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were Fr. Otto Weber, Tony Fike (temporary coach), Al Bielat by his 3-2 clinching win, freshman Dave Pulkrabek's win in the 158 pound class, Tom Svendsen's and Joe Hayes' wins in the 134 and 142 pound classes, Terry Elfering at 118 pounds, and others not mentioned in the March 2, 1973, *Record*. In fact, it was a team effort that was inspired by the memory of their coach Terry Haws.

It would be a gross oversight to omit a word in praise of Terry Haws. We cannot tell the whole story, for his success in coaching was only one aspect of a full Christian life, both as a teacher and a public citizen. But the thousand people who packed the St. Cloud Cathedral at his funeral tell that story—men from all walks of life, students, twenty-six priest concelebrants (sixteen from St. John's, ten from St. Cloud parishes)—testify to the universal esteem he was held at St. John's and the Diocese of St. Cloud. What attracted people to him was his capacity to understand—he was a good listener and for those in trouble he found an answer, and if he did not have it at first, he would work at it until he found it.

In many ways his teams were an outward expression of himself. The key to his success as a coach, said one of his proteges, was his "contagious confidence." The week before a crucial meet he devoted to the development of self-confidence in his wrestlers. He called attention to their good points, their strengths and chances to win. He told them that any capable wrestler, given good luck, could defeat a national champion. They all knew of his confidence in them, and by listening to him it became theirs. Tom Svendsen said of him: "He instilled confidence. He made you think the opponent's first mistake was stepping on the mat with you. And when you believed, it became true" (*Record*, March 2, 1973). His wrestlers were grateful to him for more things than wrestling. He taught them to stand on their own feet, whether on the mat or in life, and to fear no duty.

In the funeral sermon Fr. Ray Schultzenberg read a paraphrase of St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter nine, vv. 24-27, that Terry had made a guide for his life work: "In a race everyone runs but only one gets the prize. So, run your race to win. To win the contest you must deny yourself many things that would keep you from doing your best. An athlete goes through all this trouble just to win a blue ribbon or a gold medal or silver cup. But we also do it for a heavenly reward that never disappears. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win. I am not shadow boxing or playing around. Like an athlete I punish my body, treating it roughly, training it to do what it should, not what it wants to. Otherwise I fear that, after enlisting others for the race, I myself might be declared

unfit, or ineligible, and ordered to stand aside." Terry's teaching covered the whole of life, student life and life after college, and he exemplified it in everything he said or did.

— 1973-74 —

For the 1973-74 season new Athletic Director Jim Smith secured the services of Roger Ludwig to take the place of Terry Haws. Roger, an outstanding St. John's football player and wrestler who graduated in 1959, was an inspiring and vigorous leader. When he took over the head coaching position, the Johnnies were riding high on a string of 58 undefeated dual meets. But always strong Augsburg during these years was determined to break it. All-American Tom Svendsen (brother of Gary), who had not returned for the first semester, was out of shape and fell victim to a 6-1 decision. Dave Kalkman also lost his match, Dave Riley tied his, and Brad Eustice lost his heavyweight match. It was enough to break the four-year string of MIAC championships.

The loss to Augsburg awakened the Jays. In the MIAC meet, held at Hamline in late February, the Jays made a decisive comeback and won their fourth straight title, out-wrestling Augsburg by a total of 104 points to 75.5. Conference championships were won by Jay Huffman at 118 pounds, Tom Svendsen (134), Larry Osterhaus (150), Jerry Workman (177) and Greg Miller (heavyweight).

There are no reports to indicate that St. John's took part in the National Catholic Invitational for this year, but they did attend the NAIA national meet held at River Falls, Wisconsin. Co-captain Tom Svendsen captured All-American honors for the third time in two years when he placed third in the NAIA national championship meet. He lost only one match, that to the eventual 134 pound champion of the University of Wisconsin, but clinched third place by a 3-0 victory in the consolation finals.

