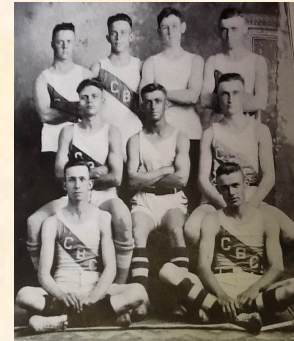


# HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERS BASKETBALL

BY  
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Very little has been written about the early years of CB basketball. In 1909 Brother Baldwin decided that Christian Brothers should have a basketball team. He persuaded the YMCA to allow CB to use its gym. They lost most of their league games, but won all of the non league games. The league consisted of Sacramento High, San Juan, Courtland, Elk Grove and Roseville. Dixon, Galt and Folsom High joined later. Some of the non league teams were YMI, Part Time High, Gridley, St. Francis, St. Marys of Berkley, National Guard, Preston, Vacaville, St. Agnes of Stockton and St. Marys of Stockton.



**CB Team of 1910**

Between the years of 1909 and 1929, CB rarely had a losing season. Some of the players names have a long history at CB: O'Neil, Rooney, Lagamorsino, O'Brien, Slakey, Ryan, Margetich, Lahey, Flynn, Neves, Hannah, Morebeck, Bordes and Dickson. Some of the coaches were Brother Baldwin, Joe Tatti, Carl White, Paul O'Neil, Russ Dixon and John Gianonni. Gianonni, White and Tatti also coached football.

The 1918 team was led by Pete Mitchell who later became the long time City Manager, Andrew Lagomarsino of the multi-generations of CB families, Tom and Steve O'Neil also followed by many generations of O'Neils. Paul O'Neil took over the reins in 1925 and led the hoopsters to a 6-3 record. Leading players were Herb Morebeck and Joe Rooney who became the Police Chief for many years. Coach Tatti took the 1927 team to an 8-2 record against teams from Gridley, Preston, St. Agnes, St. Francis, Sac City College.



**The 1938 Christian Brothers Gaels**

Leading players were Oscar Pine, John Remich, Earl O'Brien and Vic Bordes. That was the beginning of 3 great years for Bordes. Coach Tatti was followed by coach Russ Dickson the next two seasons whose records were 9-6 and 8-2. The leading players were Bud Hannah and Vic Bordes. Bud Hannah returned to CB as Coach in 1937. John Gianonni took over in 1941



and 1942. Brother Bertram followed him during the 1943 and 1944 seasons. They were led by Don McKenzie, Jack Ryan and Clyde Haskell. All three players were named to the All City Team.

Roy Misfelt coached in 1946 and was very successful with a 10-5 record. Some of his leading players were Gil Urbano (who was also a standout in baseball, hitting .625 his senior season) Tom O'Neil, Jim Lahey, and Dick Lee. The 1947 team had a record of 18-5. The roster included Jim Lahey, Dick Lee, Tom O'Neil, Manuel Cazares, Jack Pickart, Bob Henderson, Joe Lutzy and Harold Matthews.. Lee and Lahey were All City choices. At one point of the season they had a winning streak



of 13 games. Brother Eugene took over in 1948 and had another outstanding season, winning the mythical City Championship. Members of that team were Harold Matthews, Bob Henderson, Jack Pickart, Vince Pisani, Joe Lutzy, Pat Melarkey and Jerry Mikacich. Lutzy and Pickart were named All City. Besides basketball Bob Henderson won the city championship in golf.

**Gael Basketball dominated Sacramento in the late 1940's**

City Manuel Cazares and second team All City Pat Melarkey. Cazares led the city in scoring with 204 points. Also on the team were Manuel Cazares, Ken Orvick, Jim Church, Pete Vartanian, Bill Henderson, Bob Lehtola and Greg Crane. Their record was 16-9. The City schools which determined the City Championship were Sacramento High, C.K. McClatchy, Grant Union High and Christian Brothers.

Again in 1949 they were City Champs led by All

Jack Buick took over the coaching reins in 1950 and had a great team again winning the City Championship. Their record was 18-2 and had a winning streak of 14 straight. The five starters; Mike Hanley, Ken Orvick, Asa Whetstone, John McNamara and Jim Church. The later two earned All City honors. Of note is that these five players were in the top eleven scorers in the city. Sophomore Sal Vasquez was 6<sup>th</sup> man and had a lot of playing time. Other members on the team were Will Towne,

Bill Ross, Greg Crane, Tex Newberry and Jim Winchell. Jack Buick's last team was in 1951 when they went 14-10 led by All City Sal Vasquez, Asa Whetstone and Mike Hanley. Whetstone was injured the last part of the season or they probably would have done a lot better. He later went on to play for Grant Tech and Sacramento State College. Sal and Will Towne were selected to the second team All City in 1952.

