



Photo courtesy of Saucony

Tiny ULS Has Proud Athletic Past

BY CHUCK DELSMAN



When it comes to high school sports success in the Lake Country, much of the publicity for many years has gone to the likes of Arrowhead, Kettle Moraine, Oconomowoc and Pewaukee. All four of those schools have championship banners hanging from their walls.

But tucked back into the woods, high up on a hill, at the intersection of Vettleson and Nagawicka roads in the City of Delafield, is quiet, little University Lake School. Rarely do their athletic teams find their way on the sports pages, much less the headlines.

Since the school was founded in 1957 and opened in 1958 at the former Behrend's Hotel and Resort on Nagawicka Lake (now the Seven Seas) before moving to its present location in 1959, ULS has certainly enjoyed more than its share of athletic success. Despite high school enrollments that at times didn't even reach 100 students, ULS has 15 state championship banners hanging from the north wall in the Brumder gymnasium. Not bad for one of the smallest schools in the state.

Not only have the Lakers enjoyed some good team success in four different sports, but over the years, covering a span of 41 years, the quiet little school on the hill has produced two of the most talented and decorated athletes Waukesha County has ever seen.

Joe Duncan, who graduated in 1971, is to this day the best male athlete in school history and arguably one of the best the county has ever produced. Duncan excelled in soccer, basketball and baseball for the Lakers and went on to enjoy a successful collegiate career at Davidson University. He capped off his brilliant athletic career by getting a tryout with the Dallas Cowboys to be their place-kicker in 1976. Despite performing well, Duncan was eventually released.

And then there's the incomparable and gifted Molly Seidel. She made WIAA history from 2009-2012 when she put together perhaps the best two-sport career ever in Wisconsin high school sports. In cross country she won four consecutive cross country individual state

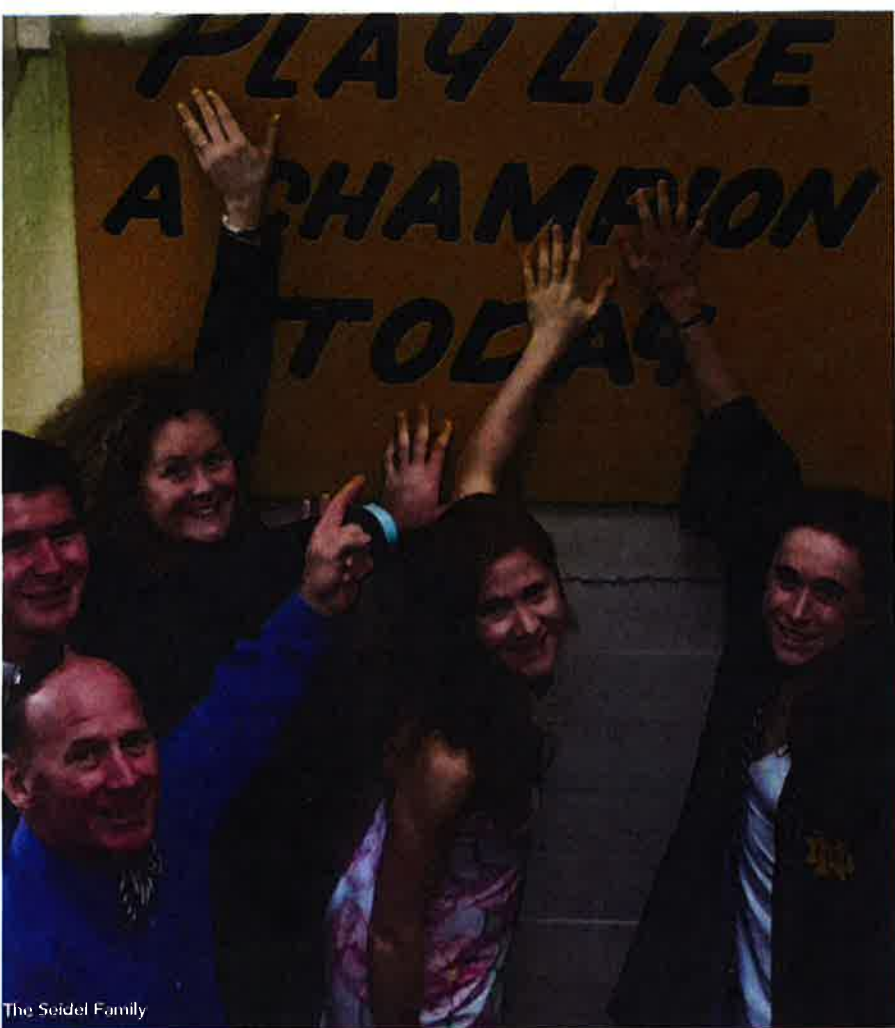
championships and then did even better in the sport of track. In her four-year high school track career, she won the 1,600 and 3,200-meters each season, becoming just one of four track and field athletes to win two events four consecutive years at the prestigious state meet in the 47-year history of the sport. Twice she won the National Gatorade Cross Country Runner of the Year award.

