



*Laker Hall of Honor
Induction*

October 6, 2012

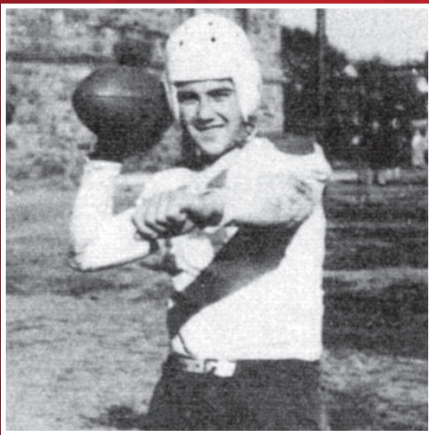
Holmes Community Center Ballroom

*"Standing on the Shoulders
of Those Who Came Before Us"*

Dennis “Bubby” Drews - Class of 1943



Dennis “Bubby” Drews, a 1943 graduate of DLHS, was an outstanding athlete in his years at DLHS. Bubby was named in 1950 as one of the four greatest Laker Athletes of the first half century. He played and excelled in football, basketball and track. He lettered in all three sports and was a captain of the football and basketball teams. He was on teams that won the District 23 Championship in Basketball and the Region Six Track meet.



As a small boy his big ambition was to fly and WW2 gave him that opportunity. After graduation he enlisted to become a Naval Aviator at Wold Chamberlain Field (now Minneapolis St Paul Airport) where he got his boot training. He then entered Aviation cadet training at Northfield, MN. He was sent to Minot for his initial flight training then went to Georgia Preflight. While there he quarterbacked the football team against some of the best in the country at that time. When he graduated, he went to Memphis for additional flight training and then onto additional flight training on the coast in May of 1945. The war ended in August of 1945 and the hope of a lasting peace settled on the world.

With the need for pilots diminishing Bubby chose to be discharged and enrolled in North Dakota State College to continue his education. He graduated with a degree in physical education and mathematics. While at college he married his hometown sweetheart Dagney. Later he became the father of two wonderful daughters, Lynn and Denice.

While at North Dakota State, he earned four letters in football, two in basketball and two in boxing. In football he was voted most valuable player two years and all conference three years in the North Central Conference. He was the captain of the football team for two years. He stayed at NDAC for a Masters of Guidance degree and coached the freshman football and basketball teams and scouted for the Varsity.

He entered the US Air Force Reserves in September 1950 and flew over 100 missions in Korea. He was the recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the WW2 Victory Medal, Korean Service Medal and was awarded the Air Medal for Meritorious Service in the Korean War.

Bubby died July 2, 1954 shortly after takeoff on a routine training flight in a F84F Thunderstreak at Dow Air Force base in Bangor, Maine. He was scheduled for leave the next day to be back in Detroit Lakes with his family for the 4th of July.

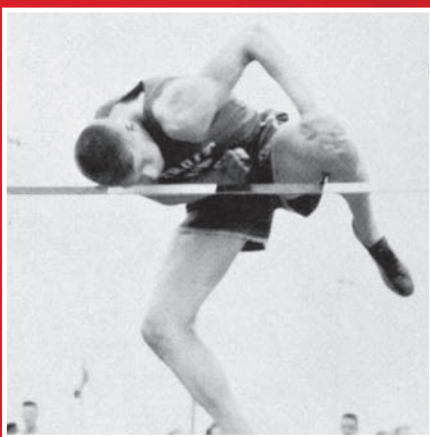
Bubby is remembered each year at North Dakota State University with the Dennis Drews award, started in 1955, for the Most Valuable Player on the NDSU football team.

He is survived by his wife Dagney and two daughters, Lynn Bidlake and Denise Scott.

