



NFF MINNESOTA CHAPTER

*News and notes from the chapter of
the National Football Foundation and
College Football Hall of Fame
serving the state of Minnesota*



March 2010

Two-Minute Drill

• The 3rd Annual NFF-MN “Honoring Legends, Inspiring Leaders” awards dinner will be held in Murray-Herrick Campus Center Room 304 at the University of St. Thomas on **Sunday, April 18 at 6:00 pm.**

Silent auction begins at 5:30 pm

Featured Speaker: **Rich Gannon**
Emcee: **Frank Vascellaro**

\$35 for chapter members
\$40 for non-members

Visit **www.nffmn.org** to purchase tickets to the event and for directions to the University of St. Thomas.

• NFF-MN members:

Remember to **cast your ballot** for the **2010 College Football Hall of Fame** class by **March 31**. You should have received the National Football Foundation’s magazine, *Footballletter*, in the mail. The ballot appears on the back page and can be returned via mail, fax, email (vote@footballfoundation.com), or telephone by calling (800) 486-1865 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (CT) on March 31.

The Play Caller

Mr. Sean Gothier
Minnesota Chapter President
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www.nffmn.org

In the Huddle

Bob and Pinky McNamara to Receive Distinguished Minnesotan Awards

On April 18, the NFF Minnesota Chapter will present the Distinguished Minnesotan Award to Bob and Richard “Pinky” McNamara for their contributions to football in the state of Minnesota.

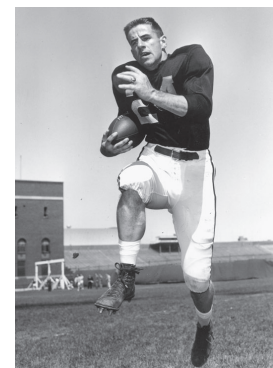
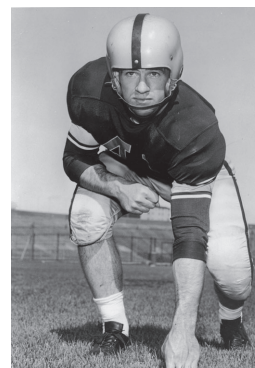
But “contributions” is an understatement.

The McNamara brothers have been loyal and generous supporters of the University of Minnesota and the Golden Gophers football program for more than 50 years.

Bob McNamara was a four-year letter winner for the University of Minnesota from 1951-1954, earning All-American honors, All-Big Ten honors, and the team’s MVP award during his senior season. After his career with the Gophers, Bob played in the CFL and NFL for seven years, which included seasons with the Denver Broncos and the Vikings.

Pinky McNamara was also a letter winner for the Gophers in the early 1950’s. In 1956, he played halfback in the Blue-Gray Classic and was drafted in the 23rd round by the Baltimore Colts. He earned a BA that same year and went on to become a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist.

The McNamaras remained loyal supporters of the University of Minnesota and its football



Award winners Bob (l) and Pinky (r) McNamara from their days playing for the Gophers.

program long after their playing careers were over. They have spent years raising funds for the university, and their involvement was instrumental to the completion of TCF Bank Stadium. Bob served as an honorary captain for the inaugural game in the new stadium on September 12, 2009. Pinky McNamara served on the University of Minnesota Board of Regents from 2001-2005, and his generous financial gifts helped fund the building of the McNamara Alumni Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota.

In addition to honoring the McNamaras for their dedication and service, the chapter will recognize other outstanding individuals from the world of professional and amateur

GAME BALL

Congratulations to the University of Minnesota’s **Eric Decker** (Cold Spring, MN) for being named an NFF Scholar-Athlete and 2009 William V. Campbell Trophy finalist. The prestigious award, formerly known as the Draddy Trophy, recognizes 16 scholar-athletes from all divisions of the NCAA and NAIA for their efforts in the classroom and includes an \$18,000 post-graduate scholarship. Eric’s achievement represents the highest academic and athletic ideals of our chapter and serves to inspire younger student-athletes.

NFF-MN to honor McNamaras, Lieser, Marshall, and 8 scholar-athletes at April 18th awards dinner

(story continued from page 1)

football in Minnesota. The event will feature a keynote address by 2002 NFL MVP **Rich Gannon**, and numerous college football and NFL legends will be in attendance. For the third year, WCCO-TV news personality **Frank Vascellaro** will return as Master of Ceremonies.

