



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



WINSEL LEE BILYEU

July 12, 1922 - August 5, 2000

Stillwater High School Class of 1941

6th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

September 29, 2001

Winsel was a dear friend of mine. He was a member of one of Stillwater's pioneering families. His great-grandparents made the Oklahoma Land Run in 1889 and staked their claim three miles west of where they lived in a dugout and raised their family. They had 11 boys, one of whom, L.I. "Dock" Bilyeu, later married Julia Alfreda Ham. The union produced six children, including Winsel. He was born July 12, 1922 in Stillwater, OK. He had one brother

Casper "Cap" and three sisters, Alta Kirby, Olive Pryor and Joan Botts.

I first met Winsel in the Fall of 1938 when we moved next door to the family. When I was a freshman at Stillwater High School I worked out with the wrestling team and Winsel was a senior wrestling at 175 lbs. That year he placed 3rd in the regional tournament and went on to State. Unfortunately he didn't place. He played guard position on the football team and lettered his senior year.

After graduation he enlisted in the U.S. Marines. He served four years in the U.S. Marines Air Corps and was honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant. He remained in the inactive reserves and returned to duty to serve in the Korean War from 1950 to 1951. In between time he completed four years of college at Oklahoma A&M with a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management.

Upon returning from the service he worked for Lockheed Aircraft in California. He returned to Stillwater and worked for Midwest Creamery. In 1954 he began his tenure as assistant director of OSU Student Union and was manager of the Student Union Hotel until his retirement in 1986. While at OSU he was the advisor of the Marine Platoon Leaders class.

On January 28, 1960 he married Vera Allinson Gilbert. They had two sons, Michael and wife Marjorie, Bozeman, Montana; Kevin and wife Starla, Cushing; one daughter Kara and husband Derek Brown of Bristow; six grandchildren, Ali and Drew Bilyeu, Bozeman, Montana; Bryan and Micaela Bilyeu of Cushing; and Lyndsey and Brittn Brown of Bristow.

Winsel was very active in the community. He was a long time member of the First Christian Church where he was a deacon. He was also a member of the American Legion and was a charter member of Frontier Rotary, serving as president from 1978 to 1979. He was also a volunteer for many years at the Stillwater Medical Center.

It gives me great pleasure to present this Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial Award to his wife, Vera and their family.

Presenter
Grover Rains
Stillwater High School, Class of 1945