Darold Thompson - Class of 1955



When Darold Thompson, a graduate of DLHS in 1955, was two years old, he suffered what doctors said was as gruesome an injury as they have ever seen. The injury, which was caused when his arm was pulled all the way through a Maytag wringer washer, was so severe that it ripped all the muscle away from his chest. Obviously, during his recovery through the years, it was pretty much thought Thompson would not be able to compete on an athletic field. But it was work with a basic rope which enabled Thompson to eventually become one of the best Detroit Lakes athletes of his time, as he excelled in football, basketball and track and field. His ability to defy the odds after such a horrific injury is an inspiration to all young athletes and a path on which he earned the nickname, "Horse."



Thompson's doctor as he grew older was Dr. Bill Dodds. He recommended to Thompson to start climbing the rope in the old DLHS gym backwards, to strengthen his chest muscles. As usual, Thompson took on the challenge and met it head on. After much rehab Thompson pursued three track events; high jump, pole vault and high hurdles. He eventually became one of DL's prized athletes by qualifying for state in the high jump during both his junior and senior seasons. When he graduated in 1955, Thompson held the school record in the high hurdles, which lasted 13 years, and the high jump, which he held for a dozen years. He tied for second in the state high jump as a junior and took silver as a senior.

Thompson had a broad jump of 21-0 and a high jump of 6-3.25. During a meet in Waubun, he hit his personal-best pole vault of 12-0. He was voted most valuable player on the track team.

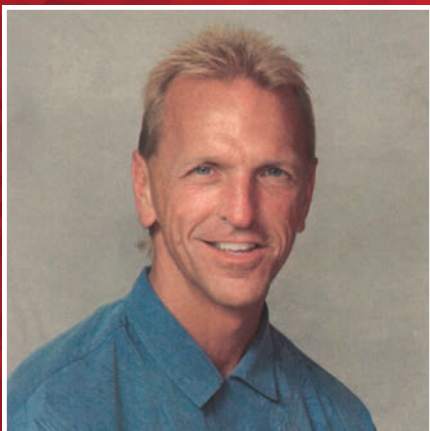
His speed for a bigger athlete was also a bit unusual. But again, it was his hard-work ethic which enabled his speed. During his freshman year, he took an extra subject, so by the time he was a senior, he would have his last hour of school free. Instead of just taking that time off, Thompson would run every afternoon.

Thompson had success on the gridiron, where he earned his longtime nickname, "Horse." Thompson started playing as a sophomore during the 1953 season, under then head coach Marv Helling who gave him the name "Horse" when he saw how hard he worked. The "Horse" kept true to his nickname, as he played every single down on both sides of the ball his sophomore through senior seasons. He played defensive safety as a sophomore and junior, and tackle both ways as senior.

As a 6-2, 195-pound athlete, Thompson also was a force on the basketball court. Even though he wasn't as tall as most centers, his vertical due to his strong legs made him one of the top rebounders in the area. The team was talented and beat perennial foe Moorhead in both his junior and senior year.

When Thompson graduated in 1955, he married his wife Arlene the month after graduation. He passed up a partial scholarship to play at the South Dakota University to work and support his growing family. His wife Arlene passed away in 2010 and he lives in Detroit Lakes after retiring from turkey farming.

Mike Neitzke - Class of 1975



Mike Neitzke, a 1975 graduate of Detroit Lakes High School, was an outstanding four sport athlete in football, hockey, baseball, and track. While in High School Mike lettered 12 times in four different sports; Hockey – Five, Football – Three, Baseball – Two, Track-Two.



Hockey was the sport where Mike excelled, not to take away from his excellence in the other sports. At the time of his graduation Mike was the all-time leading scorer in DLHS history in hockey with 100 goals and 104 assists for 204 points. Those assists Neitzke made were also a way for him to create more space for himself, since he was a marked player during his junior and senior years from his center position. This was an era when Detroit Lakes played a Section 8 schedule against the powerhouse teams such as Moorhead, Warroad, Thief River Falls, East Grand Forks, Bemidji and Roseau. The competition was fierce each night, but Neitzke and his teammates thrived on it. He was named to the Region 8 all-star first hockey team.

