

In no particular order:

Steve Cutchall -- His boys teams claimed back-to-back District 10 titles in 2010-11, and the 2011 squad reached the Elite 8 in the state tournament. The 2010 district championship was the first for Rocky Grove since Vince Curran's team won it in 1949.

Vince Curran -- Coached hoops from 1954-71 and posted a 167-186 record. In addition to District 10 Class B titles in 1946 and 1949, Curran also had three league title winners. In fact, in his first year as coach, he guided the Orioles to their first basketball title ever -- the Bi-County League with a 39-37 decision over Cranberry. Curran coached four sports at the Grove.

Speaking of longevity back in the day:

Byron Johnston -- coached five sports at Cranberry, including bowling. He was big on the U.S. Marines physical fitness program and he had his boys working out in the wee hours, resulting in multiple western Pa. and national championships. He made 943 coaching "starts" at Cranberry. His basketball record (including jayvees) was 429-249. He was 616-313-2 in all sports, including 156-38 in baseball. His baseball record included a 55-3 record in the spring/fall league from 1961-63 with five titles and 25 straight victories at one point. Basketball record was 216-142, coaching from 1941-63.

Howard Smith -- Special mention to this guy. While Byron Johnston is listed as starting his coaching career at Cranberry in 1941 (and he was the baseball coach in the spring of 1942), it was Howard Smith who was coaching the basketball team at this time. According to the Berry Bush (the school's yearbook), Smith was at the helm through the 1941 season with four straight league titles and a pair of District 10 crowns. The Berries won a fifth straight league championship in 1942 under "Albert" Johnston before John Samonsky took over from 1943-46. Johnston "returned" from the Armed forces in 1947 and mentored the Berries to 23 wins. Incidentally, center Merle Sheffer scored a school record 385 points that season.

Hud Wells -- began his coaching career at Oil City in 1930 with football. He coached nine seasons in football and also had a hand in coaching volleyball and baseball. His basketball teams were 366-174 from 1931-58. Ten Section 2 titles (1931, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43 and 50). His 1950 team (Dutch Burch, Kraft, Blaney, Hartz, Capanaro) was probably his best, but the Oilers lost in the D-10 title game to Hickory. Another heartbreaker: 1936 when 6-10 Rich Ahrens left the D-10 title game against Sharon in the second quarter with a broken wrist. Oilers probably would have won had Ahrens not been injured. All told, 488 wins, 231 losses for Hud. His volleyball teams in the late 1930s and early 1940s reached the state finals several times. Was once in spring training with the Detroit Tigers and met Ty Cobb.

Other coaches who were around a long time in the 1950s through the 1980s include Dick Russell at both Franklin and Oil City, Bob Irons at Franklin, Crunk Porter at Oil City and Chuck Shankel, Chuck Marin and Had Ward at Rocky Grove. Crunk was the tennis coach at Oil City for years, amassing hundreds of victories.

Bob Lynch -- began his career as the jayvee coach at Oil City in 1968. He won 137 games as the varsity coach at Oil City and another 70 at Franklin. Coached through the 1983 season. Lynch later coached at Thiel and Pitt-Titusville, claiming some 300 wins.

Dean Henderson -- Coached from 1973 through at least 2006, starting as the football coach at Venango. He said the basketball coach at the time (Keith Lane) wouldn't allow his players to play football, so when Lane left, Henderson asked for the basketball job and was very successful, winning two District 10 titles. Even though his heart was still with football, the Oil City High and Slippery Rock grad left VC for Cambridge Springs, still hoping for that big football job. But he ended up staying in Crawford County, also coaching the Saegertown boys and the Meadville girls in hoops. As of 2006, he had more than 400 coaching victories.

Father John Weibel -- He gave up cigarettes for Tootsy Roll pops a la Kojak on TV, but was also noted for his coaching successes, especially early on at VC, where his teams won two District 10 crowns and claiming "the big one" in 1980. He started as the golf coach in 1972, and began coaching girls basketball in 1977. His teams were 184-46 through 1984. A 48-42 victory over Warren on Dec. 27, 1985, gave him his 200th coaching victory. He was at the school for 21 years (English teacher, AD, assistant headmaster) before being transferred to St. Eulalia in Coudersport and its mission, St. Augustine in Austin, in June 1993. Father Weibel died unexpectedly in 2005.

Roy Sanner -- A motorcycle accident claimed the life of Sanner in 2009 at the age of 53. He was serving as girls basketball coach and athletic director at the Grove at the time of his death. The former Cranberry High scoring machine accumulated most of his coaching wins as the boys coach at Rocky Grove. He began coaching at the Grove in 1984, amassing more than 300 wins in boys and girls.

