



John Gallinaugh

It's a difficult if not impossible chore to condense John Gallinaugh's immense contributions to the growth and development of Saint Mary's as a national basketball power into a few short paragraphs. But let's try by first using the descriptive phrases of his Huskies coach Brian Heaney who breaks down his always perceptive analysis into three parts: (1) "determination, fierce competitive drive, fabulous scoring, speed, defensive play, assists total and a magician's dribbling and passing skills"; (2) "leadership, the respect of his peers and competitors and standard of excellence for others to measure themselves by", and (3) "character and commitment to success have been the trademarks of his success".

From 1971 to 1974, John Gallinaugh might have played with less personal profile in the shadows of All Canadian teammates Mickey Fox and Lee Thomas, Jr., as well as league top scorers Fred Perry and Greig Redding, but all four credit their brilliant point guard with much of their successes. Coach Heaney, "With such a high powered and talented group of scorers around him, there were few extra shots to go around for the tenacious point guard, but more often than not John was at the initial end of a spectacular assist, providing all his teammates with great opportunities to score and win."

It is generally accepted that on a team with less offensive explosion, Gallinaugh would have easily averaged 20 points per game in every year of competition. But the spunky 5'9" guard did 20 when they were needed, and had his own highlight reel games in both the AUAA and national playoffs. For example in his rookie year when he was assigned the job of shutting down the League's co-top scorer Steve Pound of Acadia in a playoff game at the Halifax Forum, John held the great Pound to two buckets and the Huskies went on to beat the Axemen 70-64 before a raucous crowd at the old landmark on Windsor Street that served to open up college basketball as a major attraction.

That result also established what would be the Huskies defensive culture and in 1973 Saint Mary's went into Wolfville and knocked off the Axemen to win the conference championship. The following week in Waterloo, with Gallinaugh masterminding the offences with remarkable poise and Fox contributing 39 points, the Huskies beat Lakehead Norwesters 79-67 to win the national title. John and teammates Mickey Fox and Lee Thomas were named to the CIAU All-Star team. A year later in his final season, he had to face a reverse result in the national final when a jump shot at the buzzer gave Guelph Gryphons a 74-72 victory over the Huskies. It wasn't the way John wanted his university career to end but his exit was as graceful as his far greater number of successes had been accepted with typical modesty.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce Degree in 1974, the young man from Rockaway Beach, New York and Brooklyn Preparatory Academy decided to put down roots in Halifax where that character and commitment to success have made him successful in business while he continues to impact the community with his involvements. John and Jane have raised two boys, Jack and Bill, while Dad attends to business and continues coaching basketball at the minor and high school levels.

Today Saint Mary's is proud to welcome John Gallinaugh as a 2007 Hall of Fame inductee, an outstanding individual, forever Huskie, and a man Coach Heaney sums up as "a premier performer--there will never be another point guard quite like him. In my memory, he was simply the best!"