Like during the pickup games at the outside rink growing up, where Neitzke was usually the youngest and smallest, his start in a Laker uniform was much the same. Neitzke was brought up to varsity as an 8th grader and used the skills he had learned in the “shinny hockey” games on the outdoor ice in DL. He started blossoming as a defenseman his first three years,

then made the switch over to center his junior and senior seasons. Neitzke registered one goal his first year on varsity, then proceeded to score 11, 31, 20 and 37 the next four seasons.

In football Mike played running back and linebacker. He was a versatile two way player on a talented Laker team. He was the leading rusher his senior season, running for 516 yards on 113 carries for a 4.57 yards per carry average on the gridiron. “I just loved playing football,” Neitzke said. “It was a very close second to playing hockey. I loved the contact in both sports.”

Neitzke also played baseball and took part in track through his junior season. In baseball he pitched, played shortstop and left field. He lettered twice in track but did not participate his senior year due to a commitment to baseball.

Mike received a scholarship to play hockey for the University of North Dakota and was part of a team that won the WCHA Championship in 1979 & 1980 and the NCAA Division One Mens Hockey Championship in 1980.

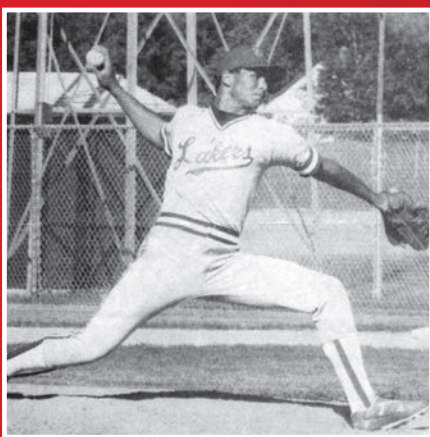
Mike is currently living in California and is involved with a Fitness Center in the Bay Area.

Mike Gunderson - Class of 1991



Mike Gunderson, a 1991 graduate of DLHS, was a three-sport star for the Lakers, excelling in football, basketball and baseball. Gunderson possessed talent and skills that can't be taught, which emanated from his 6-4, 235-pound frame during his high school playing days.

Gunderson didn't start out as the hulking 6-4 quarterback. He entered his freshman year as a 5-9 athlete. Between his freshman and sophomore seasons he went from a 5-9 to 6-4. Gunderson didn't just allow nature to do all the work. Instead, he harnessed his growth spurt by becoming a workout warrior in the weight room, and the time spent sweating and lifting paid off big-time dividends.



Gunderson is looked on as one of the pioneers who helped spark the Laker football dynasty of that decade, while being one of the top baseball prospects in the state during his junior and senior seasons. Gunderson entered his junior season starting at quarterback and free safety under head football coach Rick Manke. He was a quick study running the veer offense. He led the team in touchdowns, rushing yards on offense and interceptions on defense.

The Lakers were peaking by the time the section playoffs rolled around in the fall of 1990. The Gunderson-led team upset No.

1 seed Staples and then downed Fergus Falls to earn DL's first-ever state berth. They lost to Delano in the state tournament but the stage was set for the future Lakers to start one of the most dominating stretches of state championships in Minnesota history.

Even though football was Gunderson's first love, it was baseball in which he would have the most success. The DL native was just at home on the mound as he was under center. His fastball reached in the upper 80's in high school. By the time he was pitching in college his fastball was reaching speeds of 94 to 96 miles per hour.

In between football and baseball seasons, Gunderson was a force on the hardwood. He accumulated 386 points during his senior basketball season for an average of 19.3 points per game, while collecting an outstanding 206 rebounds. He broke the single-game scoring record when he dumped in 38 points against Bemidji. He finished with a career total of 572 points.

