

Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame

Polian leads Class of 2007

The architect of the Buffalo Bills Super Bowl teams, one of those team's inspirational leaders and defensive stars, one of the great playmakers in Buffalo Sabres history and an NCAA basketball legend, highlight a class of 11 new inductees into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame.

Bill Polian, Darryl Talley, Phil Housley, Christian Laettner, Tony Masiello, Dick Ciprich, Patty Jordan, Tovie Asarese, Joe Foyle, Jim May and the Muscato Family join a rich heritage of native Western New Yorkers or those who starred in and around the Queen City to be enshrined in the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame.

The 2007 class will be officially enshrined in October (date yet to be released) at HSBC Arena. This event will mark the 17th class to be inducted into the Hall of Fame since its inception in 1991 and brings total membership to 192.

To follow, in alphabetical order, are individual mini-bios on the enshrinees:

Tovie Asarese

For nearly 50 years, Tovie Asarese has played an important role in Western New York amateur and youth sports — so important that without his efforts, many would not have had the opportunity to play and compete.

In 1970, he converted an empty lot into a West Side play area that included paving, lighting, and fencing of 9,500 square feet, four basketball courts and a tot lot. He founded the West Side Little League Football Club, and the

West Side Street Hockey Program. He founded and directed the West Side Ponytail Softball League and reorganized West Side Boys Baseball and served as its president. Asarese sponsored and coached the AAABA Royal Printing club for more than 50 years. His team went undefeated in 1976 and finished third in the nation in 2000.

Dick Ciprich

A three-sport star at Watkins Glen High School, Ciprich earned 10 letters playing basketball, football and baseball. While baseball was his love, he eventually took up the favorite sport of his parents, bowling, and became a natural on the lanes.

He bowled with the Buffalo All Stars, one of the most powerful teams in the country, ranked as one of the top five in the nation in the late 1960s, winning 15 championships throughout the US in 1965. Ciprich placed fourth in the U.S. Open in 1970, was the BPAA All-Star Champion the same year, All Star Doubles Champion with Tom Baker in 1971, and was a member of the ABC Tournament 10-year average list. During his career, he had 29 300 games.

Joe Foyle

With a highly successful high school coaching career spanning more than 50 years, Joe Foyle could certainly claim the moniker "Mr. Football" in Western New York.

Arriving in Lancaster in 1951, Foyle, an Ithaca native and graduate of Ithaca College, launched a heralded football coaching career.

As junior varsity coach for seven years, he compiled a record of 43-2-2. His high school record of 117-81-7 included three championships and two co-championships. He is the winningest coach in Lancaster's 85-year history.

He was a founding father of the Western New York Football Coaches Association, charter member of the Section VI Football committee, and Western New York Coach of the Year numerous times. The Western New York High School Football News named the Large School Coach of the Year award and the football field at Lancaster carry his name.

Phil Housley

Born in Minnesota and drafted sixth overall in the first round of the 1982 NHL entry draft by the Buffalo Sabres, Phil Housley made the quantum leap from High School to the NHL at age 17 and quickly became a fan favorite and a feared foe.

During his 21 seasons in the league, he appeared in 1,495 games, scored 338 goals, 894 assists and 1,232 points. He earned a spot on the NHL Rookie Team in 1983 and played in six NHL All Star Games.

His tenure with the Sabres was accentuated by playing in 643 games and setting the team record for all-time points by a defenseman with 558.

Housley was a member of the 2002 US Olympic Hockey Team, winning a Silver Medal in the Salt Lake City games. He was inducted into the Buffalo Sabres Hall of Fame earlier this year.

Patty Jordan

An outstanding athlete in five different sports at Eden High School, Patty Jordan was also the number one player on the boys' varsity golf team for four straight years.

Jordan was named the winner of the top female athlete in the Erie County Interscholastic Conference, and won the Ron Jaworski scholarship as Western New York's outstanding girl athlete in 1978. As an amateur golfer, she won the Women's Buffalo Interclub Golf Association Junior Girls' Championship two consecutive years, 1976 and 1977, and the 1977 Erie County Junior Girls' Championship.

In her 13 years on the LPGA Tour, Jordan played in 230 events including three U.S. Opens, earned five top-25 finishes and won the Ocean State Open in 1988. Patty received the 2000 LPGA 'Samaritan Award.'

Christian Laettner

Christian Laettner of Angola, honed his skills on the courts of Nichols School where he won two state championships and was the all-time leading scorer with 2,006 points.

Laettner's college career at Duke University was movie-making material, winning back-to-back NCAA titles in 1991 and 1992. He is one of only four players to play in four consecutive Final Fours, and the only player to ever start in all four Final Fours. He holds several NCAA tournament records including most games played (23).

He was the only college player named to the original 'Dream Team' that won the gold medal in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona Spain.

Taken third overall by Minnesota in the 1992 NBA draft, he played 13 seasons for six different teams, was voted to the All-Rook-

ie Team in 1993 and was voted to the All Star game in 1997.

Tony Masiello

Buffalo residents were familiar with this team captain of the Cardinal Dougherty High School and Canisius College basketball teams long before he served three terms as Mayor of Buffalo.

