

Sandy Weed Austin



In a city such as Norwalk, which has always been among the leaders when it comes to girls sports, no one did more or made a bigger impact locally than the late **Sandra Weed Austin**.

Sandra Weed, as she was known growing up in Norwalk, was regarded as one of the best female athletes in her era, exceling in sports at a time when there were limited outlets for women to display their talents.

That never stopped Weed, however, who was standout in basketball, softball, and track. In fact, she was named the 'Best Girl Athlete' in the Class of 1950 at Norwalk High School. She also played for several amateur softball teams in the area, including the Traendly Rosebud here in Norwalk, who staged some memorable games against the internationally renowned Raybestos Brakettes. The Brakettes actually tried recruiting Weed to play for them, but she declined, choosing instead to remain loyal to her hometown team.

Weed graduated from the University of Bridgeport's Arnold College division with a degree in Physical Education and Health. She began teaching at Benjamin Franklin Junior High School, but was soon elevated to the position of Assistant Supervisor of Health and Physical Education in the Norwalk school system. In that role, she organized what was known as "Play Days" for girls to compete in various sports against other schools.

She was also co-chair of the Health Curriculum in Norwalk schools, worked for the Norwalk Recreation Commission, and was director of the Norwalk Girls Club.

The highly respected Weed Austin was also involved with several prominent committees on the state and national level, including being elected president of the Connecticut Association of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. She represented that group on the Title IX Advisory Committee.

Unfortunately, she was to be denied fulfillment of her role as president. A short time after assuming office, in October 1977, Sandra Weed Austin passed away at the age of 44.

"She would've done so much more if she lived longer," said her brother, Wayne Weed, who will be accepting on her behalf tonight. "She was way ahead of her time. She was born too soon."