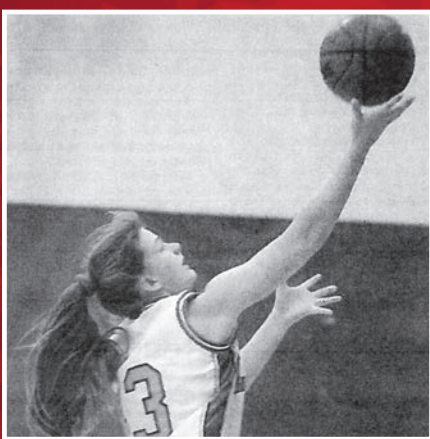
Gunderson went on to the University of New Mexico on a full ride scholarship to play baseball his freshman year, then transferred to NDSU for his sophomore and junior seasons. Mike was drafted by the Houston Astros in the 5th round of the major league baseball draft and chose to leave NDSU and pursue a professional baseball career. He played 3 minor league seasons. At the time of his induction Mike is living in Detroit Lakes with his wife Jeni and their 5 children.

Jessica Abrahams - Class of 1999



Jessica Abrahams, a 1999 graduate of DLHS, was an outstanding three sport athlete.

The well-rounded Abrahams became a Laker hardcourt legend, after she became just the second DL girls' basketball player, of that time, to eclipse the 1,000-point barrier. Her rebounding skill became as well-known as her scoring, along with her unselfishness, which attributed to her impressive assist numbers. Although the game of basketball came natural for Abrahams, she added to it with endless hard work and an unselfish attitude, which featured not herself, but her team. She ended her prep career in the all-time top 10 in points, rebounds, and assists.



Abrahams had superior shot selection, while playing stingy defense and showing the ability to find an open teammate. During her senior season, she averaged 16 points per game, but only averaged 11 shots per game, along with finding her way to the free throw line plenty of times.

In volleyball Abrahams was All-Conference for four years and was Captain two years. She was twice MVP, Defensive player of the year once, and offensive player of the year twice. She was a four year starter and was all state honorable mention her senior year. She was All-Conference 1995-98, while earning

loads of awards during her four-year starting career. She had a career serving percentage of 93 percent, and a serve-receive percentage of 89. Abrahams added big career numbers in kills with 936, along with 642 digs.

Abrahams was a Varsity track Member for 5 years, All-Conference – once, All-Section - twice, and competed in the State True Team Meet. The team was the Mid-State Conference Champions all five years.

Abrahams became a 1,000-point scorer for the St. Cloud State University women's basketball team St Cloud State and was a three year starter. At the time of her induction into the Laker Hall of Honor she is teaching her philosophy and hard-work ethic to the younger generation as assistant head coach for the UMD women's basketball team.

Rick Manke



Rick Manke joined the DLHS teaching and coaching staff in 1985. For over two decades the influence Manke had on all Laker extra-curricular activities was positive and is still being felt today.

It wasn't about winning state championships — although a good handful of those were accomplished under Manke's watch — but about benefiting the Laker student/athlete. What he brought to the Laker football program was strict discipline, a winning attitude and the correct way of playing the game.

By the time Manke decided to take on the activity director duties, and resign his head football coaching duties, he had racked up an amazing 120-31 record and three state championships.



Success didn't happen overnight for Manke, with his first three seasons going 5-4, 4-5 and 5-5. But Manke was just getting started developing the younger players, something which is vital to building a successful program. Manke's rigid discipline of doing the fundamentals led to perfection. In each of the Lakers' three championship seasons in 1992, 1993 and 1995, DL went a combined 41-0.

“If you tell younger kids enough times how to do things right, they'll start believing you,” Manke said. “You teach them good technique and build their confidence in themselves, they will perform. “You need to take time with the younger players; you can't just coach the varsity.”

That attitude started to pay off in 1988 when the Lakers went 10-1 and in 1990, Manke led his first team to the state playoffs and finished the season 11-2.

