



The year was 1956, Ike was enjoying a second term and the Christian Brothers were thriving on Willow Street. The Golden Tornadoes were dominant in football, coming off a 35 game winning streak. There was a star basketball player from Transfiguration that was coming to CBA who had a great reputation for being able to score points in a hurry. Coach John Gibbons was looking forward to the time when George Deptula would don the purple and gold of the Golden Tornadoes.

At the time when he entered the school, it was understood that football was king. Legendary coach Walt Ludivico had developed his alma maters football program into one of the most dominant in New York State. In fact, the team had won six consecutive league championships when George entered CBA in the fall of 1956. It was understandable why all the young brothers boys wanted to be part of such an elite group. George was no different. He was selected on the varsity team as a sophomore as a athletic end, not that in those days the wide receivers saw a whole lot of action other than blocking. Still George was proud to compete. In his junior year he was in the top ten in the league in scoring with a whopping 18 points and was chosen as an honorable mention all league selection by both newspapers (does anyone remember those days when Syracuse had two newspapers and they actually had different information in each one!....didn't think so). That year the team tied Nottingham for the league championship with a 5- 0 - 1 record. George played alongside players such as Paul Ciciarelli, Chuck Sorbello, and Benny Lamanna.

In the spring, George headed for the baseball diamond. He was a member of the varsity baseball team for all four years of his high school career. As the teams' catcher, he helped lead the team to the City Championship in 1957 and 1960. In his senior year, George was the teams leading batter as he hit well over .400. He was chosen as a first team all league selection where the 6'1 180 pounder was hailed as CBA's field general, a thinker behind the plate with a strong throwing arm. In his last game in a Golden Tornado uniform, he played an instrumental role in the teams 5 - 3 comeback victory over Sacred Heart in the All City Championship game held at MacArthur Stadium. In that game he thwarted three Hearts rallies by gunning down runners attempting to steal, much to the delight of the estimated crowd of 3500. That championship was a fitting way for George to end his sterling high school athletic career.



But in spite of his success outside on the fields, George's specialty and passion was indoors on the basketball court. Even before he came to CBA his accomplishments were legendary. Depending on who you talk to, George scored 75 points in a biddy league game, a national record at the time, when he was in grammar school. So the expectations that people had of George were very high. He would surely help coach John Gibbons continue the tradition that the Golden Tornado teams of the past had helped to build. It didn't take long for George to make his mark on the program. By the end of the 1956 season he had not only moved into the starting lineup but had begun to perform even beyond anyone's expectations. Deptula averaged double figures in the last eight games of his freshman year and helped lead the team to a second place finish in the City League. As a sophomore George became even more of a factor. He was second in the league in scoring with 281 points scored in league games for an average of 20.1. For his efforts he was the only sophomore named to the first team, all city, all star team.

By his junior year George was considered by most to be the best basketball player in the area. And the numbers bore out that distinction. At one point during that year he was averaging 37 points per game. That year he scored 41 against Central, 35 and 32 against Nottingham, and 35 against Vocational. Maybe the most impressive was his 21 points in the third quarter of a game against Smith Tech when he finished with 37. By the end of the season Bomber Deptula as he was called, was the leagues leading scorer with 456 points on the season. He was

unanimously chosen to the leagues first team all star team. By his senior year there was not much left to accomplish. By now all teams were readjusting their defenses to contain the senior superstar. But even with each team concentrating on stopping George, he still led the league in scoring..

When it was all over his accomplishments were amazing. George scored 1337 points in his four year career, a record that held up for over 40 year until it was broken last season by Greg Paulus. This was in a time when there was no three point shot and the season consisted of 14 league games and a couple of playoff games. He was chosen to the first team, all city, all star team three times and led the league in scoring his junior and senior years. It was written about George that it was often said that he was the "lad who had everything". This comment not only spoke to his athletic prowess but also to his achievement in the classroom. Deptula was second in four year scholastic average in the class of 1960. He took great pride in his studies, a fact that would impact his life much more than his athletic successes.

Upon graduation, George accepted a basketball scholarship to the College of the Holy Cross to continue his academic and athletic career. However after his sophomore year he realized that his best days on the hardwoods were behind him and that he would be better served to give up basketball and focus on his academic studies. He was such a good student and outstanding member of the Community that he was able to have his scholarship transferred to an academic one for his final two years. He didn't let the school down as he was elected Junior Class president for the 1962 - 63 school year and was named Man of the



Year by the Student Congress when he graduated in 1964. Not surprisingly he continued his education at Harvard Law School where he finished first in his class and he was prepared him for his current profession.

George, sometimes as we go through the years, the memory of our athletic achievements are diminished. After tonight, not only will all of your accomplishments be remembered, they are now immortalized. From the Class of 1960, George Deptula.