Irving Nelson, 78; football coach at Mt. Pleasant from 1954-1974

PROVIDENCE — Irving Nelson, 78, high school coach in several sports for more than 40 years, a resident of the Jewish Home for the Aged for one and a half years, died yesterday at the home. He was the husband of the late Celia (Corich) Nelson.



A lifelong resident of Providence, he was a son of the late Joseph and Fannie Katznelson.

Mr. Nelson was a graduate of Providence College, and was an accomplished athlete in high school and college.

Although his more than 40-year coaching career included hockey, wrestling, and fencing, he was best known as the football coach at Mount Pleasant High School from 1954 to 1974.

He taught mathematics at the school from 1933 to 1974, and was a guidance counselor as well.

In 1957, Mr. Nelson received the Service to Sports Award of the R.I. Jewish Bowling Congress, the year after his Mount Pleasant team compiled an undefeated and untied season. While presenting the award, Harry McCormick, former althletic director at the high school said, "Irv has a great way with the kids. He gives them a fresh viewpoint . . . He is most deserving of this award as he builds loyalty that transcends any game or sport."

In 1963, Mr. Nelson was awarded the Jack Martin Memorial Football Sportsmanship Award by the R.I. Footall Officials Association. He was named Coach of the Year in 1961 by the Mal Brown Chapter of the Providence College Alumni Association, and in 1980 he was inducted into the Providence Gridiron Club's Hall of Fame. He was a past president president of the R.I. Football Coaches Association.

NELSON, IRVING

Mr. Nelson was a founder of the R.I. Interscholastic Injury Fund in 1947, which helps pay the medical expenses of football players injured in interscholastic competition.

He leaves a son, William Nelson of Lexington, Mass.; a daughter, Joyce C. Booth of Mount View, Calif.; two sisters, Ida Falk of Cranston and Hattie Feinstein of Houston, Tex.; three brothers, Sam Nelson of Providence, Walter Nelson of Metuchen, N.J., and Louis Katznelson of Narragansett; and four grandchildren.

The funeral service will be Thursday at a time to be announced at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St. Burial will be in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

IRVING NELSON

PROVIDENCE — Irving Nelson, 78, of the Jewish Home for the Aged, 99 Hillside Ave., a high school coach in several sports for more than 40 years, died Tuesday, April 17, at the home. He was the husband of the late Celia (Corich) Nelson.

Born in Providence, a son of the late Joseph and Fannie Katznelson, he moved to the home 18 months ago.

Mr. Nelson was a graduate of Providence College, and was an accomplished athlete in high school and college.

Although his more than 40-year coaching career included hockey, wrestling and fencing, he was best known as the football coach at Mount Pleasant High School from 1954 to 1974.

He taught mathematics at the school from 1933 to 1974, and was a guidance counselor.

In 1957, Mr. Nelson received the Service to Sports Award of the Rhode Island Jewish Bowling Congress, the year after his Mount Pleasant team compiled an undefeated and untied season. While presenting the award, Harry McCormick, former athletic director at the high school, said, "Irv has a great way with the kids. He gives them a fresh viewpoint . . . He is most deserving of this award as he builds loyalty that transcends any game or sport."

In 1963, Mr. Nelson was awarded the Jack Martin Memorial Football Sportsmanship Award by the Rhode Island Football Officials Association. He was named "Coach of the Year" in 1961 by the Mal Brown Chapter, Providence College Alumni Association, and in 1980 he was inducted into the Providence Gridiron Club's Hall of Fame. He was a past president of the Rhode Island Football Coaches Association.

Mr. Nelson was a founder of the Rhode Island Interscholastic Injury Fund in 1947, which helps pay the medical expenses of football players injured in interscholastic competition. In 1986, Mr. Nelson was named to the Jewish Community Hall of Fame.

He leaves a son, William Nelson of Lexington, Mass.; a daughter, Joyce C. Booth of Mount View, Calif.; two sisters, Ida Falk of Cranston and Hattie Feinstein of Houston, Tex.; three brothers, Sam Nelson of Providence, Walter Nelson of Metuchen, N.J., and Louis Katznelson of Narragansett; and four grandchildren.

The funeral service was held Thursday, April 19, at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

NELSON, Irving (coach)