

A Recent History of Shady Side Academy Baseball

In 1894, Shady Side Academy, an eleven year-old college preparatory school in Pittsburgh, started a baseball team; the first interscholastic sport offered by the school. It was the beginning of a long and storied athletic program. In the early years, Shady Side competed against area colleges, high schools, and anyone else who fielded a team. In the early 1900's, Shady Side was a founding member of what is now known as the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL). However, the school soon realized that it was better suited for a league consisting of other independent schools, and thus helped to form the Interstate Prep School League (IPSL), in 1924. The IPSL consisted of teams from Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia, Ohio, and Michigan. Shady Side won four of the first eight IPSL championships.

In 1966, Alex Howson became head coach of the Shady Side baseball team and proceeded to raise the program to new heights. In his twenty-eight years as head coach, Howson's teams recorded 309 wins and 197 losses. These teams also won 10 IPSL championships and one WPIAL Section title. In 1994, Shady Side made the decision to leave the crumbling IPSL and return to the WPIAL. That same year, head coach Harry Fleishman led the team to its first WPIAL Section title. Fleishman also won the school's last IPSL title in 1992. In 1997, after a very successful stint as Shady Side's head basketball coach where he won a State Championship in 1995, Alex Howson returned to coach the baseball team. In 1999, Howson won the school's second Section title. Three years into his second stint as head baseball coach, Howson retired and left former SSA player and current assistant coach, Bob Grandizio, Jr. to take over the reigns. Grandizio's teams have won section titles in 2001, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, finished as WPIAL runners – up in 2001 and won the program's first WPIAL Baseball Championship in 2009, with a school record setting season of 22 wins and 2 losses. In his fifteen years as head coach, Grandizio's teams have totaled 211 wins and 85 losses. Since 2000, SSA baseball alums have moved on to play at the collegiate level at the following schools: Bucknell University, Brown University, University of Pittsburgh, Colby College, Marietta College, Emory University, Grove City College, Allegheny College, Johns Hopkins University, Ohio State University, University of Rochester, Notre Dame (OH) College, College of Wooster, Princeton University, Columbia University, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, University of Buffalo and Lafayette College. Since 1950, Shady Side baseball's career record is 629-433-3.

Although Shady Side has never produced a major league baseball player, several former players went on to solid Division I college careers. The following is a list of players in the modern era who played at the Division I and/or pro levels since 1950:

George Graham '55, Trinity College, New York Yankees organization
Paul Martha '60, University of Pittsburgh, (Pittsburgh Steelers)
Jack Singer '61, Princeton University, St. Louis Cardinals organization
Jim Kocoloski '69, University of Michigan (led the Big 10 in hitting),
Drafted by the Montreal Expos
Bob Kimutis '72, Columbia University (broke several of Lou Gehrig's
school records)
Jimmy Silverblatt '76, Yale University
John Molnar '78, Rollins College, drafted by the Baltimore Orioles
Chuck Scales '83, University of Pittsburgh, drafted by the Kansas
City Royals
Vince Sonson '90, Yale University
Bob Grandizio, Jr. '91, Furman University
Bart Brush '93, Harvard University
Frank Cafaro '94, West Virginia University
Matt Draper '99, Bucknell University
Eli Friedman '01, Brown University, University of Pittsburgh
Jason Zoeller '03, Ohio State University
Kyle O'Donovan '07, Princeton University
Tim Giel '09, Columbia University, New York Yankees organization
Ben Hartz '12, University at Buffalo (D. I Freshman All-American)
Coleman Strohm '13, Lafayette College
Chuckie Scales '14, Bucknell University

SSA Baseball Players currently playing College/Pro Baseball:

Grant Foley '11, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (3B)
Ben Hartz '12, University at Buffalo (P)
Coleman Strohm '13, Lafayette College (P)
Tim Giel '09, New York Yankees organization (P)
Chuckie Scales '14, Bucknell University (OF)