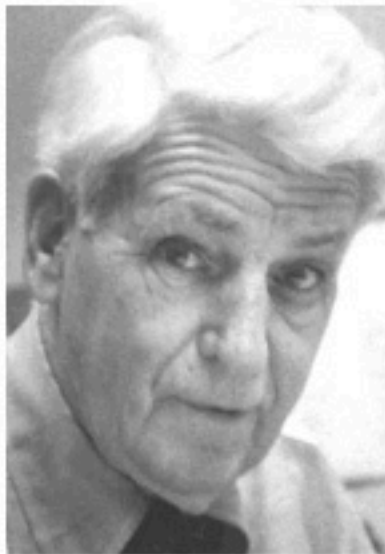




Walter "Brick" Stone Founder of Hofstra Wrestling

By Dan Notine



Walter "Brick" Stone

Walter D. "Brick" Stone founded the Hofstra wrestling program in 1946. A native Long Islander, Brick was well known for his many achievements at Lynbrook High School on the track and field team. He was the National AAU Junior Steeplechase champion in 1937. A varsity trackman at the University of Michigan for three years, he also played football with former President, Gerald Ford.

Brick served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Shortly after his discharge, he was hired by Hofstra University. One of his first assignments was head track coach and trainer. Despite having no previous experience with wrestling, he was charged with setting a collegiate program and getting it ready for competition.

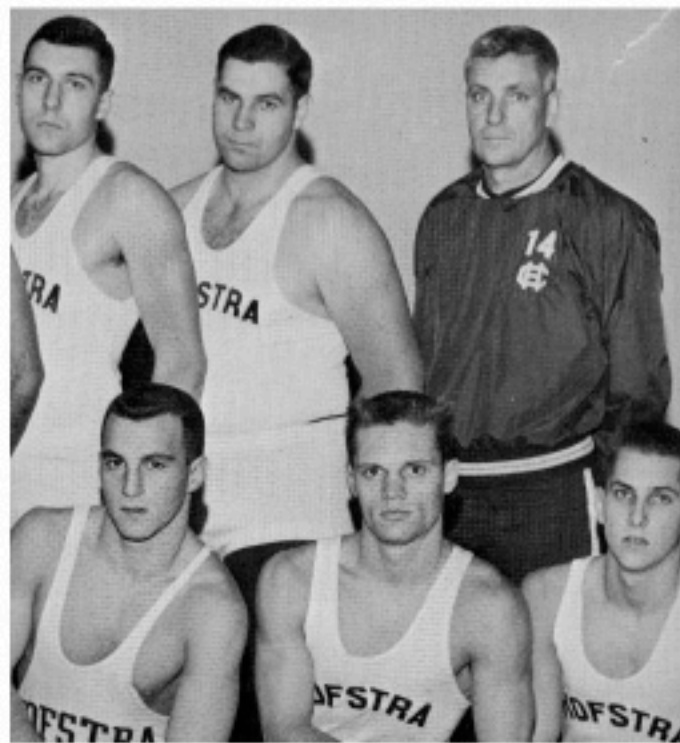
His love for and devotion to this sport were apparent to the student-athletes on campus. His tireless efforts and integrity attracted the students necessary to get his program started. In the beginning it was his charisma that jump-started the process, a critical factor at a time when financial aid was minimal.

During his early career as coach he studied under Mepham High School legend, Frank "Sprig" Gardner. He also attended summer wrestling camps conducted by the great Lehigh coach, Billy Sheridan. Brick Stone quickly acquired a vast knowledge of the intricacies of the mat game and firmly established himself as one of the better young college wrestling coaches in the East.

In a few short years he gained the attention and esteem of other coaches from larger and more established wrestling programs. Schools such as Iowa, Michigan, and Pittsburgh showed up on the Hofstra schedule. This happened in the early '50s when the program was still developing! This was a testimony to one man—Brick Stone. He was recognized for his total commitment to the sport. And this commitment, coupled with his quiet but intense competitive spirit

would be an asset to Hofstra wrestling for many years. Brick completed his coaching career with a record of 80-54-4. He went on to hold other positions at Hofstra, retiring in 1978. His family has also been involved in the wrestling program since its inception and continues to do so. Brick's widow Muriel attends most home matches and is regularly recognized at Hofstra wrestling functions. His son Donald was an outstanding wrestler at Penn State and an Eastern Division champ. Another son, Briton, has been employed at the university as an assistant equipment manager for almost 40 years. His faithful service was recently recognized at a half-time presentation during a Hofstra-Lehigh football game.

Although Brick has been gone for some time now, the foundation he created for the Hofstra wrestling program is alive and well. After surviving the peaks and valleys of most sports programs, Hofstra's wrestling picture has never been bigger, brighter, or better. Led by Coach Tommy Ryan and his talented staff, Hofstra enjoys national recognition and ranks among the top programs in the country. The very first step in this 60 year old program was taken by Brick Stone.



Brick Stone (top right) is pictured with members of his 1959 Hofstra team

Compliments of Dan Notine — Hofstra University Class of 1958