

Josh Morris, '94



Josh earned 8 varsity letters while at Norwich High School; 3 in football, 2 in basketball, 2 in baseball and 1 in track and field. I had the pleasure of coaching Josh in both basketball and baseball.

In his 3 seasons of varsity football Josh's teams went a combined 27-4-1, including a 20 game winning streak that took place over the course of 2 seasons, 1992 and 1993.

In his sophomore year he had 20 carries for 143 yards (7.2) and 1 touchdown. He also completed 3 of 10 passes for 52 yards. In his junior year is where he really began to stand out. The team went 10-1 and Josh had 50 carries for 230 yards (4.6) with 2 touchdowns and a two point conversion. At the conclusion of the season he was named to both the Section IV Division III and All Chenango County All Star teams as a defensive back.

His senior year the team went 10-1 again with Josh rushing for 778 yards on just 78 carries (10.0) with 8 touchdowns and he caught 7 passes for 89 yards. Included in his three 100 yard games was a 13 carry 145 yard 1 touchdown effort in a 21-8 win over Binghamton, the only team to beat Norwich the previous season. He also accumulated 125 yards and 2 touchdowns on 15 carries in a 34-6 win over Windsor. And despite missing the last two games with a knee injury, more than likely costing him a shot at the coveted 1,000 yard plateau, Josh was again named to both the Section IV Division III and All Chenango County All Star teams, this time as a running back.

He finished his high school football career with 148 carries for 1,151 yards (7.8) and 11 touchdowns and a two point conversion, 8 pass receptions for another 116 yards and he completed 7 of 17 passes for 140 yards and a touchdown. And he was a shutout defensive back as well as a sure tackler.

Josh's two seasons on the varsity basketball team resulted in a 56-2 overall record, the only 2 losses coming to Gonzaga Collegiate (Washington, D.C.) in the National Division championship game of the 1993 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic at a sold-out Broome County Veterans Memorial Arena and to Long Island Lutheran in the very last basketball game of his high school career, the 1994 New York State Federation Class B championship game.



Along the way he and his Purple Tornado teammates earned 2 STAC Central Division championships, 2 overall STAC championships, 2 Section IV Class B championships, 2 Region I championships, 2 New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Class B championships and 1 New York State Federation championship.

They went 44-0 against teams from Section IV and had an overall 37 game winning streak, which was snapped in that aforementioned loss to Gonzaga Collegiate. The 29-0 record in 1992-93 is one of only three in the history of the NYSPHSAA and their 56 wins over his two years make them the winningest team ever in consecutive years.

At the conclusion of the 1993-94 season Josh was named to the STAC All Conference Team, the All Chenango County Team and the Press and Sun-Bulletin All Metro Team.

The point guard was a very critical part of our team throughout the years, the ball was in his hands a lot. I put a lot of responsibility on his shoulders and he was usually the first guy I would get after when things weren't going well. Josh had the perfect demeanor for that position. He always kept his emotions under control and he could not be rattled. His statistics are not going to WOW you but the people that have a true understanding of the game of basketball understand how good he was, and how important he was to our success.

I know I do and Coach Branham (JV coach Bob Branham) does as well, as do his teammates. We watched him closely throughout his younger years and he could absolutely get to the basket and score at will but he put that part of his game aside to be the point guard for back to back state champions. He did so many things that don't show up in a box score, he was the unquestioned team leader in intangibles.



He needed to be a leader. He was the extension of the coaching staff on the floor and he needed to play fearlessly and unselfishly because everything ran through him both offensively and defensively. It was really because of him, and the poise that he played with, that teams could not press us. Well, I take that back, they could press us, just not successfully.

And Josh was tough as nails, so tough that one time he actually left his teeth IN the court at Maine-Endwell and wanted to keep playing. I was always relaxed when the ball was in his hands because I knew that he valued the ball and he would make a good decision with it.

His 172 assists during the 93-94 season are the fourth highest single season total and his 283 career assists rank fifth with the top 2 on the list (Brian Collier and Charlie Wightman) being three year varsity players. Couple that with the fact that many times Josh played barely half the game because of lopsided scores and one can only imagine how high his career numbers might have been?

His 139 career steals put him third all-time in that category while his 75 steals in 93-94 are the number two seasonal total. He is also tied for the school record with nine steals in a game. He also finished with 338 points, 166 rebounds (as a point guard) blocked 39 shots and drew 15 offensive fouls.

Josh's two seasons as point guard we averaged 78.4 and 76.8 points per game, which was unheard of in high school basketball. And this was before there was a shot clock so there were teams that tried to stall against us. The team scored 100 points or more five times and also had games of 99 and 98 points.



We have been blessed over the years to have had a lot of great point guards at Norwich High School. Guys like Pat Dowdall, Ryan Deady, Timmy Clark, Derek Hughes but based on what his teams were able to accomplish with him at the controls I can't think of any legitimate argument that would refute Josh Morris being at the very top of the list. And the great thing is Josh, nor any of the other guys I mentioned, were interested in individual accolades because with them, it was all about the team.

Josh is, without a doubt, the most athletically gifted point guard I ever coached and I can only imagine the kind of numbers he could have put up were it not for the number of lopsided games AND the talent he was surrounded with. But, like I said, none of that mattered to him as long as the team was successful.

—Mark Abbott