John Lieser will be honored with the **2010 Outstanding Officiating Award**. During his more than 45 years in the profession, Lieser has officiated high school football games, including sectional contests and state championships, and college football games in the North Central (NCC), Minnesota Intercollegiate (MIAC), and Northern Intercollegiate (NIC) Conferences. Lieser has also officiated 16 NCAA Division II playoff football games and worked the 1987 Division II National Championship game in Florence, Alabama, between Portland State and Troy State. His career is further highlighted by 49 years officiating high school and intercollegiate basketball games and championships, and 45 years as the golf coach at Apollo High School in St. Cloud. In 2009, Lieser was enshrined in the Minnesota High School Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame. In addition to his service on the field of play, Lieser has given back to the profession by teaching a course at St. Cloud State University called "Officiating Football/Basketball." Says the selection committee of Lieser: "John Lieser has always displayed a great deal of professionalism and integrity throughout his career as an official. He is well respected by his peers and the many officials he has mentored. His leadership in the officiating community has been outstanding in all areas."

Jim Marshall is the 2010 recipient of the **Fred Zamberletti Award**. The award, named for the legendary athletic trainer for the Minnesota Vikings, honors an outstanding athletic trainer who has done extensive work in the state of Minnesota. Marshall, this year's honoree, began his athletic training career as Head Student Trainer at the University of Notre Dame and attended Physical Therapy School at the Mayo Clinic in 1959. He joined the University of Minnesota staff in 1961 under Lloyd "Snapper" Stein and served both the football and hockey teams. Upon Snapper's retirement in 1975, Marshall was named Head Football Trainer. For 25 years he worked with the Gophers football program then eventually was named Administrative Services Coordinator of the Sports Medicine Department. Marshall's 42-year career at the University of Minnesota spanned 8 university presidents, 8 head football coaches, 6 head men's basketball coaches, 6 head men's hockey coaches and well over 8,000 student athletes from all the Gophers sports teams. In 1993 he was inducted into the Minnesota Athletic Trainers' Association Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the University of Minnesota "M" Club Hall of Fame.

Eight young men will receive recognition as outstanding high school **Scholar-Athletes**. These Scholar-Athletes, as nominated by their football coaches, were evaluated on their academic achievement (3.0 GPA or better), football ability, performance, leadership, attitude, and service to their community. Remarkably, the average GPA among the finalists was 3.84.

Scholar-athlete award winner **Marshal Ash** was a two-way starter and team captain for Milaca High School. He has earned All-Conference and All-State academic honors and was a state entrant for the wrestling team. Ash is also a member of the track team, band, and National Honor Society and is dedicated to service activities, including a youth mission trip to the Philippines. Ash plans to study pre-medicine in college. He is the son of Paul and Gayle Ash.

St. Thomas Academy fullback **Dan Freund** was named All-Conference, All-State Honorable Mention (Pioneer Press), and earned the title of Classic Suburban Conference leading rusher in 2009. His academic achievements include (story continues on page 3)

ON THE BALLOT

Two highly successful college coaches from Minnesota are on the College Football Hall of Fame ballot for 2010:

Jim Malosky, Sr.

Recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Minnesotan Award and honored guest at the chapter's 2nd annual awards dinner, Malosky coached football at the University of Minnesota Duluth from 1958-1997. He amassed a record of 255-125-13, making him the winningest coach in Division II history at the time of his retirement. He led teams to 9 conference championships and was named NSIC, MIAC, and/or NAIA Coach of the Year 13 times. He produced 33 winning seasons in 40 years at UMD.

Ross Fortier

Fortier is the all-time winningest coach at the University of Minnesota Moorhead (formerly Moorhead State). During his 23 seasons as head coach (1970-1992), the Dragons won 9 conference championships and were in the NAIA playoffs 7 times. He led his 1981 team to an unbeaten regular season and a #1 ranking in the final regular season poll. He is a member of the NAIA Hall of Fame.

CONTACT

Do you have news, notes, or features that you would like to see in a future newsletter? Would you like to correct an error or voice your opinion? If so, please email newsletter editor Carlee Tressel at ctressel@gmail.com.



Jacob McHenry (Henry Sibley HS)



Anthony Osifuye (Woodbury HS)



Jason Schneider (Andover HS)



Kris Wensmann (Melrose Area HS)

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Academic All-State honors and award-winning scores on the National Latin Exam. He volunteers at an elementary school care program and plans to study Economics at Princeton University. He is the son of Janet Freund.

Scholar-athlete **Jacob McHenry** is a three-year letter winner, captain, and 2009 team MVP for Henry Sibley High School. He was a 2009 Academic All-State selection and a Distinguished Academic Award Winner as a participant on the football, basketball, and baseball teams. McHenry has been involved with Feed My Starving Children and the Mendota Heights Youth Association. He plans to study aerospace engineering or business entrepreneurship in college. He is the son of Marcy and Shinya McHenry.

