

DENHAM SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME
CLASS OF 2016

BERT BARNETT
(ATHLETE)

A two-sport All State star in basketball and track, in 1946 Bert Barnett was the first athlete in school history to earn an athletic scholarship to LSU in these sports. As a senior he led his hoops team to the quarterfinals in the State Tournament with a 23 point performance. In an era before DSHS fielded track teams, Barnett competed solo in the State Track Meet where he was State Champion in the 220-yard dash, running in tennis shoes. After a year at LSU, he moved to SLC (SLU), leading the Lions to the NAIB (NAIA) national basketball tournament (1950, 1951), averaging 16.3 points per game as a senior. In track he set the 440-yard dash record at SLC and was Gulf States Conference Champion in 1951. He died in 1984.

TODD BURKS
(ATHLETE)

Todd Burks was a premier wide receiver who set the standard for future receivers to chase, earning Class 4A All State football honors in 1989. He was the first player in school history to amass over 1,000 career yards on pass receptions with 1,460 yards on 87 catches. A four-year letterman and Team Captain as a senior, he was chosen All District on both offense (receiver) and defense (defensive back), selected MVP on offense. Burks was also named to the All Parish team on both sides of the ball. An explosive runner as well, his 80-yard kickoff return for a score and a 96-yard rushing touchdown were highlights of his senior campaign. He was named All District in baseball (1990), displaying his versatility. Burks received an athletic scholarship to play football at LSU where he lettered three years.

LAURIN BYARS (COACH)

By any standard, the celebrated career of softball coach Laurin Byars was legendary. No other DSHS mentor in any sport was directly involved in winning four state crowns with four runner-up finishes as well. As assistant to Nikki Leader, their teams won Class 4A state titles in 1986 and 1987, with a stunning record of 84-3. As co-head coach with Robbie Spangler, the Jackets dominated Class 5A softball for another pair of state titles in 1998 and 2000, with a remarkable record of 113-14. Byars earned District Co-Coach of the Year laurels six times and was honored as head coach (East) in the LHSCA All Star Softball Game. As DSJH girls' basketball coach, she engineered three straight undefeated seasons and an 85-0 record!

SUSAN WILLIAMS CHAMBLISS (ATHLETE)

Susan Williams achieved the rare honor of earning All District laurels four times in softball, ending a sterling career as the Class 4A All State shortstop on the DSHS state championship team in 1986, the first state title in school history by a girls' team in any sport. In a storied softball program that has won four state crowns with seven runner-up finishes, Coach Robbie Spangler referred to her as "the best shortstop to ever play for the Yellow Jackets." Williams received an athletic scholarship to play softball at USL (ULL), winning a spot on the All Louisiana Collegiate Team as a freshman. She epitomized the student-athlete ideal at USL by her selection to Who's Who Among Students in American Universities.

ANTHONY DUGAS (SUPPORTER)

The seeds of his unwavering fidelity to DSHS were sown when Tony Dugas was a clutch scorer on the Yellow Jacket basketball team that won the Class B state title in 1956. Best remembered as football's "Voice of Yellow Jacket Stadium" from 1983-2005, he also served as the basketball scorekeeper and clock operator between 1975-2005. A well known community leader, Dugas was a founding member of the original PARDS Board and one of the visionaries who saw that the superb North Park sports complex could serve both the community and his beloved alma mater. After his death in 2006, the facility was named in his honor as the Anthony "Tony" Dugas Recreation Center. He was selected to the PARDS Wall of Fame in 2007.

IVY VAN FOSTER, JR. (ATHLETE)

Van Foster was a dominating defensive lineman, named to the Class 3A All State football team in 1970 and known for his disruptive style of play. A versatile four-time Lineman of the Week in the Baton Rouge area as a senior, he averaged 10 unassisted tackles per game, blocked two punts and recovered three fumbles on the season, kicked PATs and field goals, punted, kicked off, and played offense and defense. He was an All District selectee (1970) and an All Parish pick (1969, 1970). Voted Team Captain his senior year, Foster played in the prestigious LHSCA All Star Football Game (1971). He was also a unanimous pick as catcher on the 1971 All District baseball team. He received an athletic scholarship to play football at SLU.

JEFF HARRIS (ATHLETE)

A two-time All District pitcher, Jeff Harris soared to the 1993 Class 5A All State team with a distinguished 10-1 record and a superb 1.14 ERA. His sterling DSHS baseball career culminated in his selection to the prestigious LHSCA All Star Baseball Game (1993). Harris also enjoyed a sensational basketball career as a two-time All District and All Parish pick. The Outstanding Offensive Player in the parish, he averaged 21.2 points per game as a senior. Highlighting a celebrated tenure on campus, he was voted Mr. DSHS in 1993. He won an athletic scholarship to play baseball at LSU, helping the Tigers to national titles in 1996 and 1997. He joins his dad, Cecil Harris, as the first father-son pair to enter the Hall of Fame.

DR. DAVID THIBODEAUX (SUPPORTER)

From 1955-1966 Dr. David Thibodeaux was a community treasure. In an era long before paramedics and trainers patrolled the sidelines, he gave himself to the Yellow Jackets on Friday nights for 11 years, missing only one game to deliver a baby. Absent ambulance service, he parked his car near the far end zone in case of serious injuries. Today's DSHS sports medicine program stands on the shoulders of this small town pioneer who served without pay, starting the practice of preseason physical exams at no charge. In 2003 some 50 former players honored "Doc" with a DSHS letter jacket after 37 years. Four decades later, these aging athletes fondly remembered his encouragement, "I know it hurts, son, but you can still play."