

Chronicles of Fredonia Athletics

Fredonia as a college has been widely known for its great music program and science program. When you think about college athletics in Western New York, Fredonia does not normally come to mind.

With schools like University at Buffalo, Canisius, Geneseo and Niagara in the area known for their rich sports programs, Fredonia isn't real prototypical sports school.

However, Fredonia has a history of athletic success stretching back a few decades in various sports.

Athletic achievements in Fredonia history include SUNYAC championships in hockey, basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball and track and field among other sports. Fredonia might not have the facilities or budgets as other schools in SUNYAC or the great location but they are a small school eager to welcome people to their campus.

Fredonia athletics is best summarized as a "family". Everyone from the athletic director to the players prides themselves on being team first and forming strong bonds with their teammates and

coaching staffs.

Being a smaller school, funding for new buildings and facilities, and recruiting great high school talent were sometimes issues for the Blue Devils but whoever they had playing for each sport worked hard and together.

In each decade, this family aspect and team-oriented mentality led to some success for Fredonia sports teams. Whether it was the track team's dominant success in both the 70 s and 90 s, to the 90 s dynasty in soccer, basketball, and hockey, Fredonia has made a nice mark as a respectable force in athletics.

This magazine will highlight and spotlight some people in Fredonia's history from the past and present who have influenced or are influencing Fredonia athletics.

From athletic directors to coaches to players, each person has a different story on how they got to Fredonia, but all have been influenced by Fredonia in some way.

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The image shows a person standing in a hallway, looking out through a glass door. The door has a large, circular NCAA logo on it. The logo is blue with the letters 'NCAA' in white. The person's reflection is visible on the glass. The hallway has a polished floor and a tiled wall on the right side.

NCAA

Division III

DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE



JERRY FISK

- Fredonia Athletic Director since December 2017
- Assistant Athletic Director of Event and Facility Operations at Elmira College (2015-17)



After over 30 years as athletic director, longtime Fredonian Greg Prechtl decided to retire as AD. As the search began for his replacement last year, many names were discussed but in November of 2017, Jerry Fisk was appointed as the new Fredonia athletic director.

Fisk came from Elmira College, where he was assistant director of athletics and event and facility operations, to join the Blue Devils and he is full of bright new ideas to spice up the athletic department here. Fisk is no stranger to sports as he has worked as a college athletics administrator, a coach and a development associate.

He inherits a program that isn't known for its sports but had done a great job of recruiting and getting players the past 25-30 years under Prechtl. Under Fisk's domain, Fredonia will look to expand its sporting department while potentially adding some key additions and renovations to the program.

Talking with Fisk about improving the Athletic Department, he quickly mentioned improving student athlete experience and facilities as well as creating a leadership seminar each year for the teams.

"I want to also travel with teams on the road to tell the coaches and players that they have my support," said Fisk.

Fisk said the next phase in his plan to improve the athletic department is to fix up Dods Hall, improve the weight room, create a press box for the turf field and do other things among his plan to give the department a "facelift".

Location has always been something Fredonia has had to deal with in terms of recruiting and competing against other SUNYAC schools, but Fisk thinks the location doesn't damage Fredonia's recruiting plans.

"We have a big footprint already. Coaches have the tools to recruit players," said Fisk.

With a wide region of recruiting destinations from the Western New York region, to downstate, Canada, and out of state, Fredonia is very much active in its recruiting. Fisk explains that what Fredonia lacks in facilities, it makes up for in other areas like academics.

"We have other things that some SUNY schools don't have. The Science Center and music program are big selling points along, with selling Fredonia as a town and a family atmosphere," said Fisk.

He also mentioned recruiting brochures and meetings with the strength and condition coach as things to help improve recruiting.

Fisk plans to improve facilities and give them a facelift but also wants to brand the Fredonia Blue Devils more on campus.

He wants to have more Blue Devils logos on campus so people are more in tune with their athletics and can be a consistency reminded about sports. Elmira has taught Fisk a lot of things, but one thing he learned was to maximize resources, which he is hoping to do here.

"I want to bring the game day experience back to Fredonia," said Fisk. "Whether it's through private funding or building relationships on campus."

One thing Fredonia has going for athletics is that

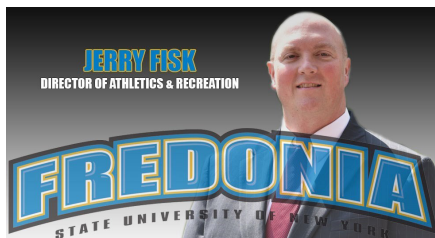


Photo from Fredonia's website

it is a family atmosphere that Fisk said is a plus for recruiting and for current student athletes. He said the emphasis on personal relationships here and how the genuineness of people is something that stands out.

Steele Hall and Dods Hall are the two athletic buildings on campus and Fisk plans to improve both buildings. Steele Hall due to uneven spots in the floor has forced the Athletic Department to change venues for men's and women's basketball. The men's and women's basketball teams now play their games in Dods Hall where the teams originally played. Fisk stressed that he would make fixing Dods Hall a priority and said it was "important to him" to improve that. His plans included improving the basketball court in Dods to make the gameday experience better for fans.

