



*Linda Dawson*

Linda graduated from UCSB in 1972 with a B.A. in Ergonomics and Physical Education. She taught and coached at Bishop Diego High School for 7 years (1973-80), coaching basketball, volleyball and track, and was fortunate to win 6 CIF Championships during her tenure; 4 in volleyball and two in basketball. Linda also served as the Athletic Director (boys and girls) at Bishop Diego from 1977-80. She finished with a career basketball record of 109-21 with two CIF AA Championships, winning in 1977 and 1978.

Linda states: "I was lucky enough to have some fantastic athletes at Bishop Diego such as Marina Gomez, Nancy Craig, Iris MacDonald, Diane Sebastian, and Paula Charest. In addition to fine athletes, the tremendous community support in Santa Barbara from Bishop Diego parents, Bishop Diego Dad's Club, Santa Barbara Athletic Round Table, as well as the Santa Barbara News-Press and Jon Zant, regularly celebrated and reported the teams' accomplishments over the years."

Title IX was just coming into play for women's sports in the early 70's and the Santa Barbara athletic community appreciated and embraced the excellence of both boys and girls' sports. Principal, Father Jerome L. Cummings, Vince Stumpo from the Bishop Diego Dad's Club, and the many parent supporters were an inspiration to Linda and gave her the confidence to learn and grow her coaching and leadership skills during those formative years.

Linda states, "I was especially fortunate to have basketball Coach Tony Vigna mentor and generously teach me about the art of coaching basketball. I remember many calls after the games to Jon Zant at the Santa Barbara News-Press to report on the score and highlights of our games. My most memorable basketball moment was traveling from Santa Barbara to Brawley, California (by Melni bus) for the CIF Championship final. Brawley was favored to win, but we upset them in a hard-fought game. Many parents and supporters followed us to the game and cheered us on to victory."

It was a magical time for girls and women's sports and the lessons learned during Coach Dawson's years in Santa Barbara served her well in her career in Education as a teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent. Linda says "The Santa Barbara athletic community was ahead of its time in embracing, supporting and celebrating excellence, regardless of gender. That was most certainly true for Bishop Garcia Diego High School Girls' Basketball! I remember those exciting times and the people I was fortunate enough to teach, coach, learn from and know with fondness and gratitude."