

Jim Lyons



A small, but dedicated group of individuals is mainly responsible for the growth and popularity of the sport of lacrosse in the city of Norwalk.

The name **Jim Lyons** can be found somewhere near the top of that list.

Lyons has been a part of the Norwalk Lacrosse Association and Norwalk Junior Lacrosse for the past 27 years, wearing a number of different hats during that time, including assistant coach, head coach, board member, commissioner, and field coordinator. He's also been involved with U.S. Lacrosse as well as a league rep with the Connecticut–New York (CONNY) Youth Lacrosse Association.

But Lyons's introduction to sports occurred long before lacrosse became a household word in Norwalk.

From 1967–'72 he played in the Cranbury Baseball League, leading Devine Brothers in hitting and helping them win the 1972 Pioneer League championship.

He also played Pop Warner Football with the Norwalk Ramblers and competed in soccer, basketball, and track at West Rocks Middle School. In track, Lyons was undefeated in the 440 and triple jump as he led West Rocks to the city middle school championship. He also received the school's "Best Boy Athlete of The Year" award in 1971.

All roads led to Norwalk High School where Lyons was linebacker on the freshman football team and a third baseman on the JV baseball team. He made the varsity football team as a sophomore and started at middle linebacker as a junior and senior, leading the Bears in tackles both years and earning All–City honors as a senior in the fall of 1975. He was also one of head coach Sam Testa's co-captains that season.

It was during Lyons's junior year, in the spring of '75, that a new sport was introduced at NHS and he was one of the original members of the Norwalk High club lacrosse team. The program operated as a club the first two years and Lyons was a starting midfielder both years and led the upstart Bears in scoring and ground balls as a senior in 1976.

Lyons then went to Nichols College in Dudley, MA, where he played three years of varsity football and four years of varsity lacrosse. As a defensive back on the football team, Lyons was part of three New England College Conference championship teams.

It was in lacrosse, however, where Lyons really shined on the collegiate level. He was a four-year starting midfielder for the Bisons, compiling 62 points in his first three seasons. As a junior, his biggest game came against intrastate rival Holy Cross when he scored a hat trick, including the tying and winning goals as the Bisons pulled off one of the biggest upsets in New England Division III that season.

Lyons was named a captain his senior year and was primed to have an even bigger season, but suffered a career-ending ACL injury just 17 seconds into the season opener against Brandeis University. In fact, Lyons won the opening faceoff before his ACL went as he made a move upfield.

He eventually made a full recovery and, following his graduation, Lyons returned home and played four years in the Sunday morning Norwalk Recreation Touch Football League, serving as a team sponsor and captain. It was shortly after that he got into coaching with the girls basketball team at All Saints Catholic School.

It was in 1992 when Lyons got involved with Norwalk Junior Lacrosse as an assistant and then head coach, winning several A, B, and C division tournament championships. He soon became involved on the administrative end of the organization and, fortunately for Norwalk, has been there ever since.