Steele Hall will also be a project for Fisk as he described it as a "major renovation" to fix up the floor, track, and curtain system.

Hopefully this will help improve recruiting but

Fisk has a plan in terms of making Fredonia a popular sports destination.

"It's not easy but it's not difficult. You have to know your strengths and use your strengths to have strong relationships with recruits. Being able to speak to your strengths, meet with kids and you could compete with anyone," said Fisk

Fisk talked a lot about how he wanted to improve the athletic department and had a lot of plans in place to fulfill that goal.

"I want to paint inside Dods, add lights in Dods and hopefully new bleachers," said Fisk. "I also want to have electronic scoreboards and data for the turf fields as well as new equipment."

He hopes with these changes to the athletic department in the near future that the sports department in Fredonia can reach new highs.

"Athletics on campus is a priority and the funding follows that. It can be a special athletic department if that happens," said Fisk

Things such as coach's meetings with the Athletic Department where clear expectations for coaches are mad before the season are some things Fisk has in mind for changes to how the department is run. Fisk's goal is to get more kids to come to the games while making Fredonia more in tune with sports as they were in the 80 s and 90 s.

If the plans Fisk has come to reality, Fredonia will be in great hands for years to come.





Photo from sunyacsports.com



Photo from fredonia.edu



Photo from 1968 Fredonia yearbook

Greg Prechtl

- Fredonia Alumnus (1965-1969)
- Men's Basketball Coach (1978-1999)
- Assistant Athletic Director (1990-1998)
- Athletic Director (1998-2017)

Greg Prechtl is what you like to call a Fredonia lifer. Prechtl had a career at Fredonia that spanned five decades. A Fredonia alumnus, Prechtl played for the men's basketball team from 1965-1969 and coached the men's basketball team, starting from 1977, ranging for more than 15 years.

He was the coach for men's basketball's only SUNYAC championship in the 1992-93 season and became the athletic director in 1998. He is currently the director of athletics emeritus after retiring from being the athletic director but has been around to see new coaches, new buildings, and other important moments in Fredonia's history.

He has seen and been a part of the improvement of the Fredonia Athletic Department and knows what it takes to compete in SUNYACs.

"The facilities have improved. In 44 years, I've seen a new soccer stadium, tennis and basketball courts, and the Steele Hall **Fieldhouse**", said Prechtl

He added that there's still work to be done to compete in SUNYACs for every sport but with Fredonia spending more money on the athletes, improving the hotels for them and the way they travel, hopefully it will lead to more on-court success in the coming years.

Fredonia's location makes it difficult for recruiting and Prechtl named that as one of the biggest obstacles in his time as a coach and athletic director in Fredonia.

"Our location hurts us. Lake Erie is to the north of us, west is Pennsylvania and kids out of state have to pay double to come here", said Prechtl. "Going east, you're fighting with other SUNYAC schools to get players. You've got to get kids on our campus for them to come here."

Over the years, the competition in SUNYACs have gotten tougher as it went from a small northeast DIII conference to one of the toughest conferences in DIII sports.

"It's stacked," said Prechtl. "Dr. Patrick Damore, who worked 30 years at Fredonia, combined art and SUNYAC schools to create an athletic conference," said Prechtl. "It included Albany, Binghamton, and UB at the start and is now a Top 5 DIII conference in the country."

With schools now like Geneseo, Cortland, Oswego, and Plattsburgh good at multiple sports, Fredonia has seen its difficulties catching up with the competition from other SUNYAC schools.

Prechtl explained how it was harder to get kids in New York than in years past. Fredonia has

experienced some trouble with funding which contributes to the problem.

"It's harder to get kids from southern New York because we're a small school and last in SUNYACs in **funding**", said Prechtl

Eight years ago, the funding for athletics was \$ 5,770 dollars and now it's declined to 4,900 dollars which affects recruiting.

Though funding isn't as high as at other SUNYAC schools, Fredonia in the 90s was known for its dominant sports teams as men's basketball and hockey both won titles in the decade.

The Blue Devils also were good in track and field in the 70s and Prechtl attributed that to the commitment from the athletic department to track



Photo from alumni.fredonia.edu

and field.

"They had good coaching and the school was committed to track. Everett Phillips was the full-time men's and women's track coach. He was a good recruiter and we competed well with Cortland and **Brockport**", said Prechtl

Prechtl said the lack of schools focusing on targeting recruits with certain majors and location in the past was the key to recruiting success.

Now kids determine their school selection by location, major, and situation at the school so Fredonia has had to change the way it recruits.

"It was a lot of familiarity and focused aggressive recruiting. Location, majors, and facilities did not come into play quite as **much**", said Prechtl

Prechtl has been a part of many new additions

to the sports department, such as adding women's



sports to Fredonia and funding them equally with their male counterparts.

