

Hector Huertas



Hector Huertas was the very definition of an ‘all-around athlete.’

In high school, Huertas excelled in two sports and then after graduating from Central Catholic in 1974 he shined in two more sports. He even went on to earn a Division I college scholarship in a sport he only began playing a few years earlier.

Now that’s an all-around athlete.

Born in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico, Huertas grew up in South Norwalk and began playing organized basketball in the Norwalk Parochial League for St. Joseph’s. He helped lead the team to an undefeated season and was named MVP of the Shehan Center Holiday Tournament in Bridgeport.

From there it was on to Central Catholic, where Huertas played from 1970-74. He dressed for varsity games as a freshman, saw considerable action as a sophomore, and started the next two years. As a junior under first-year head coach Ray

Barry, Huertas averaged 14.2 points and was named second-team All-WCC and All-City.

Then as a senior captain, Huertas led the Cavaliers in assists and steals while his scoring average jumped up to 15.1 as the Cavaliers reached the Class S state quarterfinals. He also set a new school record with 15 assists in a game and was named first-team All-WCC and All-City. During his scholastic career Huertas played against future college All-Americans and NBA stars Mike Gminski of WCC rival Masuk and Rod Foster of St. Thomas Aquinas in the state tournament.

Huertas was also an All-WCC and All-City baseball player for Central Catholic. As a junior he finished second in the city batting race with a .351 average while the following year he helped the Cavaliers win a share of the WCC crown and reach the 1974 Class S state championship game, the first state final in any sport by a CCHS team.

It was also in 1974 that Huertas began a long and successful softball career, playing shortstop and second base for such local slow-pitch powers as Sonny’s and Lawrence’s Tigers. He also played for Cotaling’s Auto Body, the Bucs, and Snellman Construction, winning several city championships and an Independent League title with Sonny’s.

While his softball career in Norwalk was interrupted by military service, Huertas did play fast-pitch softball for a Southern European Task Force (SETAF) team that went 19-1. He also played basketball for SETAF against national teams throughout Europe.

While in the Army Huertas also picked up a new sport: Tennis.

“I just picked up a racquet one day and started hitting a ball off the wall,” he explained. “Then I played all the time and got pretty good, so an Army captain suggested after I was done with the military that I go to the college he graduated from, which was Western Kentucky.”

Huertas took his advice and made the Division I WKU tennis team as a freshman walk-on in 1981. A year later he received a partial scholarship and in 1984 he advanced to the finals of the Southeastern Regional Championships.

When Huertas returned home he won a couple of city titles in both singles and doubles at the annual Norwalk Recreations Tennis Tournament at Oak Hills. He also played in several New England tournaments and in 1995 reached the quarterfinals of the 5.5 national tourney in New Orleans.

Huertas, now 61, continued playing slow-pitch softball locally until he was 48. He now umpires baseball and is a member of the Fairfield County Chapter of Approved Umpires.

And as if he needed another sport to excel in, Huertas is a member of the Oak Hills Men’s Golf Association and in 2014 won the Governor’s Cup.