

In Huntington, They All Know The Organizer

By Jim Neughton

They have all known him at one time or another. The 27-year-old teenager who wanted to be a major-league pitcher, the shortstop with pizzazz who everybody called a "ten-bagger," the high school kid whose basketball-handling was his identity, or the player who occasionally liked to show people that he used to abuse the jumper just like every West. Each of them has known Mickey Norton.

People wouldn't guess what Norton does by looking at him. But if they saw his living room, they'd know. The walls, floor and pictures, more than 50 of them, line the walls. Titles like "The Boys of Blue," "Lombardi" and "Wilt" adorn the bookshelves. Although crippled with polio at 11 and now confined to a wheelchair at age 48, Norton has been a winning home school teacher, basketball coach and a winning basketball player. He is an organizer, a leader, a person who can play, and he can teach.

Norton was one of the guys who was cultivated by his father, Harvey, founded the YMCA in Huntington and coached basketball in every high school in the city. When he died, Norton was 66. In 1946, his third year of coaching, he decided to leave the sport. He wanted to be a doctor, to allow him to become just another son. He coached Little League baseball throughout high school, spent two years at Princeton University and then turned to his father's old sport, basketball. He spent his long basketball career in the Huntington area, coaching and playing.

At 24, he created the Norton Athletic Club, including one of Long Island's first summer sports camps and a year-long athletic program that included basketball, baseball, swimming and golf.

He has also served as coach of the Huntington YMCA. He spent five years there and then went back on his own again in 1972, when he founded the Huntington Athletic Club. With the present club in a Huntington, Norton's organizing eye is not only on his son, Eddie, but also on the future of the club and his son. Eddie, now playing in the Huntington area, is a member of the Huntington Athletic Club. He has already coached and coached several youngsters and plans to start coaching on a full-time basis in the near future.

The club, he feels, will be the same in 10 years as they have been for 20 years. He has already coached the Huntington Athletic Club for 20 years and has coached many youngsters in the Huntington area. He has coached many youngsters in the Huntington area. He has coached many youngsters in the Huntington area. He has coached many youngsters in the Huntington area.

"The most satisfying thing," he said, "is watching them grow up and become adults and successful family people, and then having them come back to me to give back what they got. They help me live in the present." If you look at the Huntington Athletic Club, you will see the same thing. The Huntington Athletic Club is a place where people can come and learn, and where they can give back.

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