

SoCal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame Inducts 2011 Class

By Ashley Zeldin, Contributing Writer | PUBLISHED Jul 5, 2011 | Community

Horseracing and water polo were well represented among the 15th class of Southern California Jewish Sports Hall of Fame inductees during a gala ceremony on June 26 at the Skirball Cultural Center.

Honorees included Jerry and Ann Moss, owners of 2009 Breeders' Cup champion Zenyatta and 2005 Kentucky Derby winner Giacomo, and Jay Privman, Daily Racing Form correspondent and television analyst.

"There are a lot of horseracing connections here that make [the induction] more special," Privman said, pointing to the late Audrey Skirball-Kenis' successful horseracing enterprise.

A pair of former UCLA water polo players, Joseph Axelrad, an All-America goalie on the 2004 NCAA champion team, and Samuel Bailey, who helped the Bruins to three national titles in the 1990s, were joined by prep standout Ashley Grossman.

USC's four-time All-America honoree Taylor Mays became the 14th football player inducted, Doug Gottlieb was honored for his collegiate basketball, and ESPN analyst career and sports radio personality Vic "The Brick" Jacobs joined his KLAC broadcast partner and MC Steve Hartman (2004) on the list of media honorees.

"It's important to honor all these sportspeople and explain their stories so that young children can say, 'I can become an NFL quarterback, I can become an NBA

basketball player, because a Jew has done it before me,' “ Hall of Fame president Barry Kaz said. “That’s really the essence of the organization.”

Shawn Lipman became the first rugby union player to be inducted. Lipman, the first Jewish athlete to play in the Rugby World Cup in 1991, spoke of his motivation to play rugby at the highest level.

“Growing up in South Africa, where the stereotype of Jews not being athletic was perpetuated, it became very important to me not only to prove myself as a rugby player but also to show the naysayers that not only could Jews play one of the most demanding sports in the world but also excel at it,” Lipman said.

Mays, too, spoke of the stereotype of Jews as unathletic.

“That stereotype being what it is, having people who are Jewish say to me that they are proud of what I do and what it represents to the Jewish community, that’s special,” said Mays, a safety for the San Francisco 49ers. “It’s different from individual awards. I’m carrying a different weight on my shoulders, representing a group of people. I’m happy to have that responsibility.”

Mike Enfield, part of the 2002 NCAA champion UCLA soccer team and 2005 MLS champion Los Angeles Galaxy, joined his former Bruin teammates Jonathan Bornstein (2008) and Benny Feilhaber (2010).

“It’s great to be with my former teammates,” Enfield said. “I feel privileged to be included with great athletes and to be recognized for all the hard work I’ve done in my life.”

Marc Bluestone was inducted for his basketball, baseball and track achievements at Fairfax High, but emphasized his lifelong commitment to sports.

“To me, sports is a way of life,” he said. “The interaction with teammates and the competition, to play at such a level and to continue on as I did, it meant so much

to me.”

Grossman and Max Fried shared High School Athlete of the Year honors.

A member of the U.S. junior national water polo team, Grossman led Harvard-Westlake to its first CIF championship as a senior and will play for Stanford next season. Fried, a pitcher for Montclair Prep who signed with UCLA, was in North Carolina playing for a place on the 18U national team and missed the ceremony.

Andrew Kallick, editor-in-chief of the Brentwood School newspaper, received the Allan Malamud Scholarship Award, in honor of the late Notes on a Scorecard columnist.

Richard “Dick” Conger, a pitcher who starred at Fremont High and UCLA, and 1932 Olympic silver medal-winning gymnast Phil Erenberg were inducted posthumously.

“The [SCJSHOF] is a great way to raise the profile of Jewish athletes,” Privman said.