

Montana Indian Athletic Hall of Fame

Don Wetzel, Sr., Founder/CEO 3332 St. Johns, Billings, Montana 59102 (406) 534-1223 griz32@bresnan.net

2009 Inductees:

George Yellow Eyes

George stood 5'7" tall but took the game to the next level. You had to make sure he was picked up on defense as soon as he received the Ball because he would shoot from anywhere. Known for his outstanding shooting ability and uncanny quickness; he could hit from everywhere, back when the "winners" would shoot we did not have a 3 point goal. I would automatically add 12-18 points a game to his total. He also played for 2008 Inductee Hall of fame coach Joe McDonald at Miles City State School.

Robert Howard, Sr.

An enrolled BlackFeet from Browning, strong rebounding, strong defense, ability to score around the basket was his greatest strengthwent to western Montana college and received his B.S degree in Education in 1952. At 6'2" Robert was a big man and continued his hard work ethic and was inducted into the Western Montana basketball Hall of Fame in 1981, an automatic choice.

Albert Hawley

Ft. Belknap Assiniboine/Gros Ventre was not only an outstanding athlete but a prominent citizen. Albert M. Hawley, who was from Hays, MT, and attended Haskell from 1925 to 1928. All-Haskell Football Team, All-American Honorable Mention (1928 & 1929). The state of Arizona named a lake after him called Hawley Lake. He was prominent principal, coach, and

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teacher in Idaho and Nevada, AAU boxing commissioner in Nevada, American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame in 1973.

A. Fritzler

Has been in Pro Rodeo his entire life as a professional bull rider and steer wrestler. He was also a world class pro rodeo clown, one of the most important men in the arena.

Roy Old Person

1960's runner ran for Wichita State against Bill Mills. He was a strong - strong runner. 1st of many BlackFeet "Aces"

Fernandel Omeasoo –

An MHSA Hall of Famer in 2009. Fernandel was a State champ 4 Years in a row- 1976- 1980. He never lost an individual run in 4 years- never lost a state x-country meet. ABC Individual Champion for the entire state:

1979: Fernandel Omeasoo Browning 15:58.0

1978: Fernandel Omeasoo Browning 16:03.93

1977: Fernandel Omeasoo Browning 16:04.0

Bob Parsley-

Wolf Point Wolves/ Turtle Mountain Chippewa. Played on three state tournament teams(61-63) under great Coach Bob Lowry. The Wolves won the State B Tourney in 61 & 62. Bob went on to play at Carroll College and Northern Montana College and was an All Frontier Conference selection three years. At 6'5" Bob could play inside and out for the Lights. He was also honored as the NAIA MVP for NMC Basketball in 1967. He was selected to the MSU Northern Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996. Went on to dominate the softball leagues with crushing power and home

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runs a plenty. Bob got his degree in secondary education at Northern Montana College, Class of 1969. He worked 23 years for the Montana Office of Public Instruction as the Indian Education Specialist, and is retiring from USDA Rural Development on December 31, 2009 after 12 years.

Del Fritzler-

A man with god given strength was a good, tough overall athlete. A bull underneath the basket he could knock heads with the best of them. He started steer wrestling as a young man and learned quick by winning All-American honors. Del Fritzler was the 1980 world steer wrestling champ. That started a run as a state champion coach. He enjoyed kids and enjoyed working around them. Coach Fritzler used his strength with kids and taught them character and honor by to pulling them together. His team was crowned boys basketball champs in 1987. Evidence that he is a winner through and through.

Gordon Real Bird Sr-

Coach Real Bird won 4 state titles for the lodge Grass Indians- 85-86-87-88. Coach of the year four years - and nominated national coach of the year.

Fort Shaw Indian School Woman's Team –

When basketball was new, a progressive principal of an Indian boarding school taught the game to his female students. They picked it up quickly and well, barnstorming across Montana and defeating all comers. Local club teams, high school teams, college teams all fell to the ladies from Fort Shaw. Their speed and teamwork were simply overwhelming. Today they call this style of play "Rezball." Back then, it was just the way the Fort Shaw team played.

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In 1904 the young ladies from the Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School, located in Montana's Sun River Valley, attended the Model Indian School at the St. Louis World's Fair. The Fort Shaw team again took on all comers and emerged victorious.

For their efforts, the team received a trophy commemorating their achievements, declaring them World's Fair champions. Upon their return to Montana, they were hailed as Champions of the World.

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