"We added women's sports and lacrosse. There was effort made to fund women's athletics the same as men and we hired full time coaching staffs for both **genders**", said Prechtl

Before becoming the athletic director and before he was the men's basketball coach, Prechtl attended and played at Fredonia from 1965-69. The Blue Devils still played at Dods Hall. Every team played there as Steele Hall wasn't built at the time.

"It was a lot of people using one space. Our equipment wasn't that new and our travel budget was not that high **either**", said Prechtl

Prechtl said he didn't play much at Fredonia but became a student of the game, which made him into a good coach. That success led him to a title coaching the 1992-93 men's basketball team to its only SUNYAC title and only NCAA tournament appearance.

Prechtl is a staple in Fredonia's sports history. A lot of the accomplishments Fredonia has achieved, new buildings and renovations, have been under Prechtl's watch and he hopes that continues and flourishes under new athletic department Jerry Fisk.





Jeff Meredith

- 30 seasons as Blue Devils head hockey coach
- 400+ wins at Fredonia
- 3-time SUNYAC Coach of the Year
- 3-time SUNYAC champion
- 43rd on NCAA All-Time Coaching Wins List



While many things in Fredonia have changed the past 30 years, one person has been there through it all, hockey coach Jeff Meredith. Meredith, who has been the coach of the Blue Devils since their second season of existence, has been the most winningest coach in Fredonia history.

With three SUNYAC titles, two coach of the year awards, and over 400 wins to his name, Meredith has basically seen it all in hockey in the Western New York area. His 90 s teams featured some of the best hockey this campus has ever seen and he was a revolutionary in terms of recruiting on a DIII level.

In the past 30 years, Meredith has seen SUNYAC evolve into a much better conference as competition has gotten better throughout the years. "DI 30 years ago is like pro hockey now. DIII hockey now is like DI hockey 30 years ago," said Meredith.

Meredith said that the main difference between the difficulty of play is teams used to battle in games, then fade away, but now the competition is better and every team is good.

Recruiting has been something Meredith has seen grow over the years. He explained that recruiting has not gotten harder as the years went by.

"It's easier because of the Internet. I can dial up any game in North America and watch it," said Meredith.

The clear difference between DI and DIII hockey has made recruiting easier for Fredonia as more junior leagues and fewer DI walk-ons are making DIII schools destination targets for more players.

Meredith said his success in the 90 s was mostly due to the fact he recruited from the two junior leagues, the NA League, and the USHL. At the time it was only two junior leagues and Fredonia was one of the first DIII schools to recruit them.

Kids used to play college hockey straight out of high school and recruiting junior leagues gave Fredonia an upper hand in terms of talent. Fredonia was the first DIII school to recruit the North American league, located in Detroit, as while Fredonia's freshmen were 21, everyone else's freshman were 18. The difference now is schools provide their departments with more resources, which in turn helps out the programs.

As recruiting has gotten tougher and the competition has gotten tougher, coach Meredith explained that being a better team has been his message to his guys every year.

"We have to be a better team. We have to be more disciplined and work harder than other teams in SUNYAC.

It might be a difference in talent but if you play a perfect game, it's a fair fight."

He agreed that the biggest obstacle in recruiting is cost and competing against other SUNYAC schools. New AD Jerry Fisk has found more money to scholarships to narrow the gap but Fredonia is battling against teams like Oswego, which has a huge hockey arena and new facilities and Geneseo, which is a powerhouse when it comes to hockey.

AD Jerry Fisk has found more money to scholarships to narrow the gap but Fredonia is battling against teams like Oswego, which has a huge hockey arena and new facilities and Geneseo, which is a powerhouse when it comes to hockey.



Meredith said that he has expanded his recruiting range to Western Canada to find kids eager to play college hockey in the United States. This has been something that has worked for Meredith for many reasons but mostly because of the recruits lack of familiarity with SUNYAC teams.

"Local kids know the league and know success and standings. Western Canada just knows you play in a good league and they are normally locked in on the first school that recruits them," said Meredith.

The pace of hockey has also changed in past years. The style of play in the 90 s was more slow paced. More defending, shot-blocking, and better athletes have made the game more fast and more competitive in the past 20 years.

While the type of style and players that have come through Fredonia's doors have changed, the strength of schedule has stayed the same. Fredonia plays about nine non-conference games a year and the schedule difficulty usually stays around the same.

"SUNYAC is so good that 1/3 of the schedule is against Top 15 teams. Schools like Elmira, RIT, Mercyhurst, and Hogart in the 90 s but now you don't need to schedule these types of games." Said Meredith

In his 30 years behind the bench, Meredith has learned a lot after basically taking over the program from its first year.

"I took over a brand new program so you get to put your own stamp on it. I took over a 0-22 team and six years later we were in the Frozen Four as an undefeated team," said Meredith.

He recruits high character, high-motor kids to create a hardworking and family aspect to Fredonia hockey, something that all of the teams at Fredonia try to look for.

