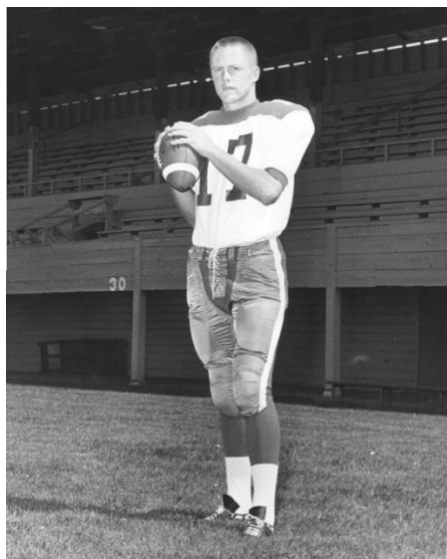


Mark Brandt
1968
Inducted in 2019



Mark grew up in Grants Pass and lived for sports. He started out competing in Little League, Punt, Pass and Kick and All Comers Track meets and ended up playing on the State Championship Football Team in 1967. It helped that the Brandt Family home was located adjacent to the GPHS track field and baseball fields. All spare time was spent learning from his mentors and coaches and practicing his athletic skills. Most importantly, he just had fun.

He was top scorer for GPHS and leading rusher in the State for the 1967 football season. He thrilled the crowds with his ability to carry the ball and plow through giant opponents. In his 1967 Championship season, he rushed for 1,120 yards and averaged 6.6 yards per carry. He earned All-Conference and All-American honors and played on the prestigious State All-Star Shrine Team.

In basketball, Mark was again the top scorer and top rebounder in his senior year and was awarded All-Conference, All-State and All-American honors. Renowned local sportscaster Jerry Acklin announced that Mark was the first GPHS player to dunk a ball during conference competition, a feat for which Mark had practiced for seasons.

In his favorite sport, baseball, Mark excelled as pitcher and first baseman and earned All-Conference designation. He also pitched for the local American Legion Team.

Mark lettered in football, basketball and baseball all three years in high school and was named "Outstanding Senior Athlete" in 1968. He did all of this while also holding down a demanding job in a local mill. After every hard-fought Friday night football game Mark was up at 5:00 a.m. Saturday morning to report to work at the mill. That's how character was developed in those days.

Mark was heralded as one of the best football prospects in the country and was heavily recruited nationwide. He visited college campuses around the country as he was considered a "Blue Chip Athlete" and coaches liked his size, athletic ability and character. He excitedly accepted Coach Ara Parseghian's offer to join The University of Notre Dame's legendary football program on a full four-year scholarship. Since travel funds were prized, Mark hitchhiked to South Bend, Indiana to start a new chapter in his athletic career. He had a very successful season playing tight end and punter for Notre Dame. During Christmas break, he returned home and played against the Harlem Globe Trotters Basketball team. Mark returned to Grants Pass for the summer after completing a vigorous and successful Notre Dame Spring football program and earning a starting position for the Fighting Irish.

Tragically, Mark lost his life in the Rogue River two days after his return to his beloved hometown. A promising bright future and a young life cut short. Grants Pass lost one of its "Golden Boys." His funeral was stated to be the only one held in the original Heater Newman Gymnasium and was attended by over 1,000 mourners from across the country. Mark is an Inaugural Inductee on The Mark Brandt Wall of Fame located in the Reinhart Volunteer All Sports Park.