



**Bill was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles.**

## **Bill Iannicelli:**

### **Used football, track as a stepping stone at F&M**

*by Bob Kasun*

**B**ill Iannicelli enjoyed a 40-year love affair with track and field.

The 68-year-old Iannicelli is a coaching legend at the Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster after 40 years on the sidelines.

The Altoona native's coaching record speaks for itself. Iannicelli posted a 217-54 record in cross country and a 261-90 mark in track.

"It doesn't seem like I have been here for 40 years," Iannicelli said. "I go from sport to sport to recruiting and the year goes very fast. That is why I take R&R during the summer and recharge my batteries."

Iannicelli is married to the former Phyllis

Shellenbarger of Altoona. The two graduated together from Altoona High School in 1942. The Iannicellis have two children, Michael (39) and Susan (37).

The man affectionately called "Coach I" had a noteworthy track record for himself before he entered the coaching ranks.

Iannicelli was an All-American at Franklin & Marshall in track and was also talented enough to be drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles for football.

In track, Iannicelli finished second at the NCAA championships. The top three are considered All-Americans. Iannicelli also won the javelin twice at the Penn Relays.

With those credentials, Iannicelli was

given an opportunity to try out for the 1948 Olympics. In the trials at Evanston, Ill., Iannicelli placed sixth and the United States took only three participants.

"I had an opportunity (for the Olympics) and I gave it my best shot. That is all I ask of my kids and that is what I try to do," Iannicelli said.

Iannicelli then turned his attention to football. He was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles of the NFL, but didn't sign with them.

"I couldn't sign with any professional team until I found out that I didn't make the Olympics. The Olympic committee was very strict about accepting only

amateurs," Iannicelli said. "I decided to play with the New York Yankees of the old All-American Football League."

Iannicelli started his athletic career at Altoona High, where he participated in both football and track. He was courted to participate on the track team in his sophomore year and never regretted his decision.

Iannicelli believed that his success in high school was due to the coaching staff at Altoona.

"We had some wonderful coaches," Iannicelli said. "Altoona had the best coach in the country in Dick Bartholomew. Harry Dinges and Paul Adams were the other two coaches. We never lost a dual track meet under those coaches."

From Altoona, Iannicelli moved on to Catawba College in North Carolina on a track scholarship. Catawba was a popular choice of colleges with Altoona athletes at the time.

"Harry Dinges was a graduate of Catawba and he had connections there," Iannicelli said. "About 15 Blair County boys went to



**Bill's athletic and coaching career landed him in the Franklin & Marshall Hall of Fame.**

## **BILL IANNICELLI**



**Age:** 70

**Sport:** Football, track.

**High School:** Altoona Area.

**College:** Franklin & Marshall

**Hall of Fame Achievement:**  
Second in NCAA javelin in 1947;  
Little All-American football player  
at F&M.

**Current Occupation:** Retired  
from Franklin & Marshall.

**Current Residence:** Lancaster, PA.

Catawba. Altoona was well thought of and Catawba wanted some tough northern boys."

Iannicelli joined the Marine reserves and was transferred from Catawba to Franklin & Marshall in the summer of 1943. He attended F&M for seven semesters, competing in football and track before graduating in 1948.

An assistant track coaching position opened in 1949 and Iannicelli accepted. Iannicelli was coaching and teaching at Manor High School, south of Lancaster, for one year, but wanted to return to his alma mater.

In April of 1955 Iannicelli finally landed the head coaching job at Franklin & Marshall.

"It has been a lot of fun at Franklin & Marshall," he said. "I really felt comfortable at Franklin & Marshall. I enjoyed working with athletes and with students from class. I will miss it."

Iannicelli was so well regarded at the college that he became the original inductee into Franklin & Marshall Hall of Fame in 1969.

"That was a nice honor," he said. "I was the first to be inducted, but since then, there have been more inducted."