

## 2007 SAUGERTIES SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

### Lou Spada



Lou Then--#10 headed for pay dirt



Lou Now--with wife Kathy

Lou Spada was born in Saugerties, NY on October 9, 1944 to Lou and Emily Spada. He was raised with three brothers (Dave, Dan and Alfred) and one sister (Terri). On October 16, 1965 he married Kathy Dedrick. Together they raised two children, Eric and Krista. They now enjoy their grandchildren Lidy, Jullia and Peyton. They own and operate Total Tool.

Lou began his sports career playing baseball in the Glasco/East Kingston Little League. He was a catcher and pitcher for the Yankees. As a pitcher it was not uncommon for young Lou to strike out ten plus batters per appearance. He continued with baseball playing for the American Legion team in the Saugerties Babe Ruth. This experience prepared him to play at Saugerties High School. Where he played for his coach and inspiration Bill Straub. During his high school career Lou fondly remembered hitting a 360-foot home run against Arlington. He also had the pleasure of catching John Nolan, who was arguably one of the hardest throwers in SHS history. Lou recalled, "You could certainly hear the pop of my mitt and feel the burn in my hand."

Lou also played basketball and wrestled. He played CYO basketball before playing on the freshman team at SHS. He did not play his sophomore or junior years but returned to play on the varsity team his senior year. As a senior he filled the role of enforcer. Lou remembers, "being put into games to control the other teams aggressiveness." During his hiatus from basketball he participated in wrestling at SHS. He competed in the 145-pound weight class.

As well as Lou played other sports, football is where he made his mark. He started out playing on the junior varsity squad as a freshman. As a sophomore he was promoted to the varsity squad. He was a member of the legendary Saugerties High School football teams that compiled a 39-0-1 record. In 1961, he was named to the Kingston Freeman's Best of the DCSL Team as a running back. He was honored to be

named to the team with teammates Bill and Chuck Schirmer and Eddie Gunn. As a senior he was awarded the Best Back Award at the SHS Football Testimonial Dinner at which New York Giant defensive end Andy Robustelli was the keynote speaker. Lou was known as a speedster who always gave everything he had on every play. He was also known as a competitor and teammate who refused to lose. When things needed to be done Lou, in his number 10 jersey, was doing whatever was needed to ensure another Saugerties victory. In a letter to Jim Gage and the Hall of Fame Committee, his coach Bill Straub stated, "In my 16 years at SHS, Lou was the most team oriented player I have ever coached. His unselfishness and blocking at the point of attack made our teams winners. He also picked up tough yardage off tackle and inspired his teammates to work hard to achieve success. One of my fondest memories of Lou was when he was tackled going off the left side that he bounced up and peeled tacklers off his back. He received a 15-yard penalty for unnecessary roughness. There are many players I could recommend but, to me, Spada is a champion via his great determination, courage and unselfishness." Being part of such a good team is sure to produce many wonderful memories. Lou remembers a punt return against Albany Academy, which helped the Sawyers defeat the home team. He also recalled a touchdown against Beacon, at Beacon, which contributed to another Sawyer victory. Most of all he remembers his teammates John "Big Daddy" Marshall, Al Giannotti, Hank Smith, Bill Vickery, Stu Crank, Bill Schirmer, Russell Talmadge, Al Hrdlicka. Bob Francello and coaches Bill Straub, Fred Seither, Bud Smith and Jeff Smythe. He was planning to continue his career at Cortland State College until a broken leg forced his retirement.



Lou with other award winners and Andy Robustelli

In addition to athletics Lou was President of the Student Council at SHS. His involvement in sports resulted in his being awarded, along with good friend Carol Hillje, the Most Physically Fit Student in 1962, as voted by the faculty of the SHS Physical Education Department.

After high school Lou participated in other competitive endeavors. He has raced motorcycles and cars. He has flown airplanes and he is an avid sportsman. He is a Life Member of the American Motorcycle Association. He won the AMA On Ice championship in 1971. He was a regional amateur champion in 1972 and a regional open expert champion in 1973. He has also raced Corvettes. He is a charter member of the Tri-Vettes in 1966. He is a Life Member of the National Corvette Museum. He graduated from the Skip Burton Racing School in 1979. He was the Northeast Regional Division Solo II champion in 1980 and finished third in the national competition, held in Topeka, KS, that same year. He has participated in the Richard Petty and Mario Andretti Driving Experiences. He is a licensed pilot who owns a Cessna 172 and has participated in the Warbird Flight School. As an outdoorsman he is a Life Member of the National Rifle Association and the New York State Pistol and Rifle Association. He is a member of the Adirondack Museum, the Gooley Club (in Newcombe, NY), the Hendrick Hudson Sportsman Club, the Watervliet Fish and Game Club, the Indian Lake Gun Club (he also serves as Range Officer), and the American Trap Association. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Lake Abankee Owners Association and he is a New York State Whitewater Guide.



Lou at the Richard Petty Driving Experience

Lou has been one of Saugerties' finest athletes. He was not only a sports champion in Saugerties he is a champion in life. The Hall of Fame is honored to welcome Lou as a member of the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame. Congratulations.



