

WAS - Gymnastics Legend

Bud Marquette

2002 Honoree



The Coach of America's first World Championships medalist

Clayton Marquette, or Mr. Bud as he preferred, developed his gymnastics abilities and knowledge as a youth at the Ambridge Turners north west of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on the eastern bank of the Ohio River. He was among a handful of men to coach women exclusively and had one of the early clubs for girls only. Marquette's coaching career spanned a period of time from when the American Turners organization trained and developed most of America's top male and female gymnasts. Throughout his coaching career and beyond, Marquette worked hard to preserve the American Turner program. As a gymnast, Marquette won several high school titles in Pennsylvania and in the American Turner meets.

Prior to World War II, Bud attended the Normal School of the North American Gymnastics Union in Indianapolis and Slippery Rock State Teachers College (now Slippery Rock University). After the war, he taught and coached in Rochester, Pennsylvania at the Rochester Turners. His first nationally prominent gymnast was Judy Howe. Judy finished among the top twenty gymnasts in the 1952 Olympic team trials. She went on to make the 1956 Olympic team that competed in Melbourne, Australia. By 1956, Marquette's Turner teams had won ten consecutive state titles in Pennsylvania.

After the 1956 Olympics, Marquette and his family moved to Long Beach, California. He discovered California en route to Melbourne for the 1956 Games and took a position with the Lakewood Recreation Department just north of Long Beach and taught gymnastics at the area high school gymnasium. Marquette formed the Southern California Acro Teams (SCATs) in 1960. He moved into a renovated church facility. The SCATs became one of the earliest successful women's gymnastics clubs. Today, the SCATs continue to be a successful private gymnastics club.

By 1964, Bud had trained a group of SCAT gymnasts to an advanced level of skill. Judy Trammel, the eldest SCAT tried out for the 1960 Olympic team and finished in the top twenty. Stephanie Stromer and Dagmar Hintnaus were both nationally ranked gymnasts. In 1966, an extra special young talent appeared at the door of Lakewood HS named Cathy Rigby and she was eager to become an accomplished gymnast. In 1968 Bud coached Cathy and Wendy Cluff to the 1968 Olympic team competing in Mexico City. Rigby went on to win the first ever medal by an American gymnast in a World Championships (Silver medalist on the balance beam in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia in 1970). This was a very important medal politically for the budding United States Gymnastics Federation which just recently replaced the Amateur Athletic Union as the United States' representative to the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG).

Bud trained his own daughter, Beverly, to become a prominent gymnast with the SCATs. At their pinnacle, the SCATs were considered to be one of the top three women's artistic gymnastics schools in the US under Marquette's reign as head coach. Bud took the SCATs on a national tour to raise money enabling their squad to attend and

perform at the FIG's fifth Gymnaestrada in Basel, Switzerland in 1969. Cathy Rigby was one of the world elite gymnasts invited to perform at a "Night of Stars" exhibition sponsored by the FIG.

Known as a loving but strict disciplinarian as a coach, Bud was also one of the early supporters of the United States Gymnastics Federation founded in 1962. Marquette was appointed temporary chair of the Women's Elite Committee and became the first elected Vice President for Women at the inaugural USGF meeting in Chicago in 1962. Bud was chosen Honorary Director for the first USGF American Cup held at Madison Square Garden in 1976. He retired in Long Beach in 1989 where he lived with his wife Ethel until his death on May 8th 2001.