The 1974 wrestling tourney marks the last season, from 1969-74, that the name of a Svendsen brother ever failed to find a prominent place in the St. John's wrestling annals. Gary, the older brother, left behind him a record of 105 victories versus only nine losses. Except for his freshman year when he wrestled at 118 pounds, he competed for the following three years at 134 pounds. In his career he was awarded three all-conference titles (1969-72), losing out only in his senior year when, just at the end of a heart-breaker match, he was decisioned by an Augsburg College friend. For once the "Haws' luck" failed him.

In his four years, Gary won the All-American award twice—in fact, he was the first St. John's wrestler to win this award for his coach, Terry Haws. He was also a National Catholic champion twice.

Tom Svendsen was not less famous than his older brother Gary. He graduated in 1974 with an almost identical record of 96 victories versus twelve losses. Like his brother, he was a three-time recipient of all-conference honors, beginning with his sophomore year. He was awarded All-American honors three times, twice in one year, and was a champion place-winner in the National Catholic Invitational Tourney in 1971, '73 and '74. He once placed second in the NCAA national tournament and contemplated competing for a place on the Olympics team.

The *Record* thus describes him: "When one thinks about a wrestler, a stocky, brawny type comes to mind. Tom Svendsen, at 6 feet, 140 pounds, hardly fits this mold. His leanness is an asset. On the mat his arms and legs drape like vines. His opponent might have bigger biceps, but he is helpless in a tangle of limbs. . . . One teammate remarked, 'in practice Svendsen makes me feel like a pretzel' " (*Record*, April 13, 1973).

— 1974-75 —

The 1975 National Catholic Invitational Tournament was held early in January at St. John's and found the Jays unprepared for the powerful matmen of Notre Dame, Marquette and the Eastern schools. The Johnnies performed well under the circumstances, but were dropped to third place for the year 1975. David Kalkman (150 pounds) was the only St. John's wrestler to win first place honors. Joseph Wentzell and Tom Skudlarek made it to the finals but were defeated in their attempt to win championship titles. The team was disappointed by its showing.

But Coach Ludwig was an able, optimistic coach; instead of permitting the Jays to bemoan their fate, he made use of the weeks following the NCIT tourney to bolster them up for the conference meet to be held in mid-February at St. Olaf. But the opening day of the MIAC meet was a sorry one for St. John's. Carl Neuburger and Jay Huffman, both normally high-point winners, suffered knee injuries in the finals and had to forfeit their matches to their Augsburg opponents. On the other hand, forfeitures were not the only reason for disappointments. Augsburg was at the peak of its power and was truly a formidable opponent. Dave Kalkman (150 pounds), a St. John's All-American, was decisioned by Augsburg's Bill Schmidt, also an All-American.

St. John's heavyweight Greg Miller easily defended his second championship title and was the only St. John's MIAC titlist for 1975. Other St. John's place winners were Tom Skudlarek (third place at 158), Tom Matlon (fourth at 177), and Joe Wentzell (third at 190).

Final standings of the conference teams and their points scored are the following: Augsburg first (156.5), St. John's second (128), Concordia third (86), Duluth fourth (59), St. Thomas fifth (48), Hamline sixth (30), St. Olaf seventh (19), St. Mary's eighth (11), and Gustavus ninth (2.5). The Augsburg victory ended a five-year championship streak for St. John's.

— 1975-76 —

Roger Ludwig resigned his coaching position at the end of the 1975 school year and was succeeded by Greg Miller, heavyweight wrestler and football star who had just graduated. As a first-time coach, Greg had his problems, one of which was overwhelming—what to do about Augsburg that blocked the way to any possibility of taking the championship in the MIAC—Augsburg with six All-Americans on its team, a national second-place NAIA rating, and the 1975 coach-of-the-year mentor. Faced by the impossible, Coach Miller decided to do all he could with what he had and then see what would happen.

