

## Robert L. "Bunker" Murphy, Sr.

### 1945 - Football & Hockey



As the senior captain and quarterback of the 1944 football team, Robert "Bunker" Murphy led the Spartans to a record of six wins and two losses, their best record and highest ranking (16th in the state) since 1930. The versatile "Bunker" also played defensive back and handled punt and kickoff returns. One of many memorable performances came against Somerville. As a junior, Murphy achieved the rare "triple play" of scoring touchdowns as a receiver and punt returner while also tossing a touchdown pass in a 39-0 victory.

It was hockey that solidified his athletic legend. A four-year varsity letter winner, Murphy developed into a dominant performer at center gaining the rare honor of GBI all-star selection as a junior. The co-captain of the 1943-44 team, Murphy displayed his flair for the dramatic with an unassisted goal in a 1-0 victory over archrival Melrose. In 1944 Murphy garnered numerous accolades for his all-star game efforts versus Montreal Catholic. Murphy was his club's outstanding player in the game causing Medford GBI coach John Prior to comment, "Rarely is a junior given a chance to play so much in an all-star game."

Murphy and the Spartans saved their best for last. The 1944-45 hockey season is remembered as one of the most memorable in SHS hockey history. Starting the season on defense, Murphy was shifted back to center by coach Doc Gordon. After a hard fought 5-3 loss to Medford in the season opener, the Spartans and Murphy embarked on a 5-0-1 run. The Spartans' impressive finish propelled them to the GBI title game and another shot at the two-time defending champion Mustangs. Murphy tallied the game-winning goal and then set up the insurance marker in a pulsating 4-2 victory at Boston Garden. It was the Spartans first GBI crown since 1937.

For Murphy there was little time to savor the championship as he departed for Navy enlistment. A special waiver allowed him to play two periods of the 1945 GBI all-star game versus the Montreal Catholics before returning to base. Overall Murphy posted a 13 goal/11 assist/24 point scoring line, good for third in the league despite his time on defense.

After completing his service to his country, he graduated from Boston University in 1951. Murphy raised his family in Stoneham, served on the school committee, and remained an active member of the community in countless areas including youth sports and numerous charitable endeavors. Robert "Bunker" Murphy passed away in 1998 at age 72.