



Richard P. Mehen – *Sports and Athletics*

Richard (Dick) Mehen and his older brother Bernie Mehen, who was inducted into the Wheeling Hall of Fame in 1992, are probably the most acclaimed brother athletes from Wheeling. Dick was born in Wheeling on May 20, 1922, and both brothers earned basketball fame at Wheeling High School, the University of Tennessee, and in the early era of professional basketball.

Dick and Bernie became the first two West Virginia high school basketball players to earn all-class, 1st Team All-State honors three times – Dick graduated from Wheeling High in 1940, two years after Bernie. Dick was a 6-foot-5, 195-pound Wildcat center who was honored as All-State captain as a senior when the Wildcats posted a 23-1 record and won the school's second state title in three years. Earlier, in 1938, with both Dick and Bernie in the starting lineup, the Wildcats went 24-0 and won a state title for coach Everett Brinkman, a Hall of Fame honoree for the city, Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, West Virginia, and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans.

The Wildcats were 64-3 in the three years Dick was a standout. As a senior, he scored 556 points to lead the Ohio Valley and probably the state in that low-scoring era. He ended his prep career with more than 1,300 points, a rare total for that period. He also competed as a high jumper for the Wildcat track and field team.

Dick joined his older brother Bernie at the University of Tennessee and earned two 1st Team All-Southeastern Conference honors in 1942-43 and was a second team All-America selection in 1942. His career was interrupted by U.S. Air Force service, in 1944-45 during World War II, but he managed to finish school in 1947.

He then played five seasons of pro basketball as a power forward/center starting with the Toledo Jeeps of the National Basketball League (coached by Wheeling Hall of Famer Jule Rivlin) in 1948. Mehen

played with the Waterloo Hawks two years (one in NBL, one in NBA) before playing with three NBA teams in 1950-51: Baltimore Bullets, Boston Celtics and Fort Wayne Pistons. He ended his pro career in 1952 with the Milwaukee Hawks. He earned All-NBL 1st Team honors in 1949. His pro career totals for 193 games were 2,067 points, 505 rebounds, and 480 assists.

Mehen was inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame, Legends category, and the University of Tennessee sports Hall of Fame. He passed away on December 14, 1986, in North Olmsted, Ohio.