

Hall of Fame Inductee

Jim Rees – Downers Grove South High School

The name Jim Rees is synonymous with Downers Grove South tennis. Jim founded DGS tennis during the late 1960s and remained the head coach of both the boys and the girls programs until 1995. During his tenure, Jim's teams compiled a staggering 550 dual meet wins and claimed many conference championships.

The boys tennis team experienced much success under the tutelage of Jim Rees, winning seventeen West Suburban Gold Conference championships and an IHSA sectional championship. Among his top players were Jeff Neuman and David Ortiz, whom he coached to top finishes at the IHSA State Tennis Tournament. One of the highlights of Jim's success was a 91-match winning streak that the boys team enjoyed.

Jim's success continued with the girls tennis team. The girls compiled 13 West Suburban Gold Conference championships and also won an IHSA sectional championship. Two of Jim's standouts on the girls team were Chris Neuman and Michelle Radman, both of whom finished in the Top 8 at the IHSA State Tennis Tournament. The girls team also enjoyed a lengthy winning streak, amassing 73 consecutive wins.

Jim has had a huge impact on his players and those around him. Three of his players gained world rankings in tennis: Chris Neuman, Jeff Neuman, and David Ortiz. Dozens of his players went on to play tennis at the collegiate level.

Beyond his role as a coach, Jim has also served as a mentor to others, guiding two-time IHSTCA Assistant Coach of the Year Dan Miller, Urbana High School's head girls tennis coach Melissa Welch, and his son-in-law, 2007 IHSTCA Coach of the Year Pete Freischlag.

Jim's love of the game of tennis grew from the time he was a young boy. As a youth, Jim would watch top players as they played in the Chicago area. This love of tennis led Jim to be a successful high school and college tennis player. His love of tennis, his competitiveness, and his desire to achieve excellence all played roles in Jim's decision to enter the coaching world.

Congratulations, Jim, on your accomplishments as a standout tennis coach at Downers Grove South. In recognition of your successes on and off the courts, we would like to welcome you to the Illinois High School Tennis Coaches Association Hall of Fame.