

2010 Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame



Jerry Malgieri

When measuring greatness in Saugerties sports one looks at an individual from many different aspects. Athletic success, team leadership, ongoing commitment to sport programs, and service to the community are all important attributes for which an individual could be recognized. When putting Jerry Malgieri to the litmus test it becomes evident that his sports achievements and participation in the Saugerties sports scene are as well rounded as any individual in the Saugerties community. As a result of his accomplishments Jerry Malgieri has deservedly earned his place alongside other Saugerties sports greats and he is congratulated for his induction into the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame.

Born 8/30/53 in Schenectady N.Y., Gerald "Jerry" N. Malgieri is the oldest of four children born to A. Nicholas and Geraldine Malgieri. Jerry's dad Nick, who worked many years for IBM, passed away in 1978, while his mom Geraldine still resides in Saugerties and stays very busy with her 9 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Jerry's younger brother Nick, a talented athlete in his own right, also still resides in Saugerties while his sister Cheryl lives with her family in Highland. Jerry's younger sister Cathy, whom he was very close to, sadly passed away in 2007.

Jerry Malgieri's early sports participation began at the age of 8. Growing up in High Falls, N.Y., Jerry participated in the Rondout Valley Little League as well as the Rondout CYO basketball program. Athletic success arrived early for Jerry as a member of the Rondout Valley Little League Red Sox where his team enjoyed an unprecedented 3 seasons without a loss and 4 seasons with only 2 losses capturing three championship titles in that time. At the conclusion of his Little League play, Jerry's family moved into the Onteora Central School District and in 1965 Jerry attended Onteora High School as a 7th grader competing in basketball and baseball. A year later in 1966 just as he was starting to get comfortable, Jerry's dad Nick received new marching orders from IBM and subsequently the family was whisked away by Big Blue to Longmont Colorado. While attending 8th grade in Longmont, Jerry played both football and basketball before moving back to New York in 1967 where he and his family set up their permanent residence in Saugerties.

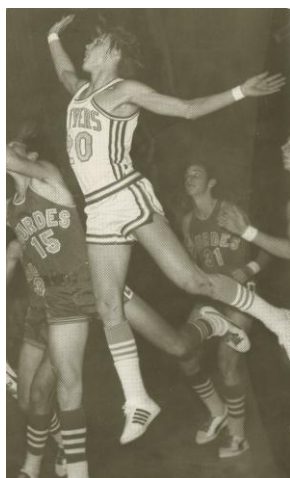
In 1967 Jerry Malgieri entered the Saugerties sports scene participating in the Saugerties Babe Ruth League as a member of a team sponsored by Marquette Cement. Jerry's athleticism combined with his bright outgoing personality drew the attention of both players and coaches who quickly embraced the likeable new kid in town and rewarded his talents by selecting him to the Saugerties Babe Ruth 14/15 Year Old All Star team. It became

quickly evident that Jerry Malgieri was an up and coming talent who had a bright future and was poised to begin a successful high school athletic career.

Entering Saugerties High School as a freshman, local coaches were all ready aware of Jerry Malgieri's all around athletic ability. As a 9th grader Jerry played Junior High football and basketball, while receiving the distinction of being selected to play baseball at the Junior Varsity level. On the grid iron Jerry's speed and intelligence were put to use on both sides of the ball where he played halfback on offense and cornerback on defense. On the court, Jerry's leadership qualities made him the perfect candidate to be groomed as the future point guard for the Varsity basketball team and subsequently as a 9th grader he began his apprenticeship for that anticipated role. Shortly after the start of his freshman basketball season Jerry recalls one of his most memorable sports moments when he was called up to play JV basketball as a 9th grader by coach and fellow Hall of Famer Pete Kramer. Jerry recalls, "The first JV game I dressed for, Coach Kramer called me off the bench only a couple minutes into the game". "In those days the gym was packed even for JV games and I remember being very excited and more nervous than I have ever been in my life". "It's a feeling I'll never forget". Jerry continued playing JV basketball and JV football as a sophomore with fellow Hall of Famers Bill Schirmer as his JV football coach and Pete Kramer as his JV basketball coach and on both teams he continued his role as team leader and catalyst.

Jerry Malgieri's true love and arguably his best sport was baseball. In the spring of his freshman year, Jerry pushed the envelope of high school sports participation by not only being selected as a freshman to play JV baseball on the Ron Kunst led squad, but also by becoming a three sport athlete. There are few athletes who are able to play 3 high school sports, however fewer who are able to do so while achieving success in both those sports as well as in the classroom. It's important to recognize Jerry Malgieri's accomplishment of competing at the highest level while at the same time maintaining academic excellence throughout his entire high school career. As a result of his hard work in the classroom, upon graduation Jerry was accepted at Marist College on an academic scholarship and went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mathematics. After Marist, Jerry worked briefly for the IBM Credit Union before being hired by IBM where he has worked for nearly 32 years. This is something for which Jerry and his family should be very proud.