"Recruiting is about relationship and trust. The quality of experience you have at Fred is important." Said Meredith

This mindset has paid dividends as many of Meredith's former players have come back to work as assistants and keep it touch with the school and their longtime coach.

Meredith explained that he may not have the resources like other SUNYAC schools, but the relationships, trust, and communication at Fredonia is something people love about the school.

"Fredonia is a great, friendly place. Recruits commit and say they were comfortable here which, is a goal of ours."



Ian Helps, Fredonia Blue Devils basketball (2014-18)

- Career averages: 15.8 PPG/7.9 RPG/1.2 APG
- 2015 SUNAYC Rookie of the Year
- Third on Fredonia's all time scoring list
- Seventh on Fredonia's all time rebounding list



**MALE ROOKIE
OF THE YEAR**

IAN HELPS

BASKETBALL

2014 - 2015

Coming out of high school, Ian Helps was not highly recruited. He hadn't even been playing organized basketball for longer than two years.

Current Fredonia men's basketball coach Philip Seymour, who found out about Helps through one of Helps' assistant coaches, recruited him and convinced him to come to Fredonia.

Four years later, Helps was one of the Fredonia men's basketball team most dominant players of all time. With career averages of 15.8 points, 7.9 rebounds, 1.2 assists per game, Helps is third on the Fredonia's all-time leading scoring list, seventh in rebounds, 2nd in free throws made, and 4th in blocked shots.

Since freshman year, Helps has led Fredonia in scoring and became not only a good basketball player, but a good leader in the locker room and off of the court.

"It was a late recruitment, around April (2014)," said Helps, describing his Fredonia recruitment, "I did know anything about them (Fredonia) or the school."

Helps, who is an exercise science major, was impressed by Fredonia's new science center and also enjoyed the distance from home.

"Besides basketball, I liked the science program. I'm an exercise science major and getting away from home and getting out of the city seemed nice," said Helps.

Once he arrived on campus, Helps realized how different Fredonia was from what he was used to.

"I graduated with 40 kids in my high school and went to small schools all my life, so it was an eye-opening experience for sure," said Helps.

Another thing Helps had to adjust to was the grind that was a full college basketball schedule.

"I never played a full season of basketball until college. In high school, we played in one tournament a year so I had to adjust to a longer schedule," he said.

Fredonia is known for a school that has a family atmosphere in the athletics department and Helps echoed that sentiment.

"We were not always as successful but we were a family. Everyone was close on the basketball team and we have brothers for life," said Helps

Helps described himself as a "raw prospect" coming into Fredonia and credited his coaching staff with making him into a better player.

"My game was unpolished and I was still working on it. Coach Seymour and Coach (Adams) got me better fundamentally and in the weight room," said Helps. "I credit them and my teammates for making me a better scorer, defender, passer, and leader."

Helps became a captain his sophomore year. He said he didn't try to talk about leading, but to lead by his actions.

"I wanted to lead with actions. Talk less and act more. I was not perfect but showed what it meant to be a good teammates and leader. You can talk, but if you don't produce it's empty," said Helps.



Photo from observertoday.com

One of the biggest obstacles at Fredonia that Helps had to deal with was the turnover with the roster every year.

"Besides my junior year, we never had a core base of players. It wasn't a lot of time to mesh and we basically started over every year," said Helps.

The Blue Devils went 23-74 in Helps' career at

Fredonia, with every season bringing on a different groups of guys to play alongside him.

One thing Helps learned, however, was that you needed to work hard to be good in SUNYACS.

"It was not a cakewalk and you have to work every day. When you don't, it shows," said Helps.

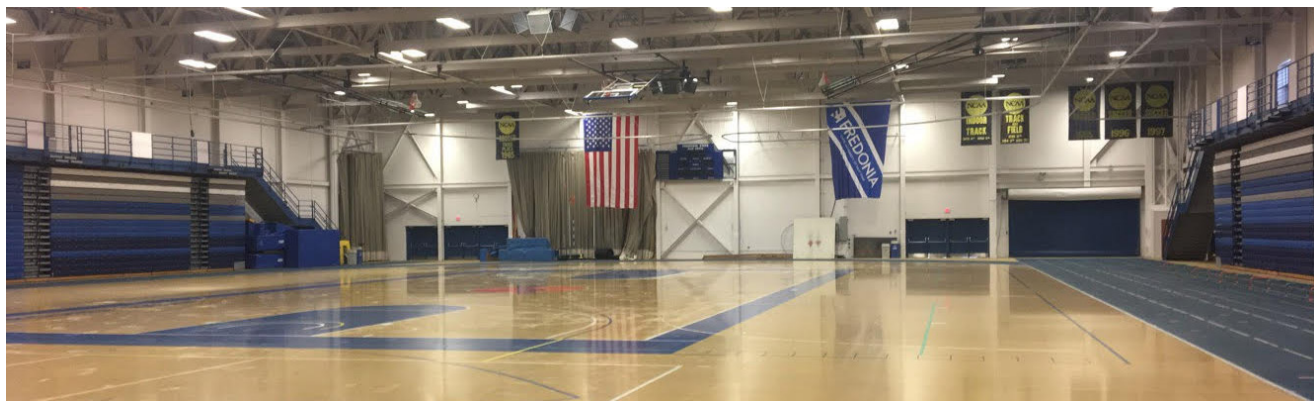
As a student, Helps came from a religious background so learning to be less judgmental and having a full perspective was some of the things he learned from being a student at Fredonia.

