

Walter “Pete” Antimarino
1926-2017

OUR LEGENDARY AND BELOVED COACH



Pete Antimarino was born in Pitcairn PA, and graduated from Pitcairn High School in 1943. Pete participated in football and baseball during his high school years. One of the highlights of Pete’s scholastic career was co-captaining the 1943 undefeated football squad coached by J.C. Allen. Pete was the starting fullback on that memorable team, excelling in blocking and hard running.

In 1943, with our country involved in W.W.II, Pete entered the U.S. Air Force where he served his country for 2 years. Upon returning to Pitcairn after the war, he joined the legendary “Pitcairn Mohawks.” During the 1946 and 1947 seasons, Pete quarterbacked the formidable Mohawks to two consecutive undefeated campaigns under the direction of Joe “Hozzle” Borovick.

In 1948 Pete followed his high school coach J.C. Allen to the deserts of New Mexico to attend Highlands University (now known as New Mexico State University) where Allen had become coach. Pete became an all conference quarterback at Highlands while earning his degree in education. After college, Pete decided that he wanted to focus his energy on coaching.

“It’s the greatest thing that ever happened to me,” said Pete, upon accepting a teaching and coaching position in his hometown in 1952. He coached at Pitcairn for two years as an assistant under Chuck Klausing. And, when Klausing left for Braddock High, Pete moved into the head coaching slot. From 1954 through 1957 his Pitcairn teams were a solid 20-13-1.

When Pitcairn and Monroeville merged to form Gateway School District in 1958, Pete became Gateway’s first football coach. In that inaugural year, the Gateway Gators were 7-1-1, a sign of good things to come.

Under Pete’s leadership the Gators football team accomplished many milestones in Gateway High Schools first 32 years including:

- A 236-80-12 record and a .725 winning percentage. Best among active high schools
- Only four losing seasons out of 32.
- Five W.P.I.A.L. Championships, including two Co-Championships. One with Upper St. Clair in 1974, a 6-6 tie, and the other against North Hills in 1986, a scoreless tie. Gateway’s first title came against Altoona in 1969 (22-15). The victory against Altoona established the Gators as a perennial football powerhouse and was followed up with an impressive 20-0 shutout over Jeannette in 1972. In 1986 Gateway answered the previous year’s scoreless battle by beating the North Hills Indians 7-6 in the games final seconds. Altogether his teams played in 7 W.P.I.A.L. championship games.
- Teams voted State Champions in 1972 and 1986.
- First AAAA team to record 13 wins in a season (1986).
- Three noteworthy win streaks: 15 in a row, 18 in a row, 20 in a row (23 in a row including ties)
- Game 4 in 1987 saw E.S.P.N. come to Gateway for Gateway’s 300th game. The fact that Gateway was rolling along with such success could have added impetus to their interest. Gateway was W.P.I.A.L. Co-champs in 1985, W.P.I.A.L. champs in 1986 and riding a 16 game winning streak, which would eventually go to 20, going into the 300th game.
- A No.3 National Ranking by U.S.A. Today in 1986. North Hills entered the title game ranked No.1 nationally before losing to the Gators.
- Five undefeated seasons (1965, 1969, 1972, 1974, and 1986) Six seasons with only one loss and eight seasons with only two losses.
- 17 Conference Championships.
- W.P.I.A.L. playoff record 19 wins – 10 losses – 2 ties
- Members of: Pa Sports Hall of Fame East Boros Chapter, 10-19-90
Pa Sports Hall of Fame Western Chapter, 5-5-91
Pa Scholastic Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, 1993
Gateway Sports Hall of Fame, 11-27-99
- Big 33 Assistant Coach in 1973 and Head Coach in both 1975 and 1985

- Pitcairn's Citizen of the Year in 1983
- Monroeville Dapper Dan Man of the Year in 1975
- Awarded National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Chapter Coach of the Year, 3-1-87

After 38 years of teaching and coaching, Pete announced his retirement from Gateway High School on January 17, 1990 after compiling a 36-year head coaching career record of 256 wins and 93 losses, and 13 ties.

But Pete did not stay retired for long. In April of 1990, Pete received a call from England to coach the Walsh Titans. He and Katy spent five years coaching football, American Football that is, sight seeing across England and enjoying British hospitality. Katy often remarked that the "Brits" played their best football at the "Pub" after the game! Upon returning to the states, Pete took on another coaching position as an assistant at Carnegie Mellon University for a two-year stint. Pete found Carnegie Mellon to be a perfect way to wind down a long, successful coaching career and satisfy a desire he always had to coach at a college level.

Pete credits his "hometown folks" for much of his success since it was they who provided him with his start in teaching and coaching at Pitcairn High School way back in 1952. Pete loves to bump into old teammates, coaches, players and fans and reminisce about the great Mohawk and Gator teams and get reacquainted with old friends. Today Pete spends much of his time serving at St. Michael's Parish in Pitcairn, relaxing with his wife, his children and their families, gardening, participating in alumni activities and golfing. After a long and distinguished coaching career, Pete is finding retirement off the field as rewarding as his time spent on the gridiron fields of western Pennsylvania.

We asked Coach Antimarino his most vivid memory of Gateway High School Athletics.

"The Dream Game"

1969le Game vs Altoona

"Winning the game against Altoona was the best thing that happened to me in my coaching career. This AA Championship crown was a double victory. It gained the AA crown and it elevated our school district to the greatest heights in high school football. This most exciting victory pulled us to the top. It will never be forgotten. It provided confidence for future teams and it was a game, quoted by some, as the greatest high school football game they had ever seen. The score was 22-15 in favor of the "Gators." It made believers of many, that we were of this caliber. This great victory convinced many high school fans that Gateway was the new powerhouse in the W.P.I.A.L."

- Coach Pete