

Tecumseh Athletic Hall of Fame
Class of 1998

Joe "Spanky" McFarland

Eight opportunities, eight letters. When one reflects back to the class of 1972, an athlete that stands out is Joe McFarland. As a sophomore he would play football and earn All Conference in the Mad River Valley League as a Defensive End. The winter would allow Joe to letter in basketball, and spring would him with a 5-0 record as the 1970 baseball team would make its way to the regional finals at Crosley field with a 36-6 record.

A bond levy would fail his junior year thus starting school late in the fall canceling football. Being able to concentrate on his basketball skills, Joe would become the leading scorer and share the Most Valuable Player with classmate Larry Hensley. During this time he would move into the #9 Top All-Time Scoring Leaders and be recognized to the 2nd team All Conference team in the MRVL. Spring would bring him receiving 2nd Team All Conference in the MRVL. Joe would also serve the Varsity T Club as the Secretary/Treasurer.

Participating in Campus Life and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Joe would polish his leadership skills. Not only being recognized as Co-Captain, but receive 1st team All Conference MRVL and be placed on the Journal Herald All Greater Dayton Team. Along with Co-Captain Greg Peitsmeyer, Joe was happy to present Principal Carl Snapp with the MRVL Football League Championship trophy. The winter would find Joe as a Co-Captain of the basketball team that would win the Troy Holiday Tournament and take the 13-7 Arrows to a second place league finish. He would be recognized 1st team All Conference. Joe would receive 1st team All Conference in baseball and become the first athlete at Tecumseh to become All Conference in three different sports.

Upon graduation, Joe would attend Hillsdale College to earn his Bachelors Degree. While there he would play fullback for the Chargers becoming a three year letter winner. In baseball, Joe was an outfielder and pitcher earning letters for four years. After graduation spring of 1976, he would be invited to participate in training camp of the CFL Calgary Stampeders.

McFarland would return to Hillsdale College to start his coaching career as an assistant before moving to Battle Creek, Michigan to become the Head Baseball Coach at Kellogg Community College. Prior to his current position as Head Baseball Coach at James Madison University, Joe served as an assistant coach at Appalachian State (1981), Florida State (1982), Georgia Tech (1983-85), and South Florida (1986-90). He would reinstate baseball in 1991 at Northern Illinois University serving as the Head Coach for seven seasons (1991-97).

His coaching career record of 203-253-1 in ten years would allow him to coach more than 60 pitchers who signed professional contracts. Included in those is 1997 World Series stand out Kevin Brown then of the Florida Marlins and now with the San Diego Padres.

An author of "Developing Pitchers" and "Coaching Pitchers", he is a sought after speaker. Not only speaking at four National Baseball Coaches Association National Clinics, McFarland was a guest speaker at the U.S. Olympic Committee symposium on "Injuries to the Throwing Arm" in 1983.

He and his wife Deb, have two children, Tara Lynn and Tyler. Joe is the son of Ed and Imy McFarland.