

## Joe Madaffari



Joe Madaffari has been a part of the Norwalk sports scene for nearly half a century, first as an athlete, then as a coach, and most recently as an administrator.

But most of all as a fan and supporter of the local sports community.

The “Mad Dog” is currently in his 18th year as athletic director at Brien McMahon High School, where he was also the Senators’ head baseball coach for 15 seasons.

But Joe Madaffari’s sports journey in Norwalk began in the Cranbury Baseball League and Pop Warner Football program, and eventually evolved into a solid athletic career at Norwalk High School.

A 1976 graduate, Madaffari was the Bears’ starting

quarterback in football his last two years and a three-year starting catcher on the baseball team, earning All-FCIAC and All-City honors as a senior. He also played baseball for the Norwalk American Legion, one summer leading the Post 12 team with a .350 batting average.

He continued his baseball career at Graceland College in Iowa, where he was a three-time All-Heart of America Athletic Conference selection.

After graduating in 1981, Madaffari began his teaching career as a substitute teacher at Stamford High School that fall. He was only there for the fall and winter, but launched his coaching career as an assistant with the Black Knights’ football and wrestling teams.

In the spring of ’82, Madaffari returned to Norwalk as a long-term Math sub at Nathan Hale Middle School, before landing a fulltime Math position at Brien McMahon that fall. He also joined the Senators’ football coaching staff as an assistant under the legendary Jack Casagrande, the coach he once played against.

In fact, as a senior he was the QB in one of the most memorable games in the Norwalk-McMahon football rivalry when the Bears upset the Senators 3-2 in 1975.

Madaffari coached football at BMHS for 15 seasons, while also serving as head coach of the boys indoor track team for six years and the girls indoor and outdoor track teams for four years. One of the highlights of his coaching career was leading the Senators’ boys indoor track team to the 1985 Class M state title.

His first love, however, was always baseball and in 1986 he joined the McMahon staff as an assistant for one year before taking over as head baseball coach in 1987. Over the next 15 seasons, Madaffari guided the Senators to 10 state tournament appearances, including a pair of trips to the quarterfinals, as well as an FCIAC Central Division championship in 1998.

In fall of 1996, following the retirement of Ralph King, Madaffari came over from the Math Department to take over as the Boys Athletic Director and eventually as AD of both boys and girls interscholastic sports.

He stepped down as baseball coach after the 2001 season because of his increasing AD duties, and at the time his 147 wins were second most in the history of the BMHS baseball program, one shy of the all-time record.

Madaffari did resume coaching in the summers with his son’s baseball team in the Cal Ripken League and his daughter’s softball team. He guided the Norwalk Pride to a pair of Babe Ruth Softball state championships at the U-14 and U-16 age levels.

The McMahon AD has also been very active on FCIAC and state committees. He is a member of the FCIAC executive board, serving as president for four years, is on the CIAC baseball committee, and is also a past president of the Connecticut High School Coaches Association. He has been inducted into the FCIAC and CHSCA hall of fames, and last year received the CHSCA’s Thomas R. Monahan Honor Award, one of the highest awards in the state.

Madaffari has also been involved with the Norwalk Board of Education “Fun Runs” for the last 15 years, and is director of the Board of Ed Summer Sports Camps. He was a member of the Norwalk Shellfish Commission for two years, the Oak Hills Golf Authority for three years, and the Silvermine Community Scholarship Association for four years.

He and his wife Eileen reside in Silvermine and are parents of two children, Lauren and Christopher, a member of the men’s cross country team at the University of North Carolina this fall.