasons, and three consecutive state championships. He was a four-year starter named All-State First Team in 1982 and 1983 by the *Star-Ledger* and named to the *Parade* All-American Team in 1983. Craig finished his high school career with 5,142 rushing yards, 64 touchdowns, 499 points, the most rushing attempts in one game vs. Ridgewood (42) and most rushing attempts in a season (230 in 1982 and 215 in 1983).

After high school, Craig attended Pittsburgh University on a football scholarship where he played for three years, before being drafted into the NFL. At Pitt, Craig finished third of all time for career rushing with 3,086 yards. In his third and final year, Craig was named All-American, rushed for 1,791 yards in one year, and finished 5th in the Heisman Trophy balloting. He also set a Pitt record which he shares with Tony Dorsett for most 100-yard rushing games in a season (12). In 1988, Craig was drafted as the 24th overall pick by the New Orleans Saints.

As an NFL player, he played 11 seasons between the Saints, Bears, Falcons, Rams and Colts. He rushed for a total of 4,301 yards, had 1,559 receiving yards, and

completed 34 touchdowns. His best season was in 1995 when he rushed for 1,083 yards for the Falcons.

Craig left this world too soon, when he passed away at the young age of 39 from chordoma, a bone cancer near the base of the skull. In his short years, he truly left his mark.

*Posthumous Award

Renaldo “Skeets” Nehemiah

Scotch Plains-Fanwood HS Athlete (Track and Field and Football)



Regarded as the best hurdler of his time and the first man ever to be timed under 13 seconds in the 110-meter high hurdles, Renaldo hails from Scotch Plains Fanwood High School. His individual accomplishments there are too numerous. Some highlights include being the National Scholastic Record Holder in the 120-yard hurdles and 330-yard hurdles and the NJ State champion for both events. He was named Prep Athlete of the Year, Easterns Champion in the 120-yard hurdles and the NJ State Record holder for the long jump. After high school, Skeets went to University of Maryland, where he was named one of the Top-10 athletes in ACC history. In 1980 he finished 1st place in the US Olympic trials in the 110m hurdles (probably would have been the 1980 Olympic champion if the U.S. had not boycotted those games), was ranked #1 in the world for four years in the Indoor 60-meter hurdles and the world outdoor 110-meter hurdles. Renaldo's athletic career received its highest awards when he was inducted into the National Track & Field Hall of Fame, the State of New Jersey Sports Hall of Fame, the University of Maryland Hall of Fame, and the Maryland State Athletic Hall of Fame.

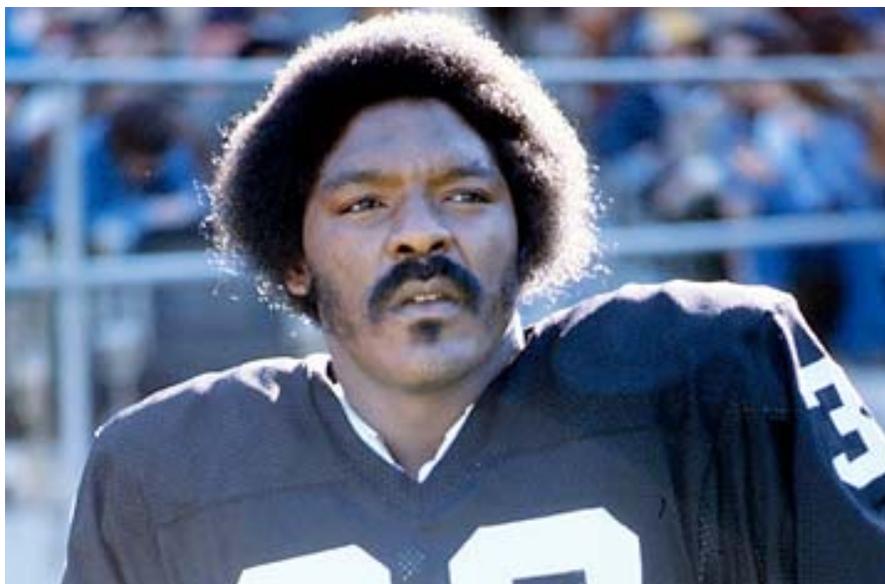
Renaldo is known not only for track and field but also for his career as a National Football League wide receiver for the San Francisco 49ers. In 1982, after domination of the hurdles for four consecutive years, Renaldo relinquished his amateur status and entered the professional football world. Although having no college

experience in this sport, Renaldo showed his versatility and perseverance with a successful career as a member of the World Champion San Francisco 49ers, in which he was also a member in 1984 when San Francisco won their second Superbowl. After four years of challenging the rules of amateurism in court, Renaldo set a precedent becoming the first amateur ever to play professional football and be reinstated to run track and field. Today, in what is appropriately called “the Nehemiah Rule”; professional athletes can now participate as amateurs in track and field.

Today, Renaldo is the President of Athletics Promotion Ltd, an athlete's representation & sports marketing firm in Reston, Virginia. He manages some of the world's top male and female athletes among them Olympic & World Champion medalists. He oversees their marketing strategies, contract negotiations, budget management, and recruiting.

Jack Tatum*

Passaic HS Football Player



Jack was a star athlete at Passaic High School, roughly 15 years prior to “Ironhead” Heyward. On offense, Jack played fullback and on defense he played linebacker and safety. He was an integral part of the 1964 Group 4, North 1 state championship team and ended his high school career with 409 career rushes, 26 touchdowns (14 in his senior year), and 2,257 all-purpose yards. In Jack’s three years playing varsity, those teams’ combined records were 24 victories, two losses and one tie. The Associated Press honored Jack as a 1965 All-State Honorable Mention player, and in 1966, he earned All-State First Team.

