

## HARRY C. MOORE MEMORIAL BASKETBALL CLASSIC

# FORMER PLAYER OF HONOR 2007

## MR. CLIFF LIETZ

### 1968 GRADUATE OF CAPAC HIGH SCHOOL

Playing on two district championship teams is no easy feat. In fact, it's a pretty big deal. And it was a pretty big man who was a pretty big part of those shining moments in the history of Capac Basketball.

Cliff Lietz is still a big man—one of the big men on a team that went 18-3. He was a big part of the 1968 team that lost to Orchard Lake St. Mary's in the Regionals after sharing the Southern Thumb title with Anchor Bay.

Cliff Lietz is tall, standing near the 6 and a half feet mark—able to fill a room with laughter over a joke or a tall tale—reminiscent of the tall threat he posed to an opposing offender back in his day. That threat led to him holding many of the major offensive school records for many years—of which the last to fall was a rebounding record broken by his son, Chad in 1999-2000 season. "I'm really surprised they held up that long, and it was really something that Chad was the one to take the last one from me," said a modest Lietz.

When asked about advice he had for his son Chad growing up, he said, "He needed to listen to his coach. I taught him the basics of ball handling, and shooting was the last thing. It's natural and he turned out

to be a very good shooter." Chad (2000), also a star athlete in his own right during his years at Capac, has much respect for his dad stating, "Dad taught me to play hard, be humble and win. Nobody likes to lose, but if you do lose, find a way



to learn from your mistakes."

The reign of Harry Moore was blessed by men such as Cliff Lietz, who today joins the ranks of other Players of Honor. These fine men including Jim Seidell ('68), Dale Mills ('71), and Ray (Ricky) Hawks ('62) and now Lietz remember the philosophies, ethics, and fundamentals they learned from Coach Moore. "Strict but fair, a father figure, someone who chewed you out when you needed it and praised you when you deserved it," are sentiments echoed by these former players in reference to Coach Moore. Reflecting on his years with Coach Moore Lietz said, "I remem-

ber one practice Coach made us run, and run we did! Down the gym, up stairs, and around we went—he was mad and we were running. He said 'keep going people and I'll be back'—he came back about an hour later and he had forgotten about us. But we were still running. We lost a little weight that day. No one would have dared stop running—we respected him that much." Lietz paused, a look of sadness filling his face. We felt we let Coach down. We couldn't beat Anchor Bay—and we should have, and we could have beat Orchard Lake, too. But things have a way of working out—his youngest son was born during that time—it would have been interesting if we had made it out of the Regionals with him having a new baby at home," queried Lietz. "According to Mrs. Moore, Coach had already informed her that he was going to the state tournaments, baby or no baby!"

Lietz praised his days with Moore, reflecting that, "Coach Moore was strict but fair—he was a father figure to all of us. You knew he would chew on you when you needed it, and you didn't mess around. When he said jump we didn't question him—we just jumped as high as we could and then did it again. That's called respect."



### WHICH BASKETBALL MOMENT STICKS IN YOUR MIND?

- *"Only the bad ones—I was hard on myself—I don't like to lose—wins we had a lot of them and the three bad losses stay in your mind. I was hard on myself and I didn't want to make those same mistakes next time," Cliff Lietz, 2007.*

### LIETZ AT A GLANCE:

2 TIME  
FIRST TEAM STA

2 TIME ALL STATE  
HONORABLE  
MENTION

BLUE WATER AREA  
HONORS

SCHOOL RECORDS:  
FIELD GOALS PER SEA-  
SON (155), POINTS  
IN A SEASON (379),  
REBOUNDS (259)

CAREER: 513 RE-  
BOUNDS IN 40  
GAMES

### A LOOK AT LIETZ TODAY...

Cliff Lietz is now the successful owner of his own business, married almost three decades to his wife, Jan, and a grandfather of two. He still loves basketball, and only recently did he stop playing in the recreation leagues. He was disappointed this year when the Port Huron league he was playing in was cancelled. "I just kept playing. I figured as long as I was still getting up and down the court

and could run with them I was being competitive. Every year there were fewer and fewer of us. When it got down to 6 or 7 teams, I guess they decided to fold."

"When I look at basketball teams today, I am disappointed at the lack of respect there is and how they fall for the flash of the NBA. If I were to give them advice, I'd say listen to your coach because he

knows more about basketball than your parents do. It's his job. The coach knows what he's talking about. Don't question your coach - respect him. Stay away from the flash—the NBA isn't what it's about. It's about playing fundamental basketball which will win you more games than anything else—if you can rebound, have good defense, those two items alone will win you games."