



Coach Ed Lombardi Park History

As a football coach and teacher, Ed Lombardi helped evoke a winning spirit in the lives of Elk Grove's young people.

Born to Shirley and Salvador Lombardi in 1945, Ed and his sister, Diane, were raised in Lancaster, California. While active in both wrestling and football at Antelope Valley High School and Antelope Valley Community College, it was Ed's love for football that spurred him on to attend California State University at Northridge where he played linebacker for the Matadors. Ed earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a minor in Physical Education in 1969. He earned his teaching credential from California State University in Chico in 1971.

Following two years on the staff at Alemany High School in Mission Hills, Ed began a 15-year teaching and coaching career at Lassen Union High School in Susanville where he shifted from head coach in wrestling to baseball and then football. In 1986, he moved to Elk Grove High School and tackled the jobs of social science and physical education teacher and Thundering Herd head football coach. Over his 14 seasons with the Herd (eleven as head coach and the last three as co-head coach) he fostered one of the best football teams ever to play in the Sacramento area. Under Lombardi's leadership, the varsity team won seven league and three sectional championships, enjoyed four undefeated regular seasons, and reached the Sac-Joaquin Section playoffs ten times.

Coach Lombardi encouraged Elk Grove players to excel in both on and off the field. In a 1999 article, he states his service philosophy that "...football players should contribute to their own school and community. That is why I had projects where football players do many of their own clean-up activities, including repair of the stadium as well as taking care of their own locker room."

Ed's zealous marketing strategies and imaginative public relations techniques garnered financial support for several school athletic teams. In 1989, Ed pioneered the formation of Home Field Advantage, a non-profit corporation designed to raise funds for the improvement of youth athletic programs. By 1999, the group had raised in excess of \$300,000 for projects that included a pool heater for the swim team, back stops for youth baseball teams and new lights at Thunder Stadium. HFA was also instrumental in acquiring \$1.5 million in funds for renovation of the stadium shared by Elk Grove and Laguna Creek High Schools.

Ed has been named Football Coach of the Year seven times by the Delta League, three times by the Sacramento Bee, three times by the Sac-Joaquin Section, and once by the North Section. He was named North Section Wrestling Coach of the Year three times and Teacher of the Year three times while in Susanville. In 1999 he was honored as the Elk Grove Citizen's "Man of the Year" and served as Grand Marshal for the 42nd Annual Elk Grove Western Festival Parade.

Ed moved to Clovis in 2000 and became head football coach at Clovis West High School. His "home team" centers around his partner, Jeannie Stewart, and their blended family of six children. Ed's 26-year-old son, Nathan, lives and works in Sacramento. His 17-year-old daughter, Janelle, lives in Lancaster and attends Quartz Hill High School.

The information within this document was created at the time of park dedication and may not be current.