

Pat Quinn, Class of 1958



Patrick Michael Quinn was born Feb. 24, 1940 in Norwich, NY, the oldest of three children to Frank and Mary Quinn. This post-depression era spawned many jobs, but money was still scarce. Multiple factories dotted the city, and two railroads hauled cargo and passengers through town at all hours of the day and night. At the center of all this sat "Quinn's Diner," presently Johnny B's (formerly The Caboose). It was a busy lit-

tle eatery, a place of good food and hearty banter – always packed. This business enabled Frank and Mary to raise their children and purchase a home on Maple Street, not far from the baskets where young Patrick would soon be "tickling the twines."

Pat showed early signs of interest and ability in all sports and this era enabled him to pursue them. Technology was still in its infancy. There was no internet or satellites. Rotary dial phones and "party lines" were the norm. Television didn't cross the airways until Patrick was 10 years of age. Entertainment was narrowly selective; consequently, a young lad had ample time to pursue his interests and hobbies. Young Patrick was athletic, diversely interested in sports and of good size. This combination in this era would prove to make Pat "A Man for All Seasons."

There were plenty of role models a few years older for him to emulate. There were the Fierros—Bob and Chuck, the Caravaglios—Fran and Vinnie, Wayne "Lefty" Adams, Ted Kerley, and the incomparable fire-balling duo of Fred Swertfager and Charlie Townsend. Pat confided that the Stewarts (John & Ken) were two athletes that he personally admired. He often competed with these older boys, and it was reflected in his development and progression. He made his Little League all-star team at the age of 10 and by his 12th year of age dominated most offensive categories in that same league. Play in the Kiwanis League (the next age level) was similar, and a young, lanky Pat got to hone his pitching skills there.

His hoop development paralleled that of baseball. Playing for Bob Van Tine's "4" groups (pee wees, reserves, reserve juniors and juniors), he was a talented player and scorer. This was reported often in the newspaper by Van Tine, who had taken over the reins and style of his predecessor, Perry Browne. Pat's football introduction, though, was on the back burner until high school. There was no modified program or Pop Warner league at that time. Sandlot and pick-up games were the norm.

Organized football for the freshmen in 1954 was a challenging experience. Pat was pretty much schooled in baseball and basketball, but football was a new direction. Coach Walt Shonosky

tutored and guided Pat through the junior varsity program. As a junior, he was listed by Coach Kurt Beyer as "halfback/fullback/punter." He booted the ball 25 times for a respectable 31.3 average. The highlight of that 3-5 season, of course, was the Quinn to Fred Miers 15-yard aerial that downed the once-defeated Oneonta Yellowjackets 7-0.

Shortly thereafter, Quinn and Miers were elected co-captains for their senior season, a year in which Norwich went 3-5. That 1957 season found Pat assuming a more dominant role. He was second on the team in scoring (by a mere five points), he completed 24 of 55 passes (43.6%) for 530 yards and two touchdowns and he rushed for another 274 yards on 78 carries (3.5 average). Plus, he punted 31 times for a 33.1 yard average.

At the conclusion of that season, Pat was selected to the All-Iroquois League second team as a quarterback, and football was probably his weakest sport. Speaking at the season-ending football banquet on Nov. 22, 1957, Larry Kimball (former sports writer for The Norwich Sun) stated, "If Norwich had lost all eight games, it would have been worth it, if for no other reason than the leadership ability that was brought out in Fred Miers and Pat Quinn, a fine pair of co-captains."

"Hoops" was different than football. Pat had already acquired many of the skills necessary through the local YMCA programs; and his 6-foot-2 frame and silky jumper made him an immediate contributor to the junior varsity program. Pat's junior season found him as a starter and major factor during Coach Jim Smith's 13-9 campaign. He scored 188 points and reached double digits eight times, with a high of 25 coming in a 66-51 win over Mohawk on Feb. 8, 1957.

