

## Bob Kramer



It's been said that timing is everything in sports. With that in mind, the introduction of *The Norwalk Hour* All-City teams couldn't have come at a better time for **Bob Kramer** when he was a standout athlete at Central Catholic High School.

The birth of All-City teams occurred in 1970-'71 and only three sports were recognized that inaugural school year: football in the fall, boys basketball in the winter, and baseball in the spring.

And Kramer, a senior at CCHS, had the distinction of being the only athlete from any of the three local schools named to the very first two, the 1970 All-City Football Team in the fall and the 1971 All-City Basketball Team in the winter.

But Bob Kramer was not only one of the top athletes at Central Catholic his senior year, he was one of the best in the entire city of Norwalk. That was confirmed at the end of the school year when he was named the recipient of the annual Norwalk Fire Fighters Association's Outstanding High School

Athlete of the City Award. What's more, Kramer earned the prestigious honor in a year when all three local high schools boasted some exceptional athletes.

A two-way starter in football, Kramer was a tight end for the Cavaliers and was named to the All-Western Connecticut Conference First-Team Offense. His ability to catch the pigskin also aided him on defense as he recorded five interceptions.

In basketball, Kramer was a senior co-captain and led Central Catholic in scoring and rebounding. He averaged 15.1 points, which was tenth best in the WCC, and although at six feet he was one of the smaller centers in the league, he averaged double figures in rebounding.

Kramer displayed his talents in the season opener when he rang up 21 points and 15 rebounds, both game highs, in a 67-46 win over New Milford. He was even more dominating a couple of nights later when he posted 24 points and 20 rebounds as the Cavs beat Bethel. In a rematch against Bethel later that season he scored a career-high 26 points.

But Bob Kramer didn't care about his own individual stats . . . which explains why he calls his team's dramatic 63-62 win over Masuk in the first round of the state tournament his best sports memory. The Cavaliers, down by seven with less than a minute to go, scored the last eight points. Kramer finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds, and in the second round he had 11 points and 15 rebounds as No. 14 CCHS upset No. 6 Wolcott Tech 71-55.

In his final high school game, a 68-62 loss to St. Thomas Aquinas in the state quarterfinals, Kramer closed out his career with an 18-point, 10-rebound effort. The Cavaliers finished 15-8 as Kramer scored double figures in 20 of the 23 games.

Kramer, a product of the International Little League and PONY League programs in town, was also part of the Cavaliers' baseball program his freshman and sophomore years before a shoulder injury curtailed his career.

But his sports days were far from over after high school. He would play 11 years in the Norwalk Recreation Adult Touch Football League and helped the Steamrollers win the championship in 1975 (another great sports memory, he says) and again in '78. The longtime accountant also played recreation basketball and softball for his company team for well over a decade.

Kramer also did his share of coaching. While attending Sacred Heart University, he returned to his alma mater and served as the Central Catholic junior varsity boys basketball coach during the 1974-'75 season under head coach Ray Barry, who was his JV coach at Central. Kramer's brother John played on the varsity that season while another brother, Ed, played for him on the JV team.

The father of four also coached his two daughters and two sons in softball, baseball, and basketball, including several seasons at All Saints Catholic School, the former Central Catholic and the gymnasium he once played in.

With that, you could say Bob Kramer's sports career had come full circle.