**ESA HALL OF FAME**

First-Year Selections (Approved by ESA Board Oct 24, 2016)

**Les Knuti**

Basketball coach 1934-1942, 1946-1953. Record 200-55.

Football coach 1946-1964 and program founder. Undefeated in final 25 games. Member of Minnesota Football Coaches Hall of Fame. Record 88-21-7.

Track coach 1935-1942, 1947-1966.

First athletic director. Coined “Eskomos” nickname. Instrumental in founding of Polar League. Widely known as “Mr. Esko” for decades.

**Walter Maunu**

1935 graduate. Tied for state high jump championship in 1935. Held school high jump record (6-0 3/8) for 45 years. Threw discus 138-6 when national schoolboy record was 141. Often competed in six events (high jump, discus, shot put, pole vault and long jump) in single meet.

Starred as basketball center for high school and FFA (including the team that defeated Harlem Globetrotters in 1938). Described by Les Knuti as Esko’s greatest all-around athlete.

**Harold Bergstedt**

1955 graduate. Led 1955 basketball squad to first state tournament appearance in any team sport. Still holds school record for points per game (26.6) and held career scoring record (1,515) until 2014. Held single-game record (43) until 1964.

Also excelled in football at tackle and in track as shot and discus thrower.

Starting center and forward at UMD for three years and helped Bulldogs advance to two national small college (NAIA) tournaments.

**1955 Basketball Team**

First team from Carlton County to win Region 7 championship. Defeated Duluth Denfeld and Duluth Central to win school’s first District 26 championship, then Lindstrom-Center City and Tower-Soudan in regional. Lost first game at state before Williams Arena record crowd (18,146), but won next two for consolation bracket trophy. The starting five: Harold Bergstedt, Ron Korby, Don Terwey, Jerry Anderson, Ernie Bylkas. Coached by Coopen Johnson, member of Minnesota Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame.

**Eleanor Randels**

Founder of Esko’s modern-day girls sports. Joined faculty in 1965 as health and fitness instructor and GAA (Girls Athletic Association) supervisor. Organized volleyball and track teams when state lifted ban on girls sports in 1969 and also started basketball program. Coached team to Minnesota’s first statewide basketball tournament in 1976.

Coached track team to championship in area’s first post-season (District 25-26 combined) meet in 1970. Also took team to first state meet for girls in 1972.

Head coach of all girls teams (basketball, track, volleyball, softball) through 1979. Career basketball record 63-18 over-all, 43-6 in Polar League.

**Darrell McKibbon**

1970 graduate. Four-year starter as football quarterback, set state record with 61 career touchdown passes. Named to 1969 Midwest All-American team by Coach & Athlete magazine and to all-state and all-region teams. During his four years, team record was 31-3, including 9-0 in 1969 when Esko defeated Two Harbors in the first year of state-sanctioned post-season conference playoffs.

Starting quarterback at UMD for three seasons, including two conference championships.

**Anna Townsend**

1995 graduate. Holds school records in basketball career points (1,966 points) and rebounds (1,324). Twice scored 35 points in a game. Led team to two state tournaments (1993 and 1995) and both times named all-state tournament.

Selected Duluth News Tribune Player of the Year in both basketball and volleyball as senior.

Competed in basketball and volleyball at Minnesota-Morris and was head volleyball coach at Virginia Wesleyan and Northwest Missouri State.

**Gina Perich**

1996 graduate. Seven-time state champion in track (six in hurdles, one in long jump) between 1992 and 1995. Almost singlehandedly won state team championship in 1995 when she had 46 of Esko’s 51 points. Ran second fastest 300-meter hurdles (42.81 seconds) in state history and set then-state record in long jump (18-5 ¾). Still holds several school records.

(Perich, continued)

Also excelled in basketball for five years and was finalist for Miss Minnesota Basketball in 1996. Played in two state tournaments and was Duluth News Tribune 1996 Player of the Year.

**Michelle Maunu**

2006 graduate. Earned 20 school letters in four sports and competed in 12 state tournaments—five in golf, four in hockey, two in football and one in soccer. Had 3.9 grade average through high school.

Led Cloquet-Esko hockey team to two runner-up finishes at state tournament and named to three all-state teams. Was Esko’s first female football player and kicked winning field goal in 2004 section championship.

Played hockey at University of Minnesota for four seasons; team captain as senior.