Regis Hurley was named coach for the 1952 seasons through 1957. He had very successful seasons with several All City players including Ron Limeberger, Jerry Kirrene, Don Terra, Art Sanchez and Jim Mikacich. The 1955 team won the Northern Interstate Conference Championship in its first season. The league consisted of CB, Chico, Shasta, Red Bluff, Reno High and Anderson. The league disbanded because of all the travel which took its toll on finance and studies. In 1956 the school moved to its present campus and was called Bishop Armstrong High School which was only 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders and included girls. The 21<sup>st</sup> and Broadway campus remained Christian Brothers and had only the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. The 1957 team were co-champs of the league.



**Jerry Kirrene**

Jack Witry followed Hurley for two seasons and had good years led by Art Sanchez, Ed Dudycha, Jim Mikacich, Duke McAlpine, Joe Rogaski, and Jim De Roos. Dick Sperbeck took over for three very successful seasons before becoming the head football coach. Jim De Roos was the city top scorer in 1960. The 1961 & 1962 teams led by Paul Rotz, Don Semon, Mike Green, Doug Crawford, Clark Aldrich and Don Bradley compiled a record of 41-17 playing an independent schedule since the breakup of the Northern Interstate Conference. The 1962 team earned second place in the Aker Tournament in Oroville. Rotz went on to play college ball at CSUS and Bradley started for the Saint Marys Gaels.



**The 1957 co-champions Christian Brothers Gaels**

Green had a baseball scholarship to USF, Crawford played professional baseball and Aldrich earned a football scholarship to Oregon State.

Jack Witry returned to Bishop Armstrong in



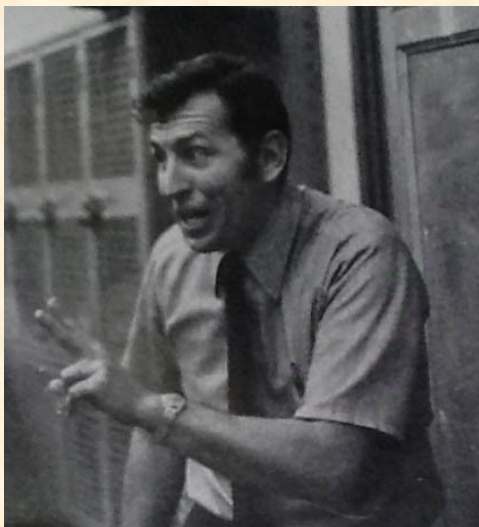
1963 replacing Dick Sperbeck who took over the football program. Witry led the Falcons until 1976 during which they had only three losing seasons and had several all city players. Carl Boyer, Jim Sequeira, Wally Frandrup and Joe Gill were outstanding for the 1963 team.



**Joe Gill soars for two in 1963**

Joe went on to play college ball. He played for the freshmen USF team during their glory days. The 64,65,66, and 67 teams were led by Manny Tequida, Steve Scully, Bill Hoover, Phil Verduyssen, Tim Quinn, Dave Bettencourt and Tom Boyer. Manny went on to play at SCC and later coached at Jesuit Sacramento High School and CSUS. The 1968 team ended its season with a win over Nor Cal Champs Hiram Johnson. Tom Parilo and Ken Church were the leaders. Tom was one of the leading rebounders in the city despite only being 6 feet 2. He earned a scholarship to Gonzaga University. Tom and Ken perfected the pick and roll which caused many problems for their opponents.

The 1969 and 1970 teams featuring four year starter Rich Raimondi, Joe Gutierrez, Roger Zanze, Pat McAuliffe, and Claude Alber. Although undersized, they were exciting to watch and won the majority of their games. In 1970, led by all city Joe Gutierrez, their record was 16-6, losing only to league champs of other leagues except for one of those losses. Joe earned a scholarship to San Jose State. He was 6 feet 2 and the rest of the team were under six. These were fun years.



