



WELCOME TO COUGAR COUNTRY



HALL OF FAME - 2010

MANKATO EAST HIGH SCHOOL
Est. 1973



Josh Dobell - Athlete

Josh Dobell is the son of Becky Davis and a 2000 graduate of Mankato East High School, where he amassed an incredible high school running resume in both cross-country and track.

Josh lettered five times, winning countless events for the Cougars and All-Big 9 Conferences honors in cross-country. He earned All-State status twice while competing in the state meet his junior and senior years, placing 25th and 6th respectively.

During the spring track season Josh experienced a tremendous amount of success both individually and as a member of the 4X800 meter relay team that held the school record for several years. The two-time Most Valuable Track Athlete earned All-Big 9 conference twice and received All-State honors three times as a junior and a senior while competing at the state meet in both the 1600 meters and 3200 meters. Josh finished in the top twelve as a junior in both events and ended his high school career with a 6th place finish in the 1600 and an outstanding 2nd place finish in the 3200, still holds the school record (4:14) in the 1600 meter race, which was also a conference record at the time, as well as in the 3200 (9:16) meter race.

Josh was also a star in the classroom while at East High School and was the President of the Class of 2000. He was a member of the National Honor Society and was an Academic All-State recipient while competing in Track.

His exceptional distance running skills were also proven at the next level when he competed for four years while attending the University of Minnesota. Running as a Gopher, Josh also accomplished some wonderful feats and certainly earned his share of awards while competing on three national meet placing teams in '01, '03, and '04. Furthermore he was an All-Midwest Regional Team selection in '04 and was named captain by his peers for that season. Josh has the 10th fastest time in school history at the U in the 3,000 meters, he garnered Academic All-Big 10 honors each of his four years of college, and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2004.

Since graduating from the U, Josh has been teaching and coaching in North Carolina. He received conference cross country coach of the year honors while at Northwest Halifax High School in 2006 and again in 2009 while coaching at his current school, KIPP Pride High in Gaston, NC. Last year he coached the boys cross country team to their first state meet appearance in school history and the girls track and field team to a 15th place finish at state, highlighted with a 3rd place finish by his 4X100 meter relay team.



Steve Kibble - Athlete

Steve Kibble certainly left his mark at Mankato East on the football and baseball fields and continued to make a name for himself after his career at East as well.

In football Steve earned All-Big 9 Conference honors and was All-City as a junior and senior for the Cougars. Furthermore, he was a two-time Iron Man winner for the Coach Dierks' led squad and Captain of the 1986 team. Steve also was a member of National Honor Society and was on the Dean's list his senior year.

During the spring Steve excelled in baseball by lettering three years, being a starter for his final two seasons, and leading as a captain in his final campaign. He led the squad in batting average, home runs, and RBI's and capped off his senior year by earning All-Big 9 Conference honors.

Wrestling occupied Steve's winters during his last three years at East, and he claimed to have given Coach Dierks and Coach Kvebak many a good tussles on the mat during practice.

Upon graduation from Mankato East in 1987, Steve accepted a football scholarship to attend Mankato State University. As a Mav, Steve was a three year starter on the offensive line, played in two Division II National playoff games, and was named All-NCC his senior season. Steve earned his B.S. Degree in Marketing/Management with a minor in finance.

Currently Steve is part owner/general manager of Mankato Implement (John Deere) where he has worked for the last 17 years. He was the winner of 24 years of John Deere Manager's Club (top 50 dealers in US/Canada). He is president of MN/SD Equipment Dealers' Association, a board member of Poet Ethanol of Lake Crystal, a board member of the MSU Touchdown Club, and a board member of John Deere Advisory counsel.

Steve and his lovely wife Pam have three children, Zach (22), Abby (15- a sophomore at East), and Jacob (9). His hobbies include running, biking, golf, bowling and traveling.



Elizabeth (Landwehr) Mullikin - Athlete

Elizabeth's storied career is rather amazing. She made an impact at the varsity level at an early age and continued to be one of the top athletes in the conference and in East history with a total of 13 letter winning seasons.

In volleyball she lettered three years and was a spotlight scholar athlete all three years. She was Academic All-State and was on the 4th place state tournament team as a junior.

As a gymnast Biz earned six letters and six spot-light on scholarship awards. During her freshman year she was All-Big 9 Conference, a state competitor, and coaches' All-State award in the vault. She received many of the same accolades her sophomore year and was the teams most improved gymnast as well. She continued to improve as a captain her junior year where she again earned All-Big 9 Conference, another All-State award in the vault, and captured the individual state championship in the vault as well. In the final season of her incredible winter career, she earned her third All-Big 9 Conference award, her third coaches All-State award, an individual bronze at state in the vault, and was a member of the gymnastics state championship team in 2001-02!

Elizabeth was just getting warmed up for her softball career. She played in three state tournaments, was honorable mention All-Big 9 Conference her freshman year and was All-Big 9 Conference during her sophomore, junior, and

senior seasons. She played on three state tournament teams that twice placed 5th. She again was a spotlight academic athlete all four seasons and earned coaches All-State honors as a sophomore, junior, and senior. She was an All-Tournament team selection her junior year and played in the senior all-star game to cap off her illustrious softball career. She is high on the list of several single-season and all-time records. Her 42 RBI's in a season and 108 in a career, along with her 12 career HR's and 6 in a single season all rank first in Cougar fastpitch history.

As dominant as she was as an athlete, she always put academics and school first. She was a member of United Together Against Prejudice (UTAP), Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), National Honor Society, and was the Wolverton Scholarship award winner.

