

LOUIS CIRO "BIMBO" CECCONI



Louis Cirò "Bimbo" Cecconi, 95, formerly of Pleasant Hills, died on February 24th, 2024 at Paramount Senior Living Care in Bethel Park. He was born October 13th, 1928 in Donora, PA, the son of the late Albert Cecconi and Paula Pearl Puglisi Cecconi.

A member of the Donora High School class of 1946, he won 11 of 12 varsity letters starring in football, basketball, baseball, and track. The Dragons won three consecutive

WPIAL football titles with the 1945 team ending the season ranked #1 in the state and #2 nationally. In 1945, he helped the basketball team win the WPIAL, a basketball crown, and went on to finish as state runner-up.

He earned a scholarship to Pitt where he became only one of three athletes in Pittsburgh history to win nine varsity letters. He was a four-year two-way starter in football. Against Penn State in 1949; Bimbo ran for two touchdowns, passed for another touchdown, and made a record-setting three interceptions of Owen Daugherty. Bimbo tossed a record-setting touchdown of 82 yards to fellow Donora native, Nick DeRosa. Myron Cope coined the phrase "scatback" to describe Bimbo's elusive running style.

He was a four year starter in basketball and started a record 75 games on varsity. He also played baseball for one year. His many awards included:

- 1948-1949 Quarterback Club Award
- 1949 Collier All-East First Team
- 1949 Honorable Mention All-American Team
- 1949 North-South Shrine Game
- 1950 Dapper Dan Football Award
- 1950 Pitt Walk-Dr. C Hartwig Athletic Association Award
- 1900-1970 All-Time Pitt team
- 1980 Western Chapter Hall of Fame
- 1983 Mid Mon Valley Hall of Fame
- 1987 National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame
- 1980-1987 Old News Boys Top Ten (Raised \$250,000.)
- 2011 Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame

After graduating from Pitt in 1950 with a B.S. in Education he was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the 13th round. He married his high school sweetheart Vilma Claire Semetkoski on December 28th, 1950 in St. Michaels Greek Catholic Church, Donora, PA. He was drafted and served in the U.S. Army from 1951-1953, where he was supervisor of the German Youth Program. He was also a player and coach of the 172 Infantry Division football team, leading them to the European Championship in 1952. Upon returning from the service, he started his career as a teacher and coach at Sharpsburg High School from 1953 to 1958, where he was head coach of all sports. He left to return to his alma mater Pitt as an assistant coach from 1958-1965. He was then Offensive Coordinator at Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana 1966-1968. He returned to Pitt as Offensive Coordinator from 1969-1972. His last official recruit as offensive coordinator was Aliquippa star Tony Dorsett. Ironically, Tony went on to beat Bimbo's records.

He returned to the classroom at Steel Valley High School where he was head football coach for one year before becoming an administrator at Steel Valley High School.

He was a member of the St. Thomas a Becket Roman Catholic Church in Jefferson Hills, serving as a Eucharist minister. He was chairman of the Church Development Fund as well as many other committees over the years. He never missed working at the Friday Fish dinners during Lent or helping at the summer carnival. After retirement, he would drive his wife up to daily Mass and afterward, she would help clean the church and he would play the piano to entertain all the ladies in the dust-busters group.

He loved golfing with his three lifelong friends from Donora, Nick DeRosa, Tony Romantino, and Pete Balaban. Bim achieved two hole-in-ones and played until he was 93 years old. He loved sitting on his deck talking on the phone, playing cards, and reading. He followed the Panthers, Steelers, Penguins, and Pirates. Sundays were always about his children and grandchildren gathering for spaghetti and meatballs. He was a very loving and supportive father and grandfather. A great listener but an even better storyteller, remembering in detail his amazing life which he never got tired of telling.

Loving father of Louis Carl, Anne Achenbach, Paula Fonzi, and Gina Cecconi-Hazelet. Grandfather of Abraham, Noah, Erika and Isaiah (Achenbach), Gina, Marko, Gracie Maria, Gabriela (Fonzi), Claire and Nicholas (Diulus), Haydn, Paul, Autumn (Hazelet). Great-grandfather of Giamaria Fonzi Moscatiello, Liliana and Camila Fonzi, Marcus Copeland, Carlangelo Fonzi, Mia Bella Reft, Mariana Polick, Adelyn Diulus, Urijah, Eli and Olivia Meredith. He was survived by sisters-in-law, June Bowen and Shirley Cecconi; and son-in-law, Greg Diulus. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and friends. He was preceded in death by his beloved parents; brother, "Bert" T. Cecconi; wife of 73 years, Vilma Semetkoski Cecconi; daughter, Mary Grace Diulus; and son-in-law, Mark Fonzi.

The family would like to thank the amazing staff of the Paramount Senior Living in Bethel Park, for the care and dedication afforded to our father.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Mario Lemieux Foundation at <https://mariolemieux.org/>.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, March 9th, 2024 at 10 am at Triumph of the Holy Cross Parish, St. Thomas a Becket Church, 139 Gill Hall Road, Pittsburgh. Immediately following please join the family at Atria's at 10 Old Clairton Road, Pleasant Hills. Online condolences may be left at www.jeffersonmemorial.com.

