



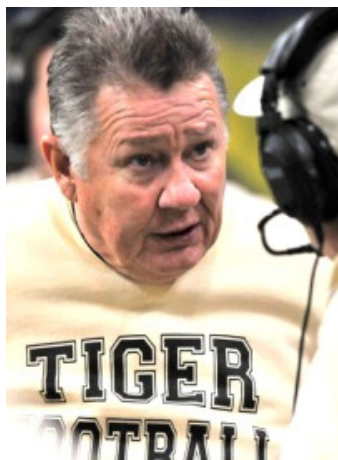
### **Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame Names Inductees**

The Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame Committee is pleased to announce the Class of 2015, which includes a beloved football coach, a professional baseball player, a storied football player and a track star. The inductees are (in alphabetical order):

- Jim Bennett;
- Mike Phillips;
- Bill Rutherford; and
- Kenny Walters.

The 2015 Hall of Fame inductees were honored at a banquet on Saturday, June 20th, at the Sheraton DFW Airport Hotel. Now in its fourth year, the Irving ISD Hall of Fame is designed to honor those who have contributed to athletic excellence throughout the history of Irving ISD. Read more about this year's honorees below.

# JIM BENNETT



Jim Bennett grew up in Marshall, Texas and graduated in 1966 from Marshall High School and in 1972 from Louisiana Tech University. It was no surprise that he chose coaching as his profession. It is a career that his brothers, Dr. Glen Hayes, Jerry Bennett and Phil Bennett also held at one time or another.

Jim Bennett spent the beginning of his coaching career in Louisiana, first at Cedar Creek High School in Ruston, then Tensas High in St. Joseph and Glenbrook High School in Minden. In the fall of 1978, he returned to Texas and coached in Waco ISD and Alvarado ISD. In the early 1980s, he heard from his brother Phil about an opening at Irving High School. He was selected for the position and began his era at Irving High School in January 1984.

Bennett worked hard to rebuild the Tiger football program, and his 1990 team won district and advanced to the second round of the playoffs, becoming the school's first team in 20 years to advance to the postseason. In addition, no football team in Irving ISD has ever advanced more rounds in the playoffs than his 2003 team, which won district and beat notable powerhouses including Flower Mound Marcus, Keller and Abilene on their way to the state quarterfinals.

As impressive as his coaching career has been, more importantly,

he devoted almost four decades of his life to coaching and mentoring thousands of boys and girls. He guided the young men and women, teaching and instilling values that would serve them well on and off the field and was known and respected for caring about and loving his players. Coach Bennett was like a father to many of his players. He taught them to set goals and to work hard to achieve them. The lessons and values he taught his players helped them excel in the classroom and beyond. Many of his athletes attribute their success as adults to him and the lessons he taught.



Recognitions earned by Coach Jim Bennett during his tenure include Irving Schools Foundation Fellows Award, NFL High School Coach of the Week three times, District Head Football Coach of the Year 13 times, *Dallas Morning News* Metroplex Coach of the Year, *Cleburne Times-Review* Johnson County Coach of the Year twice, *Irving News* Coach of the Year five times, and ICTN Coach of the Year 10 times. Of his 28 football seasons at Irving High, his teams advanced to the playoffs 16 times.

Jim Bennett retired in 2012. He lives in Bedford with his wife Peggy Bennett.

# MIKE PHILLIPS



Mike Phillips has been a resident of Irving for 53 years. Moving to Irving at the age of 12, he played Irving Boys Baseball at the River Bottoms for three years before making the freshman MacArthur High School baseball team under legendary Texas Coach Bob Ledbetter. As of 2015, Mike is the only MacArthur High School graduate to play Major League Baseball.

Mike earned varsity letters in three sports at MacArthur High School: baseball, basketball and football. He was part of the 1968 Cardinal's baseball team that posted a 13-3 season and won the Zone II Championship.

Baseball was his passion and the sport in which he earned All-District, All-State and Rawlings High School All-America Second Team shortstop honors in 1969, the year he graduated.

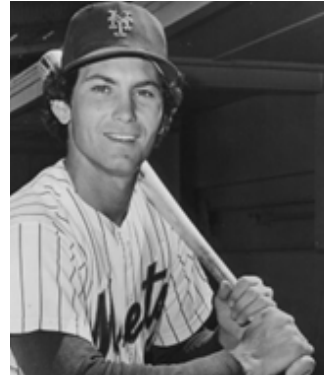
Mike began his 27-year professional baseball career right out of high school after being selected by the San Francisco Giants in the first round (18th overall pick) of the 1969 MLB Draft. After four seasons in the Giants minor leagues, his 1973 Major League debut was followed by 11 productive seasons in the Major Leagues as an infielder with the San Francisco Giants, New York Mets, St. Louis Cardinals, San Diego Padres and Montreal Expos.

On June 25, 1976, at Chicago's Wrigley Field, Mike became the ninth player in Mets history to hit for the cycle - hitting a

single, double, triple and homerun in one game. According to MLB.com, the cycle is considered rare in Major League Baseball, occurring just 279 times between 1885 and 2014. While playing shortstop for the Mets, Mike was also named National League Player of the Month.

He was part of the 1981 Montreal Expos team that won the National League Eastern Division Championship.