Scholar-athlete **Alexander Richelsen** led Holy Family Catholic High School to a 9-2 record and earned Academic All-State honors in 2009. In addition to football, he is involved in numerous service organizations including LaSallian Youth Club and National Honor Society and has participated in service trips to Florida and Ethiopia. He has lettered in football, basketball, and track and field, and he plans to attend the University of Notre Dame to study pre-medicine. He is the son of Michael and Jennifer Richelsen.

Captain of the Woodbury High School football team, **Anthony Osifuye** was an All-Conference and Academic All-State selection in 2009. He also earned All-Conference honors in track and field in 2009 and was named Student of the Year in 2007. Osifuye was the recipient of Woodbury At Your Service (W@YS) Awards in 2008 and 2009 for performing more than 20 hours of community service during the summer and football season. Osifuye plans to attend the University of Minnesota and study biomedical engineering. He is the son of Tracy Williams.

Holder of every receiving record at Andover High School, **Jason Schneider** amassed a three-year record of 20 wins, 12 losses, and one section title as a starter on both defense and offense. He earned Student of the Month honors in his freshman, sophomore, and junior years and is a member of the National Honor Society. His service activities include leading Bible studies and participating in a mission trip to Reynosa, Mexico. He plans to pursue a Doctor of Pharmacy at South Dakota State University. He is the son of Brent and Kristin Schneider.

Award winner **Gabe Mezzenga** was a two-time State Champion during his time playing for Totino-Grace High School. He was named North Suburban Conference Defensive Player of the Year and was named an All-State, All-Metro, and All-Conference (twice) selection. Mezzenga is a member of the National Honor Society and was a winner of the Spotlight on Scholarship Gold Award three years in a row. He has made and served meals at hunger organizations and has tutored elementary school students. After high school, he plans to study sports medicine. He is the son of Tony and Rainie Mezzenga.

Melrose Area High School stand-out **Kristopher Wensmann** earned Academic All-Conference (West Central Conference) and Academic All-State honors in 2009 and was recognized for Outstanding Achievement in German language in 2008 and 2009. In addition to being two-time captain of the wrestling and tennis teams, Wensmann has served as a Little Guy wrestling coach and has volunteered at Sharing and Caring Hands. He plans to study pharmacy in college. He is the son of Kevin and Karen Wensmann.

SCHOLAR-ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: 2009 HONOREE PAUL BERNDT



Paul Berndt is interviewed by event emcee Frank Vascellaro at the 2nd annual "Honoring Legends, Inspiring Leaders" awards dinner

2009 award winner Paul Berndt epitomized the qualities of a true scholar-athlete, excelling on the field and in the classroom and community during his high school career. He helped lead Mankato West HS to a Class 4A State Championship in 2008, was named Player of the Game in the championship showdown, and earned All-State Honorable Mention. Berndt was also a member of the National Honors Society and was active in numerous service organizations in his community. He received several scholarships for his academic excellence and service work, and he continues to thrive as student-athlete at Augustana College (SD).

Recently we caught up with Berndt, who gave us an update on his first year at Augustana and the transition from high school to college:

NFF-MN: At this (early) point in your college career, what majors or courses of study are you considering?

Paul Berndt: I am a biology major with aspirations to enter the medical field someday. I am not exactly sure what I want to do, but I have been considering becoming a physician's assistant or pediatrician.

NFF-MN: What has been your favorite class so far?

PB: My favorite class has been my first biology course, Biology 120. The professors made all of the subjects interesting, and it is a subject I am truly passionate about.

NFF-MN: What has been the best part about college?

PB: The best part about college is definitely the people. I have met so many great people and made so many new friends. The teachers have all been very positive and encouraging, and I share a room with my best friend. Being around great people has made college a great experience so far.

NFF-MN: What is the most challenging aspect of college?

PB: The hardest part of college has been adjusting to the additional rigors. College academics are way more challenging and [time-consuming] than any high school courses. I had to really work hard in every single class to achieve the grades I strove for.

NFF-MN: How has playing high school football prepared you for the challenges of college life?

PB: High school football taught me a lot about hard work and time management. On the field, hard work was essential every single day. Whether it was in the weight room, on the practice field, or in the games, hard work was essential in every aspect of football. High school football was also a very time-consuming activity, but it taught me how to manage my time and get everything done. This has helped me organize my time around a hectic college schedule and still get everything completed on time.

NFF-MN: What have been the most noticeable differences between playing football at the high school level and playing at the college level?

PB: The speed at the college level is much faster than at the high school level. College athletes form a combined group of many of the elite high school athletes from around the country. This makes the competition much more intense, but at the same time pushes each person to be the best they can be.

NFF-MN: What goals do you have for your academic and athletic careers at Augustana?

