



1951 Basketball Team Inducted 2002

Stepinac's first basketball team started with humble beginnings in the late Fall of 1948 with Freshman and Sophomore recruits (there were no Junior or Senior classes). The first year the team played in gym shorts and tee shirts (supplied by the school) and their own sneakers.

Through the first two years, the team's performance was truly heart wrenching! Forced to play a varsity schedule in their second year (without a Senior class), the team was, at times, seriously overmatched and looked woefully weak and pathetic against the big, established CHSAS and Westchester County teams of that era! Many times during that painful stretch, the team was ridiculed and laughed at by the few hearty souls who ventured out to watch. It was only towards the end of the second year that the team finally was able to win a few games and minimize the seemingly endless embarrassment!

Going into the 1950-1951 season, (finally with a Senior class), this previously "rag-tag" team began to take on the appearance of a potential powerhouse! They soared through the regular season with a 16 – 3 record, avenging many sad losses of prior years, easily won the Westchester County Tournament and, incredibly, went on to capture the New York State Catholic High School Championship – a dream that was never even a fantasy for most of the team's existence!

As in the movie "HOOSIERS", this little, unheralded start-up group came out of no-where to win it all!! A wonderful journey from very hard times to final triumph. Incredibly, Archbishop Stepinac had a State Championship before it ever graduated a single class!

James Deery '52
John Delaney '54
Robert Donahue '53
Richard Elston '52
Robert Filippone '51
Michael Harrington '52
James Longo '53
Richard McDine '52
Donald Pizzutello '51

John Ritch '53
James Shea '51
Richard Wise '51
Ignatius Volpe - Coach
Joseph Chalhoub '51 - Manager
Noel Fordrung '53 – Asst. Manager
David Luberger '51
Eugene O'Brien '51
George Prince '51