

## Lou Eletto Posthumous Honoree



The late **Lou Eletto** was living proof that good things come in small packages — including outstanding athletes.

Eletto was not only an outstanding athlete at Norwalk High School in the early 1930s, he was one of the best in the entire city. A quarterback in football, a forward in basketball, a shortstop and pitcher in baseball, not to mention a letterman and team captain in all three sports, Lou Eletto did it all when he wore the Green and White NHS colors.

Standing a little over five-and-a-half feet tall and weighing about 130 pounds, Eletto was a dynamo in whatever sport he played.

“I always liked sports ever since I was a kid and my father would take us to Yankee Stadium,” the lifetime Norwalker told James White in a feature story about his career that appeared in *The Norwalk Hour* after his playing days.

Born in South Norwalk in 1914, Eletto’s early sports career was playing sandlot baseball and football at the old Marvin Lot in East Norwalk. He began making a name for himself a few years later at Roger Ludlow Junior High School as a starter on the basketball team that went undefeated and captured the 1930 city championship. Eletto and his teammates — which included twin brothers Johnny and Joe Buschbaum — beat out Benjamin Franklin and Center Junior High, both much bigger schools, for the crown.

It wasn’t long after that Eletto entered Norwalk High School, which was located on West Avenue at the time. Despite his small stature, he quickly earned a reputation in football as an elusive and hard-to-bring-down quarterback in Norwalk’s offense.

A natural all-around athlete, Eletto also displayed his talents on the basketball court and as senior captain he helped lead the 1933–’34 NHS hoop team to an impressive 13–4 record. The skillful forward entertained large local crowds on the hardwood at the Norwalk Auditorium on Wall Street, Kish Hall in South Norwalk, and the White Eagle Hall on Pulaski Street.

When winter turned to spring and baseball season rolled around, Eletto played some of his best games for Norwalk High at Dunbar Field at Broad River where he liked to take advantage of the short right field fence. He also had some big moments at Amusement Park on Meadow Street, considered the best diamond in the city, while he also played at the old Baxter Grounds in SoNo.

After graduating high school in 1934, Eletto continued playing baseball with the Crawford and Knapp team, and basketball with the American Legion. His coach with the Post 12 team was Joe Andrews, the city’s recreation director and one of the founders of the Norwalk Old Timers in 1963.

Later, Eletto played softball with the local Enterprise team, from 1937–’39. When he got older, Eletto enjoyed bowling and playing golf, and did a lot of both despite still working six days a week at the package store he owned and operated on Cove Avenue.

Eletto was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II who served four years, including two years in the South Pacific with the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Upon returning home in 1945, Eletto became an active member of the Frank C. Godfrey Post 12 American Legion and the South Norwalk Council of the Knights of Columbus. He also belonged to the Laurels and the Pastimes athletic clubs.

There were very few things Eletto loved more than sports, but one of them was his family. The father of four daughters was married to the former Minnie Pybus, who was a teacher at Norwalk High School.

Louis Michael Eletto passed away in 1978 at the age of 64.