Four athletes and one coach were inducted into the UW-Stout Athletic Hall of Fame. Tim Peterson, a quarterback for the football team in the late 1980s, Michelle Espe-Walsh, a setter for the women’s volleyball team in the mid-1980s, Bill Lyons, a two-time all-conference men’s basketball player in the early 1970s, Mike Beaupre, a men’s gymnastics national champion in the early 1980s, and John Zuerlein, who started the men’s gymnastics program in the early 1960s and finished his coaching career as the women’s gymnastics coach, were inducted into the Hall of Fame, Saturday, Oct. 28, 2000.

Tim Peterson

Tim Peterson set the standard for all UW-Stout quarterbacks to follow. Peterson led the Blue Devil football team from 1986-89. After latching onto the starting role, Peterson began to rack up numbers that eventually would set 16 school records.

With Peterson at the command of a high powered offense, the Blue Devils led the NCAA Division III in passing in 1987. Peterson finished his career with 8,881 passing yards and 9,703 yards in total offense, both still school records that will be hard pressed to be broken.

After leaving UW-Stout, Peterson played with the Orlando Thunder of the short-lived World League of American Football, and has tryouts with the Minnesota Vikings and in the Canadian Football League. Upon completion of his playing career in Europe, Peterson turned to coaching with the Swedish national team, then returned to Minnesota as an assistant coach at Hutchinson High School.

Peterson currently resides in Hutchinson, Minn., where he employs his passion as a process engineer for Hutchinson Technology.

Michelle Espe-Walsh

Michelle Espe-Walsh

Mish Espe was instrumental in the advancement of the Blue Devil women’s volleyball program. As the team’s setter from 1984-87, Espe set the standard for volleyball’s quarterback position.

A team captain her final three seasons, Espe was an honorable mention all-conference choice as a junior, a first team pick as a senior, and the team’s most valuable player as a junior and senior.

Known for her pinpoint accuracy with the set, Espe graduated from the Blue Devil program with the most career assists. She currently ranks third on the all-time UW-Stout assists list.

Following her UW-Stout playing career, Espe was an assistant coach for the Blue Devils for one season, then continued to play in a number of amateur leagues and tournaments around the country.

Espe currently resides in Elkton, Minn., with her husband, Jamie Walsh, a former UW-Stout football player, and one child. Espe works for Telex Communications as an accounting supervisor.

Bill Lyons

Bill Lyons

Not only did Bill Lyons give the Blue Devils a scoring punch, he also provided the UW-Stout basketball team with leadership both on and off the court during his UW-Stout career from 1970-74.

“One of the best team leaders ever to come out of the program,” said longtime UW-Stout coach Dwain Mintz.

And Lyons’ leadership was a big part in the Blue Devils’ success. During his career, the Blue Devils posted a 67-30 overall record.

Lyons was a two-time all-conference pick and was an NAIA District 14 choice in 1973-74 when he scored 563 points for a 21.6 points per game average, a total that is second on the Stout all-time single season list. Lyons scored 1,050 career points, currently ranking him 14th.

Lyons took his leadership, team concept and winning attitude into the business world, working as a general manager for McDonald’s Corp, an area associate for STA Corp, vice president of operations from Applebees Franchise, and vice president of operations for Fairmount Capital Group.

Mike Beaupre

When Mike Beaupre looks back at his gymnastics career, the year 1984 stands out. As a member of the Blue Devils’ men’s gymnastics team, Beaupre saw both individual and team success.

As a team, the Blue Devils won the NCAA Gymnastics Championships, the only Stout team to ever win a national championship. As a team, the Blue Devils qualified to the NCAA Division II Gymnastics Championships, placing sixth.

After finishing second at the NCAA championships on the pommel horse to his teammate Paul Spitzl, Beaupre kicked his routine into high gear and won the NCAA Division II pommel horse championship, qualifying to the NCAA Division I championships where he placed 65th. But the thrill of competing at the highest levels in an Olympic year left an imprint on Beaupre.

Beaupre competed against six members of the Olympic team at Pauly Pavilion at UCLA, the same location the Olympics would be held later that summer.

