

# BISHOP GALLAGHER FOOTBALL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

October 2019



## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual BGFA Gathering Recap

### *5 NEW members join the Lancers Forever Hall-of-Fame*

The Lancers go marching on! Although, Bishop Gallagher closed its doors in in 2001, the Bishop Gallagher Football Alumni (BGFA) is keeping the memory and spirit alive.

The BGFA hosted its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Gathering and inducted its' 4<sup>th</sup> Lancers Forever Hall of Fame class this past summer at the Encore Catering & Banquet Center in St. Clair Shores. This year athletes from all sports were invited to attend the event. Former baseball, basketball, cheerleading, swimming and bowling athletes were among the nearly 200 that attended the event. The following were all inducted into the Lancers Forever HOF as athletes; Ivan Bennette ('93), Frank Czapski ('93), Brian Neil ('85), Tajuan Tait ('96) and Leroy Watson ('87).

It was a wonderful night in which alums were able to catch up with each other and reminisce about their playing days. The event also honors the memory of the late, great George Sahadi, who coached the Lancers from 1973 until the final year of the school in '01. George made an impact on countless Gallagher graduates on and off the field over the years. The BGFA awards an annual scholarship in his honor called the "George Sahadi Memorial Scholarship." It was formed in order to provide tuition assistance for family members of former BG players that wish to further their education and athletic careers at a Catholic or Christian school.

The 2019 recipients of the scholarship were Dan Triglia of Warren De La Salle, Dylan Craven of Macomb Lutheran North and Nick Johnson of Detroit U-D Jesuit.

It's a sign of how the BGFA not only honors the greatest players in its school's history but also stays true to its charitable mission of giving back to the community. Check out a few pictures from the event below or on our website: [www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com](http://www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com)

## The *New* BGFA Newsletter

*Coming twice a year*

We hope you're enjoying the inaugural issue of the BGFA Newsletter. The goal of the newsletter is to help keep you informed of the association's activities, upcoming events and happening with our members.

In this issue is a short recap of our 2019 Gathering Event in June. Thanks to all of you that attended and helped make the event a success.

Also, in this issue is an update on BGFA members and their families enjoying success on and off the field. We know we missed many of your children. So, drop us an update and we'll correct this error.

If you're so inclined, we'd love for you to write us and tell us about your best BG memories. Keep it clean and we'll hopefully publish it!

Contact us at  
[bishopgallagherfootball@gmail.com](mailto:bishopgallagherfootball@gmail.com)

**BGFA ANNUAL Dues:** \$25.00

**Join online:** [www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com](http://www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com)

**Contact us:** [BishopGallagherFootball@gmail.com](mailto:BishopGallagherFootball@gmail.com)

*The BGFA is a 501(c) Non-Profit organization  
Your tax-deductible donations are welcome and needed*

# Alumni and alumni children enjoying success on and off the field

*One of the beauties of life is seeing your friends and their children enjoy success. In this section of the new BGFA Newsletter, we'll list the successes we're aware of. Please let us know about you and your family's accomplishments.*

The BGFA congratulates Julius Curry (1998) on his latest accomplishment in the field of automobile racing. A longtime owner of Julius Curry Racing, Julius is now the owner of the M-40 Speedway in Jones, MI. Check out the M-40 grand opening event weekend October 25-26.

Rock Batten (1993) is now the Head Football Coach at Ensworth HS in Nashville. Rock had previously been the Head Coach at Battle Ground Academy in Nashville where he had great success making the state playoffs several times. He also has former players playing in the NFL. We wish Roc congrats and much success in his new role.

Lancer's Forever Hall-of-Famers Bill Dulac ('69), Steve Vercammen ('71) and Mark Carter ('73) have been named to Eastern Michigan University's 1970's All Decade Team. See the full story at: <https://www.gallagherfootballalumni.com/newsletter>.

Paul Sahadi is an Assistant Football Coach at Grosse Pointe North HS.

Chris Ryan's son Joe is a Rugby player at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Football season is a busy time for the Shaheen family. Al (1987), is an assistant coach at Liggett HS and his son, Alex is the quarterback at Grosse Pointe South.

Pete Kotula's son, Ed is a defensive back for the Carleton College (MN) Knights.

Jeff Spicuzzi's (1980) son, Alex is a wide receiver at Northwood University.

Paul Rochon's son, Evan (also wearing the #20) is a stand-out running back and defensive back at Lakeview HS.