**Coach Witry breaks it down**

Although winning no championships early on in the 70's, the teams were generally successful. The 1971 and 72 teams were led by Terry Gier, Steve Perich, Dan Carmazzi and Sam Kanelos. Top players of the 73 team were 4 year starter Rod Zanze, Mike Evans who went on to play for SCC and Santa Barbara, Jerry Karver,



**Members of the 1976 Falcon Team**

Mike Weklow earned all city averaging 14 rebounds per game despite being only 6 feet 2. Rod Zanze, perhaps the best pure shooter in CB history, made all city two years and averaged 22.3 points per game before the three point line came in existence. Most of his baskets came from outside the 15 foot distance where the arc is now. He was successful on 92% of his free throws. Other players who made important contributions were Mark Gaytan and Doug Warren. The 76 team was led by Doug Warren, Mike Limeberger, Duane Smith, and Dave Gau.

Joe Gill replaced Witry for the 1976-77 season. That was the beginning of two great years culminating in a league Championship and participating in the 1978 Nor Cal Championships in Oakland. Leaders of that team were Dave Heppell, Joe Mugartegui and Rich Henning. All three went on to play college basketball.

One of the highlights of those years was the play of David Cooke who earned all city, played for Saint Marys and later played pro ball in Spain for almost 10 years.

Mike Zenovief, John Cartwright, Joe Carson and Jeff Tisdell. Cartwright was an All State football player who played football at Colorado and Santa Clara.

Again undersized, the 74 and 75 teams were as successful as they were exciting to watch.



**The 1978 team at the Nor Cal Championship in Oakland**

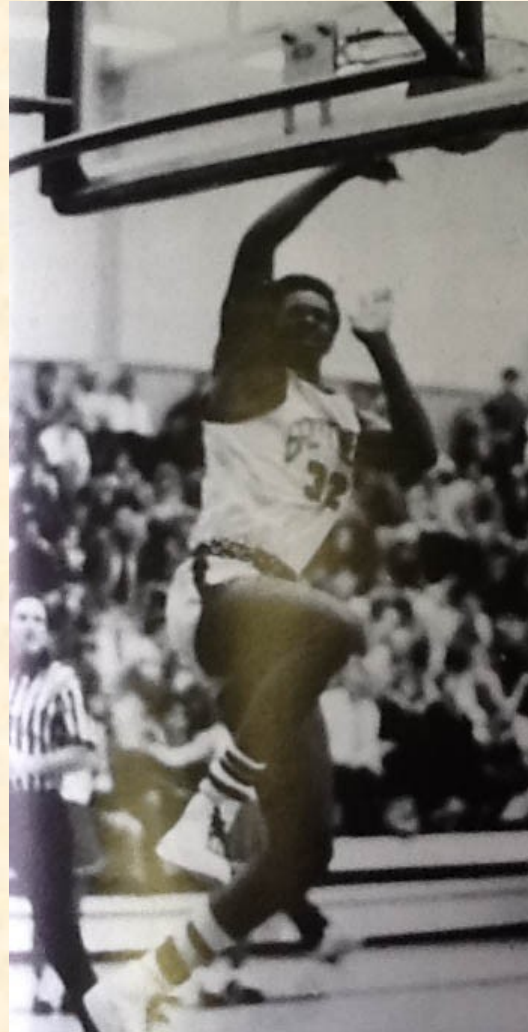


Jim McDivet took over in 1985 and did not have a lot of talent during a rebuilding year. Some of the outstanding players during those years were Marcus Bray, Pat O'Malley, Jim Carda, Ken Omlin, Vince and Rob Delgado, Troy Brown, Dean Fuhs and Avery Dority.

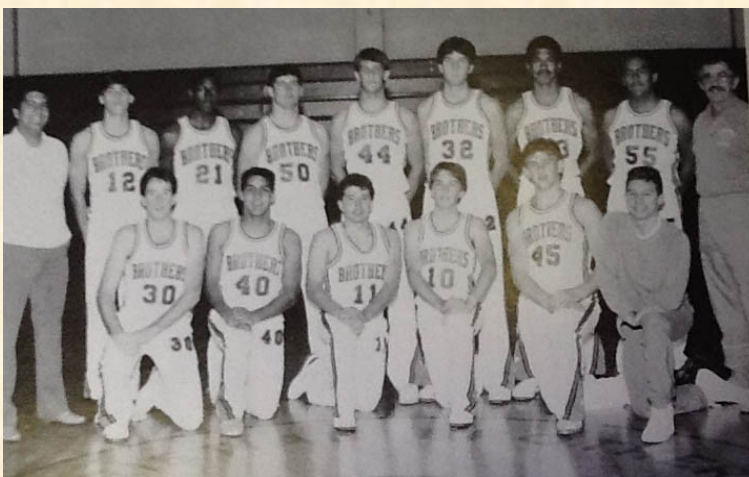
The 83 team's record was 7-19 followed by 1-25 in 84. Ron McKenna followed the next two years and had lots of success. Due to unfortunate circumstances through no fault of his own he left after two seasons.

