

# OV to honor Hall of Famers

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Otter Valley girls soccer coach Tammi Blanchard is hard at work preparing her Otters for the 2021 season.

She's hoping her passion for sports is imparted upon the next generation of Otter Valley stars itching to make their mark.

Blanchard certainly made hers when she was a student at Otter Valley. She is one of the 2020 Otter Valley Union High School Hall of Fame selections.

Blanchard and her fellow 2020 honorees will be inducted during halftime of the Sept. 25 football game against Mill River, which is Otter Valley's Homecoming game.

The 2021 class, soon to be announced by Otter Valley, will also be inducted at the time.

The 2020 class would have been inducted last fall, had COVID-19 not intervened.

Blanchard was not a soccer player when she was attending Otter Valley.

During the fall season, she played field hockey.

"You either had to play field hockey or play with the boys," Blanchard said. "I started playing field hockey in seventh grade and really liked it."

She made varsity in field hockey, basketball and softball her freshman year.

"I love sports. I've always played sports," Blanchard said. "I'm very competitive."

She continues to stay involved with athletics in her coaching. Blanchard coached middle school, then was an assistant coach to former OV girls soccer coach John White, before taking over the program last fall.

"I'm still learning with soccer," Blanchard said.

There are many other standout Otter Valley athletes that joined Blanchard in the 2020 class.

Lawton Redman won three consecutive Division II cross country individual titles from 1991 to 1993. He went on to have a successful career at St. Lawrence University, where he is a 2013 SLU Hall of Famer.

Redman was a successful biathlete and competed in the 2002 Winter Olympics. He won three consecutive US Biathlon National Championship races, the 10km sprint and 12.5km pursuit in 2001 and the 10km sprint in 2002 leading up to his Olympic competition.

Tim Coates was a Twin State Lions Cup soccer player and a great first baseman on the baseball field. He also was a star hockey player with the Rutland Amateur Hockey Association.

Herb Spaulding was a history-maker, throwing the first no-hitter at Otter Valley. He was a member of the 1963 OV baseball state championship team and also played soccer and basketball.

Steven Poljacik is one the better pitchers in Otter Valley history and had the best curveball in school history, according to Otter Valley Hall of Fame committee member Charles Rivers. Poljacik also played soccer and hockey.

Jodi Wheeler was a standout three-sport athlete at Otter Valley and went on to play a great college basketball career at Skidmore College.

Meaghan Brown was a three-sport athlete with the Otters and went on to have a historic basketball career at NVU-Johnson. From 1995 on, she ranks third all-time for the Badgers in points, third in made field goals, first in steals, ninth in rebounds and ninth in blocked shots.

Mary Bushey is another three-sport female star that is going in this year.

Derric Miner was a state champion and 100-match winner on the wrestling mat for the Otters. Miner was also an individual New England champion at the 135-pound weight class.

David Mitchell, a 35-year Otter Valley school janitor and a middle school coach is also going in.

Rounding out the class is the 1994-95 Otters Division II state champion softball team.