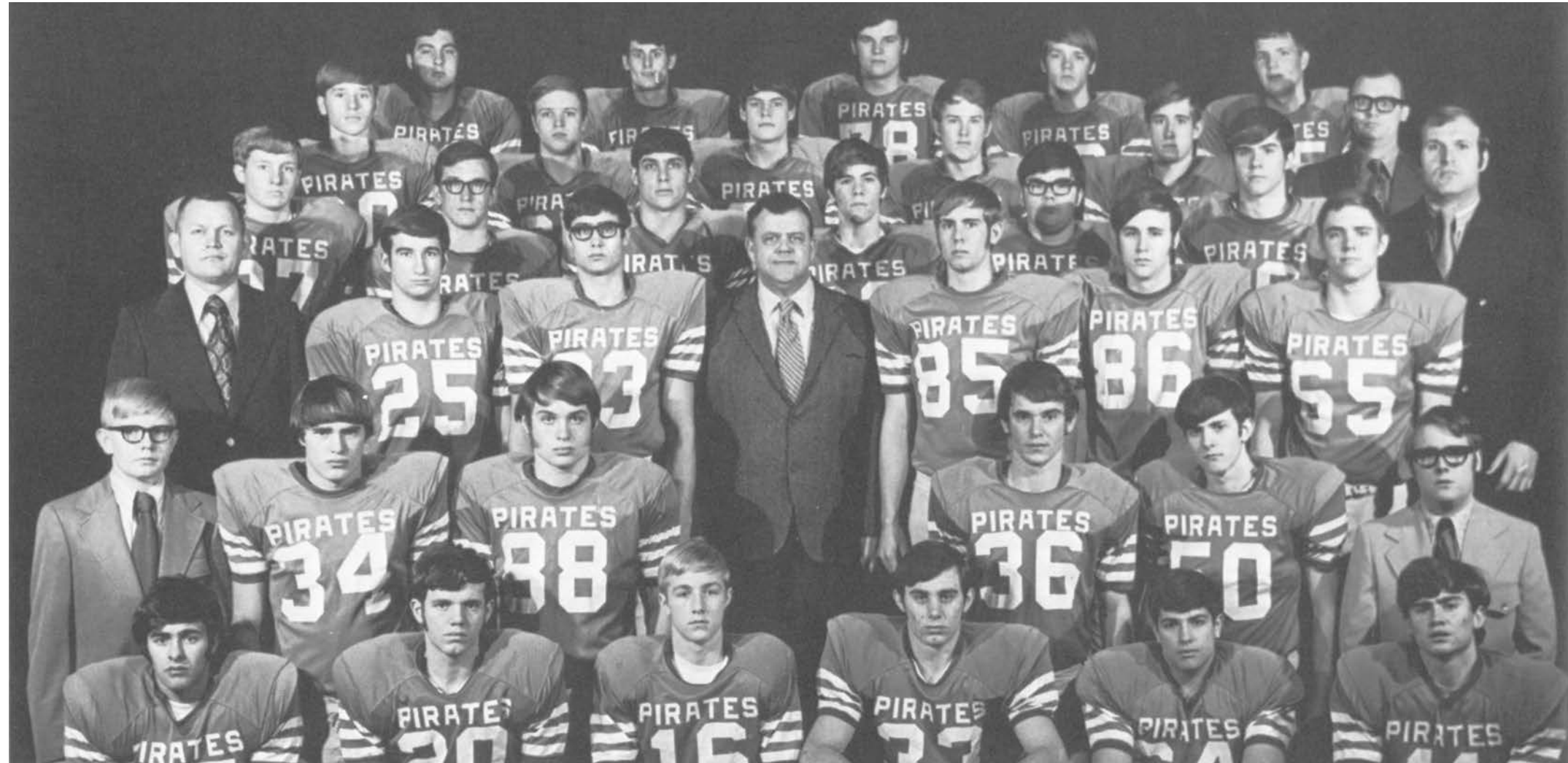


OTTAWA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME 2016



1971-72 FOOTBALL TEAM

The 1971-72 Ottawa Township High School Football Team finished their season with a perfect 9 wins, 0 losses, and 0 ties. This was Coach Bill Novak's final team, giving him during his career 10 undefeated teams, including 7 perfect ones during his 25 years at the helm, which produced 168 wins, 45 losses, and 11 ties. Coach Novak was quoted as saying of the 1971-72 Pirates, "this team has been magnificent all season" and "this has to be one of the greatest teams of all because they had to overcome so much." The OTHS Pirates entered the championship game of the Northeast Division of the North Central Illinois Conference (NCIC) with a 6-0 record against an also undefeated opponent, Sterling. The Pirates had to overcome a half-time deficit, but did so to move to 7-0. Geneseo was next which but for their loss 2 weeks before would have entered the game with the state's longest undefeated string of 52 games. The Pirates beat them 20-0, holding Geneseo scoreless for the first time in eight years. The Pirates concluded their perfect season with a 46-0 victory over Marquette in their final game of the year. Seven Pirates were named to the NCIC All Conference team - Gary Vicini, Keith Clements, Tom Miller, Phil Godfrey, Tom Gross, Jerry Zidow, and Mike Stone. Bill O'Connell received special mention, and Gary Neurohr, Kevin Galley, and Steve Dobberstein received honorable mention. The *Chicago Daily News* later named Mike Stone to the All-State team, Gary Vicini All-State special mention, and awarded All-State honorable mention to Phil Godfrey, Tom Gross, Jerry Zidow, Keith Clements, and Tom Miller. The *Champaign News-Gazette* named Coach Novak the prep Coach of the Year.

1st row: Bob Kistenfeger, Ralph Sanders, Don Sutherland, Gary Vicini, Dan Grobe, Kevin Galley 2nd row: Manager Daryl Stohl, Dan Gerding, Phil Godfrey, Fred Ingold, Curt Cechowicz, Manager Dale Mustered 3rd row: Assistant Coach Ralph Nelson, Tom Miller, Bill O'Connell, Head Coach Bill Novak, Tim Eschbach, Bill Backos, Max Hall 4th row: Steve Pearson, Gary Neurohr, Mike Stone, Jack Spicer, Mike Skul, Dave Kozlowsky, Assistant Coach Bill Murphy 5th row: Sam Smith, Jerry Zidow, Jim Waddell, Mike West, Bob Miller, Assistant Coach Ron Slack 6th row: Tom Gross, Keith Clements, Will Tongate, Steve Dobberstein, Bob McNamara Missing from photo: Ed Alderman