

## Sheila Moffett



**S**heila Moffett has been around high school sports for most of her life. Fortunately for a number of local athletes, a majority of those years have been spent at Norwalk High School, first as a successful track coach and for the last 15 years as an administrator in the athletic department. And since 2011, she's been an integral part of the Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference as a member of the FCIAC Board of Directors.

Moffett's passion for high school sports is not surprising. Some might even suggest that it's in her genes. After all, her grandfather, Thomas M. Monahan, and father, Thomas R. Monahan, were both three-sport high school coaches in the city of Bristol, whose teams achieved success on the local, state, and national levels. They were both part of the inaugural class inducted into the *Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame* in 1977.

In fact, Moffett's father was one of the founding fathers of the CHSCA and the organization's highest honor is named after him, the *Thomas R. Monahan Award*, presented annually to a member of the education profession who has made significant contributions to high school athletics.

One of Moffett's early endeavors in scholastic sports was as a scorekeeper for her father's Bristol Central High baseball team. She continued her love of sports at Southern Connecticut State College — as it was known then — where she majored in Physical Education and Health and participated in intramural soccer and softball.

It was during Moffett's freshman year in 1972 that Title IX, the landmark federal law, which assured gender equality in athletics, was passed by Congress. Before she was done with college, Moffett served as the assistant equipment manager for intercollegiate sports at Southern Connecticut in 1974-75, as well as manager of the Owls' varsity wrestling team.

Following her graduation, Moffett landed a teaching position at Holy Cross High School in Waterbury where she coached the girls track team from 1977-80 and compiled a record of 31-15. She also started the first girls cross country team at HCHS in 1978 and in her two seasons as coach guided the Crusaders to an impressive record of 17-4 and a third-place finish at the New Haven County championships.

All roads led to Norwalk High School, where Moffett taught for 22 years and served as head coach of both the girls indoor and outdoor track programs. During her coaching tenure, she coached multiple FCIAC and state medal winners, including Nicole Hansboro, who captured the 1998 New England championship in the shot put.

Like many schools, Norwalk High's boys and girls indoor track teams, while competing separately, practiced together with the two head coaches working with athletes from both teams. As a result, Moffett worked alongside her husband, Frank Moffett, the Bears' longtime boys track coach and a 2012 Norwalk Old Timers honoree. As a coaching tandem, they led the NHS boys to the program's first FCIAC championship in 1995. The Bears also won back-to-back Western Division titles in 1994 and '95.

What was also noteworthy about that FCIAC championship was it marked the only time during a 13-year span (1987-99) that neither perennial powerhouses Staples nor Danbury won the FCIAC crown. Norwalk's title was also one of only two times (Trumbull in 2000 being the other) in the last 29 years that someone other than the Wreckers or Hatters captured top honors.

A few years later, Moffett became more involved in the administration end of the girls athletic department at NHS, and when the boys and girls athletic director positions were merged, she became the assistant to the AD and was responsible for organizing practices, game schedules, and ticket sales. She has continued to serve in that capacity even after her retirement from teaching in 2012.

For the past five years, Moffett has been a member of the FCIAC Executive Board and currently serves as its secretary.

"Sheila has a great knowledge of the history of our league," longtime conference commissioner John Kuczo said. "It's like she was there back when some things in the league developed."

Apparently Moffett passed some of those family coaching genes she inherited onto another generation as she now gets to enjoy watching her son Patrick, a former FCIAC hurdles champ at Norwalk High, coach track and football at his alma mater.