



Russ Werner **Track Coach 1947-1982**

Inducted 2023

Russ Werner grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After high school, he attended SOC and Utah State before serving four years in the Army. After the Army, Russ continued his education at the University of Oregon, where he earned his degree in Education.

Russ Werner became Coach Werner in 1947 when he started his teaching and coaching career at Grants Pass High School. He taught life science and in addition to coaching the track team– the “thinclads” as they were referred to, he was the defensive lineman coach for the varsity football team, coached JV basketball and coached the cross country team.

During his tenure as Head Track Coach, Coach Werner’s teams won at least 8 District Championships. His teams placed 2nd at the state track meet in 1957, 1958, and 1962, placed 3rd in 1952 and 1963, and 4th in 1956. His 1956 Cross Country Team won the State Championship. Coach Werner’s track athletes earned 19 individual state titles and 3 of those athletes are members of the Caveman Hall of Fame.

Coach Werner was awarded the Oregon Track Coach of the Year 3 times - 1978, 1979, and 1980. He was also selected as the Region 8 Track Coach of the year in 1978.

After 35 years of teaching and coaching, Coach Werner’s retirement offered him more time to pursue his hobbies: fishing, backpacking, and skiing.

Following his retirement,
the GPHS track field was named
RUSS WERNER FIELD

In his honor.

