

INDUCTEE PROFILE

Shingler 'had everything'

Lady Lion standout distinguished herself at Pitt



By Jim Lane
Altoona Mirror

Hard worker. Dedicated. Leader.

Those are some of the words former coaches used to describe Jennifer (Shingler) Hansberry, a member of the Hall of Fame's 17th induction class.

As a schoolgirl, Hansberry was an all-state guard for the Altoona Lady Lions' first PIAA state championship team in 1985-86.

"Every coach envisions a leader, and she certainly was," former Altoona High coach Art Taneyhill said. "Everybody was attracted to her, and she took the lead role, making sure everyone got their work in during the summer."

As a senior, Jen matched the Altoona single-season scoring record (504 points) and averaged 16 points per game as the Lady Lions compiled a perfect 31-0 record, won the PIAA Class AAAA state crown and were named mythical national champs by USA Today.

"Jenny was the catalyst," said Taneyhill, a Hall of Famer himself (2002 class) who will be her presenter at the induction ceremony. "She was a great shooter and an excellent passer, too."

Shingler and Tracey (Slogik) Biesecker were the key seniors on the

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Jennifer was the sixth-leading scorer in Pitt history when she graduated in 1990.



Her ability to drive and shoot made Jennifer a complete player at Altoona.

time," Bruce, now an associate athletic director at Pitt, recalled. "We were well aware of their talent, and we were looking for a guard.

"Jennifer had everything," Bruce said. "She was a shooter, a leader and wasn't afraid of tough situations. I thought she could be an impact player in college."

She didn't disappoint Bruce, either.

At Pitt, Jennifer was a four-year starter, three-year co-captain and scored 1,081 points. At the time she graduated in 1990, she was only the sixth player in school history to reach 1,000 points, and her point total is currently 15th all-time.

She was named to the Big East all-freshman team in 1987 and closed her college career by winning the Blue-Gold Award, given annually to one male and one female student-athlete for a combination of athletics and academics.

"That's the university's biggest award," Bruce said. "Her name is on the Walk of Fame and will be there forever. It's really a big deal."

Bruce was not surprised Jen had a outstanding college career.

"From day one, what struck me was her work ethic," Bruce said. "In September, Jen was in the gym, getting work in when it wasn't required. She carried that dedication through her whole career.

"She never changed, either," Bruce continued. "She was always good, always positive. Her attitude and dedication never changed."

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Altoona team that also had several outstanding underclassmen, including Jennifer Dorfmeister, who, along with Hansberry, sparked the win over Downingtown in the state title game.

Other sophomores on the team who later earned Division I scholarships included Sandy Baker (Pitt), Debbie Taneyhill (George Mason), Jenny Moran (UMass) and Michele Rehm (Saint Francis).

Following an outstanding high school career, Shingler went to the

University of Pittsburgh, where she was one of coach Kirk Bruce's first recruits.

Some 30 years later, Bruce has fond memories of Shingler.

"Altoona had one of the top high school programs in the country at that



Shingler bio

Sport: Basketball

High school: Altoona Area

College: University of Pittsburgh

Hall of Fame achievement: Three-year starter and 1,000-point scorer at Pitt. Graduated as program's sixth-leading scorer in 1990, when she earned Pitt's "Walk of Fame" distinction, awarded to the top male and female student-athlete.

Current residence: Pittsburgh



Jennifer (21) was front and center for the 1986-87 Altoona Area High School girls basketball team, which won the school's first PIAA basketball title. Other team members include, front row, from left — Kristin Campbell, Debbie Taneyhill, Tess Schimminger, Debbie Shingler, Andrea Smeigh. Back row: Coach Art Taneyhill, Pam Worley, Marie Luciano, Shelly Weaver, Jenny Moran, Tracey Slogik, Sandy Baker, Michele Rehm, Jennifer Dorfmeister and Krissy Wolfe.

Hansberry said she is "overwhelmed" by her selection to the Hall of Fame.

"I've attended three (banquets) and I know the caliber of people who have been inducted," she said. "I'm humbled to be included."

She said playing at Altoona was "a storybook experience."

"I've coached and scouted and have a son playing," she said, "but nothing compares to my experience at Altoona. We all prepared for Art Taneyhill's program and wanted to continue what people like Lisa (Fubio), Tracey (Kimmen) and Judy (McNellis) started.

"To achieve the state championship as a senior was so special — the

crowds, the support, it was a wonderful experience."

She said her experience at Pitt was just as meaningful.

"Kirk (Bruce) is such a gentleman, a class act," she said. "He's one of my favorites. He was a wonderful coach and gave me every opportunity to shine at Pitt.

"One of my biggest honors was being a captain for three years," she said. "It was such an honor and still is. It was really wonderful for me.

"Pitt was wonderful," she continued. "I was treated very well by the university. We traveled all over the country. It was a super experience with

great teammates, and it went too fast."

Following graduation, Hansberry took a year off before returning to law school at Pitt. She met her husband, John Hansberry, in law school and they've lived in the Pittsburgh area ever since. The couple has three children — Catharine, 22, a Penn State grad who works in State College; Julia, 19, a freshman at Kent State, and Jack, 15, a sophomore at Upper St. Clair High School.

While her husband works in civil law, Jennifer is a lawyer in the child welfare system, a position she calls "very purposeful, very difficult and very rewarding."