

Courtside *Inspiration*

For well-written careers

WRITTEN BY | *Marie Young*



Saint Francis graduates, **Bob Moore '70** (Political Science) and **John Ingoldsby '76** (English/Journalism) combined their love of words with a passion for sports to build fulfilling careers in sports information long before the discipline ever showed up in college curricula.

Moore has spent a good part of his career as the director of public relations for the Kansas City Chiefs and a few years ago he became the team's official historian.

Ingoldsby has enjoyed tremendous career success in journalism investor relations, and sports communications. He is the president of IIR Sports and Entertainment, Inc. (IIRsports.com).

The two recently shared how they parlayed their

John Ingoldsby followed his family's legacy to Loretto in graduating with the Bicentennial Class of 1976.

Saint Francis education into multi-faceted careers that have landed them interviews with some of the biggest names in professional sports.

Basketball at the Jaffa Mosque

“My love of sports started with going to Saint Francis games at the Jaffa Mosque,” Ingoldsby said recalling the “Golden Era” games of the mid-to-late 60s. In those years, the Altoona native reveled in his new found independence—walking the ten blocks from his house to the games. He would get to see his older brother and sister who were cheering in the Saint Francis student section before taking his seat to watch “The Greats” play: **Norm Van Lier ’69**, **Larry Lewis ’69** and **Kevin Porter ’72**.

Moore shared a strikingly similar recollection of his childhood, immersed in Saint Francis basketball at the Jaffa Mosque where he sold popcorn during the games. Eventually both men transitioned from Saint Francis spectators to students.

The path to Saint Francis College

Moore chose to attend Saint Francis based on some friendly advice from his mother’s boss, dentist William “Skip” Hughes, who just happened to have coached basketball at Saint Francis. Basketball remained a passion for Moore during college.

In the classroom, Moore opted to pursue a political science major. He loved history, but felt politics would provide more career options. Moore’s free time was split among watching basketball, lettering on the tennis team and enjoying all things TKE. Even today he is incredibly close to his TKE brothers. Nearly 50 of them gathered last spring at Dewey Beach, Del. for their annual festivities hosted by **Joe Bak ’70**.

For Ingoldsby, it was a strong family legacy that

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brought him to Saint Francis. His father, two brothers, a sister and numerous other relatives are all graduates.

As a Saint Francis student Ingoldsby still walked to the games, now held on campus in the newly constructed Maurice Stokes Athletics Center, to watch a team that included his former Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School classmate, **Pat McGeary ’76**. When Ingoldsby wasn’t watching basketball he was clocking his own hours on the hardwood of Doyle Hall (now the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art), or fitting in some football or softball games, all at the intramural level.

Ingoldsby was naturally drawn to English as a major. His mother was an English teacher and he grew up in an environment that nurtured language and writing. Journalism, on the other hand, offered an exciting new adventure.

“I was studying at Saint Francis during the height of Watergate. In the mid ’70s journalism was in vogue because of everything that was happening with Woodward and Bernstein, and Nixon’s resignation. At that point Saint Francis, under Jerry Medley, was just starting its journalism program in the English department. I took the first courses they offered. I was hooked,” Ingoldsby shared.