PB: My academic goals are to make the Dean's List every semester before graduating from Augustana College with a biology degree. After Augustana, I hope to attend graduate school and eventually enter the medical field. On the football field, I want to become the best football player I possibly can and help the Augustana Vikings reach the playoffs.

NFF-MN: What advice would you give to younger student-athletes who want to go to college?

PB: I would encourage any younger student-athletes to give their best in every aspect of their life. Make goals in the classroom and strive to reach those goals everyday. In sports, try your hardest and have fun. High school sports are gone in a blur, but enjoy every practice, game, and moment with your teammates to the fullest.

TEAMWORK

Become a member of NFF-MN and enjoy numerous benefits:

- Nominate and vote for candidates for induction into the College Football Hall of Fame
- Connect with Hall of Fame coaches, players, and all those who are passionate about football
- Honor local student-athletes through scholarships and recognize those who are outstanding contributors to the football community
- Invitations to chapter events
- Quarterly newsletters from the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame
- Free admission into College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana
- Invitation to the chapter's Annual Awards Banquet (April 2010)
- Opportunity to support the "Play-It-Smart" Program, which strengthens the skills of high school football players from economically disadvantaged environments
- See pages 6-7 of this newsletter for form and details



END ZONE

Mission Statement of NFF-MN

Our mission is to serve Minnesota and the nation by developing leadership, sportsmanship, competitive spirit, and academic excellence in America's youth through promoting amateur football.

Game plan for fulfilling our mission:

1. Inspire excellence through Minnesota and College Football Hall of Fame player and coach role models.
2. Highlight the educational and character-building benefits of football through youth programs.
3. Honor, publicize, and financially support student-athlete football players.



THANK YOU TO OUR FEATURED SPONSORS AND PARTNERS:



MINNESOTA VIKINGS





National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame Membership Application:

I am a: ☐ **New Member** ☐ **Renewing Member**

Chapter Name: Minnesota Chapter

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone Number: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

VARSITY CLUB

☐ One-Year Membership -- \$40

ALL-CONFERENCE CLUB

☐ Three-Year Membership -- \$99

HALL OF FAME CLUB

☐ Lifetime Membership -- \$1,000

PAYMENT OPTIONS

☐ Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ made payable to The National Football Foundation.

☐ Please charge my membership to my **Credit Card**.

Credit Card Type Credit Card Account Number Exp. Date

Signature of Card Holder

BENEFITS WAIVER

X I prefer to waive all benefits offered at my gift level, rendering my entire contribution tax deductible.

Please Mail, or Fax Page One Only To:
The NFF & College Hall of Fame, Inc.
433 Las Colinas Blvd. East, Suite 1130
Irving, TX 75039

Fax: 972-556-9032



National Football Foundation/College Football Hall of Fame:

- Founded in 1947, 122 Chapters in the United States with more than 12,000 members (one Chapter covers all of Minnesota)
- Nearly \$1 million in college scholarships are awarded annually to student-athletes that excel on the football field, in the classroom and in the community
- NFL/NFF Coaching Academies are conducted for high school and youth football coaches (60 Coaching Academies in 2006 included 9,000 coaches)
- Play It Smart Program – created by the NFF in 1998 with significant support from the NFL to support 11,000 student-athletes in 136 high schools by placing highly trained academic coaches with at-risk student-athletes to help their personal and academic development
- Independently administer, tabulate and communicate the BCS standings
- The Minnesota Chapter mission is to serve Minnesota and the nation by developing leadership, sportsmanship, competitive spirit and academic excellence in America's youth through promoting amateur football
- Web site for the MN Chapter is www.nffmn.org and the web site for College Football Hall of Fame is www.collegefootball.org

Highlighted Membership Benefits:

- Connect with Hall of Fame coaches, players, and all those who are passionate about football across all levels
- Ability to nominate players/coaches for inclusion on the Hall of Fame ballot
- Annual voting in February/March for the College Football Hall of Fame (subject to approval of the Hall of Fame Honors Court Members)
- Quarterly newsletters from the Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame
- Free admission to the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana
- Weekly emails summarizing recent college football news and events
- Annual Awards Ceremony and other Chapter Events: Chapter Members will benefit from Priority Tickets and Reduced Rates
- Charitable tax deduction

Current Minnesota Chapter Events:

- Annual Awards Ceremony : “Honoring Legends, Inspiring Leaders” event held in April will honor scholar athletes, coaches, officials, college hall of famers, and other leaders in Minnesota amateur football
- Quarterly Luncheons with Special Guest Speakers

For more information Contact: Sean Gothier, Minnesota Chapter President
Email: sean@nffmn.org