Playing in SUNYAC was one of Helps' best memories at Fredonia but he admitted it was hard to pinpoint one moment that stood out from the rest.

"SUNYAC is a top DIII conference so there's lots of moments. Last year we beat Oswego and they were ranked No. 23 nationally and my sophomore year we won against Brockport on a buzzer by Dante (Williams)," said Helps.

Helps stressed how Fredonia gave him brothers for life and says basketball and his teammates are the things he will miss most about Fredonia.

"I'll miss playing basketball with my teammates Tapp, Keith, Dante. . . practicing, preseason workouts, it wasn't fun but I will definitely miss them and working hard to be a better player," said Helps.



Chris Hughey

Men's Basketball (1982-86)

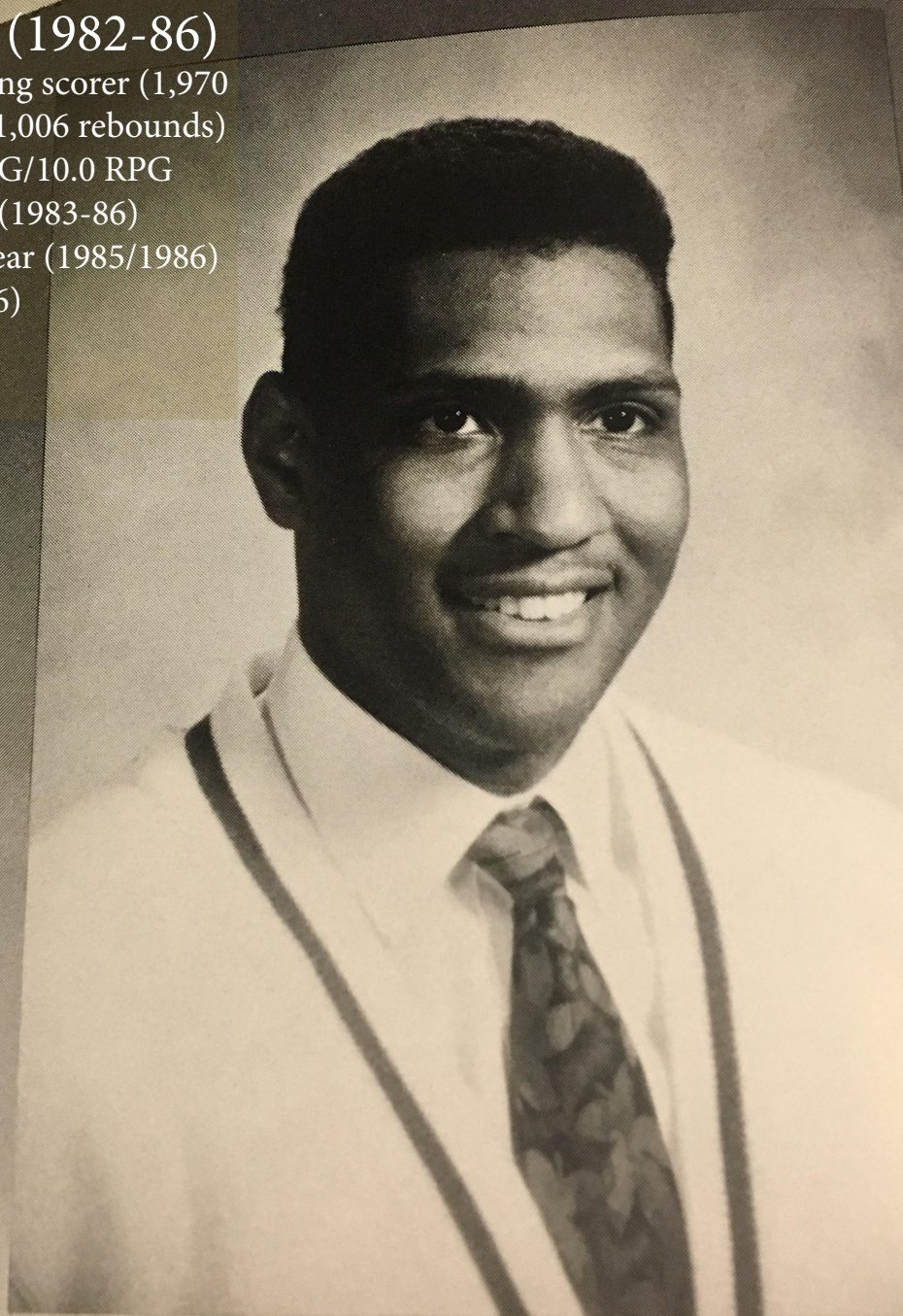
Fredonia All-Time Leading scorer (1,970 points) and rebounder (1,006 rebounds)

Career Averages: 19.8 PPG/10.0 RPG

All SUNYAC First Team (1983-86)

SUNYAC Player of the Year (1985/1986)

All-American (1985/1986)



*Chris
Hughey*

Coming out of high school in Elmira, New York, Chris Hughey felt like he had the talent to play Division I basketball. Though Hughey dominated in high school against better competition, he was not a top recruit.

