

league, Davis got the Santa Barbara High band and the American Legion Drum Corps to perform at the season's opener.

Davis said it took hard work and organization to get the women's sports programs the popularity it got back in the 1930s and early 1940s but she says it also took a lot of help. "I've had a lot of success but it must be remembered it wasn't the work of one individual but a united group."

Among those she credits is the late Katherine McCloskey, the first woman inducted into the Santa Barbara Hall of Fame. "She started the Women's Sports League in 1932 and I came aboard in 1935."

Sports has always been part of Davis' life. She was a star athlete at Hollywood High before moving to Santa Barbara to attend Santa Barbara State College. Besides competing in softball, she was one of the nation's top female table tennis players during her young adulthood.

Davis said she learned a lot from the seven City Recreation Directors she worked under during her 30-year service to the city. "All of them were wonderful men and all different and I learned from all of them."

Since her retirement from the recreation department, Louise Lowry Davis has been doing volunteer work for a variety of activities.

"I've done what I like to do all my life and that's sports."

## **Elmer Boeseke**

It was no surprise when the late Elmer Boeseke decided to take up the sport of polo. For starters, it was the Boeseke family that started polo matches in Santa Barbara on a dirt field on San Andreas Street back in the 1890s. And at one time, there was an all-Boeseke polo team that competed.

Elmer Boeseke, whose father was a two-time mayor of Santa Barbara, got interested in riding horses at a very young age, according to his cousin Cedric Boeseke. "I

think he learned how to ride before he learned to walk. He was always on a horse on his Dad's ranch."

Elmer's talent in polo was such that he is the only native Santa Barbara polo player to achieve the ranking of 10 goals - the highest honor bestowed upon a player.

Elmer achieved international recognition as a polo player back in the 1920s and 1930s. He was a member of the United States' polo team that won the gold medal in the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris. The Olympic Committee dropped polo as one of its sports after that.

In addition to winning a gold medal in the Olympics, Elmer Boeseke was on the American polo team that upset the Argentines in Buenos Aires in 1932. That same year, he played a team of western players that defeated the top players from the East in a challenge match.

In 1933, Boeseke was on the National Open Championship team.

Whenever local polo players today talk about their sport, the family name of Boeseke is always brought up, especially the name of Elmer Boeseke, the greatest polo player to ever come out of Santa Barbara.

## **Gene Snyder**

Coaches are used to challenges. When Gene Snyder was asked to coach Santa Barbara High's boys tennis team back in 1957, he knew he was in for a real challenge.

"I didn't know anything about tennis," recalled Snyder, one of six new inductees into the Santa Barbara Hall of Fame tonight. "Without my players knowing it, I snuck down and took lessons from Mike Koury, who was the city's tennis pro back then."

Today, Snyder says tennis is one of his favorite sports as a player.

What about his tennis team at



### **Santa Barbara High?**

Under Snyder, the Dons won or were co-champions four of the five years he coached the team. The other year, they finished second.

Besides turning into a top high school tennis coach, Snyder was one of the most successful basketball coaches in the school's history. During his eight seasons as head basketball coach back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he guided the Dons to the CIF playoffs three times, including the 1959-60 campaign when the team made it all the way to the CIF quarterfinals.

His overall record as basketball coach was 104 wins and 77 defeats.

When Snyder, who retired recently as co-principal of the school, took over the basketball program back in 1956, the Dons had won only 9 of their previous 60 games. After posting a 2-19 record in his first year back in 1956-57 season, the Dons turned things around and were co-league champions during the 1958-59 season. Led by such players as Bob Zapata and Gary Hart, the Dons won the Channel League title outright during the 1959-60 campaign.

Snyder retired as basketball coach after the 1963 season and served as the school's co-principal for 16 years before retiring.

As for being inducted into the Santa Barbara Hall of Fame, Snyder said: "I think it is a tremendous honor ... something I never expected."