She took that success to the collegiate level at the University of Notre Dame. And there, after seemingly battling nagging injuries throughout her career, she hit the zenith. Competing at the NCAA National Track and Field meet in Eugene, Oregon, she won the national championship in the 10,000-meters in 2015. She became the first Waukesha County athlete ever to win a national track individual title.

Both enjoyed a ton of success despite competing for one of the smallest schools in the state. However, both Duncan and Seidel thought being at such a small school might have ultimately worked to their advantage.

"Looking back, being at ULS was such a unique experience that I think it actually made me a better runner," Seidel said from her residence in Boston, where she now runs professionally. "I was always on small teams. Some times I was the only runner on the team. But what that did was make me become more self-motivated. I did a lot of individual runs. I think, in some ways, being at a small school like ULS actually helped me a lot. I took all of the experiences from my ULS career to the next level."

Duncan had similar thoughts. "When I first enrolled at ULS as a freshman I didn't know much about the school," Duncan said. "I lived just a few miles away but I had a lot of friends at Arrowhead and Pewaukee. I think we only had 26 kids in our class. But despite being so small, we won a lot of games over the years in soccer and basketball. In baseball, it was a lot tougher. We had our own diamond on the fields below the school and Tom Kopecky got the program going. But I know in several of the games we had to use a couple of eighth graders. I had a great experience at ULS. It was a lot of fun."



The Seidel Family



Molly (left) with her siblings Fritz and Isabel

The most successful program over the years has been girls field hockey. They've won seven state championships, winning titles in 1978, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1995 and 1996.

"I came to ULS in 1971 and we won that first state title in 1978," said former ULS coach Ellen Langill, who led the Lakers to several of those state championships. "We got the kids started in the sport in middle school and by the time they were ready for high school, they knew the game very well. I coached some great kids. They always worked hard and we had a lot of success. I coached just about everything at the school, softball, track and field, basketball and tennis. My years at ULS are something I'll never forget."

One of the best Langill stories came in 1976 when her varsity girls basketball team traveled to Kenosha for a game. That night a couple of girls were sick and four ended up fouling out. The Lakers won the

game despite finishing with just one girl on the court, Laura Marisalo.

"That's quite a story," Langill recalled. "We finished with just one player on the court. The next morning we were on the front page of the *Milwaukee Journal* and we also made *Sports Illustrated*."

The other state titles came in downhill skiing in 1979, 2005 and 2010, boys soccer in 1965, 1966, 1970 and 1978 and girls soccer in 2012.

Besides all of the individual championships won by Moilly Seidel, other state champs have been Helena Haas in skiing in 2005 and Isabel Seidel (Molly's sister) in 2014. Isabel won the 1,600 and 3,200 runs that year.

The school even had an outdoor hockey rink in its early days in the woods next to the gymnasium.

Not a bad record for quiet, little ULS.

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