Before deciding if he wanted to go to schools like University of Connecticut or Memphis among other schools as a walk-on, his dad advised him to look at a small Division III school in Western New York called Fredonia.

"I was recruited by about 10 teams and most of them were Division II and III schools like Elmira College, Mansfield, Lamont, and **MercyHurst**," said Hughey

Hughey knew very little about Fredonia in the beginning but attended a senior visit because of their track record of playing a strong schedule. With the Blue Devils scheduled to play Division I teams early in the season, Hughey was intrigued by the possibility of playing DI schools. Being the 3rd born in his family, Hughey said his Dad made it known that Fredonia would be a more

Fredonia, playing basketball in the back of the dorms and how he dominated so much, they didn't believe he went to Fredonia.

"I was dunking on everyone. My teammate Fred Thompson was next to me and people didn't know I went to Fredonia. I remember telling my roommate after how I was going to make varsity but didn't know if I was going to **start**," said Hughey

Hughey spoke about how freshman coming into Fredonia normally didn't play many minutes, let alone start on the varsity team. Coach Greg Prechtl was old-fashioned in his rotations, which meant he played mostly upperclassmen while underclassmen rode the bench. In Hughey's freshman year, however, the Blue Devils had five strong freshmen on the varsity basketball team.

Hughey remembered playing in a tournament in Binghamton, New York, before the start of his freshman season and how one game started a memorable career at

The Blue Devils would play the likes of Virginia Tech, Purdue, and Tulane during Hughey's time at Fredonia.

Hughey talked about one of his memorable moments playing against Purdue on December 15, 1984, during the start of his junior year. He said it was one of his career games where he scored 28 points and had 12 rebounds. He showed a photo from that game of him dunking.

"This is one of my favorite shots. By the way, I came from the right, split the double team of #43 and #31 on post-up with back to basket, no **dribble**," said Hughey

Hughey would become a regular highflyer at Fredonia. He recalled the times he didn't score by a slam; his teammates would be surprised by it.

"I had so many dunks, and then teammates would get upset and ask, 'why didn't you dunk this shot, or that shot?' They didn't believe me, I would always say, 'I didn't know I was up to that high.' They'd say 'but your hands

HUGHEY HIGHLIGHTS

ECAC "Rookie of the Year" as a freshman . . . NABC All-American as a junior . . . All-Conference since his arrival four years ago . . . SUNYAC "Player of the Year" . . . Basketball Times All American . . . ECAC "Player of the Year" . . . NABC "All-East" First Team . . . ECAC Tournament MVP . . . NCAA Top Ten in scoring as of 1/29/86 (24 ppg) . . . Third nationally in FG % with 64% . . . Over 1,850 career points . . . Fredonia's All-Time career scoring and rebound leader . . . All-State team as a frosh . . . Numerous All-Tournament selections . . . ECAC "Player of the Week" and Honor Roll selectee on numerous occasions . . .

SOME EXAMPLES

37 points, 10 rebounds, 93% shooting vs. Gannon University . . . February 5, 1985
 37 points, 14 rebounds, 65% shooting vs. Geneseo State . . . February 9, 1985
 33 points, 15 rebounds, 82% shooting vs. Penn State-Behrend . . . January 27, 1986
 31 points, 13 rebounds, 75% shooting vs. Oswego State . . . December 13, 1985
 28 points, 12 rebounds, 65% shooting vs. Purdue University . . . December 15, 1984
 27 points, 8 rebounds, 75% shooting vs. University of Buffalo . . . December 4, 1985

HUGHEY'S CAREER STATISTICS

	GP	FG	FGA	%	FT	FTA	%	REB	AVG	PTS	AVG
1982-83	25	167	268	62.3	58	96	60.4	217	8.6	392	15.6
1983-84	24	175	306	57.1	90	139	64.7	243	10.1	440	18.3
1984-85	25	213	333	63.9	130	181	71.8	246	9.8	556	22.2
1985-86	20	190	292	65.0	99	146	67.8	238	11.9	479	23.9
3 1/2 seasons	94	745	1199	62.1	377	562	67.0	944	10.0	1867	19.8

cost-efficient place to go to as well.

Hughey said that the visit to Fredonia was one of the main reasons for him attending the school.

"It was a nice, neat place. It was small and the athletic facilities were nice," said Hughey. "The people I met were very unique."