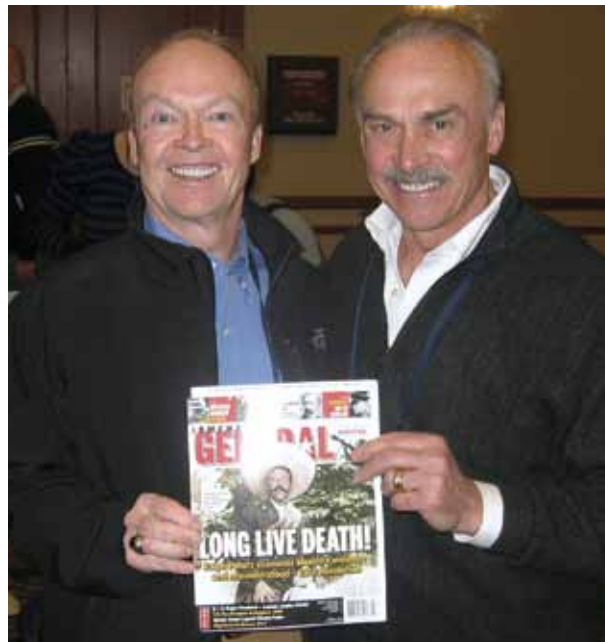
John Ingoldsby, left, talks with Rocky Bleier on Radio Row during Super Bowl Week 2011 in Dallas. The former Pittsburgh Steelers great and Vietnam veteran is holding the May 2011 issue of the *Armchair General* magazine containing the interview Ingoldsby conducted with Bleier.

Ingoldsby: Career play-by-play

After graduation Ingoldsby moved back to Altoona, not sure what he was going to do professionally, but within two weeks he landed a job at the local newspaper, the *Altoona Mirror*, writing for the news section with some sports on the side. The door to career success had opened.

One highlight of those early career days was covering the Pittsburgh Steelers. “I was a high school kid during the ‘Steel Curtain’ era. I listened to the ‘Immaculate Reception’ on the radio. It wasn’t even on television in Altoona due to NFL blackout rules. Now, seven years later, I found myself covering the Steelers—interviewing players in the locker room. I was a 25-year-old kid, and I thought I’d reached the mountain top,” he recalled.

For his first ten years after college, he worked to build a foundation in newspaper journalism and sports writing. Then he jumped over to the



corporate world, building a business foundation. When the internet explosion hit in the '90s, he merged the skill sets into a career in investor relations where he communicated news on publicly traded organizations. “They were looking for a journalist who knew how to read a balance sheet. It was the perfect blend of the two careers,” he said.

In 1999 Ingoldsby merged all of his passions into one career by launching his own full-service communications and writing agency, IIR Sports and Entertainment, Inc., that allows him to work in

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Bob Moore with wife, Maggie, and daughter, Mandy, at Miami's Sun Life Stadium prior to a Chiefs game with the Dolphins.

industries as diverse as entertainment, sports, public affairs, homeland security, and travel/tourism.

The common threads through all these different career turns have been writing and sports. Even during the years when he wasn't working in sports communications, he always found freelance sports writing jobs to keep those ties fresh.

Working in the "ultra-passionate sports town" of Boston, with the connections he has made there, has been a huge boon to his career. His weekly schedule often looks something like this: one day of Boston Bruins practice, two days at Radio City Music Hall for the NFL draft, before heading to Uncasville, Conn. for the WNBA media day at the Mohegan Sun, ending the week with Celtics practice back in Boston.

He has an open invitation to Celtics practices

in part because of his Saint Francis ties. As he tells the story, **Mike Iuzzolino '91**, a star Saint Francis player in the early 90s, was drafted by the Dallas Mavericks and was slated to play against the "Larry Bird-Era" Celtics at the Boston Garden. Ingoldsby contacted his former editor at the *Altoona Mirror* and asked if the *Mirror* would want him to cover the game if he could get press credentials. Of course, the answer was yes.

Ingoldsby contacted the Celtics PR director and sealed the deal. Those press credentials led to locker room interviews with Iuzzolini and Larry Bird. Ingoldsby even stuck around until the arena emptied and asked a janitor if he could take some photos. He then spent 15 minutes shooting both camera shots and jump shots on the "fabled parquet floor." For a kid from Altoona and a lifelong Celtics

fan, it was a dream come true. That first contact with the Celtics PR director has led to a long-standing professional relationship with the organization, culminating in his covering the Celtics home games in their epic series against the Miami Heat last spring.

The Saint Francis connection impacted his career again in 2007 when he reached out to Army Women's Basketball Head Coach **Dave Magarity '74** during his first year coaching the team. Magarity moved into the coaching role after Coach Maggie Dixon collapsed and died from a heart condition. She was 28. Her death left a stunned and heartbroken team of young women.

Magarity was a well-known Saint Francis grad who spent his early coaching career at Saint Francis. Ingoldsby requested an interview with Magarity after he took over for Dixon in the wake of the tragedy. The resulting piece is one of the most cherished in his portfolio, which most recently includes his article on NFL player engagement for a special advertising section in Bloomberg Businessweek's annual September sports issue.

It is hard to say what the next great story will be for Ingoldsby, but he feels incredibly lucky to be able to follow his passion every single day, and he is thankful for the Saint Francis education on which he has built such a rewarding career.

Moore: career play-by-play

As a college student, Moore worked in "sports information" before it was officially considered a career field. He traveled with the men's basketball team filling in anywhere that they needed a hand. For home games, he took on the role of announcer in the Stokes Center. As Moore's abilities grew, he was asked to take on more formal communications duties.

Moore continued his public affairs career with stints at Mount Aloysius College, the National Park Service and Drexel University. He found his way to professional sports through a position with the Philadelphia Stars, part of the now defunct United States Football League. Stars General Manager Carl Peterson recruited Moore to move on with him to work for the Kansas City Chiefs, where Moore has spent the majority of his career.

Moore knows that team inside and out. During his years as the director of public relations, he spent

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—Bob Moore '70

many long days making sure the Chiefs' story got to the right people in the media. Yet as interesting as the current season is to him, the past holds an even greater pull. He has parlayed his love of history into a new role with the team--historian.

As team historian, he is the chief curator of the Kansas City Chiefs Hall of Honor at Arrowhead Stadium. The museum contains the original papers of the team's founder, Lamar Hunt, including his notes on the AFL/NFL merger in the late 60s. Moore recently completed a documentary on Hunt's life for the Hunt family.

Moore carefully researches the pieces in the collection, helping to tell the story of the team's early



Seen here on another NFL sideline, Moore has always taken time to tutor young staff members like Patrick Herb (right) who now handles sports publicity for the University of Wisconsin's men's basketball program.

days. He points out that many of the artifacts in the collection reflect America's culture at different points in time. For example, Hunt's league was ahead of its time in the recruitment of black athletes when, as late as 1962, the NFL still had one team with no African-Americans. By 1969 and the Chiefs' first Super Bowl victory over the Minnesota Vikings half of Kansas City's starters were black.

"The thing that gets the most gasps in the collection," according to Moore, "is Chris Burford's \$35 paycheck for a pre-season game." Burford was named an AFL All-Star in 1961 while with the Texans and went on to enjoy a stellar professional career. Moore explained that people—including the players themselves—are shocked to see a check that small for an athlete.

In 2012 Moore was asked by Saint Francis President Fr. Gabriel Zeis T.O.R. to combine his passion for history and his passion for sports to benefit the newly formed "Saint Francis University Golden Era Hall of Fame" Through the Hall of Fame, Moore plays a big role in honoring all of those "greats" whom he watched growing up.

Sage advice to future professionals

Ingoldsby and Moore both found their strengths in an emerging profession thanks to a liberal arts education, persistence, and the ability to seize opportunities. Over the years, both Ingoldsby and Moore have seen many fresh-faced graduates eager to make their own mark on the field. So what is their advice to the next generation of sports information professionals?

"You don't have to be able to write a great treatise, but you have to be able to express yourself," Moore says. He encourages students to take a wide range of courses that focus on research, and most importantly, improving writing and speaking skills. He finds that too many students come out of well-respected universities with high GPAs, but with a poor writing ability.

Ingoldsby urges students to take advantage of summer internships with sports teams or marketing firms as a way to learn the business. "Internships can lead to great opportunities down the road," he said. 🏈