Manke credited the people who were around him for the success of his coaching tenure, but it was his detail-oriented way of coaching which eventually shot the Lakers up the mountain. It wasn't necessarily about winning, but what the players accomplished, Manke said. “The part I enjoyed when we won a state championship was seeing how much the kids enjoyed it,” Manke said. “Seeing what the kids got out of it is what it was all about. It's a lifelong achievement to do what those kids did. They utilized that one chance, which many kids don't get to have.”

After the 1997 season, Manke decided to move into his administrative activity director position, while resigning his head football position. During his time as activities director, Manke was able to instill that confidence and success in the rest of the programs. The coaches, who would see him attending virtually every home event, appreciated his hard-work ethic. Manke's footprints are still seen on all the DLHS extra-curricular programs. “My philosophy was to keep as many kids involved in as many programs as possible,” Manke said.

That is why the standards are set high and being raised every year at DLHS to this day.

LAKER ATHLETIC HALL OF HONOR REQUIREMENTS

Purpose: The primary purpose is to honor outstanding Laker athletes and teams of both genders, and all Varsity sports, the Detroit Lakes School System has sponsored, along with individuals who have made a significant contribution to the long-term betterment of Laker Athletics.

Eligibility:

- A: The individual must have graduated from Detroit Lakes High School and participated in Varsity Athletics.
or
The individual must have participated in Varsity Athletics for at least two years in the Detroit Lakes School System.
or
The individual must have made significant contribution to the long-term betterment of Laker Athletics.
- B: The individuals scheduled graduation must be a minimum of ten years prior to the nomination.
- C: Varsity teams are eligible as a whole group but no more than one team can be honored with each entrance group.
- D: The individual must not be a current employee of the school district or a member of the Detroit Lakes Athletic Foundation Board of Directors and may not be considered for nomination until five years after the completion of his/her employment or term.
- E: The individual must be a representative example of the Detroit Lakes High School's concept of dedication and demonstrate high qualities of character and leadership.

PURPOSE OF THE DETROIT LAKES ATHLETIC FOUNDATION

The Detroit Lakes Athletic Foundation was developed for the maintenance and improvement of Detroit Lakes Athletics through the use of endowment funds. The goal is to raise money and pledges for an ongoing endowment fund, with future committees to provide continued fundraising and yearly distribution of the yield from the invested funds. This fund is to supplement the needs of the Detroit Lakes Athletic programs for school age children. Equipment purchased must be owned by a qualifying 501(c)(3) organization. The primary emphasis will be on equipment that will be a benefit to all sports. If no requests exist that will benefit all sports, the advisory committee will review requests from individual sports. Fair and consistent treatment between sports over a number of years will be a primary consideration in recommending donations.

GIVING LEVELS

The original committee developed some giving levels. Please note the level can be achieved by giving money or soliciting new members to the Foundation. Sustaining membership in the Foundation is achieved by a \$100.00 per year donation with full membership obtained after giving \$500.00. Other giving levels are:

*The Red & White Award for giving \$2,500.00 or more

*The Bronze Award for giving \$5,000.00 or more

*The Silver Award for giving \$10,000.00 or more

*The Gold Award for giving \$20,000.00 or more

*The Platinum Award for giving \$50,000.00 or more

Any donation of \$2,500.00 or more receives two lifetime passes to Laker sporting events.

**This endowment fund is able to take donations of appreciated stock, real estate or other assets. In addition, one of the primary methods of long-term growth for this fund is gifting through a will that will benefit athletics in Detroit Lakes forever.*

DL ATHLETIC FOUNDATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mark Hagen • Mike Herzog • Jayne Thielen • Sue Portilla • Mitch McCleod
Matt Hedstrom • Jon Olson • Al Boehne

SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

Lori's Floral, Becker County Historical Society, Steve Caulfield, Detroit Lakes Newspapers, Midwest Printing, Inc., Brian Wierima, Brian Basham, Rhonda Fode, Kent Mollberg