Dan Triglia, son of Joe (1981) and George Sahadi Memorial Scholarship winner is a DB for the DeLaSalle Pilots.

Jesse Johnson's (1990) son Nick, also a George Sahadi Memorial Scholarship winner is a freshman running back at U-of-D HS.

## Upcoming BGFA Events

- In November we're making plans for an informal Pub Night. Stay tuned for details.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual BGFA Gathering and Lancers Forever Hall-of-Fame event is coming in the Spring of 2020. Details will be announced in the coming months. This year the Lancers Forever Hall of Fame will induct it's first class of non-football male and female athletes.



Lancers Forever Hall-of-Fame inductees (L to R): Tajuan Tait, Brian Neal, Leroy Watson, Ivan Bennette & Frank Czapski

Coach Jack Masserang catching up with alums.

# Memories

*For many of us, our time at BG shaped a lot of who we became. Through the years several former players expressed what their experiences meant to them. From time to time, we'll share these with you as many of us feel the same way and may not have expressed it in writing. If you have a memory you'd like to share, send it to us.*

## The Last Season

by  
Pete Kotula  
(circa 1980)

While the late autumn night grew increasingly colder, the crowds of football fans were leaving the seasons last football game. A lone player in blue remained upon the now deserted and stilled field; seemingly unwilling or incapable of leaving. After nine seasons this was his last -he played his last game tonight. As the field lights were fading out one by one, he stood reflecting upon those past seasons - the victories and defeats, the good and bad times, the times it seemed you, could never lose, and the times when nothing went your way. He realized how much the game had become a part of him. He wondered if he could ever say goodbye.

The game had been an excellent teacher to the player. It taught him things that he could never learn in a schoolroom or on a street corner – things like discipline, self-reliance, personal honor, and the feeling of pride in accomplishment. He also learned teamwork and that relying upon someone else was not a sign of weakness, but a sign of trust and strength. He could, count on his teammates on and off the field, and they know they could count on him. There was unsaid motto and bond among the players – “Once a Lancer, a teammate and Lancer forever. For as long as other young men wore the blue and white, the player would be there with them.

One of the things that the player learned from the game was that no matter how dark and tough something may look, there was always a reserve strength he could call on deep down inside him that would see him through the difficulty. In a football game the difficulty may be third down and two, but in life the problems would be real and difficult.

The people that the player had the honor of meeting and being teammates with were of the best mold. They were true friends, not shallow opportunists that were always in abundance. Football also taught the player to work hard at all times and to dedicate oneself to a good cause. The player remembered leaving games, seeing students wasting their talents and personal honor by getting sick drinking and acting like fools trying to get the attention of girls in the stands. It did not bother the player because he was not sweating and bleeding for them, but for his teammates. The player also took comfort in thinking that someday when his son asks him what he did in high school, instead of saying, “I used to pass out at football games” he could proudly reply, “With the best guys around, I played football.”

As the player stood on the field, memories as real as the present flashed before him – Catholic Central, Notre Dame, Lumen Christi, Bishop Foley. He remembered his first start three years ago – “Three years ago”, thought the player, “it seemed just like yesterday that I was a sophomore,” and now, images of the De La Salle games flashed before him vividly – the packed stadiums, fierce rivalries, the frustrations. The player wished he could have one more shot at them, but it would never be. He remembered the championship game at the Silverdome, and then recalled his most treasured memory of all – picking up Jim Gorzalski after the clock ran out and we were assured our victory over Brother Rice. The following minutes of mobbing, jumping, yelling, of carrying each other and being carried, were the best memories the player had.

By now all the lights were off, and the filled tam bus was waiting to leave. With one last glance, he looked at the field, the empty bleachers, the blank scoreboard, and the goal posts. He then turned his back and walked away. He had said goodbye in his own way and had left, but a very important part of him would never leave.

## Membership Corner

- Please consider becoming a paid member of the BGFA. The annual dues of \$25 go a long way in helping us put on our events and fund the George Sahadi Memorial Scholarship. You can pay the dues or donate at [www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com](http://www.GallagherFootballAlumni.com).
- We need your email address to get you or your friends on the Newsletter mailing list. Send those addresses to [BishopGallagherFootball@gmail.com](mailto:BishopGallagherFootball@gmail.com).
- Please let us know if you like the newsletter. Or if you have any suggestions for how we can improve, let us know.
- We're also looking for more folks to help us out. If you're interested, drop us a line.