

## Wayne Mones



Perhaps no one in the last half-century has represented high school sports in the city of Norwalk better than Wayne Mones, who played at Brien McMahon, coached at Central Catholic, and for the last eight years has been the athletic director at Norwalk High.

Born in Norwalk, Mones grew up on Woodward Avenue in South Norwalk until his family moved to Rowayton when he was in fifth grade. His sports career began in the Rowayton Little League where he helped lead Rowayton Pharmacy to the league championship and he pitched and played shortstop on the all-star team.

He moved up to the PONY League where he won another league title in 1966 with Merchants Bank and started at shortstop for the all stars. This was also during the time Mones attended Roton Middle

School, which was housed at McMahon, and he was a member of the soccer, cross country, basketball and baseball teams.

He transitioned to the high school part of McMahon in the fall of 1967 and as a sophomore was the quarterback on the JV football team. The junior Senators went 0-8 and that convinced Mones to switch to soccer the following year. Ralph King, who was still in the early years of a legendary career, was certainly glad he did.

Mones broke into the varsity starting lineup as a junior defender in 1968 and earned All-FCIAC second-team honors for the Senators, who were FCIAC co-champs with Staples that year. Then in 1969, he was not only named first-team All-FCIAC, but scored the winning goal with 13 seconds left in the FCIAC championship game to give McMahon a dramatic 1-0 win in a rematch against Staples.

While soccer was his main sport, Mones was also a three-year starting goalie for the BMHS ice hockey team and earned All-FCIAC first-team honors as a senior when he helped lead the Senators to a second consecutive state tournament berth. In the spring, Mones was a two-year starting first baseman on the McMahon baseball team.

Following his graduation in 1970, Mones took his soccer talents to UConn, where he was a two-year starting defender, was named All-Yankee Conference, and helped the Huskies win the league championship and earn back to back NCAA tournament bids.

Mones would eventually return to Brien McMahon as a guidance counselor and in 1978 became the head boys soccer coach at Central Catholic, at the time Norwalk's third high school. He quickly transformed a struggling program into one of the elite teams in the Western Connecticut Conference.

In 10 seasons under Mones, the Cavaliers were 86-54-18 and won three WCC championships. They also qualified for the state tournament seven straight years, reaching the Class S state finals in 1986 where they lost 1-0 in sudden death overtime to Granby Memorial.

Mones would coach only one more season at CCHS before accepting the head coaching position of the men's soccer team at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury in 1988. Like Central Catholic, he took over a struggling program and promptly led the Division III Colonials to success, compiling an impressive record of 212-89-34 in 16 seasons for a .680 winning percentage.

Under Mones' leadership, WestConn won six Little East Conference championships and qualified for 10 postseason berths in the NCAA and ECAC tournaments. In addition to his team's success, Mones was named the NCAA Division III New England Coach of the Year, as well as the Little East Conference Coach of the Year.

During his tenure at WCSU, Mones continued as a guidance counselor at McMahon, and since the Colonials practiced at night, he served as an assistant coach with the Senators during the final few seasons of King's Hall of Fame career, which ended in 1994.

Following the 2003 season, Mones stepped down as coach at Western Connecticut to become the new athletic director at Norwalk High, completing his personal trifecta of the city's high schools. In 2011-12, he oversaw one of the more successful school years in sports at NHS in nearly a decade, culminating with winning The Hour Cup for a second consecutive year.

While he gave up coaching on the collegiate level to take the Norwalk job, Mones remained involved in youth soccer as the coaching director of the Yankee United FC Premier Soccer Club. He personally coached Yankee United club teams to 13 state championships at various age levels. Two of his former players signed with teams in the new Women's Pro Soccer League, another played in the MLS, while three of his former WestConn players currently coach in the FCIAC.

Mones did return to Western Connecticut State University in October 2009 to be inducted into the Colonials' Athletic Hall of Fame.

The father of three children, who all played high school soccer, resides in Trumbull with his wife Lynn.