

# Wilbur C. Ruckel

---

## *Class of 1934*

Wilbur Ruckel was a "pint-sized" shooting guard on Grove City College's basketball team. After graduation, he played professional basketball with the Wilkes-Barre Barons. He accepted his first coaching post at Franklin, N.J., and moved to North Arlington, N.J., in 1939. There, he established basketball as a major sport.

Under Coach Ruckel's guidance, the North Arlington High Vikings became a power in northern New Jersey basketball. Ruckel's stalwarts won 424 games, losing just 89 times. He took teams into the state finals eight times, and he captured 14 sectional titles during 24 years. His teams won the state title three times and rang up consecutive winning streaks of 40, 28 and 24 games.

Ruckel, who was chairman of the Business and Education Department at North Arlington High, was frequently sought as a panelist for basketball clinics, including the New Jersey State Clinic. He was a committee member of the Bergen County Jamboree, serving as chairman in 1957. Through the years, Ruckel-coached Viking teams were known as sensational shooters and strong competitors.

Ruckel was one of the founding members of the North Arlington High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 1979, which has become a Vikings tradition and cornerstone of the North Arlington High School Athletic Program.

He passed away Nov. 27, 1995.

*Additional Education: Montclair University*

