

Jeff Olson

Jeff Olson, Head Coach of the 3-Time Michigan State Champion Ishpeming Hematites, will be the keynote speaker at the All-Star Banquet on Friday evening, June 29, 2018.

Coach Olson, his family and his community have been through some of the best and worst that life has to offer, all within a very short amount of time, and they have all been through it together. The loss of classmates and family members, changing Michigan sports legislation and both losing then winning multiple state championships; the Ishpeming family has grown closer through all of it.

Jeff was born and raised in Marquette, where he played football and basketball at Marquette High School for Hall of Fame coaches Mike Mileski and Gordy Leduc. Jeff was named 1st Team All-UP in both sports. Since he was fifteen, he has worked construction during the summer months.

Jeff went to Northern Michigan University, where he graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Business Management and a Teaching certificate in Physical Education. He has taught in the Ishpeming School District for the past 21 years. Prior to that, he taught 2 years in Sault Ste. Marie, and has also taught in the Marquette and Gwinn school districts.

Jeff has been coaching football for the past 36 years. His resume includes 8 years as a JV coach in Marquette, 2 years as a Varsity Assistant in Sault Ste. Marie, and the past 26 years as the Head Coach in Ishpeming. His Hematites have won 6 Conference championships, made the state quarterfinals 6 times, and were state runner-up 2 times, in addition to the 3 State Championships they have won. Throughout his football coaching career Jeff has been named Regional Coach of the Year 8 times, UP Coach of the Year 3 times, and the Michigan Football Coaches Association State Coach of the Year 4 times. Jeff states that he was very fortunate to have legendary football coach Buck Nystrom assist him at Ishpeming for 10 seasons. In addition to football, he has also coached Track & Field, as well as basketball in Ishpeming.

Jeff's football teams have the reputation for playing hard-nosed, smash-mouth football. He emphasizes being very fundamentally sound and not too fancy. His defenses have proven to be very stingy and have been the No. 1 defense in the Mid-Peninsula Conference numerous times over throughout his tenure at Ishpeming. His former running back has the State Record for carries in a game and season.

Jeff is an All-Star Game veteran, having been the head coach for the East in the inaugural game in 2008, and also an assistant in 2010, when his son Daniel was an All-Star quarterback. Jeff has lent his coaching expertise to the All-Star Game 6 times, far more than any other coach.

Coach Olson will talk to the players about teamwork, supporting each other through adversity and the family atmosphere that football and athletics provides. Developing and maintaining a "strategy" to get through life's unpredictable obstacles is important to always remember. All in attendance will understand how everyone in a small U.P. community can come together to achieve greatness, despite the hardships they faced.

