

Bios for HOF inductees '15

HOF TEAM

1978 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM: The 1978 Islanders entered the Class A playoffs as a #8 seed. Grand Island defeated #1 Lincoln Southeast 8-7 in the opening round, beat #3 Lincoln Northeast 19-6 in the semifinals, then beat #2 Creighton Prep 31-7 in the championship game.

HOF Contributor

Norval "Nay" Deines: A Grand Island sports personality, Nay Deines started his radio broadcasting career in Clay Center, Nebraska, with KMMJ, in 1934. When KMMJ moved its headquarters to Grand Island, in the 1940's, Deines followed and began his prolific sportscasting career. Nay was the voice of Islander football for over 40 years and worked in sports broadcasting during the 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s. In addition to football, Nay called American Legion baseball games, basketball, professional wrestling, rodeos, midget car racing and Golden Gloves boxing. Nay was also a fixture as a timer at Fonner park, serving alongside longtime announcer Dean Williams for decades. During his career, Deines had the privilege of interviewing such sports legends as Joe Louis, Max Baer and Yogi Berra. Nay also had the honor of being one of the sports journalists of his day to vote yearly for the Heisman Trophy.

HOF Players

Claire Boroff: One of the greatest running backs in Islander History, Claire Boroff held the record for rushing yards in a season (1,294) for almost 50 years. Claire was an integral part of the 1953 State Championship Team and the 1954 team. As a collegiate running back and placekicker, Claire went on to earn All American honors at Kearney State College in 1958. In addition to a stellar career as an athlete, Claire went on to a very distinguished coaching career, with high school coaching stops at Bertrand, Gothenburg (where he won a state championship), Kearney High and Lincoln Northeast. Coach Boroff is best known for serving as the head football coach at Kearney State College from 1968 through 1999. Coach Boroff is the winningest coach in Kearney State/UNK history with 169 wins, 108 losses and 5 ties. Coach Boroff led the Lopers to 19 winning seasons and 12 conference titles. In 1987 Claire was inducted into the UNK Hall of Fame and in 2000 he was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame as a coach.

Harry Grimminger: One of the most dominant offensive linemen in Islander football history, Harry Grimminger, a 1980 GISH graduate, was a two-year starter at left tackle for Grand Island, helping pave the way for the ground game of the 1978 state championship team. Harry was an All State selection by both the Omaha World-Herald and Lincoln Journal-Star, selected to play in the 1980 Nebraska Shrine Bowl game, started 25 consecutive games at left guard for the University of Nebraska, and was a first team All Big 8 and first team All America selection in 1984. Grimminger was part of an outstanding offensive line that helped pave the way for Heisman Trophy Winner Mike Rozier and a Nebraska offense that led the nation in rushing (401.7) and scoring (52 points per game). Harry was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame in 2003.

Bobby Reynolds: Regarded by many as the greatest Islander player in history, Bobby Reynolds, a 1949 GISH graduate, was a quarterback who later starred as a running back at the University of Nebraska. Reynolds helped guide Grand Island to back-to-back undefeated state championship seasons in 1947 and 1948, plus was an integral part of back-to-back state championship basketball teams. At Nebraska, Bobby was a first team All America running back as a sophomore, setting a new school rushing record and touchdown record during the 1950 season. Referred to as "Mr. Touchdown," Reynolds was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame in 1972, the College Football Hall of Fame in 1984, and the Nebraska High School Hall of Fame in 1994.

Carl Samuelson: One of the most dominant players of his era, Carl Samuelson, a 1941 GISH graduate, earned All State honors as an Islander in 1940. After serving honorably in WWII, Carl went on to the University of Nebraska where he lettered in football from 1945-1947. The 6'4, 220-pound Samuelson enjoyed a stellar career as a receiver for the Huskers and was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame in 1982. Following his days with the Big Red, Carl played four seasons with the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers.

Tom Rathman: Tom Rathman, a 1981 GISH graduate, was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Grand Island, excelling in football, basketball and track. Tom gained a reputation, on the gridiron, as a bruising fullback and earned All State honors in 1980 and was chosen to play in the Nebraska Shrine Bowl. He played at the University of Nebraska from 1983-1985, and is regarded by many as the greatest fullback in modern Nebraska history. Tom earned All Big Eight Conference and third team All America honors in 1985. Drafted in the third round of the NFL draft, Tom played eight seasons for the San Francisco 49ers, winning two Super Bowl rings, before finishing his playing

career with the Oakland Raiders. Since then, he has served as a coach with the 49ers, Raiders, and Lions, and is regarded as one of the top running backs coaches in the NFL. Tom is a member of the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame and the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame.

John Sanders: One of Nebraska's greatest all-around athletes of any era, John Sanders was the Islanders starting quarterback during the 1962 and 1963 seasons. John earned All State honors as a quarterback for the Islanders in 1963 while helping lead the Islanders to the East Big Ten title. In addition to his prowess on the gridiron, John also earned All State honors in basketball, won the Class A state discus championship, and was named the Nebraska Athlete of the Year in 1964. John is most well known for his ability on the baseball diamond. Drafted by the KC Athletics in 1964, John played professional baseball with the Red Sox, Mets and Royals before serving as the head baseball coach at Nebraska for 20 years. John was inducted into the Nebraska Sports Hall of Fame in 2002.

HOF Coach

Ken Fischer: One of Nebraska's greatest high school football coaches of all time, Ken Fischer led the Islander Football program from 1973 through 1991. During his tenure, Coach Fischer's Islander teams qualified for the state playoffs 14 times. Coach Fischer led the 1987 and 1990 teams to state runner-up finishes and captured the state championship in 1978. Prior to his legendary career at the helm of the Islanders, Coach Fischer led Oakland High School to an undefeated State Championship in 1951. Coach Fischer compiled a career record of 214-69-9. Following his stellar high school coaching career, Ken went on to become an assistant coach at the University of Nebraska. Ken was inducted into the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame in 1995.