His senior season (11-11) showcased more of Pat's talents. The deft shooter led the team in almost every offensive category. He scored 411 points, and that is without a three-point line or a shot clock. "Stalling" and ball-control were deliberate tactics of the era. In one of Pat's games, Herkimer stalled the entire game, taking limited shots in a 16-7 loss to the Tornado. Van Tine reported, "Quinn was limited to nine points, which was more than the Magician team." Pat still scored 411 points – the third best for a NHS cager at the time, and bested double digits in 21 of his 22 outings.

Season and Postseason Basketball Accomplishments/Awards (1957-58):

- All-Iroquois League and Tornado MVP
- Charity stripe success: 137-for-194 (.706)
- Bested 20 points on 10 occasions, with highs of 28 in wins at Baldwinsville and New Hartford
- Historical Tornado Comparisons find Pat:
- 25th all-time in scoring with 599 points (in only 2 seasons)
- One-season total of 411 points ranks 10th all-time
- One-season total of 137 free throws is 4th all-time
- Season scoring average of 18.7 is 12th best all-time

Pat's excellence on the hardwoods was also evident on the baseball diamond. His early and successful baseball experiences would pay dividends. As a lanky freshman, Pat made the varsity

under Coach Ray Borowitz. He platooned the outfield positions, but probably didn't see a whole lot of action with Swertfager and Townsend ("fastballers") pitching. His sophomore season found him in right field and batting cleanup. His pitching was on hold until the "fastballers" graduated. However, he did enough with his glove and bat to earn All-Iroquois League honors as a sophomore.

During his junior and senior years, Pat became an ace on the mound. He was big and strong and could "bring it." As a junior, Pat took the mound seven times, with but one loss. He struck out 10 or more three times, and had good support at the plate with names like, Levi Brown, Kerley and the Caravaglio brothers banging out hits. Late in the season, he pitched a complete game, beating undefeated Oneonta 8-5. But, maybe his best outing was in a 12-9 loss to Iliion when he went 3-for-3, with four RBI, a run scored and a home run. The Tornado posted a very successful 11-3 season for second place in the Iroquois League.

His senior season was somewhat similar, but much of the offensive punch had been lost to graduation. The team dropped to a record of 8-6, but Pat's 2.17 ERA enabled him to a 7-3 record as the Norwich ace. He struck out 86 batters in 64 innings, and he rapped out 15 hits in 45 trips to the plate for a respectable .333 average. And, to add icing to his final Tornado season, he banged out the last hit of the spring year for the Purple nine on June 3, 1958 in a 12-0 whitewashing of Walton, thus ending what was and is a Hall of Fame career.

Overall:

- Pat earned eight Varsity letters: Football (2), Basketball (2), Baseball (4)
- All-Iroquois League selection in each sport at least once
- 599 career hoop points (2 seasons); 25th all-time
- Recipient of Gibson "Sportsmanship Award" - 1958
- Member of Chi Alpha National Honor Society
- Recruited by St. Lawrence University for basketball; he led his freshman team. As the Canton Times reported, "Pat Quinn, a deadeye shooter from Norwich, currently leads St. Lawrence frosh in scoring, averaging over 20 points in seven games."

At Norwich High School, Pat was a halfback, fullback, quarterback and punter in the fall. During winter months, he became a rebounder and prolific scorer, while spring ushered in a hitter, fielder and an ace on the mound. He was all that and an Honor Student, too - truly a "Man for All Seasons."

Pat left St. Lawrence his sophomore year and married his classmate, Donna Dixon. He finished his degree in 1963 at SUNY Oneonta and was employed by Aetna Casualty for many years. Together, Pat and Donna had two children; Kelly Murray of Stillwater, NY and Sean Quinn of Orlando, FL. Both Pat and Donna remarried many years ago. The retired Mr. Quinn and his wife Bernadine have resided in Slingerlands, NY (Albany area) for the past 43 years.

Pat is an honored and welcome inductee to this the eighth annual Norwich High School Sports Hall of Fame. His plaque will fit nicely among the previously honored athletes of NHS.

NOTE: Special thanks to Tom Rowe for much of the statistical information.

— Tom Dixon