Hughey liked that Fredonia was three hours away from his hometown of Elmira because of his parents' occupations in Buffalo. He stated that he "learned to love the place (Fredonia)", and the athletic department's marketing of DI teams they played helped them a lot.

Going to Fredonia ended up paying high dividends to Hughey as once he stepped on to campus, he became a force to be reckoned with on the court.

Hughey in his four years at Fredonia (1982-86) became a dominant force and one of Fredonia's all-time greats in athletics. A Fredonia Hall of Fame member, Hughey is the all-time leading scorer in Blue Devils men's basketball history (1,970 points), and all-time leading rebounder (1,006 rebounds).

Hughey was also an All-American and SUNYAC player of the year in both 1985 and 1986 while making the All-SUNYAC first-team all four years in college. He finished his collegiate career with a career average of 19.8 points and 10.0 rebounds a game.

Hughey was not one of Fredonia's top recruits coming into his freshman year. The 6'7 180 lb center from Elmira was overlooked at first. The local newspaper, *The Observer* didn't even have Hughey on the main headline for new basketball recruits and was limited to a tagline in the piece.

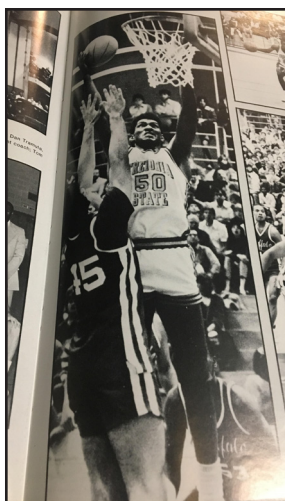
The summer before his freshman year, Hughey worked out at a basketball camp for five weeks and came to Fredonia in great shape.

Though they might not have always had the best team success at Fredonia, this focused mindset from Hughey is what drove him to so much individual achievement.

He detailed a story from his first week of school at

Fredonia.

"I was always zoned in pregame. My first game I



played well and had three monster **dunks**," said Hughey

Hughey was starting in this third game, playing with the Blue Devils and never came off the bench after that.

The competition in SUNYAC for men's basketball in the 80s was high. Fredonia would play Division I schools as a part of their non-conference games early in the season.

Hughey called these fill-in games "good balance" as it gave the team a chance to play against good competition.

"It was good entry level talent for me during my freshman season. It gave us the best of both **worlds**," said Hughey

were in the square," said Hughey.

Hughey would enjoy lots of success at Fredonia, but also went through struggles like every other college student. He talked about how it took a while for his passion for academics to catch up to his love for basketball.

"I wasn't matured at the time with my classwork. I toyed with my **education**," said Hughey

He said once he graduated he was the total opposite and became more mature and about making money. Hughey majored in business administration but loved writing in college and would often do other people's homework for them.

"I loved writing and used to do other people's homework and not mine. I hated math and stats, but now I work in operation management so it all worked **out**," said Hughey

Though Hughey's post-grad career went well, he still wonders sometimes how good he could've been in college. After his junior season, he was initially contacted by USA basketball to try out for the Pan Am Games by a representative for the coach at the time.

"This really was one of my most memorable moments on campus and an unbelievable experience," said Hughey.

The invite was later rescinded by new USA coach John Thompson but to get an invite initially was a nice moment in his career.

"Still though for a D3 player, to be initially be contacted for an invite is something special that I'll never forget," said Hughey.

Hughey's dream was to play Division I basketball and he had multiple opportunities to test the waters.

"Before Fredonia, I was approached by a coach at Seton Hall after a camp. He offered me the chance to go to Seton Hall to play, but I knew that deals don't happen that way," said Hughey.

Hughey said his parents taught him that if it was “too good to be true,” it probably is. Being so young and “naive,” as he put it, he was afraid of the unknown of committing in that manner.

The other opportunity Hughey tried to play DI basketball was after his freshman year when he averaged 15 points and 8 rebounds a game.

After keeping his promise to his dad to play a season at Fredonia, Hughey sent letters to local schools like Niagara, St. Bonaventure, and Canisius to see if there were any interest in his services for the next three years.

“Time went by and nothing came back. I thought none of the local schools reached out and so there was no point of reaching out to national schools,” said Hughey

When he got back to Fredonia sophomore year, he described it as the toughest year of his career. He had conflicts with the coaches and the players in practice and thought he was getting an unfair shake. He thought about quitting the team at one point until his dad talked him out of it.

“My dad told me, ‘Go back and see if everything is still the same and if it is, you can quit,’” said Hughey.

Once Hughey came back, the energy changed and Hughey thankfully stayed on the team but that year always stood out to Hughey.

After his senior year, coach Prechtl talked with Hughey about having

any regrets in his career at Fredonia. After Hughey said no, Prechtl asked him again. This time Hughey said he regretted not being able to see if he was capable of playing DI basketball.

