

Sam Testa



Sam Testa impacted the lives of young men on both sides of town as a football coach at both Norwalk High School and Brien McMahon. His first coaching job, however, was at Ponus Ridge Junior High School as head coach of the Green Devils in the Norwalk Recreation tackle football league. A longtime phys ed instructor at Kendall Elementary School, Testa would head up the street for practice after school and to Veterans Park on Sunday mornings for games, leading his team to a then-record three straight city championships.

That impressive resume earned Testa a spot on the McMahon coaching staff in 1969 as the Senators' defensive coach and one year later he molded the FCIAC's top-ranked defense. In fact, after a season-ending 21–0 win over Staples — McMahon's third straight shutout and fourth in an 8–1 season — his defensive players carried him off the field.

In 1973, Sam Testa saw his dream come true when he was named the new head football coach at Norwalk High School, his alma mater. He took a team that went 0–9 the previous season and guided the Bears to a 4–5 record his first year. The following year they went 5–5, Norwalk's first non-losing season in seven years.

After four seasons, he became the defensive line coach at Fordham University in 1977 and '78. That would be his last football season, however. Unbeknownst to many, Testa quietly battled cancer for more than seven years, finally losing his courageous battle in June of 1979.

That fall, the *Sam Testa Memorial Trophy* was created, which Norwalk and McMahon — the two schools he coached at — play for every year. And a few years later, Sam Testa Field was dedicated at NHS.