He brought in some great freshmen including Monty Buckley who later played for Cal Berkeley, and Cornel West who played multiple sports and went on to the University of Nevada Reno participating in football and track.

Ron had immediate success with two winning seasons. Leading players on those teams were Mike Quinn, Avery Dority, Ken Meyers, Troy Brown and Dean Fuhs. For the next five years we had a parade of coaches: Doug Coats, Tom Loden, Nick Vathos, and Sam Kanelos. Due to a lack of talent, those were really down years following the 91 season.



David Cooke slams home two more



The Ron McKenna coached 1986 squad

McKenna's last year he brought in a lot of good players including Buckley, Dee Turner and Cornel West. Hence the 89 through 91 seasons were OK but not up to expectations. After they graduated, things did not go well.

Some of the leading players were Kevin McKechnie, John Hooper, Steve Katen, Kelly Dority, Gordon Driggs, Phil Rile, Elison Alcovendez and LaVelle Robinson. Kevin McKechnie and Driggs were outstanding scorers. Kevin played baseball, football and basketball earning a football scholarship to Cal State San Diego.

Jim Stephens arrived for the 1996-97 season which was the start of CB basketball success and glory years. Immediately we had winning seasons including 4 League Championships and one Nor Cal Championship. They lost in overtime to Southern California powerhouse Westchester in the 1999 State Championship game in overtime played at Arco Arena.

Some of the outstanding players in those years were Tim McGann, T.J. Jennings, Eamon Graves who played college ball in Alabama, Glen Maley who played ball at Dominican College, Mel Cucovich who later played football and baseball at CSUS and



**Former star Rich Henning returned to coach in 2004**

Matt Traverso who played football at Stanford. Matt earned all league his junior and senior seasons and League MVP his junior year. Other outstanding players on those teams were T.J. Jennings who won a scholarship to Fresno and later became a college coach, Glen Maley, Cedric Franklin, Jim Villa and Matt Traverso. Matt was a freshman on the 99 Nor Cal Champions. His rebounding was a major factor in their success. Eamon is now a lawyer and Cedric is a medical doctor.

Ben Palofax replaced Stephens in 2002 and with a host of returning players they again won the league championship. Matt, Mel Cucovich and Dave Damron were the leaders and led the way. The 2003 season was another rebuilding year.

Rich Henning returned to campus as the next CB basketball coach and after four good seasons had to leave due to health problems. His son Bo arrived with Rich and started and led the team in scoring all four years. Bo earned all league honors all four years and was selected a MacDonalds All American his senior year.



Bo averaged 18,27,24,17 points per game during his time as a Falcon he had over 2000 points. He played with a bad ankle his senior years and also led the team in rebounding in spite of it. The team made the playoffs the last two years of Henning's tenure as coach. Other notable players were George Golden who went on to play for Bethany College and later pro basketball in New Zealand, Joe Lewis, Jeff Delgadillo and Ted Monson who played four years for UC Santa Cruz.

Roger Stanfil coached one season in 2008 and had a good season going deep into the playoffs losing the Nor Cal Championship to eventual State Champion Modesto Christian. That game was played at Arco Arena and was a big thrill for the players.

Bill Benford replaced Roger the following years moving up from the JV team which he coached for several years. Both of his first two seasons were successful making the playoffs each time. Leading players were Martin Harris, Paul Seitz, Danny Bird, Jeff Delgadillo, Asa Jackson, Sonny Birdtwistle, Asante Cleveland who earned a football scholarship the the University of Miami, Florida and Sterling Arterberry who is playing for Cal State Sonoma as of 2011. Asante started 3 years on the basketball team. His rebounding and shot blocking were outstanding. The 2010 team also made the playoffs. Team leaders were Asante, Sterling, Dan Bird, Paul Sikes and Jeff Delgadillo.

History up to year ending 2010.