

**Coach Steve Pappas loved Tom Kleinschmidt!
Steve and Tom's relationship was grounded in a shared vision of TEAM FIRST!
Coach Pappas understood that Tom is a champion on and off the basketball floor!
Tom Kleinschmidt carries Coach Pappas' legacy forward!
As Tom states: "it is about everyone pulling together!"
Congratulations, Tom, on your election to the Hall of Fame!
Cathie Pappas - TEAM PAPPAS**

**What GORDON means to me
By Tom Kleinschmidt**

A 1991 graduate, Kleinschmidt played at DePaul and then went overseas. He recently retired after an 11-year pro career.

I've had great memories there and a bunch of good times through school and sports. I had a great high school coach who passed away, Steve Pappas. (Pappas died in 2006 after battling non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Pappas also coached at Deerfield.) Those high school guys were the best. Everyone was pulling for each other.

We were an all-boys school. Back then, it was not that big of a deal. But I wanted to play in the Catholic League. My dad played in the Catholic League and it had a stigma of being very physical. It came down to Gordon Tech and Weber. I grew up in the Weber neighborhood and I traveled east. It was that big of a deal then. We had LaneTech across the river. If we wanted to look at girls we walked across the river to Lane.

We had a special group with a leader in Pappas. He was a great man, did a lot for a lot of us and made us win. We lost to King our junior year in the state championship game. We learned a hell of a lot. In pressure-filled games, we learned a lot.

I went to DePaul and graduated in 1995. I played 11 years professionally - a year in the CBA and 10 years overseas. In game situations, a lot of times I reached back to high school. I brought [Pappas' teachings] to wherever I played. Those guys got tired of hearing me say 'three stops' in the huddle, but that was directly from [Pappas].

I just retired a year-and-a-half ago. I'm back in school, and I have a construction business and a piece of a restaurant. I have been back to Gordon, and I'm a mentor to a kid on the basketball team. Going back it is weird walking into the gym, but it brings back some good memories. I try to do a little bit more of that. Now, getting back, there is something I want to do.