

“FIVE QUESTIONS WITH TERRY FLYNN ’55”

1. What was your most significant athletic moment at Saint Thomas Academy?

Receiving all-conference, all-regional or all-state recognition in football, basketball, baseball and track at the Academy. Also being the captain and leading scorer (18 points per game) on the Academy team that defeated Washburn. That was the only game Washburn lost that year as they went on to win the Minnesota State Public School Championship in 1955.

2. Who was the most influential person during your Academy days and how did he inspire you?

This is difficult because I went on to teach and coach at the Academy for 13 years and many of my former teachers and coaches were then fellow faculty members; as a student and athlete it would be “Skip” McMahon; not so much as a coach but as a person who had principles that he would not compromise. His goal was to make you a responsible, accountable person – even if he had to kill you in the process.

As a teacher and coach at the Academy it would be Father John R. Roach [later Archbishop Roach]. I never came across anyone later in corporate America who even approached him as a manager and motivator of people.

3. How did the Academy prepare you for your athletic success?

I think the combination of athletics and the JROTC program was a tremendous experience in “team play.” One other thing: I always had a little extra motivation when I coached against Cretin and DeLaSalle which was reflected in our basketball won-loss record (13-3 vs. Cretin and 12-0 vs. DeLaSalle).

4. What does the word “team” mean to you?

The player is the “father” of the coach; how you were coached and what success you had or did not have as a player will form your approach to coaching. The individual player in a team sport has to figure out how to reach his or her potential while at the same time playing a role on the team. A good coach will figure out how to bring his or her players to that level. Therefore, the lessons learned during team play will have an effect on one’s attitude toward marriage, a family, the work place and/or the professional environment. The ability to reach your potential as an individual and at the same time fit into the appropriate “role” in society without compromising your principles should be the ultimate goal.

5. What does it mean to you to be an Academy alumnus?

I have always felt that the Academy (I refer to it as “The Academy” because it drives the Cretin alums up the wall) was and is a place where they push you pretty hard to reach your potential; at the same time if you stumble or fall along the way they will pick you up, dust you off and send you back into the battle; “*Never, never, never give up!*” – Winston Churchill. Someone should ask the mothers of Academy graduates what it means to be an Academy alumnus. Moms do not give lightly of their sons. Kathleen and I sent five sons to the Academy.