

Jim Ball

LIFETIME SERVICE TO WRESTLING

Curtis Junior High School 1960-1964

Curtis High School 1964-1980

Jim Ball received the coveted Gold Award at Puyallup High School, earning 8 varsity letters in football, basketball and baseball only missing a varsity letter in football his sophomore year due to Osgood-Schlater's. He earned All-State honors in football his senior season. He matriculated to Pacific Lutheran College, earning his B.A. degree while participating in football, basketball and baseball. He was the football team co-captain his senior season in 1953.

After serving in the U.S. Army for two years Ball began his teaching and coaching career at Nooksack Valley High School in 1956, coaching football and baseball, winning a baseball league championship. In 1960 the University Place School District offered a teaching and coaching position at Curtis Junior High. Puyallup High School and Pacific Lutheran teammate, Hall of Famer Ray Barnes, had previously piqued Jim's interest in the sport of wrestling and he jumped at the opportunity. His wrestling teams went undefeated, winning three consecutive league championships. In 1964 Ball accepted a teaching and head wrestling coaching position at Curtis High School.

From 1964 to 1980 Coach Ball and his wrestlers competed at the State Wrestling Tournament seventeen consecutive years. His practices were grueling. His wrestlers were never out-conditioned and they were incredibly strong. He demanded excellence in five basic skills: takedown, hold down, escape, turns and pinning. Having never engaged in competitive wrestling himself, Ball had to learn technique from scratch often engaging in wrestling clinics in the living rooms of fellow coaches.

Coach Ball's Curtis Vikings won 5 league championships, two regional championships, placing 3rd in the 1975 AA State Championships and 2nd in the 1977 AAA State Tournament. He coached 24 state placers and 5 state champions and one High School All-American, Paul Baxter. His dual meet coaching record was 209-52-2.

Coach Ball served as president of the West Central District Coaches Association and was the wrestling Sports Representative for the Washington State High School Coaches Association. He was inducted into the Washington Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1988. Ball resides in Lakewood and has three adult children, James W. (62), Stephanie ((60) and Donald (58). He also has four grandchildren.