

SHERMAN CENTRAL SCHOOL

Wall of Fame

MELFORD C. SWANSON

Inducted 2019



Mel Swanson enjoyed a nearly 40-year coaching career at Sherman Central School, which extended 7 years past his teaching career. He achieved 607 career victories directing hundreds of hard-working girls in the Sherman girls' varsity basketball program. For perspective, that milestone places him third on the state's all-time list, according to the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, and first in Western New York in boys' or girls' varsity basketball wins. Mel served as Sherman's Athletic Director from 1998 to 2017. At various times throughout his years at Sherman, Mel also coached boys' JV football, boys' junior high, JV and varsity basketball, girls' junior high, JV, and varsity basketball, boys' varsity baseball, and varsity golf.

Mel graduated locally, from Panama Central School in 1972, JCC in 1975, and from SUNY Fredonia in 1977, then completed graduate work at Gannon University. He was hired at Sherman in 1977 to teach fourth grade and to coach JV football. The following year, he began coaching his first girls' basketball team at Sherman, although he didn't initially meet with much success on the hardwood. His team's records during the first three building seasons were a combined 10-32, including a 0-14 mark to start, but his teams began to gain some traction in 1981-82 (12-9), followed by 20-win seasons 9 times from 1983-2009. The Lady Wildcats were always a respected defensive powerhouse, and played in state championship games in Albany twice, once in 2001 and again in 2009.

Mel's family includes wife Mary (married nearly 45 years), sons Nolan (wife Amy) of Westfield, Patrick (wife Natalie) of Fredonia, and Ryan (wife Laura) of North Clymer, daughter Lesley (husband Neal), of Cumming, Georgia, and 9 wonderful grandchildren, Darien, Carson, Braylon, Josie, Johnny, Maddie, Anna Kate, Lucy Jo, and Henry.