The early season dual meet record was not particularly auspicious with a middling 5-5 record, five wins and five losses. To complicate matters, the Johnnies were committed shortly after the Christmas holidays to the National Catholic Invitational Tournament in Cleveland, Ohio, a meeting that would require a long exhausting trip by car without much chance for a rest before the opening of the tournament. The results were disappointing, for the team took fifth place behind Seton Hall University, Marquette, Notre Dame, and the defending champion John Carroll University. Point winners were John Shimshock, third place at 167 pounds, Tom Matlon fourth at 177, and Don Butzen at 142 pounds. Tom Skudlarek (167) and Jay Huffman (118), on whom Coach Miller was depending for points, both lost their matches in the semi-finals through injuries. It was a severe setback for the team, but Coach Miller still looked forward for improvement and a better showing in the MIAC tourney to be held at the College of St. Thomas in mid-February.

Greg Miller worked hard with his young wrestlers in the time remaining before the MIAC meet, and it paid off. The team ended the season with a highly commendable third place finish behind Augsburg (99 points) and Concordia (80.5), with St. John's at 43.5. Freshman Lon Feia (118) and Mike Bobick (134), sophomore Tom Matlon (177) and junior Tom Skudlarek (167) took home third place honors. Junior Steve Bechtold took fourth place to be St. John's sixth winner, but he was forced to forfeit his match in the semi-finals because of a rib injury.

St. John's took part in the national NAIA tournament held at Edinborough, Pennsylvania, but made a disappointing showing. John Shimshock and Tom Skudlarek were the only two St. John's participants to get by the first round.

Members of the 1976 squad and their weights are the following: Peter Baumann, James Bard (150); Steve Bechtold, Mike Bobick (134); Don Butzen (142); Terry Clark (150); Jim Countryman (heavyweight); Mike Davis (150); Lon Feia (118); Lee Fitzke (190); Gregory Hiemenz (134); Jay Huffman (118, co-captain); Kurt Kalland (177); Allan Keller (142); Eric Koslowski (heavyweight); Paul Loaney (158); Thomas Matlon (177); Carl Neuburger (118, co-captain); John Shimshock (142); Rick Saindon (134); Tom Skudlarek (177); Robin Tacheny (134); John Wachtler (177); Joe Wentzell (190); and Jim Zrust (heavyweight).

— 1976-77 —

The 1976-77 wrestling season opened in a cheerful mood. Coach Miller proclaimed that this year's freshman crop represented "the best recruiting job ever done for the wrestling program." Ten of the freshmen had wrestled in the state high school tournaments the year before. The addition of Pat Sherry, a well-rounded-out, 190-pound transfer, was by no means a handicap.

The results of the improved material with which to mold a new wrestling team were not immediately apparent. Competition in the MIAC was strong as usual and the new men had to struggle in collaboration with the efforts of their coach before they were ready to meet their opponents in dual meets. The Johnnies did well in the invitational tournaments, however. St. John's won first place in the St. John's Takedown Tournament and the St. Thomas Invitational, with the five returnees from 1976, co-captains John Shimshock and Tom Skudlarek, Mike Bobick, Tom Matlon and Lon Feia showing up well. The Johnnies did not do so well in the St. Cloud Invitational, however, coming up with a fourth place finish in a field of 16 contesting colleges.

The Johnnies failed to improve on their conference standing. Again they placed third with no individual championships to embellish their record. Lon Feia at 118 pounds and Tom Matlon at 177 were runnersup in each of their weight divisions. Co-captains John Shimshock and Tom Skudlarek, at 142 and 167 pounds respectively, Paul Loaney at 158 pounds and Pat Sherry at 190, all placed third. Champion of the year was Augsburg, with St. Thomas in second place—much to the chagrin of the Johnnies who had been looking forward to a second place finish themselves.

Since funds were not available to send the entire ten-man squad to the NAIA nationals in Spokane, Washington, only four men took part in the NAIA tourney—co-captains Skudlarek and Shimshock, Paul Loaney and Tom Matlon. The Johnnies were assigned as opening opponents several of the top-seeded contestants and hence were eliminated early in the tournament.

