

Local athletes, coaches named to halls of fame

BY JEFF VORVA
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It's hall of fame season in Downers Grove.

Nine former District 99 athletes or coaches have been named to their respective schools' halls of fame.

Downers Grove North honored four on Jan. 16: the swimming brother/sister tag-team Burke Sims (who graduated in 2009) and Haley Sims (2011) and football/basketball brother standouts Tommy Edwards (2004) and Garrett Edwards (2006).

On Feb. 13, South will induct five into its hall of fame, including legendary coach Chuck Novotny. Former athletes who will be honored are Cheryl Zemaitis-Ferguson (1985), Kurt Griesheim (1985), Adam Shafer (1994) and Kathy Smith (1983).

"We are so fortunate and proud to welcome these five new members to our athletic hall of fame family," South Athletic Director Randall Konstans said.

A closer look at the inductees

Tommy Edwards was a first-team all-state football team member in 2003 and an all-West Suburban Conference team member in 2002 and 2003 and rushed for more than 1,000 yards both seasons. He helped the Trojans make it to the Class 7A semifinals in 2003 and was named all-conference in basketball his junior and senior seasons.

Garret Edwards was an all-conference football player and an all-stater in 2004 and 2005 and led the 2004 squad to a Class 8A state title in 2004. He rushed for more than 1,300 yards both seasons. He also was all-conference his junior and senior seasons and was a three-year letter win-

ner in football at Illinois, where he was a defensive captain in 2009 and played in the Rose Bowl in 2008.

Burke Sims won the state championship and set a state record in the 500-yard freestyle and won seven Illinois High School Association medals in his career. He went on to swim at Stanford and helped the Cardinal win Pac 10 championships three seasons. In 2012, he was an NCAA national qualifier in the 800-free relay and an Olympic trials qualifier in the 200-free.

Haley Sims won state championships in the 100-butterfly, 200-individual medley and 200-medley relay in 2010. She won 14 state medals in her career and helped the Trojans to a fourth-place finish in the state swim meet in 2010. She was named the Illinois Swim Association's Swimmer of the Year that season. She also went to Stanford and was an Olympic trial qualifier in the 100-fly in 2008 and in the 100-fly and 50-free in 2012.

Notovny worked at South from 1965 to 1986, serving as the school's first athletic director as well as a physical education teacher and department chair and was head boys' soccer coach from 1976 to 1986, bringing home the very first state trophy for the school in 1983, when the Mustangs finished fourth in the state. He also pioneered a soccer program through the Downers Grove Park District in 1970.

Zemaitis-Ferguson was a volleyball star at South and was captain and team MVP for the Mustangs. Three times she was named to the Maine West all-tournament team, all-conference and all-area by the Tribune and was named one



Chuck Novotny

of the Best Young Players and all-state by the Tribune. She was named Big Ten Conference defensive player of the year in her freshman and sophomore year at University of Iowa and all-conference at Lewis University.

Griesheim was a three-sport athlete at DGS in wrestling, soccer and gymnastics who also played club volleyball. He won regional wrestling titles three years, was a three-time champ at the South Invitational and a two-time champ at the Rex Whitlach Invitational. He also had a third-place state finish.

Shafer was a four-year starting basketball player who was named Adidas All-American as well as to multiple all-area teams. He is the all-time leading scorer at South, holding the highest 3-point shooting percentage for a season at DGS, most consecutive and best percentage free throws in a game at the York Holiday Tournament. He also played football and led the West Suburban in receptions his junior season. He played basketball at Villanova and Wisconsin.

Smith was a four-year member of the girls' volleyball team and was instrumental in the Mustangs winning three consecutive Des Plaines Valley Conference titles. She was team captain and MVP in 1981-82. She played at the University of Iowa and was a three-time all-Big Ten Conference selection and was the league's Freshman of the Year.

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