



As Biachi and Barksdale were finishing their storied high school careers, the impact that the success of their programs had was far reaching, Remember this was before sports center, before YouTube shoot, it was even before cable TV. High school athletes were looked upon as idols to young men growing up. Moreover, if you played football, you knew that CBA had the best team. At that time, there was a whole group of Northsiders that played for the St Peters team, coached by the fiery, now CBA assistant, Pete Vercillo. Unfortunately, one of those players was a little too big to take part in his last year. So Jay Sacco had to wait until he got to CBA to rejoin his friends on the football field.

First and foremost, Jay Sacco was a serious student. He was habitual member of the Brother Adolphus Honor Society. His leadership capabilities were well documented also as he was named president of his senior class and was the class Salutatorian. Jay wanted me to mention that he was not actually second in Merit... that was his cousin Buddy Daddario.....anyone that knows Buddy will understand why it needs to be mentioned at this time.

As focused as Jay was in the classroom, he was equally as intense in the athletic arena. An avid handball player, he loved competition and thrived on that nervous adrenaline rush that all athletes feel before competing. In the spring, he was a shot and discus man for Riordan's Raiders. And as with anything that he did, Jay was pretty good at it. Always working to get better, he used to practice in the winter by throwing that metal shot into the snow at the end of the parking lot. Then he would retrieve it, put it into a bucket of warm water, and throw it again! Unorthodox but effective because by his senior year he was one of the top throwers in the area. The City Champion in the shot put his junior and senior years setting the school and city record with a 54'3" throw.

However, Jay's first love was football. A varsity player as a sophomore he was a member of the '64 championship team. In his junior year, he moved into the starting lineup and was a cornerstone of the offensive and defensive lines for the rest of his career. The 1965 season was not a stellar one for the Brothers but that was certainly no fault of Jays. He was a second team all city selection, the only junior chosen on either team. He had distinguished himself as one of the top linemen in Syracuse and looked forward to his senior year. The



senior group in the '66 season, Santola, Riccardi, Delucia ,DeJoseph, Storto, Scarminach along with Sacco had looked forward to this year. Although very talented, there were only 34 players on the team that year and Coach Cappellitti was very concerned about injuries.

Unfortunately, the first injury occurred even before the season started. Jay injured his leg in a preseason practice and with the team being thin in numbers, Coach Cappelletti did the only thing he could do, told Jay to just suck it up and play. Therefore, Jay being the leader that he was did just that. He ended up playing the entire season with a broken bone in his ankle.

Now Cappelletti's concerns came to fruition and injuries did keep the team from winning another championship but the effort that Sacco put forward did not go unnoticed. He again was chosen All-City, this time on the first team. He was described as a 6'1", 215 pound senior who was the Brothers finest lineman. He was the big man in the middle of the CBA line as an offensive guard and defensive tackle. A strong

blocker he was a near unanimous selection for his all-star berth... it was finished with simply, **he was that good!** It didn't stop at all city... add All State, and then the most coveted award for High school athletes at the time. The Italian American Athletic club award for the top Athlete in the area. Jay deservingly won that award... in fact, from the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree file, his son Bryan won that award nearly 30 years later; the first father/son pair to win it. Moreover, for good measure, his daughter Brigitte earned the IAAC scholarship in 2005.

So on to the next level. Jay and fellow teammate Orrie Scaminach went to BC to continue their careers. Then the unthinkable happened. With one hit, Saccos football days were over with a career ending knee injury. Some players never recover emotionally from crushing blow like that. This is where the strength of Jay's character came in. He packed away the football gear and came back home to Syracuse. So far, I have just highlighted Jay's athletic prowess, but as Paul Harvey used to say, now for the rest of the story. When I spoke to Coach Cappelletti about Jay, one of the first things he mentioned was Jay's compassion and care for Mike Mahaney, a handicapped classmate. Coach marveled at how Jay cared for Mike, bringing him to school helping get to classes, even carrying his books. When I spoke to Coach Riordan about Jay ,one of his first recollections was when Jay was attending Syracuse University and would come to CBA on Sunday's and spend all day in a classroom, putting formulas all over the black boards teaching himself organic Chemistry. You see, Jay attacked his studies with the same passion he showed on the athletic fields. Moreover, his compassion for others drove Jay to become a physician and all the qualities that made such a great athlete made him a great doctor.

Jay you were not only a fine athlete but also a great role model for our up and coming athletes. You exemplify the



values that we try to instill in them even today. Your athletic accomplishments and the person that you have become have earned you a spot among CBA's elite and we welcome you into the Lasallian Athletic Hall of Fame.