

## Michael Kennedy

Boys Soccer Coach 1969-1981 & Girls Basketball Coach 1975-1981



Little was expected on that early fall afternoon in 1969 when the first ever Stoneham boys soccer team, with just 16 days of practice, took the field against Winchester, an established and accomplished program. With time running out, the Spartans held a 1-0 lead only to settle for a tie when Winchester scored on a penalty kick. To the trained eye, the principles of a long, successful coaching career and a lifetime of positive influence on student athletes was evident. Coach Kennedy's emphasis on hard work, discipline, and teamwork were values he instilled in all his players.

The search for an outstanding teacher who could also start and build a soccer program was not easy until the Stoneham administration somehow looked west toward the Berkshires. Michael Patrick Kennedy grew up in Holyoke. He graduated from Holyoke Catholic where he was a three-year starter in football, ran track, and excelled in basketball, being named most valuable player as a senior. Soccer began at Westfield State College where he learned from legendary coach, John Kurdy. As a defensive back his junior and senior years, Michael led the team to consecutive New England State College Athletic Conference championships.

Michael coached boy's soccer from 1969 to 1981. With Bill Seabury as assistant coach, the 1969 team, with many athletes who also played on championship hockey teams, made an easy transition to soccer. The 1975 team was the first to qualify for the state tournament with stars Mark Giglio, Kenny Kelley, Dick Kwiatkowski, and Tony Zarba; all went on to play college soccer. The 1977 soccer team also qualified for the state tournament.

His basketball teams were always competitive in the strong Middlesex League. The 1975-76 girl's team - his first - is among the most memorable. Hard working and fun to coach, the team was led by Alice Barry Carberry and Diane Florino. Clearly, in both sports he was a pioneer and inspired and taught athletes who became dominant in Middlesex League play. Five athletes on his soccer team and two athletes on his basketball teams have been inducted into the Stoneham High School Hall of Fame. Coach Kennedy always modeled the values, behavior, and respect that placed the welfare and education of the student-athlete above all else.

Excellence in the classroom and as a leader led to Michael's appointment in 1994 to the position of Program Supervisor of Mathematics in which he served with considerable distinction until his retirement in 2007. Currently, he teaches mathematics and serves as Director of Athletics at Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School in Lawrence. Michael and Kathy Kennedy are the proud parents of Katelin, Sarah, and Michael Jr. and make their home in Lynnfield.