



## ERNIE OLSON

- **Massapequa H.S. 1972**
- **Nassau Community College 1974**
- **Cortland State 1976**
- **Garden City H.S. Asst. Coach**
- **Massapequa H.S. Asst. Coach**
- **Nassau Community College Asst. Coach**
- **C.W. Post Asst. Coach**
- **Hofstra University Asst. Coach**
- **University of North Carolina Asst. Coach**
- **St. John's University Asst. Coach**
- **Molloy College Asst. Coach**
- **Adelphi University Asst. Coach**

Before embarking on his career as an assistant coach, now entering its 37th year, Ernie excelled as a player at the collegiate level, earning a reputation as a tough, high-scoring crease attackman with exceptionally quick stick skills. It began at NJCAA powerhouse Nassau Community College where he played on back-to-back national champion teams in 1973 and 1974, leading the team in scoring his sophomore season with 55 goals. Transferring to Cortland State, he played a major role in the Red Dragons run to the 1975 NCAA Division II National Championship, leading the team in scoring with 47 goals, and earning 3rd Team All-America honors. The 13 goals Ernie scored during the national tournament established a new Division II record at the time. Elected by his teammates as captain in 1976, he led them to the SUNY Conference title before the season abruptly ended with a heartbreaking 12-11 loss to Ohio Wesleyan in the Division II national tournament. Ernie capped his collegiate playing career as a member of the winning North squad in the 1976 North-South All-Star game, and has long remarked that he was especially proud to be one of seven Nassau CC alumni competing on the field that day.

Ernie's coaching career commenced, most fittingly, on the familiar grounds of Nassau CC, where he served as an assistant coach under the legendary Rich Speckman from 1978-1981, winning two national championships along the way (1978, 1980). In 1982 he shifted to the high school level, spending two years at Garden City as an assistant to Doc Dougherty, but then returned to the collegiate ranks in 1984 when invited by John Danowski to serve as his assistant at C.W. Post. When "Dino" left Post for Hofstra in 1986, Ernie moved with him, remaining there through the 1987 season. It was during this time period that Ernie began to be recognized as a talented and effective goalie coach, and he has since coached ten goalies who have earned All-America honors. This burgeoning development did not escape the keen eye of Willie Scroggs who enticed Ernie to move south and join the staff at North Carolina. Ernie remained at UNC for the 1988

and 1989 seasons during which the Tar Heels repeated as ACC Champions and reached the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds, respectively, of the NCAA tournament. Two goalies who played under Ernie's tutelage during this time period still hold the UNC records for highest save percentage in a season (.709, Barney Aburn, 1988) and in a career (.663, Pat Olmert 1986-89).

Still a Long Island boy at heart, with a yearning to return home to his extended family, Ernie re-joined John Danowski's staff at Hofstra for the 1990 season. In 1991 he moved to St. John's University when he was a hired full-time as the defensive coordinator for both the lacrosse and football teams, an offer he couldn't refuse. His tenure there ended abruptly, however, when St. John's dropped its lacrosse program just prior to the 1996 season. This turn of events, plus an opportunity to serve at his beloved alma mater, Massapequa High School, led Ernie to return to the high school level from 1997-2003. Although Massapequa had not won a county lacrosse championship since 1974, Ernie joined with head coach Steve Molloy and assistant coach Doug Hall to guide Massapequa's return to prominence, winning three straight Nassau County Class A titles from 1999-2001.

In 2004 Ernie returned once again to the collegiate ranks, serving as defensive coordinator at Molloy College, winning the Division II ECAC conference championship in 2005. A private sector opportunity forced Ernie to leave Molloy following the 2008 season; however, unable to escape from his love of coaching, the world-wide lacrosse fraternity was pleased to see "Ernie O" reappear on the sidelines in 2012, this time as defensive coordinator and goalie coach for Adelphi under Gordon Purdie. Since Ernie's return, the Panthers have achieved a 30-6 record, reaching the semi-finals of the Division II national tournament in 2013, losing an exciting duel to eventual champ LeMoyne.