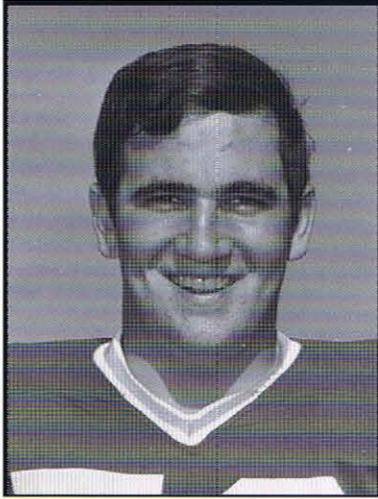




Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



CHARLES R. "RICK" BELLATTI

November 12, 1950 - July 22, 1997

Stillwater High School Class of 1969

3rd Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

October 10, 1998

Rick Bellatti will always symbolize the highest spirit and courage that defines a Stillwater Pioneer Athlete. Those of us who have had the privilege of wearing the Bronze and Blue, know first hand of the sweat and sacrifice that it takes to represent Stillwater High School. Rick understood it well, and his journey into the Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial is testament to patience, hard work, and in the end, triumph.

If you were to lookup the word "team" in a Webster's dictionary, the definition for the word could be a picture of the 1967 Stillwater Pioneer Football Squad. Together, they captured Stillwater High's only state football championship during a remarkable Cinderella season. There were several reasons why these Pioneers prevailed, but none more important than the men who made up what head coach Jim Harris called his "blue bullets".

The "blue bullets" wore pull over blue fishnet jerseys and ran the opposing team's plays at the starters all through the week. Among the toughest of these "bullet's" was a skinny tough kid named Rick Bellatti. Throughout this magical 1967 season, Bellatti and the rest of the blue bullets were often more of a formidable foe than the one's the regulars faced on Friday nights.

In the middle of the bullet line was Bellatti. #76 always seemed to play with a bent facemask and blood steaming down from a cut above his nose. Rick earned his letter the hard way that season. Not from starting and starring on Friday's but by making the Pioneer starters the best they could be on Monday through Thursday. Rick's determination and toughness helped the Pioneers win Stillwater's only state football championship. It's a distinction that stands to this very day. In his senior season, Rick finally became a starter and a star. His play in the line helped earn him All-District honors, and enabled the Pioneers return to the state football finals in 1968. By now, he was beginning to establish a work ethic that would benefit all of those who ever worked with him. His contributions to SHS included S-Club, Boys State, Lions Boy of the Month, Hi-Y, Spanish Club, and Annual and Newspaper Photographer. That one so young could keep such a busy schedule was remarkable. But it proved to be only the beginning of a life of service to the community he was raised in, and loved so much.

In so many ways, Rick Bellatti symbolized the Pioneer experience because he always tried to make a difference. For those of us fortunate to have known him, his boundless energy continues to serve as inspiration. Rick, you left us all too soon and with so much left to do. Your legacy will remain forever, and now, has a fitting home in the Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial.