

## Lloyd Fuller



**L**loyd Fuller continues a very proud family tradition tonight. Back in 1983, Lloyd Fuller, Sr. was honored by the *Norwalk Old Timers Athletic Association*. Some 18 years later, at the 2001 Old Timers dinner, his oldest son, Richard Fuller, was recognized by the same organization.

And tonight, 32 years after his father and 14 years after his brother were honored, it's time for another member of the Fuller family to shine.

Lloyd Fuller began carving out his own niche in the local sports scene while growing up in Colonial Village and later Broad River. In baseball, he pitched, caught, played third base, and patrolled centerfield in the International Little League and then the Babe Ruth League.

It was on the football field, however, where Fuller began to make his mark, playing three years for the Norwalk Ramblers Pop Warner Football team. His final season, in 1965, the hard-running halfback led the team in scoring and rushing, averaging over seven yards a carry while gaining over 100 yards in several games. He was also one of the team's top defensive players.

Fuller continued his football career at Ponus Ridge Junior High School where he was a two-way starter at running back and linebacker and helped lead the Green Devils to an undefeated season and the Norwalk Recreation Football League city championship in 1967. His coach was the late Sam Testa, a 2014 Norwalk Old Timers honoree. The versatile Fuller also played on the Ponus Ridge basketball and baseball teams.

But it was at Brien McMahon High School that Lloyd Fuller's star really began to shine. It didn't take him long, either. In the fall of 1968 he not only made the varsity football team but broke into the starting lineup at running back and helped the Senators finish in a three-way tie for first place in the FCIAC West Division.

He rushed for over 1,000 yards as a junior and senior, accomplishing the feat in just nine games both years. As a senior captain in 1970 he helped lead McMahon to an 8-1 record — the best mark in school history up to that point — with the Senators' only loss coming against unbeaten state champion Stamford High by a touchdown. Fuller capped off his final season by being named to the Norwalk Hour's first-ever All-City Football Team.

It was also at Brien McMahon that Fuller was introduced to a new sport when Jack Casagrande, then an assistant football coach, recruited him to come out for his wrestling team. As a junior, with only two years of experience under his belt, Fuller won the 155-pound state championship. At the time, there was only one state tournament for the entire state, so in effect he actually won what would be known today as the State Open championship.

Then as a senior captain, Fuller reached the state finals again at the same weight class and lost a close one-point decision to finish runner-up. His brother Terry Fuller, however, won the 145-pound state title that season and four years later their younger brother Jeff Fuller also captured a state crown, making them one of the few brother trios in Connecticut high school wrestling history to all win state championships.

Lloyd Fuller was also a sprinter and threw the shot put for the Senators' track and field team in the spring all three years and was a captain as a senior, making him a rare three-sport captain. He culminated his scholastic career by being named the Brien McMahon 'Career Athlete' in June 1971. The previous year, he was elected by the junior class as "Mr. McMahon" and was one of only three members of the junior class to be chosen to attend the Boys State program at UConn. Fuller also earned a place in "Who's Who Among American High School Students."

After high school, Fuller continued his football career at Graceland College in Iowa before transferring to Central Connecticut State College (as it was known then) and later attended Norwalk Community College, where he played on the school's successful club football team. While attending college, he also served six years in the U.S. National Guard.

Fuller, who lives in Danbury, retired in August of last year after 24 years with the State of Connecticut, working with special needs adults, a career he called "very challenging, but very rewarding."

And for all his accolades in sports, Lloyd Fuller calls his three children — Chase, Candice, and Corin — "My three greatest accomplishments."