“I learned after those years that all three teams responded to my letter. They responded and sent back letter through the Fredonia Athletic Department and no one ever showed me it,” said Hughey

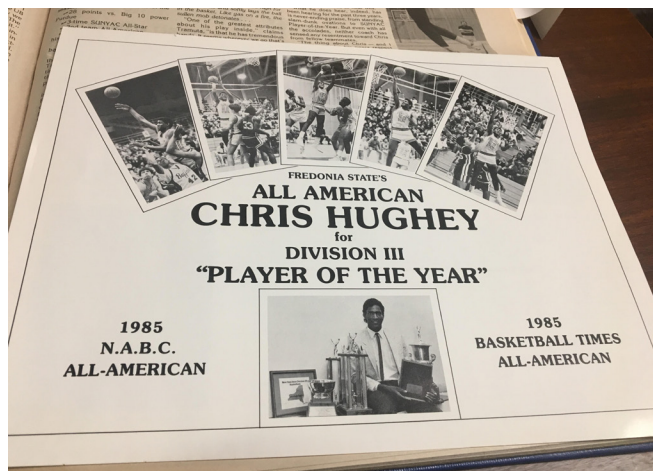
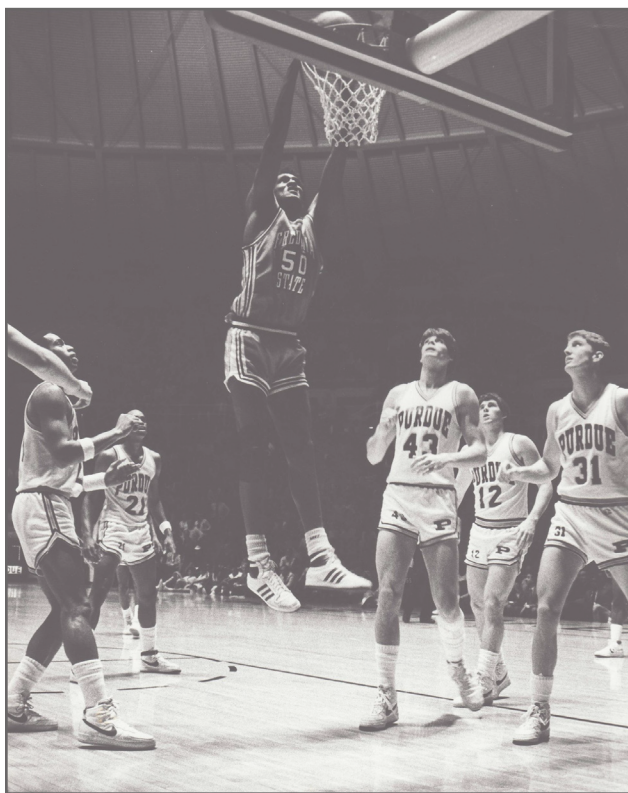
Hughey said that at the time, he didn’t mind, but as time went on, it ate away at him and he became angrier because he felt he was stripped of an opportunity to live out his dreams.

When asked about this story, Prechtl did not respond and Hughey explained that this was maybe one of the reasons he has not been back at Fredonia for alumni events.

Though his Fredonia career ended a little rocky, Hughey said he made lifetime memories and truly enjoyed his time in Fredonia.

“I had an excellent time; I can’t believe I haven’t been back. I had great friends, spent summers in Fredonia and I worked in the cafeteria,” said Hughey

Hughey helped bring a little known school in Western New York some respect on the hardwood against many formidable foes. Hughey went from coming to campus as a low-tier recruit to leaving the all-time leading scorer and rebounder. Chris Hughey will forever be a Fredonia legend.



Baseball: 1990

Men's Basketball: 1992-93

Men's Soccer: 1984, 1986, 1987, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2007

Men's Cross Country: 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983

Men's Ice Hockey: 1993-94, 1994-95, 2006-07

Women's Indoor Track and Field: 1987-88, 1994-95

Men's Indoor Track: 1980-81, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86, 1986-87, 1988-89, 1989-90, 1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95, 1997-98, 1999-2000



1990 Fredonia Blue Devils baseball team

Editorial

By Quintin James

Growing up, I was really into sports. I loved playing sports, but I enjoyed watching sports on TV and learning individual sports. As I got older, this love turned into sports journalism. Fredonia is not a huge sports school, but I've always been interested in learning the history from its sports teams. Since freshman year, I would attend multiple games for different sports here. I **delevoped** a love for the underdog, gritty menality Fredonia has over the years. This project was meant to highlight all aspects of Fredonia sports from past to present. The conversations I had with each person in this piece felt like a normal conversation. I understood how Fredonia athletics is a family atmosphere to players and **coahces**. Fredonia has a lot of history in sports **and** researching everything was my favorite portion of this. I want to give a thank you to the employees who worked in the Fredonia archives office .They let me look **through hours of** yearbooks and *The Leader* newspapers from decades past. The pictures and articles I found really gave me a good insight as to what Fredonia and its athletics was. I'm glad I got to do this project because as a fan of sports and a member of the Fredonia student body, I wanted to know more about Fredonia **atheltics** and I felt like I achieved that goal.

