



Montana High School Association

1 South Dakota Avenue ♦ Helena, MT 59601 ♦ (406) 442-6010 ♦ Fax: (406) 442-8250 ♦ www.mhsa.org

December 15, 2008

TO: SELECT MEDIA OUTLETS

FROM: MARK BECKMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: 2009 MHSA ATHLETES' HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

***** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *****

The Montana High School Association is proud to announce its twelfth class of inductees to the MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame.

There are seven inductees for 2009 including the late Ed Hauser (Anaconda High School); Mike Huggins (Flathead High School - Kalispell); Kathleen Monaghan (Custer County High School - Miles City); Fernandel Omeasoo (Browning High School); Loree Payne (Havre High School); Stacey Smiedala (Billings West High School); and Mike Zadick (Great Falls High School).

The MHSA Athletes Hall of Fame consists of two nomination categories: "Modern Era" and "Old Timer." The Old Timer category is for nominees who have graduated at least fifty years prior to the induction year. All of this year's inductees are from the Modern Era category, except Hauser, who is this year's Old Timer inductee.

Hauser excelled in basketball and track and field in Anaconda and was arguably the most dominant high school athlete in Montana prior to 1915. He scored 38 points in the 1912 state basketball championship as the Copperheads defeated Kalispell to take the title. Hauser's 38 points in a championship game set a record that would last 58 years. In track and field, no athlete had dominated the sport since the track finals began in 1904 like Hauser did in 1911 and 1912. He won four events in both 1911 and 1912, scoring twenty points for the Copperheads both years. Hauser did not live to see his induction into the Hall of Fame, but even now his accomplishments are renowned.

Huggins was a standout in football, basketball and track and field for Flathead High School from 1956-1960. He held the state high jump record for ten years and also once held the state record for football interceptions in one season at eight. He also earned 1st team All-State honors in basketball, football and track and field during his high school career at Flathead. Huggins received a scholarship to play basketball at UCLA under legendary coach John Wooden and played on UCLA's first national championship team in 1964. Huggins is retired and resides in Los Angeles, California.

Monaghan graduated from Custer County High School in 1986. She excelled in both basketball and track and field for the Cowgirls. During her high school track and field career she won three state championships in both the 1600 meter and 3200 meter races and held the Class A record in the 800 meter run for many years. She still holds the Class A record for the 1600 meter run. Kathleen received her medical doctorate degree, and she currently resides in Duluth, Minnesota.

Omeasoo excelled in cross country at Browning High School from 1977-1980. He was the first Montanan to win four state cross country individual championships. He led his team to four consecutive State Class B championships, part of the eleven year string of boys' cross country championships for Browning High School. In the late seventies, Omeasoo was the third high school male in the United States to win four consecutive individual state high school cross country championships. He currently resides in Hobbema, Alberta.

Payne was a tremendous student-athlete for Havre High School in the late 1990's. She was an outstanding basketball player who averaged 25 points per game during her career. Loree was a four year All Conference and All State selection in basketball. She was a three year starter in volleyball leading the team to back-to-back state championships in 1998 and 1999. She also excelled in track and field throwing the javelin and competing in the high jump, winning the Class A state high jump championship in 1998. She had a stellar career playing basketball at the University of Washington and is currently an assistant women's basketball coach at U of W.

Smiedala excelled in track and field first at Glasgow High School and then at Billings West High School. While at Glasgow High School he placed in six events at the state meet. Then as a senior at Billings West, Stacey set multiple records in the 800 meter run to include the divisional, class and all-class state records. The all-class record still stands after more than twenty years. The 1986 Billings West Track and Field team won the state championship with Smiedala winning the 400m, 800m and anchoring the 4x400m relay. He competed in track and field for the University of Kansas winning over fifteen Big 8 (now Big 12) medals. After college, Smiedala returned to Montana with his wife to Montana to raise their three daughters. He is currently employed as an FBI Special Agent Polygraph Examiner.

Zadick graduated from Great Falls High School in 1997 and it is an understatement that he excelled in the sport of wrestling for the Bison. He was a four time Class AA state wrestling champion whose stellar record was 156-1 during his high school career. After high school, Mike was recruited by famed University of Iowa coach Dan Gable where Zadick became a three time All American. He participated for the United States World Team, winning the silver medal in China in 2006, and also participated for the United States Men's freestyle wrestling team at 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China. He presently is coaching wrestling at the University of Iowa.

The MHSA Executive Board adopted a change in the way inductees are recognized for this prestigious honor. Previously the MHSA Hall of Fame Banquet was held in conjunction with the MHSA Annual Meeting. To allow for more friends and family to attend a function to honor the inductees, the Annual Meeting banquet has been replaced with the option for friends, family and the local school district to organize a recognition function in the inductee's local community at a time and place that maximize attendance and support for each new inductee. Also, there is a page on the MHSA website (www.mhsa.org) dedicated to all of the inductees.

If you have any questions regarding the MHSA Hall of Fame please contact Brian Michelotti, Assistant Director, at the MHSA office.