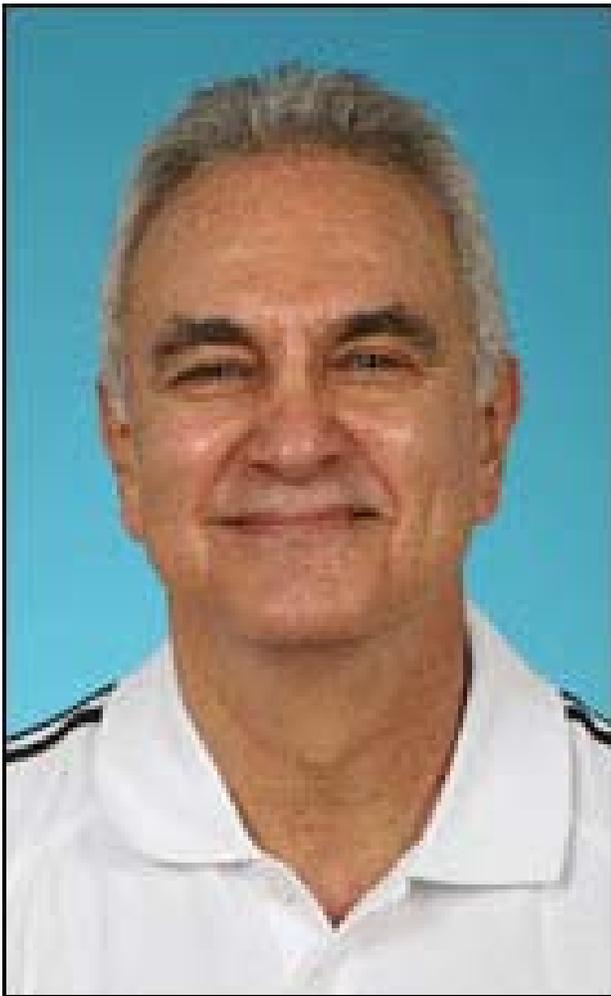
As a collegiate football player, Jack played under the legendary coach, Woody Hayes, as a safety at Ohio State University. OSU won the 1968 National Championship, two Big Ten titles, and competed in two Rose Bowls. Jack was a two-time All-American and named the 1970 national Defensive Player of the Year. In his three seasons as a starter, he led his teams to a 27-2 record and was inducted into the Ohio State Athletic Hall of Fame in 1981.

In 1971, Jack was drafted in the first round (#19) by the Oakland Raiders, where he played for eight years and captured a Superbowl win in 1977. As a pro player, Jack was named to the Pro Bowl three times and was part of the famous “Immaculate Reception” play when it was his hit on the Steelers’ Frenchy Fuqua in a 1972 playoff game that sent a Terry Bradshaw pass into the arms of Franco Harris, who ran the ball for the winning touchdown.

**Posthumous Award*

Dave Wohl

East Brunswick HS Basketball Player and Coach



As a basketball, football and track star at East Brunswick High School, Dave was an All-Area standout in football and basketball. In Dave's senior year, he led Middlesex County in scoring in football and was voted the Middlesex County Scholar Athlete. He is also very proud to have spent the summer of 1966 teaching brain injured children how to swim. Dave went on to play for the University of Pennsylvania and star on the nationally ranked Quaker teams of the early 1970's. In 1971, his senior year, Dave was captain of the basketball team that was ranked 3rd in the nation and finished the regular season undefeated with a record of 28-0 and went to the final Eight in the NCAA Tournament. That same year, Dave was yet again voted as a school Scholar-Athlete.

Dave just recently entered his 40th year with the NBA. He spent the first seven years as a player, the next 27 as a coach and has been in an executive position for the past six years. He has been to the NBA Finals five times, won two NBA championships; the first with the Los Angeles Lakers in 1985 and the second with the Boston Celtics in 2008.

But of all Dave's extensive achievements, if you ask him, he'll say his biggest accomplishment is being married to his wife, Elena for the past 21 years and having raised two terrific daughters.

Eric Young

St. Peter's HS / New Brunswick HS Baseball Player



Eric was a two-sport athlete for St. Peter's HS and New Brunswick HS. From there he would go on to be a two-sport standout for Rutgers as a baseball and football player before heading to the MLB. In 2000, Eric was inducted into the Rutgers Olympic Sports Hall of Fame and then a year later was inducted into the Rutgers Football Hall of Fame.

Eric's MLB career began with the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1992, but very soon after that he became one of the original Colorado Rockies in 1993. Eric has the high honor of being the very first batter ever to represent the franchise. In Eric's 15-year MLB career, he's been recognized with many prestigious awards. He earned the Lou Brock Award for being the NL stolen base champion, and earned the NL Silver Slugger award in 1996 as the best hitting second baseman in the league. He was on the NL All-Star team and was also given the Jackie Robinson Award for outstanding achievement in baseball by the NAACP in 1997.

Eric's professional baseball career spanned 14 seasons with seven different Major League teams. After Eric officially retired as

a Rockie on September 12, 2008, he spent a few years as an ESPN Analyst for the Baseball Tonight Show and spent two years as the Arizona Diamondbacks first base coach. His son, Eric Young, Jr. is following in his footsteps, and currently plays for the NY Mets.