As a freshman on the JV baseball team Jerry continued developing as a solid shortstop and contact hitter and once again at an early stage in his high school athletic career he was projected by his coaches as the program's future as a result of his combined athletic ability and leadership qualities. In the following year as a sophomore Jerry was rewarded for his talents by being promoted to the varsity and playing on a team that was projected by most as the DCSL's powerhouse of the future. In his first season on the SHS varsity baseball team Jerry made an immediate impact and became the team's starting shortstop. Jerry's all out, take no prisoners approach quickly set the tone for the Sawyer Nine as the talented squad resonated the scrappy playing style of their tenacious shortstop.



Jerry: 1970 Sawyer Basketball

From 1969 through 1971 Jerry Malgieri continued his 3 sport participation at Saugerties High School playing varsity football and basketball in both his junior and senior years while playing varsity baseball in his sophomore, junior, and senior seasons. As a testimony to his leadership qualities, Jerry was selected as Captain on all three varsity teams in his senior year. In football, Jerry played under Hall of Famer Fred Seither but unfortunately in his senior year he suffered a broken ankle early in the season and was forced to support his team from the sideline. Jerry's injury fortunately healed in time for his senior basketball season where he took to the court as the Sawyer point guard under the direction of Coach Gerry Hawkins. As a playmaker and scrappy defender Jerry led his SHS varsity basketball team both on and off the court. In a game in 1970, Jerry's on court leadership was really put to the test when head basketball coach Gerry Hawkins became ill just prior to the game. Without hesitation Jerry and teammate Rich Koegel stepped up, took charge, and as player coaches guided the Sawyers to an exciting first ever major sport victory against a Poughkeepsie High School team.

In the spring of 1971, Jerry Malgieri and the Saugerties Varsity Baseball team were poised to accomplish what everyone had projected them to do and anything short of a DCSL championship would have been a disappointment. With players the caliber of Rich Koegel, Tom Whitaker, and Jerry Malgieri being coached by talented rookie coach Tony Vizzie, the Sawyer Nine were held to high expectations...and they didn't disappoint. Led by Captain Jerry Malgieri and his .383 batting average, the Sawyers cruised to 17-2 record claiming the DCSL Championship and establishing the beginning of a highly successful 20 year run by SHS baseball coaching great Tony Vizzie. As the number 2 man in the lineup, Jerry Malgieri's high on base percentage not only resulted in him being one of the DCSL's league leaders in runs scored that year, but it also attributed to much of the success enjoyed by RBI men Rich Koegel and Tom Whitaker. Not yet satisfied with their accomplishments, the 1971 Vizzie squad went on to win the Class A Section IX championship to further emphasize the talent and dominance of this team.. Much of the 1971 championship baseball team's success can be attributed to the intelligent leadership and productive, hardnosed play of Jerry Malgieri and fittingly, Jerry was rewarded for his performance by being selected "First Team All DCSL" joining close friend and teammate, fellow Hall of Famer Rich Koegel.

In the summer of 1972 Jerry traveled to Cooperstown N.Y. playing at Doubleday field in the New York State American Legion Championship game as a member of the Saugerties Post 72 American Legion team. Although coming up short and losing 11-2 in the final against Utica, Jerry cites his participation in the '72 Legion Tournament as one of the most exciting experiences he's ever had. "I remember one game on our way to the championship we were no hit and I scored the only run of the game", "What a thrill!" Jerry reminisces.

Outside of high school athletics, Jerry Malgieri has participated in many extracurricular sports. As a Saugerties Athletic Association participant, Jerry has pretty much done it all. SAA full court and half court basketball, SAA volleyball, SAA flag football, SAA softball along with numerous championships for these sports are all part of his resume. Notably, Jerry participated with the champion Anaconda Sports "A Division" softball team donning the trademark Houston Astros rainbow colored uniform of the late '70's. As an IBMer, Jerry also participated in the IBM leagues playing fast pitch softball, basketball, flag football and golf and as you probably guessed was part of many championship teams.