The 1977 team roster included co-captains Tom Skudlarek and John Shimshock, Mike Bobick, Dennis Clark, John Elton, Lon Feia, Paul Hyland, Melvin Koenig, Peter Kranz, Paul Loaney, Tom Matlon, Pat Sherry, William Wall, Donald Burns, Greg Feldmeier, William Harrison and Donald Quinn.

— 1977-78 —

Coach Greg Miller started the 1977-78 wrestling season under the burden of an almost unsupportable handicap, a team made up of sophomores and freshmen with only one senior, Captain Tom Matlon. In the first meet of the season, January 17, St. Cloud State enjoyed a romp over the young Johnnies by a score of 42-0. Coach John Oxtan of St. Cloud acknowledged that St. John's had "a very young team" and added an explanation of his lopsided victory: "We put three experienced seniors against three of their freshmen at the start of the match, and any time you're able to do that you can expect to come out pretty well" (St. Cloud *Times*, January 18, 1978).

In the invitationals that preceded the MIAC tournament, St. John's regularly took fourth place with the exception of the St. Cloud Invitational, when the Johnnies took fifth: fourth place in the National Catholic Tournament, the St. John's Takedown, the Pillsbury, and the North Country Invitational. On the other hand, they did better than fair in the dual meets: six wins versus four losses overall, and six wins versus two losses in the conference.

In the early part of the season the team was plagued with injuries, but when the MIAC meet came around Captain Matlon expressed his conviction that the wrestlers were at full strength, with the toughest competition to be furnished by St. Thomas and Augsburg, both of whom had defeated the Johnnies earlier. Unfortunately, the Johnnies made their poorest showing of the season with a sixth place finish. Captain Matlon lamented the finale: "It was a dismal finish for our team and an equally dismal day for many of our fine athletes" (*Record*, March 3, 1978).

One bright stand-out of the season was sophomore Greg Feldmeier, who was elected winner of the Most Improved Wrestler Award. He was second place finisher in the National Catholic Invitational, and

first in the North Country Invitational. An entrant in the NAIA national tournament, he lost his final match by only one point, the point that would have made him an All-American. Another award winner was Tom Matlon (Most Valuable, third in the National Catholic, first in the St. John's Takedown). Freshman Joe Cavanaugh was champion in his weight in the North Country Invitational, fourth in the MIAC and was given the Outstanding Freshman Award. Freshman Shawn McDonald took first place in the St. John's Takedown.



CHAPTER IX

Hockey

How did hockey get its great start in the state of Minnesota? Some say that it came as a result of the Prohibition Amendment and the contraband trade with Canada where the best of liquors were procurable. Well, so the legend goes, hockey is the national sport in Canada, and when the old-timers crossed the border for refreshments they caught onto the game of hockey and brought it back with them—together with the contraband.

But that is not all. Due to the wisdom and foresight of Northern Range mining towns, taxes collected on iron ore were spent on the improvement of schools and recreational facilities, among them indoor hockey rinks. That is why the kids on the Iron Range have been the best skaters in Minnesota.

Hockey did not get its start at St. John's by way of contraband, however. It came by the slow and hard way. There had always been skating on Lake Sagatagan and the ponds surrounding the college, whether they were artificial or natural, but it was Fr. Polycarp Hansen, O.S.B., who in 1910 made the first serious effort to organize a skating game to take advantage of the surrounding environment. Why the attempt to establish hockey was a failure no one seems to know, but it very likely was the lack of a device to clear the ice of snow and keep it in playing condition throughout the winter.

The next serious attempt to establish a hockey program was made in 1925 by Fr. Damian Baker, O.S.B., who never could understand why a young man would choose to spend his leisure time within doors instead of going out of doors and become engaged in a sport proper to

the season of the year. There were plenty of skiers on campus but very few skaters. And that bothered him. Perhaps he was coming down with a mild case of cabin fever himself. At any rate, he was an organizer, and it was not long before he was able to see the first intramural program of hockey instituted on the St. John's campus.