John Zuerlein

John Zuerlein

John Zuerlein can only be termed as Stout’s “Mr. Gymnastics.” After coming to Stout as a student in 1959 from Lincoln, Neb., Zuerlein played a year of football. Zuerlein left Stout for two years, but returned in 1962 and turned his attention to gymnastics, starting the Blue Devil men’s program while still a student and quickly turning the program into a national contender.

Zuerlein was twice qualified to the NCAA Division I Gymnastics Championships.

Larkin receives distinguished service athletic award

Larkin receives distinguished service athletic award

Since coming to Menomonie and Stout in the mid-1960s, Joe Larkin has had an impact on the UW-Stout and surrounding community athletic programs. For his efforts, Larkin received the UW-Stout Distinguished Service Athletic Award. The award was presented at the UW-Stout Athletic Hall of Fame ceremony, Saturday, Oct. 28.

As the university’s dean of students, Larkin was overseer of the UW-Stout Physical Education and Athletic programs for six years. Under his watch, the university returned men’s hockey to varsity status and began work on the development of the Recreation Complex where he was a prime player in fundraising to generate contributions with numerous individuals, organizations and businesses. Larkin also helped to initiate the exclusive pouring rights for beverages on campus. Larkin began his first season as an administrative assistant in Athletics for the Blue Devil hockey team.

As the dean of students, Larkin was responsible for discipline of students and staff alike: Larkin was known as a stern taskmaster, but fair, as he handled disciplinary procedures.

Larkin played an important part in the establishment of artificial ice at the Dunn County Rec Park, working to raise funds to install the system in the late 1980s.

As an executive board member, Larkin has served 20-plus years as the chair of the Menomonie Board of Zoning Appeals.

Retired last year, Larkin is married to Linda, a retired Menomonie school teacher, and the couple have two sons, Jerry and Kevin.

Larkin played an important part in the establishment of artificial ice at the Dunn County Rec Park, working to raise funds to install the system in the late 1980s.
Women's Cross Country
Hired only a week before the Blue Devils opened training camp, Joe Haarlan laid the groundwork for his program. UW-Stout place in the top half of the regional championship and was sixth at the WIAC Championships.

Men's Basketball
First year coach Eddie Andriot brought a new look to the Blue Devils. Emphazising defense, Stout consistently played all of the conference teams on an even keel, but came up short as they earned the No. 8 seed in the conference tournament.

Women's Basketball
A traditionally strong women's program did not disappoint, even though the roster was more than 50 percent freshmen. UW-Stout placed third in the league with an 11-5 conference record and posted an 18-7 overall record, their best finish in four seasons despite losing a starting point guard and post player before the season began and another point guard seven games into the season.

Amy Zeilinger (Jr., Racine) led the team, defending her move to the point spot, and was named to the All-WIAC team and the WIAC all-defensive team after leading the league in steals.

Men's Ice Hockey
The Blue Devils enjoyed a renaissance of sorts, putting up their best overall record ever (15-11-1) and finished fourth in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association to earn the right to host their first-ever NCHA playoff series.

Coach Terry Watkins, a Stout graduate and former Blue Devil player, earned his second WIAC coach of the year award. Eight players were named to the WIAC honorable mention squad, and defenseman Cullen Flaherty (So., Dalush, Minn.) was also named to the NCHA honorable mention team.

Gymnastics
The Blue Devils spent the entire season breaking both team and individual records.

Tasha Pasch (So., Northfield, Minn.) captured her second consecutive WIAC all-around title, and coach Jeff Hazuga was named conference coach of the year for the second year. Katie Hanson (So., Dalush, Minn.) and Erika Opsteen (Superior, Wis.) were also named all-conference.

Hanson and Pasch were named All-America all-arounders, with Pasch finishing eighth and Hanson 10th. Hanson, Pasch and Brenna Jones (Sr., St. Paul, Minn.) were also All-America on individual events, Hanson placing fifth on the bars, Pasch fifth on the vault and Jones sixth on the floor.

2000-2001 seasons shaping up to be memorable