Masiello was a three-year starter at Dougherty, averaging 18 points as a junior and was league scoring champ in 1965 with 21 points per game. He led his team to the Manhattan Cup Championship in 1963, runner-up in 1965, and named MVP that year.

At Canisius, Masiello led the team in scoring, rebounding and free-throw percentage his junior and senior years. He was voted to the Canisius College Hall of Fame and to the school's Pre-70's All-Century Team. He was selected by Indiana in the 1969 ABA draft.

Jim May

The game of soccer hardly registered a blip on the Western New York sports radar until Jim May elevated its stature, first as a player and then as a promoter.

A junior college soccer All-American in 1972, May moved on to Brockport State College, where he played for the fourth-ranked Division I team in the nation and earned Division I Collegiate All-American status as a goalkeeper. He was drafted first overall by the Rochester Lancers of the North American Soccer League.

In 1979, May was the first player signed by the newly formed Buffalo Stallions. May was an All-Star selection in 1981. After the franchise folded, May was instrumental in returning the game to Western New York with the Buffalo Blizzard, serving as Vice President and General Manager from 1992 to 1999.

The Muscato Family

In the world of heavyweight boxing, it is rare to find brothers who rise to the upper levels of the sport and remain consistently competitive.

But in the 1940s, Buffalo boxing meant the Muscato brothers - Joe, Phil and Sam from Dunkirk. Phil and Joe rose to the top 10 in the world heavyweight rankings. Phil, the younger brother, is considered by many to be the best heavyweight in Buffalo boxing history. He fought 32 main events and holds two of the biggest record-drawing crowds at Memorial Auditorium. He faced many of the best of his era including Angelo Sotillo, Harry Matthews, Archie Moore and Rocky Marciano.

Joe stunned the crowd in Cleveland when he knocked out the second-ranked Lem Franklin, marking his 13th consecutive pro victory. At one time, he was ranked 6th in the world.

Bill Polian

Since entering professional football in 1978, Bill Polian has not only helped build competitive teams, but championship squads.

Polian joined the Buffalo Bills in 1984 as pro personnel director and was promoted to general manager in 1985. The Bills became winners, compiling a mark of 58-22 from 1988 to 1992. Buffalo reached the Super Bowl in 1990, 1991, and 1992 during Polian's tenure, then added a fourth Super Bowl appearance in 1993, a year after his departure. He then built the newly-formed Carolina Panthers into the winningest ex-

pansion franchise in sports history, taking the club to the NFC Championship game in only its second season.

Currently serving as the GM of the Indianapolis Colts, Polian has built the team into a powerhouse. The 2006 Colts reached the NFL pinnacle, winning an unprecedented fourth-consecutive division title, posting an unbeaten home record, producing its fourth consecutive season with 12 or more wins, and winning four playoff games in claiming the Vince Lombardi Trophy in the Super Bowl.

Darryl Talley

Darryl Talley was drafted in the second round of the 1983 NFL draft out of the University of West Virginia. A consensus All America linebacker, Talley learned the world of professional football in a humble way - experiencing back to back 2-14 seasons. But by the mid 1980s, a coaching change and the addition of a few players enabled Talley's Bills to usher in a golden age of Buffalo football.

During the Bills four Super Bowl seasons, Talley led the Bills in tackles every year but one, finishing second in 1991. That year would be his finest as a Bill, recording four sacks, four forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries, and five interceptions - a team high. He appeared in two Pro Bowls.

Talley never missed a game during his 11-year career with the Bills. He is the Bills all-time leader with 1,137 tackles. He also recorded 38½ sacks and 11 interceptions.

Pride of WNY Award goes to Kansas, Reidpath

In addition to the Hall of Fame inductions, two other athletes, boxer Rocky Kansas and track and field standout Charles Reidpath, will become the first enshrinees in a new wing called the Pride of Western New York, which honors Buffalo-area sports immortals posthumously.

Rocky Kansas

Rocky Kansas was a tough, short (5-foot-2) former lightweight champion of the world.

Born in 1895 in Buffalo, Kansas faced the cream of the featherweight and lightweight divisions. He knocked out Richie Mitchell in 1921 and upset Lew Tendler to earn a title shot at Benny Leonard. Leonard won a unanimous decision, but retired, and the title was claimed by Jimmy Goodrich. Kansas was a decision over Goodrich to win the title after 14 years of fighting.

Charles Reidpath

Charles Reidpath, war hero, civic builder and Olympic Champion, was born in Buffalo, in 1889.

At Lafayette High School from 1904-08, Reidpath was an outstanding track competitor, in spite of an unorthodox flat-footed running style. It was while at Syracuse University from 1908-1912 that Reidpath became a collegiate track star, winning the 220- and 440-yard dashes in the 1912 Intercollegiate Games. At one point he held the college record for the quarter mile.

Upon graduating from Syracuse in 1912, Reidpath made the U.S. Olympic track team. He won the 400 meters in an Olympic record-shattering time of 48.2 seconds. This record lasted until 1924. Running the anchor leg of the 4x400-meter relay, Reidpath helped the U.S. team set a world record of 3:16.6.



FORE — Williamsville's Justin Cardon watches one of his drives during the 55th International Junior Masters on June 26 at East Aurora Country Club. The tournament was held through Friday, June 29. Cardon shot rounds of 82 and 85.

Photo by John Normile

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