

March 1, 2012

Reference: Nomination of Herbert J. Mols to the Buffalo Hall of Fame

Dear Sir(s):

I am writing this letter on behalf of the countless athletic participants, fans and supporters who would like to recommend Coach Herb Mols to the Buffalo Hall of Fame. Coach Mols successes have long been heralded by sports fans and sports writers alike. The time is right for him to now be paid the proper homage that he deserves by being granted admission to the Buffalo Hall of Fame. I respectfully request that you would please give the nomination of Coach Herb Mols your full consideration.

I am also thrilled to support the nomination of Coach Mols. Many nominators will supply background about his athletic achievements and leadership. I would like to focus on that which I believe was his most endearing trait - the building of character in the young people who were blessed to have him as a coach, leader and mentor.

My name is Ronald P. Maierhofer and I was born and raised in Buffalo. I currently am 76 years old and live in Alexandria, Virginia. Coach Mols was the singular most influential person in my lifetime. Much of the foundation of my character and success in life I owe to him. Coach Mols exemplified the good qualities we all would like to see in our coaches and leaders. He was a winner on and off the athletic field and represented the true meaning of sportsmanship. He always taught his players to win with class and if they didn't win, to show that same class in defeat. He always played by the rules - leading by example and demonstrating that winning isn't everything.

As I reflected on what to say about this extraordinary man, I found myself looking inwardly on myself. As I see it, in order to measure the influence of anyone on one's life, you first have to look at the results of that influence. I am a shirtsleeve kind of guy, a first generation American and the son of blue collar German immigrants who settled in Buffalo in the middle 1920's. My father was a butcher and later, through hard work and luck, became a small business owner. I was raised in an environment that embodied the American dream.

My life and my dreams changed significantly in 1951. At that time, I had devoted much of my athletic life to soccer, a sport played by my father. Then, I was a sophomore in high school and approached by the coach of soccer at Park School of Buffalo. He asked if I would be interested in attending the Park School and playing soccer. I was excited about the prospect and convinced my parents that I wanted to attend Park School. There would be little cost since it had offered me a scholarship. My parents were uneducated, neither of which had finished high school. They had difficulty in understanding the opportunity of a better education but reluctantly agreed to

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allow me to take advantage of the offer. Little did I know at that time that this decision was to change my life forever.

Attending Park School was the most important decision in my early life's journey. It was there I met Coach Mols. He convinced me, no, insisted that I participate in other varsity sports at Park. By the end of my senior year I had played varsity soccer, basketball, wrestling, baseball and track, with some success. Later, I played soccer and lacrosse at Cornell University and was later elected to its Athletic Hall of Fame. I have many memories in sports, having been selected as an All American in college and playing for our country on the USA Pan American-Olympic Soccer Team. I was also a former owner of a professional soccer team, the Denver Avalanche, which played often against the Buffalo Stallions in the Major Indoor Soccer League. None of these experiences are as vivid in my mind as those I had enjoyed with Coach Mols.

One memory in particular stands out that shows the measure and influence of Coach Mols on one's life. It was 1953 and the spring of my senior year at Park School. It was three weeks from graduation and we had finished the spring athletic seasons. On a rainy day, the senior class president (one of our outstanding athletes) and myself (the senior class vice president), decided to skip required "athletics" and go to a movie in downtown Buffalo. We had senior privileges to go off campus and my accomplice had an automobile. When we returned to school the next morning, Coach Mols met with us. He pointed out that we were supposed to be role models for the other students. We had been captains or co-captains of several of the sports led by Coach Mols. On the spot, Coach Mols, in spite of it being an unpopular decision, suspended us from school as an example of what happens when one breaks the rules. The class president had to work 40 hours in order to return to school (his choice of the punishment) to graduate. I had to write a lengthy report (my choice) in order to be allowed to return to school. Once again, Coach Mols demonstrated his evenness in leadership, not allowing "favorite sons" to get favorite treatment.

As I reflect on this episode in my life, and the harshness of Coach Mols' discipline, I now, 59 years later, understand the strength of his leadership and mentoring. He taught me to be steadfast in applying one's values to everyday life and to live with the consequences. Before attending Cornell, I was drafted into the 101st Airborne. The greatest tribute I can bestow upon Coach Mols, is a powerful belief, that if I were to be taking a hill, I would want him at my side.

It is also my belief that his most outstanding successes were helping build the character of the young people by which he was surrounded. It was not just the athletic accolades put forth by many of the nominators that separates this man from the rest.

It is my heartfelt hope that you will consider Coach Mols nomination to the Buffalo Hall of Fame.

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Respectively submitted,

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Park School Class of 1953

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