

Tim Bishop



Back when he was playing football at Central Catholic High School, Tim Bishop turned interceptions into a work of art. After all, it can be argued that there is definitely something artistic about picking off 10 interceptions in one season.

The 1966 CCHS graduate arrived on West Rocks Road as a freshman in the fall of 1962, the same school year the Cavaliers began playing varsity sports. Before he was done, Bishop would be a three-year starter in football and baseball while coming off the bench in basketball.

It was on the gridiron, however, where he made an indelible mark. As a freshman, he was not only a starter on the JV football team, but the only freshman to play varsity as head coach Jerry McDougall — who began his Hall of Fame career at CCHS — brought him up for the last few games of the season to return punts and kickoffs.

Bishop would start at strong safety and receiver each of the next three seasons, and as a senior was one of the key players on the 1965 Cavaliers who went 7–1—and received the CIAC Class B *State Award of Merit* for excellence.

That was also the season Bishop picked off his 10 interceptions, which was believed to still be a record when the school closed in 1990.

His defensive skills caught the eye of coaches around the state as Bishop was selected to play in the annual Nutmeg Bowl, which featured the best players in the state.

But football wasn't the only sport Bishop excelled in while at Central Catholic. He also played three years of varsity baseball for fellow 2014 Old Timers honoree Lorin Beresnyak. And like football, Bishop made a quick impression as the only freshman to make the JV squad and the following year the only sophomore to start varsity.

Over his last three seasons, Bishop would play outfield, catch, and pitch, and was named to the Thruway League all-star team his final two years. Throw in three seasons of basketball under Lou Orlando, another coaching icon, and Tim Bishop carved out quite an impressive scholastic career at the school on the hill.

His local sports career began long before that, however. Bishop was a 12-year-old in the Cranbury Community Baseball League the first year of its existence and played on the inaugural championship team, Gregory's Store. He went on to play two years in the Norwalk PONY League for Harrick's Dairy, making the all-star team in 1964. While at Central Catholic he also played baseball with the Norwalk American Legion during the summers of 1965 and '66.

Bishop was set to continue his football and baseball careers at UConn, which recruited him to play both sports. His career as a Husky lasted only one game, but what a game it was as he scored two touchdowns, rushed for over 100 yards and intercepted a pass on defense to spark the UConn freshmen football team to an upset win over Boston University.

During the game, however, Bishop was involved in a helmet-to-helmet collision. Although he finished the game — he was actually on the field 55 of the 60 minutes — he later developed headaches and double vision and was eventually diagnosed with a cerebral concussion. A month into his second semester, he decided to withdraw from UConn.

Bishop never got to play a baseball game at UConn, but he would eventually resume his career at Norwalk Community College, which was forming a new baseball program. In fact, he had the distinction of hitting the first home run in the history of the NCC program in a game against rival Norwalk Tech at the Brien McMahon diamond.

Bishop also caught and played outfield for the Laurel Athletic Club, which won three straight Norwalk City League crowns from 1967–69, as well as multiple Stamford Twilight League titles.

After a two-year stint in the Army, the versatile Bishop took up a new sport: softball. He played five seasons (1972–76) with local powerhouse Singewald Buick in the Norwalk City League and another three years with VIP Limo (1977–79), winning a state championship in the Open Division and finishing third in New England in his first season with VIP.

During the 1970s and '80s, Bishop also picked up tennis and won a pair of Norwalk men's 35-and-over singles titles and a couple of doubles championships at Oak Hills.

He also returned to playing football in the highly competitive Intercity Touch Football League with the perennial power Darien Sportsmen.

Bishop still resides in Norwalk on Aiken Street, right behind his old high school. In fact, he can see the now-converted field he once played baseball on for Central Catholic just by looking out his window.