

WANDA JONES

Wanda Jones' parents' early interest in sports led her to develop the same interests. After watching the Dodgers' games on television, she would go outside and use a broken broom handle as a bat to hit gravel across the field, much to her parents' consternation, as they witnessed the slow disintegration of the driveway. Her troubles generated by relocating the driveway helped sharpen her hand-eye coordination for future athletic endeavors.

Family gatherings with her five siblings, as well as numerous cousins, involved games of tag, softball, football, basketball, kickball. Wanda, or "Bug" as she was known in her family, became the leading competitor in the group. By seventh grade, she had become an early selection in games. Coach Ernie Seals recognized her skills and allowed her to play on the boys' team, the subject of friendly ribbing even today from the boy whose place she took on that team.



Wanda's high school years were filled with participation in volleyball and softball, under Evelyn Harvey, and in basketball and track, with Barbara Wood. These Hall of Fame coaches would push her to improve beyond her level of raw talent. Described as a very coachable athlete, she thrived on making improvements. Highlights included Most Valuable Player, and All-District first team and District Player of the Year selections in both volleyball and basketball. She made All-District 1st team in softball, as well, with a team-leading 13 home runs in 1977.

She enjoys recalling the night that the basketball game was interrupted to present her with the game ball, following the scoring of her 1000th point, an achievement witnessed by her greatest fans, her parents, Doris and Sterling Jones. Even with her busy team sports schedule, she managed to participate in a variety of track and field events – shot put, high jump, long jump, hurdles, discus, mile-relay, and 220-relay. She could almost be a one-person track team. Her 220-relay team placed first at the state meet.

Wanda's basketball abilities led her to attend Radford University on scholarship. The team won the conference championship her freshman year. A review of Wanda Jones' numerous sports achievements reveals unparalleled accomplishments; she was indeed the premier and dominating female athlete of the era. She continued to participate with a traveling softball team as a shortstop and third baseman, traveling the East Coast and winning weekend tournaments, until age 40. She captured a number of individual distinctions, some of which included a cash award, elevating her to the status of professional athlete.

Wanda Jones – April 8, 1960

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Youth: Basketball – Lynchburg summer league (1977, 1978), Outstanding Achievement Award
- ACHS: Volleyball (1975-79) – MVP, Seminole All-District 1st team, Player of the Year; Basketball (1975-79), American High School Athlete designation, All-District 1st team, Player of the Year, MVP, 1000+ points; Softball (1976, 1977), All-District 1st team, home run leader; Track and Field (1978, 1979), 1st place, state meet, 220 yd. relay
- Radford University: Basketball (1979-81) – conference championship (1979-80)
- Adult traveling softball team: tournament championships (many), individual awards (RBIs, HRs, defense, offense)