Jerry with 1982 Dutchmen

Arguably, the most notable accomplishment of Jerry Malgieri's sports journey was his return to play competitive baseball. After high school, Jerry was invited to play baseball in the "Albany Twilight League" with Tony Vizzie and the Finkle Jewelers team. Playing only 2 years in the Albany League (1972-1973), Jerry thought he was officially done playing baseball as he became more involved with his college studies. However, after a 7 year hiatus from baseball and the announcement of the rebirth of the Saugerties Dutchman, Jerry Malgieri found the temptation too great to resist and against his better judgment made the decision to once again play baseball in 1980. Lovingly,

Jerry's Dutchman teammates, many who were too young to have ever heard about him let alone see him compete, referred to their eldest player as "gramps" and once again the new "kid" had to prove himself to those who weren't aware of his athletic skills. After the first few practice sessions it became evident to the doubters that Jerry Malgieri was a player and although a little older and a step slower, Jerry proved he could still compete and that he wasn't on this team to be a spectator. After the Dutchman claimed the Hudson Valley Rookie League title in 1980, Jerry Malgieri was rewarded for his amazingly successful season and his .370 playoff batting average by being selected to the HVRL All Star Team. Those who know baseball and understand the difficulty of coming back to play after only a one or two year layoff can truly appreciate Jerry Malgieri's accomplishments in that 1980 Dutchman season. Those who witnessed it were treated to something that was truly special.

Jerry Malgieri's community involvement is as valued by Saugerties as was his athletic involvement. As a volunteer, Jerry was involved with the Saugerties Little League as a coach for 10 seasons and in that time teams under Jerry's direction won 3 league championships. For 7 years Jerry Malgieri coached teams in the Saugerties Babe Ruth League (twice winning championships) and while with the league Jerry also served 7

years on the Board of Directors as league Treasurer. Other coaching accomplishments of Jerry Malgieri include SAA basketball (9 seasons with 3 championships), Saugerties Junior High basketball (one season) and Saugerties JV football (3 seasons). Currently, Jerry acts as pitching coach for the Saugerties Post 72 Senior American Legion Baseball Team having coached for the past 9 years while enjoying one District Championship. In addition to his coaching responsibilities with the American Legion baseball team, Jerry also serves on the American Legion Sports Committee and is largely responsible for raising the \$13,000-\$15,000 needed annually for the Legion team. For nearly 30 years, Jerry Malgieri has energetically coached teams in the Saugerties community passing on his knowledge and his passion of the game while at the same time working as an administrator and fund raiser. Saugerties is grateful to Jerry Malgieri for his involvement as a volunteer and thanks him for his ongoing dedication and commitment to its sports programs and the youth of our community.



Jerry (center) with Legion coaching staff

As much of an inspiration as Jerry Malgieri is to others in our community, he humbly acknowledges those who have been an inspiration to him. “I believe it all starts at home with the support and encouragement of your parents, and I had the best.” “My mom and dad were always there for me and supported my participation in sports throughout my youth.” Jerry also acknowledges coaches throughout his high school career like Pete Kramer, Bud Smith, Hank Smith, Fred Seither and Tony Vizzie whom he looked to as role models and as a support structure while

in high school. Jerry recalls when he was going through a tough time defensively while playing on the varsity baseball team. He went to Coach Kramer and told him that he should put someone else at shortstop because he felt he was hurting the team. Coach Kramer responded by saying, “You’re my shortstop, don’t ever forget that, now go out there and play like you’re capable, end of discussion”. Jerry recalls, “It’s little things like that that pick you up and teach you”. “You never forget those lessons and you carry them with you throughout your life”.

Another memorable moment that helped mold Jerry’s perspective occurred in 1973 when he began coaching the SHS JV football team with fellow Hall of Famer Hank Smith. Hank was highly respected by the players and other coaches which enabled Jerry to craft his understanding of what coaching was all about from x’s and o’s to the ins and outs of working the players physically as well as mentally. During the baseball season Jerry assisted Tony Vizzie coaching the Sawyer varsity baseball team once again working with a technician who knew how to get the most out of his players. “I considered it a privilege to have been able to have coached with two of the best coaches and people in the sports community of Saugerties”.

Considering all of Jerry Malgieri’s accomplishments, surprisingly when asked about his biggest thrill in sports Jerry proudly recalls the thrill of watching his children participate in sports from the time they were small right up to adulthood. All of Jerry’s four children were talented athletes who participated in Saugerties High School sports. His oldest, Nicole played high school softball and earned “All MHAL” honors in her senior year. Jerry Jr., was a SHS baseball standout as a crafty left handed pitcher and infielder while Jerry’s twins Marc and Mike excelled in golf and baseball respectfully, both earning All MHAL honors in their sports. Jerry reflects, “ Sports have been a wonderful part of my life and theirs, providing learning experiences that have been instrumental in making them who they are today”.



Jerry and Family

As sports have made a difference to the lives of Jerry Malgieri’s children, Jerry’s contribution to local sports has in turn made a difference to those in this community. Fittingly, Jerry Malgieri is being recognized for these accomplishments as a 2010 inductee into the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame. Jerry’s achievements as an

athlete and a volunteer are unsurpassed and it is with great pride that the members of the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame and the Saugerties sports community congratulate and welcome into the Hall of Fame, Jerry Malgieri.