

Michael Leonard Scarpace

(July 13th, 1945 - November 5th, 2019)

Mike Scarpace (USC 1965-1967) passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by the love and care of his family and friends on Tuesday, November 5th, 2019 after a lengthy illness.

His funeral service will be on Saturday November 23 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Julie Billiard Catholic Church, 2475 Borchard Rd. Newbury Park, CA.

Mike started his football career as a Birmingham Brave in Encino, CA where he was a two way player and an integral part of the 1963 LA City Championship Team. He also excelled as a thrower on the track team. Mike was selected to the All West Valley Team, All San Fernando Valley Team, and is on the Birmingham High Wall of Fame.

Following high school, Mike played one season at Los Angeles Valley College earning J.C. All -America honors and playing for his high school coaches George Goff and Lynn Lomen. Mike also credited former All Pro Duane Putnam for teaching him key technique. Duane Putnam once told him, "You could go as far as you want to go in this game." At LAVC, Mike Scarpace was honored to be inducted into the LAVC Hall of Fame as both an athlete and as a coach on one of LAVC's many successful teams.

Mike Scarpace went on to play for the legendary John McKay at the University of Southern California. At SC, Mike played three seasons blocking for two Heisman Trophy winners (Mike Garrett and O.J. Simpson). Mike earned All Pac 8 honors while at U.S.C. He was one of only two players to be unanimously voted to Notre Dame's All Opponent's Team. Mike also earned First Team All Coast Honors and was named an Honorable Mention AP All-American in 1967.

For two consecutive seasons (his junior and senior year), Mike Scarpace earned the Elmer "Gloomy Gus" Henderson Award for most minutes played. John McKay once noted that Mike was a tough player and if he had to pick someone on his team to fight by his side in an alley fight, it would be Mike Scarpace. Mike "Blood Alley" Scarpace was a key member of the Trojans' 1967 National Championship Team and played a pivotal role in what has been termed "The Game of the Century." On one of the key plays of the game, Mike was hustling down field behind the world class sprinter Earl McCullough when the ball was fumbled. Several Bruins were in a better position to recover the ball, but the lightning quick and tough as nails Scarpace recovered the fumble. Helped along by some clutch play by his high school teammate Bill Hayhoe, the then Number 2 ranked Trojans went on to unseat the top-ranked Bruins. Mike Scarpace was one of the best pulling guards and Coach McKay would use Mike Scarpace to lead the infamous Student Body Right/Student Body Left. Mike graduated from USC in 1968 with a BA in Physical Education.

After a short stint in the NFL, Mike returned to USC where he earned his Master's in Education.

Following college, Mike Scarpace became "Coach Scar" working at LAVC, Garden Grove High School, Edison High School, and on to Long Beach Poly High School. Mike was an assistant at Poly (which previous to his arrival had a losing record) before becoming the head coach. He was able to help turn the Poly program around and coached many notable players such as Tony Hill and Gary Jeter. Long Beach Poly awarded Mike The Distinguished Service Award for his tenure there from 1971-1976.

From Poly, Mike went on to coach at Glendale Community College where he was a health teacher and coached for 15 seasons. It was at GCC that Mike coached the young Andy Reid. John McKay personally instructed Reid to go to Glendale to play for Mike Scarpace. At Glendale, the team was very successful with

Coach Scarpace coaching the Offensive Line. As was the case with Long Beach Poly, Mike helped numerous players go on to attend or play at 4 year colleges and universities, some making it to the NFL.

In 1990, Coach Scar assisted with the Offensive Line at UCLA under Coach Terry Donahue. Those years produced some of the most exciting back and forth rivalry games between UCLA and USC. Notable linemen included Vaughn Parker, Jonathan Ogden, and Mike Flanagan.

Los Angeles Valley College was Coach Scarpace's next coaching stint, this time on the defensive side of the ball. Valley College went 30-3 in his 3 years under head coach Jim Fenwick, competing for the national title once.

Towards the end of his career, Mike Scarpace moved his family to Ventura County where he coached at Newbury Park High School, Moorpark College under Jim Bittner, Hueneme High School, Newbury Park Steelers (Pop Warner), Chaminade High School Freshmen, and concluding his career at Camarillo High for the freshman level. Mike was able to coach his sons in youth leagues and the oldest three sons in high school.

Mike's life work was to help young men succeed and reach their potential so they in turn would become outstanding family men and community members. Coach Scar relished the challenge of coaching the "underdog" to victory. If Coach Scarpace believed in someone, they were capable of incredible accomplishments on and off the field.

Mike Scarpace was a hard-working, loyal dedicated family man who absolutely cherished his sons and extended family. Coach Scarpace is survived by his loving wife of 25 years Teresa (McCauley) Scarpace and four sons Travis (married to Amy Gillmore Scarpace), Garrett, Shane and Aidan. He is also survived by his grandson Carson, sisters-in-law, nephew Joshua Peddycoart and niece Emily Peddycoart. Mike Scarpace epitomized the term Renaissance Man as he was a concert level piano player, a talented painter, and creator of stained glass. Mike loved our gatherings with extended family and friends and he filled our lives with protection, love, laughter, music and dance. He will be sorely missed, but we will honor his legacy and

Fight On!

In lieu of flowers, those wishing to do so can donate to the following in Mike's name:

Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy Center
Boston University School of Medicine
72 East Concord Street, Suite B-7800
Boston, MA 02118