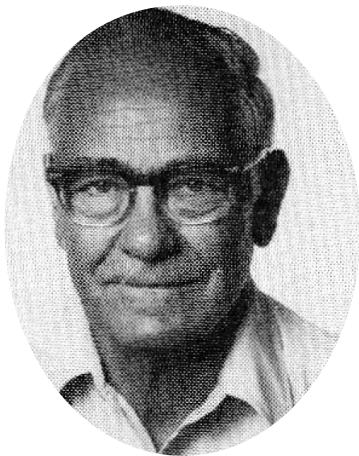


Sal Spinola



Sal Spinola was a mainstay for the Strawberry Hill AC for eight years in the period immediately following World War II, and came to be known as a feared southpaw slugger.

For two years during that same period, he played end for the Westport Wanderers, and then branched out as the first football coach of the newly formed Strawberry Hill football team in 1948.

Sal and Strawberry Hill have been synonymous throughout his life. He was brought up in the Strawberry Hill area, played some local school baseball and, in 1946, he joined coach Joe Santo's club as a first baseman and an excellent lefthanded hitter. He played with Nick Santo, Cas Stack, Lou Bottone, and his brother, Abbe, a pitcher. This club became a power in the old Norwalk Twilight League, winning two championships. They were also active in Sunday ball against local and nearby independent clubs. He was to continue with Strawberry Hill until 1954, when he moved with Coach Santo to the Potato Chips.

Here, he played with Tommy Scarso, Walt Melillo, Phil and Jim Matregrano, Art Churchill, and Art Reale.

In 1946 and 1947, Sal played for the Westport Wanderers football team, coached by Lou Nassaro. A little small by today's standards, the five-foot-10-inch Spinola played end on a team that included fullback Lou Nistico as well as running backs Sal and Whitey Valiante.

When Strawberry Hill decided to go into football in 1948, Sal took over as its first coach. His club had moderate success, winning about 60% of its games in 1948 and 75% in 1949. Bob Hunt succeeded Sal as coach in 1950, leaving Sal to concentrate on baseball for several more years.

Today, Sal is retired from a career as a carpenter with Local 210, for whom he once served as an officer. He has been married to the former Theresa Catena for 44 years. They have two children — Sal, Jr., and Patrick, and four grandchildren.