

**JOHN ISNOR  
SR.**

“I started playing hockey when I was approximately six years old,” John Isnor recalled. “I was one of three rambunctious boys in my family needing an out for a lot of pent-up energy. Our parents thought hockey would be a great way to keep three active boys busy for a few hours a week.”

“In those early hockey years, I was particularly fond of Coach Greg Ashe,” John continued. “He was a Bedford dad -- I played hockey with his son Jay. He was motivational, supportive -- just an all-around great guy.” John cherishes memories of Waterville Valley hockey tournaments in Quebec, “meeting kids from all over the country and Canada forming friendships.”

John’s varsity hockey career began in Grade 9, and by his junior year he was team captain. A teammate, Joel Shamon ’83, remembers that John was “a fantastic player. He controlled and dominated the ice – when he was on the ice, everybody got out of his way... He was a big guy – like Cam Neely in some respects.”

Junior year, 1980-81, was especially memorable. John was Dual County League most valuable player, a Boston *Globe* all-scholastic and a Lowell *Sun* all-star. He was being scouted by the Edmonton Oilers of the National Hockey League, and powerhouse college programs, including Boston College and Boston University, were showing interest. John was recognized regionally by Hockey Night in Boston as a sophomore and junior.

John was also an all-star linebacker and fullback, a three-year varsity football player in an era when that was unusual. “He was a hard worker, always on task. He always did his job,” related Coach Armand Sabourin. “He was a really good fullback and a true team player.”

Coach Sabourin, John testified, “could always get the best of out you. We'd meet every Friday night at the high school to prep and go over plays for the game. He was low-key but motivating. His favorite saying was, ‘Come loaded for bear’.” He also has fond memories of Assistant Coach Bob Petrillo, who “would get the team going and pumped up before each game.” Both coaches are members of the Hall of Fame.

On Saturday afternoon, Oct. 10, 1981, everything changed for the senior co-captain. John suffered a serious knee injury as he absorbed a tackle while returning an interception against Acton-Boxborough. After the injury, he said, he knew that the door had closed on unlimited hockey potential. Still, he played for a year at New Prep in Cambridge and two years after that at Salem State.

John’s high school hockey play is almost legendary. “I’ve been following hockey all my life,” said former BHS Coach Paul Sainato, who continues to work as a referee in his late 70s. “I’ve heard nothing but absolutely great words about John. Many people say he could have been a star at the collegiate level.”

“After the football injury, I couldn't play any other sports, so I picked up the game of golf,” John said. “I only played my senior year for something to do, starting out the season with a cast still on my leg.” As an underclassman he played freshman and junior varsity baseball.

For 23 years John has been employed by the Bedford Department of Public Works. John and his wife Jo Ann have been married for 26 years and have two children, John Jr., 23, and Kimberlie, 20.