Upon graduation from Mankato East in 2002 she was heavily recruited by Winona State to play softball, but an unfortunate shoulder injury during that summer kept her from ever playing at the next level. After two years at Winona State, Elizabeth finished her schooling at Minnesota State Mankato, earning a degree in Early Childhood Education with Summa Cum Laude honors.

Ms. Mullikin and her husband, Nathan, have a three year old son, Carter, and a one and half year old daughter, Teegan, who all enjoy outdoor activities and just loving life!



Ty Ries - Athlete

Ty Ries, a 2001 graduate, had an illustrious career both in high school and college, while embodying what a student-athlete is all about throughout her scholastic career. She was a three- year letter winner in volleyball and earned all conference honors as well. In addition, she was part of the volleyball state academic championship team her senior year and was named to the coaches' All-Tournament team when the Cougars participated in the 2000 state tournament.

Thalia continued to show her well-rounded athletic skills on the hard court in the winter where she lettered four years and was named All-Big 9 and All-City during her final two years.

The spring season is where Ty's athletic passion was fully present. She was the starting catcher since her 8th grade year and played in four straight state tournaments from 1998-2001. Her overall record of 112-16 at tests to how instrumental this born leader was for the Cougars. She earned All-Conference nominations during her final three seasons, was a two-time coaches' All-State selection, made the Pioneer Press All-State softball team, and was as dominant as any defensive catcher to ever wear a Cougars' uniform. She ranks second in school history with 87 career RBI's and sixth in both hits (118) and runs (79).

Ty was a National Honor Society member, earned countless academic accolades including Academic All-State in volleyball, basketball, and softball her senior year. As accomplished as she was in athletics, she may have succeeded even more in the classroom.

Upon graduation Ty enrolled at Princeton University where she continued to shine as a student-athlete in fastpitch softball. She was a four-year starting catcher for the Tigers and was voted captain by her teammates during her junior and senior year. While at Princeton Ty won three Ivy League Championships, appeared in three Division I NCAA tournaments, was a two-time honorable mention All-Ivy League performer, and a two-time All-Ivy League Academic Team member. Moreover, she was a two-time ESPN the Magazine Academic All-District softball team member and received the Cindy Cohen Award, awarded to the senior who has been an inspiration to her teammates through sportsmanship, dedication, and consistent effort.

Ty graduated with honors from Princeton in 2005 with a degree in politics and economics. After a few years in a financial position in San Francisco, Ty has recently relocated to Chicago to go back to school at Northwestern University Business School.



Mark Schmit - Coach

Mark Schmit left his mark on several sports at Mankato East during his 26 years of coaching. He began his teaching career in 1971 and retired in 2004. Mark coached both football and wrestling for twenty-six years and baseball for fifteen years. Most of his coaching career was at the varsity level, but Mark spent time working with some other levels of the athletic programs offered at East High School as well. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1970 from Mankato State and his master's degree in 1980. He was a tough no nonsense coach who earned the athlete's respect immediately when they played for him. Many staff members commented on how much they enjoyed coaching with Mark and how much of an impact he made at the school.

Gary Dierks, also a football and wrestling coach, said that Mark formed great bonds with all of his players from the star player to the last guy on the team. He cared for all of them equally.

Coach Nordeen Haldorson, who coached baseball with Mark, commented on how organized, efficient, and well-respected Mark was as a coach. He was a great coach at understanding how the "team" could be better and how as individuals you could accomplish that. Nordeen also cited that their differences in what subjects they taught in school, their different nationalities, and opposite personalities didn't get in the way of their objective of doing what was best for the team or keeping them from getting along as friends.

Mark has a daughter, Melissa Erickson, and two grandsons, Mark and Karle. Since retiring in Webster, SD., Mark has been enjoying hunting and fishing as much as he can.



Paul Sorenson - Coach

Paul Sorenson has been as much of a fixture of the Mankato East fastpitch softball program as anyone could have been. He has coached at Mankato East since 1980, arriving here after four years as the head coach in Delevan, MN. After retiring from the classroom in 2006 after 34 years of teaching, Sorney is still going strong coaching this coming spring for his 36th season. His great relationship with his players, positive attitude, and his gentlemanly behavior has endeared him to scores of current and former players.

After guiding Delevan to a state tournament appearance in 1979, he moved to Mankato and began assisting Bob Maes at Mankato East in the Cougar fastpitch program and continued that same role under current head coach Joe Madson. During his career, he has been the assistant coach on 17 Big 9 Conference titles starting in 1985, 14 section titles, three state consolation championships, two 3rd place finishes, one 2nd place finish, and four state championships! His combination of 34 championships (Big 9, Section, and State) is the most for any coach in school history and sets an almost unreachable benchmark for years to come. His overall record of 560-192 will be tough to match as well.

Paul was an outstanding athlete from Villard High School in Villard, MN, where he excelled in basketball and baseball. Both his basketball and baseball teams won Little 8 (conference) titles during his junior and senior years. At Southwest State University Paul was the starting pitcher in the first baseball game in Mustang history and was credited with the first win in the Southwest State baseball record books. He earned two letters as a pitcher and outfielder while also earning his bachelor's degree.

Furthermore Paul was named MN Sports Federation All-Star Assistant Coach in 1992 and the AFLAC National Assistant Coach of the year in 2002. He noted that he especially enjoyed his two trips in 2001 and 2007 to Disney Wide World of Sports in Orlando where the Cougars practiced and played exhibition games.

Paul and his lovely wife Janet have been married for 36 years.