The first games were played on Lake Sagatagan. The monastic bathing house was on the lake shore and could be used as a warming house. Scrapers were assembled in the carpenter shop to clear away the snow, and goals were constructed of two-by-fours—only ankle high. Somebody once said that if there was no puck available, a weighted can of Copenhagen wrapped with friction tape was a likely substitute—another legend!

The hockey sticks were of two kinds: those bought from a sporting goods house, and those found in the woods. Both were as heavy as baseball bats. One hockey stick usually lasted two years.

The hockey program enjoyed a precarious existence for the next few years, and colorful winter carnivals were held at the end of each season. Skating contests were arranged and the winners received awards.

A change in the program developed during the first four years. Groups of students gathered into independent teams, and around 1929 one of the groups played annual matches with the St. Cloud Lions. In 1932 another change took place, mainly through the enthusiasm and energy of Simon "Si" Ryan, a football player of astounding vitality who had played on the hockey team of West Minneapolis High School. He proposed that St. John's should put out a representative hockey team and play the other college teams of the state. His enthusiasm and drive were contagious and swept even Fr. Damian off his feet. Once more he was called upon to play a role in the establishment of hockey at St. John's.

At first Fr. Damian was asked to serve as referee of the scrimmages of the two or three teams on campus; then he was asked to assist in choosing the teams, and finally, at their request, he consented to be their coach.

The first hockey team was made up of Si Ryan as captain, William Freeman, Eugene McCarthy, Louis Lundemo, George Esterly, Jerome Cramer, Donald McHale, Jude Paquin (a Canadian), Allen Ross and Louis Niemeyer.

In the first game they defeated St. Cloud Normal School 4-1, then were defeated by St. Cloud Cathedral High School 0-3, and in a third game overcame St. Cloud Normal again by a score of 3-2.

It is evident that the administration was prepared to approve of a college hockey team because in December, 1932, it was announced that beginning with 1933 St. John's would enter a hockey team in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Fr. Damian assumed a sort of sponsorship of the hockey team, for, following the announcement that St. John's was entering a hockey team in the conference, he requested a budget for funds to purchase uniforms, gloves, shinguards and other accouterments proper to the playing of the game. The athletic department balked at his request for custom made sticks, however, as a bit too much since, so they said, the carpenter could make them just as good and as substantial.

— 1933 —

By the opening of the 1933 season the stage was set for the first conference competition. It was a good team made up of several veterans: Si Ryan (captain), Eugene McCarthy, Frank Hendrickson, John O'Malley, George Esterly, John Devney, Robert Kyle, Elmer Madsen, Carl Priley, and Milton Lydell. The team showed its inexperience in the execution of team tactics and lost all the six games scheduled: to St. Cloud Teachers 1-10, to Macalester 2-7, to St. Thomas 0-3, to Macalester 0-3, to St. Cloud 2-4, and St. Thomas 0-1.

— 1934 —

The 1934 edition of the hockey team proved to be superior to the version of 1933, mainly through the addition to the squad of the Maus brothers from St. Cloud, Eddie and Dick. Eddie went on to become one of the most prolific scorers in St. John's hockey history.

The team assembled early and was blessed with ideal weather in which to practice a week and a half earlier than in the past year. For moral support the team had its first cheerleader in the person of Ferdinand "Chickie" Lehn. Midway in the season, after more experience in teamwork, the Johnnies proved themselves to be contenders for the title by an upset victory over previously unbeaten Macalester. But the loss by injury of star goalie Bill Dreher, plus a two-weeks' thaw, put a damper on all St. John's hopes on that score. The Johnnies slid to an overall record of 3-5 and a 2-2 conference standing before falling victim to St. Thomas in the last game of the season.

Members of the 1934 team were William Dreher, Si Ryan, Eugene McCarthy, John Devney, Frank Hendrickson, Milton Lydell, Leonard Werner, George Toman, Robert Kyle and Fred Thielman.