Following his playing career, Mike served as the Director of Sports Marketing for KRLD Radio for nine years before re-joining Major League Baseball as Director of Corporate Sponsorships for the Texas Rangers for five years. He completed his MLB career serving seven years with the Kansas City Royals where as Vice-President, he oversaw all corporate revenue for the ball club.



Throughout his career Mike served in his community through various non-profit organizations. In addition to volunteering his coaching services for Texas Christian University for two years, he coached in the Irving Boys Baseball Association for eight years and served on the FCA Tom Landry Golf Committee for 13 years. Mike remains an active member of the Major League Baseball Players Alumni Association and the Professional Players Foundation.

Mike and his wife of 39 years have three sons who played in the IBBA system and are MacArthur High School graduates. Retired, Mike enjoys playing golf and spending time with each of his seven grandchildren.

# BILL RUTHERFORD



Bill Rutherford has lived in Irving most of his life. The three-year letterman for the Irving High Tigers continued his football career at the collegiate level at the University of Texas at Austin. Upon his graduation from college, he moved back to the Metroplex, living in Dallas, Carrollton, Rowlett and Rockwall before returning to Irving 15 years ago.

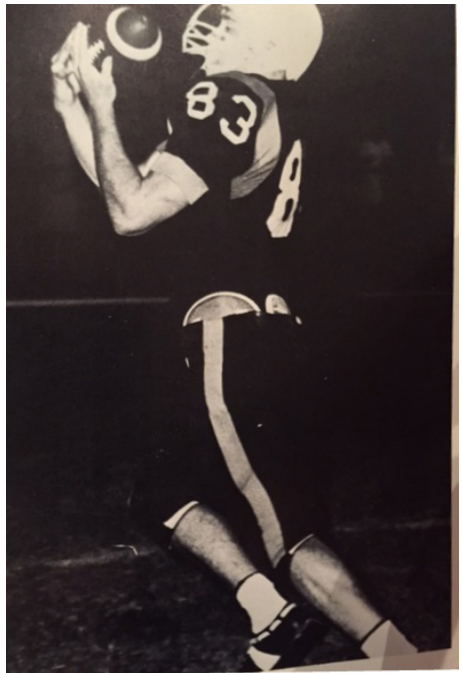
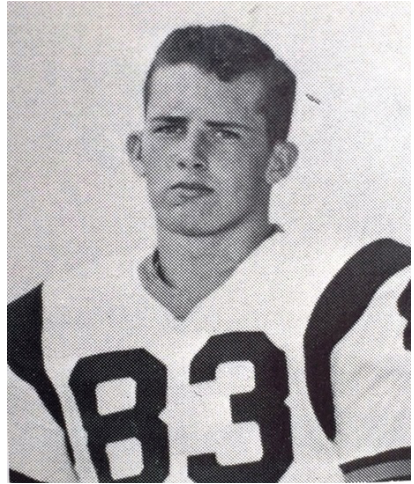
The 1969 Irving High graduate played high school football from 1966 to 1968, serving as a team captain his senior year. That year, the team went undefeated in district play, winning the district, bi-district and regional titles and qualifying for the quarterfinals. Rutherford made the All-District Offense and Defense, All-Greater Dallas and All-Regional teams and was named an All-State linebacker. He was designated as a Top 20 Blue Chip player in the state of Texas.

In college, Rutherford played football for five years from 1969 to 1973 after he was injured and redshirted his sophomore year. He was a two-year starter and was named an All-Southwest Conference player in 1972 and 1973. His teams

won four Southwest Conference Championships, four Cotton Bowls and a UPI National Championship in 1970.

He graduated from UT with a degree in General Business in the spring of 1974 and shortly after began a career, which now spans 40 years, as a manufacturing representative at the World Trade Center in Dallas selling women's clothing.

Rutherford enjoys playing golf, fishing and watching sports. He has two daughters, Reagan Glover and Brittany Rutherford; and two granddaughters, Gail Grace Glover and Kynleigh Faith Villarreal.



# KENNETH WALTERS



Kenneth Walters and his brother Billy were raised in Irving. Their most avid supporters, parents Warren and Lucille Walters have passed on. Ken attended Central Elementary School through sixth grade, Bowie Junior High for seventh-ninth grades, and was a member of the first class to spend all three years in high school at the new Irving High School, graduating

in 1964. While at Irving High School he was a member of the football and track teams. Ken was a letterman in football in the 1961, 1962, and 1963 seasons. He was also a member of the 1962 10-0 District Champion football team and was voted Honorable Mention All-District Back.

Ken Walters was also a three-year letterman in track and field. He felt good things were to come in the future when, as a sophomore, he placed third in low hurdles at the district track meet. As a junior in 1963, Ken won the 120-yard high hurdle event at the UIL State Track & Field meet in Austin. In his senior year in 1964, he tied the national record in the 120-yard high hurdles at a meet in Corpus Christi. The following week Ken again won the 120-yard high hurdles at the UIL State Track & Field meet in Austin, earning him back-to-back state championships.



After graduating from Irving High School, Ken attended the University of Texas at Arlington, where he lettered four years in track and field and served as co-captain of the track team his senior year. He won the Southland Conference 120-yard high hurdles as a sophomore and won the Southland Conference 440-yard intermediate hurdles event as a senior. He graduated from the University of North Texas with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education.



Ken and his wife, Debby, now live in Montgomery, Texas and between them have four daughters and six grandsons. Ken is currently a territory manager for Mohawk Industries. He and Debby are still competitive and love to race sailboats.