

March 22, 2007

Insell Elected to National High School Hall of Fame

Coach just sixth Tennessean to be inducted into national hall of fame

MT Media Relations

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee head women's basketball coach Rick Insell has been elected into the National High School Hall of Fame, becoming just the sixth person and fourth coach from the state of Tennessee elected by the national organization.


Insell is among 12 individuals who will be inducted in the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) National High School Hall of Fame July 4 at the Desert Springs Marriott Hotel in Palm Desert, Calif. The Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be the closing event of the 88th NFHS Annual Summer Meeting.

Insell built a dynasty at Shelbyville Central High School in Shelbyville, Tenn., guiding the Golden Eaglettes to a record 10 TSSAA state championships with an overall record of 775-148 (.840 winning percentage) during his 28-year tenure. He was hired at Shelbyville Central (Class AAA) in 1977 and spent all 28 years as head coach at the school.

The Woodbury, Tenn., native has spent the last two seasons as head coach at Middle Tennessee, compiling a 50-15 record and winning two straight Sun Belt Tournament titles. The Blue Raiders claimed the regular season Sun Belt title in 2006-07, posting a perfect 21-0 mark versus SBC opponents and earning a school-record 30 victories.

Middle Tennessee won 27 consecutive games before falling in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. Insell was voted Sun Belt Coach of the Year this season, the first Blue Raider head coach to garner a Coach of the Year accolade since 1988. Middle Tennessee also appeared in the national rankings for the first time since 1988 and in the Associated Press Top 25 poll for the first time in school history.



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Insell's high school coaching records and honors include:

- Won a Tennessee state record 10 state championships (1986, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004). The four consecutive titles from 1989-92 is a Tennessee state record.
- Coached Shelbyville Central to 110 consecutive wins from 1987-91, a Tennessee state record.
- Finished Runner-Up for the state championship five times (1984, 1985, 1988, 1994, 1997).
- Either won a state title or finished runner-up 15 of his 28 seasons as a head coach at Shelbyville.
- Named *USA Today* National Coach of the Year in 1989 and 1991.
- Named Converse National High School Coach of the Year in 1990 and 1992.
- 1990 squad was named the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Team of the Year, the first high school team so honored.
- Guided the Golden Eaglettes to 23 district championships and 16 regional championships.
- Insell has developed six Tennessee Class AAA Miss Basketball Award recipients, 15 high school All-Americans, and 57 of his players have received either athletic or academic scholarships to continue their careers at the collegiate level.
- Coached Tiffany Woosley, who was named *USA Today* National Player of the Year in 1990-91.
- His teams received the TSSAA Distinguished Award for Academic Success each year from 1989-00, an award based on team GPA. The lowest cumulative GPA at Shelbyville during this stretch was 3.4, with the highest 3.98.
- Was inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame in 2003.
- Received special invitation to the Oval Office by President George H.W. Bush for academic and athletic achievement, honored in the United States Senate and House of Representatives, the Tennessee State House and Senate, and by two Tennessee Governors.

"We are extremely happy for Rick and his family," said Ronnie Carter, Executive Director of TSSAA. "His record at the high school level speaks for itself and the same will occur at the NCAA level now. However, more than this, Rick was always an ambassador for girls' basketball across the state and nation. This is a very proud moment for Shelbyville, Middle Tennessee, and TSSAA, but most of all, it's a proud moment for the Insell family."

Previous Tennessee inductees include the late Jim Smiddy, the late Buck Van Huss, and the late Boyce Smith, all coaches. The late Bill Pack and most recent inductee, Billy Schrivner of Jackson, were inducted into the Hall of Fame as officials.

"It's a very humbling honor," Insell said. "I knew two people already in there, Jimmy Smiddy and Buck Van Huss, and to be even mentioned with them makes me very emotional," Insell said. "I can't tell you how honored I am to be mentioned with the likes of those two men, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate the TSSAA putting me up for it."

"I had great support, great players, great kids. This would not be possible without everyone I have been associated with."

The National High School Hall of Fame was started in 1982 by the NFHS to honor high school athletes, coaches, contest officials, administrators, fine arts coaches/directors and others for their extraordinary achievements and accomplishments in high school sports and activity programs.

This year's class increases the number in the Hall of Fame to 338, and this year's event will be the 25th induction ceremony. The 12 individuals were chosen after a two-level selection process involving a screening committee composed of active high school state association administrators, coaches and officials, and a final selection committee composed of coaches, former athletes, state association officials, media representatives and educational leaders.

Nominations were made through NFHS member associations. The NFHS press release can be found [on the NFHS website](#).

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A complete list of the 2007 National High School Hall of Fame Class includes:

Athletes

- Jim Plunkett - a three-sport star at James Lick High School in San Jose, California, in the 1960s prior to leading the Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders to two Super Bowl victories
- Terry Steinbach - the top high school baseball player in Minnesota in 1980 who enjoyed a highly successful 14-year professional career with the Oakland A's and Minnesota Twins
- Clyde Duncan - a track and field standout at Des Moines (Iowa) North High School in the early 1960s who is currently the track and field coach at Texas Southern University in Houston
- Jim Johnson - the most prolific scorer in high school ice hockey from Cranbrook High School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
- Charlie Wedemeyer - considered one of the greatest athletes in Hawaii history after excelling in football, baseball and basketball at Punahou High School in Honolulu in the 1960s

Coaches

- Rick Insell - who won 10 state girls basketball titles at Shelbyville Central High School in 28 years and now is the women's basketball coach at Middle Tennessee
- John Bagonzi - who won seven state baseball championships and five state basketball titles at Woodsville (New Hampshire) High School
- Lewis Benitz - wrestling coach at Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, who has won 17 state championships
- Joan Wells - who won 15 state championships as volleyball coach at Lawrence (Kansas) High School

Officials

- Jane Hansen - field hockey and lacrosse official from New Jersey
- Sam Short - a veteran football and basketball official from Alabama

Others

- Tim Stevens - a long-time high school sportswriter for the *Raleigh News and Observer* in North Carolina

Printed on February 10, 2012

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/24918>