Todd Wetjen -- The Rocky Grove graduate began his coaching career at Oil City and was 51-25 in three years before moving on to Franklin where he was even more successful at 156-54 with district titles in 2004 and 2006 and five of his six league crowns. He had some modest success early on at his alma mater, where he coached seven years through 2019. Record from 1999-19 was 265-177.

Bill Mook -- It was Mook who built the Franklin girls program from the ground up after serving as jayvee coach under Rick Fletcher at Oil City in the early 1980s. He spent 20 years as FHS girls basketball coach and/or athletic director, his teams winning the program's first three district championships. The Lady Knights also won 12 league titles and reached the western Pennsylvania finals twice. Mook also coached golf and track at Franklin. He later served as athletic director at Rocky Grove. Mook died at age 62 in 2016. He was married to former Oil City basketball and volleyball star Peggy Gregory. 357-169 record from 1980-09.

Scott Creighton -- Creighton became more legendary after leaving Cranberry, and eguiding the Berries to two state titles in 1993-94. As of 2020, he was an associate head coach at Penn

State DuBois. Prior to that, the Cranberry grad was coach at DuBois High School and led the Beavers to their only District 9 title in 20 years. Before that, he was the top assistant at Oregon State for a year and assisted nine seasons at Clarion University. He also coached at Titusville High School after leaving Cranberry.

Jim Garland – Guided Cranberry to its first state title in 1992, coaching the Lady Berries from 1987-94 while compiling a 168-50 mark. Later coached seven seasons at Mt. Lebanon where he was 143-48. The Franklin grad also coached at South Park and Bethel Park, putting up a 16-26 in one season-plus for the later, so he accumulated more than 300 coaching victories.

Rick Fletcher -- When girls basketball as we know it today began in the early 1970s, Oil City was "the" team in Venango County, winning the District 10 title in 1975 under coach Dixie Cox. Fletcher succeeded her and coached eight years from 1977-84, compiling the 120-59 record with three Section 2 titles. He later became the school's athletic director, serving for a number of years before retiring in 2016.

Dixie Cox Agnew -- Was at the helm at Oil City when girls basketball as we know it now started up. Guided Oilerettes to their one and only District 10 crown. Team created quite a stir, advancing to the state final four for all classes. Led by Melinda Hale, Jodi Gault and Peg McDougal, program put girls hoops on the map locally.

Jason Fulmer -- Two district titles in two stints with the Franklin boys, the first from 2010-13 and the second starting in 2018 through the present. Only its third region title ever in 2022. Started at Oil City and coached the Oilers in 2009-10 with a 15-28 mark. Overall record is 175-95 (160-67 at FHS) and counting.

Steve Shingledecker – Was at the helm when Franklin won its second state title in 2006.

Joe Conners – Coached Oil City St. Joe to Catholic state titles in 1939 and 1941.

Bill Hager -- The king of 'em all, y'all. Twenty-two conference championships at Jamestown, N.Y., Maplewood and Franklin. Ten straight TCAC crowns with a 78-2 record; only "on the court" loss was to Meadville. Seven-time conference Coach of the Year. Overall in 36 years (boys and girls), took teams to the state Final Four for times, and had seven teams in the Elite Eight and 11 in the Sweet 16 in addition to winning the state title in 2001. Teams were a combined 672-273. Two stints as boys coach at Franklin: 1993-03 and 2006-10. Also coached the Franklin girls for two of the District 10 titles in three seasons from 2011-13. Teams won 48 D-10 playoff games and 24 in the PIAA playoffs. Pa. Big School Coach of the Year. He's a member of the West Allegheny High School Hall of Fame (in addition to Franklin) and was drafted by the Pirates in 1967. Also offered a baseball scholarship to Iowa. Interestingly, Hager was turned down for the Corry job just before he was hired at Franklin. Hager already had a 307-156 record before even starting at Franklin. Overall, in 36 years as a coach, Hager went 672-273 and took 31 teams to the playoffs, 17 to the state playoffs, 11 to the Sweet 16, seven to the Elite Eight, four to the Final Four and one state championship. He racked up 48 wins in the District 10

playoffs and 24 more in the PIAA playoffs. His teams won seven District 10 titles, five teams finished second and five more finished third. Hager's boys teams at Franklin were 290-109; the girls were 75-8, giving him a 365-117 mark overall at FHS.