

# **CIFSS HERO** **A PIONEER IN THE CREATION OF** **GIRLS SPORTS**

34<sup>th</sup> historical “tidbit.”

## **KAREN HELLYER**

**“My main goal in life was to make a difference in the lives of  
kids!”**



**ST. MARY'S ACADEMY**  
*Today's Young Woman. Tomorrow's Leader.*

Karen Hellyer was born November 1, 1942 in Los Angeles at the Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. She attended St. Anthony Elementary School and St. Mary's Academy in Gardena. She loved school, the education she received from the Sisters and was active in sports. She was a Physical Education major and received an A.A. degree from Los Angeles City College (where



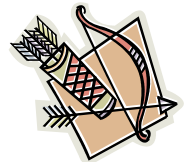
she played field hockey) and a B.A. degree from California State University at Los Angeles along with her teaching credential. She earned a Masters Degree in Education from Pepperdine University. She began her teaching career in 1963 with the Downey Unified School District at Woodruff Junior High School and later moved to Griffiths Junior High School as the Dean of Girls (discipline). In 1973, she transferred to University High School in the Irvine District and was the girls Athletic Director for eight years. Karen was hired at University to start the girl's sports program. She coached softball, basketball and field hockey and won the CIFSS Field Hockey Championship in 1981 with a 4-2 victory over Charter Oaks. Her teams had been in the finals two other times. Karen served as the South Coast and Sea View League Coordinator to the CIFSS Council. She was on the CIFSS Field Hockey Advisory Committee, Officials Fees Committee, Sports Calendar/Combined Season of Sport Committee; spoke to the California State Legislators for the beginning CIF girl's sports in the mid 1970's and was chosen as CIFSS Girls Athletic Director of the year in 1978. In 1981, she was chosen to serve on the CIFSS Executive Committee as the Girls Athletic Director Representative when she replaced Barbara Wilson. She was hired October 1, 1981, by Commissioner Ray Plutko as a CIFSS Administrative Assistant replacing Margaret Davis who moved onto the State CIF office.

During her more than 26 year tenure with the CIFSS, she served as the Director of the CIF State Volleyball Tournament; served on the NFHS Athletic Administrators Association and Field Hockey Rules Committee; was member of the United States Field Hockey Association; served on the Orange County Athletic Directors Association; and has served as a member of the California State Athletic Directors Association. Karen also had time to serve as the Director of Competition and Team Management at the 1984 Summer Olympics for the sport of Field Hockey.



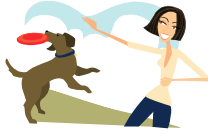
The following tidbits are taken from an interview with Karen Hellyer and her colleagues:

- “I am beach girl having lived in Manhattan Beach and Laguna Beach for over 34 years”
- “I had three sisters and we lived in Gardena. I was the only one to go to private schools and my sisters went to Leuzinger High School”
- “My mother was Hispanic and my dad was part Irish which makes for my assertiveness”
- “Sometimes my friends tell me to lighten up, but I feel I have so much responsibility to the youth of today and the impact CIFSS has on them”
- “I loved playing sports at St. Mary’s and was a pretty good softball player”
- “I loved St. Mary’s and the regimented routine of the Sisters”
- “I used to chase the boys and they chased me too”
- “I was competitive in the sports I played and my college teacher Mrs. Pettit used to call me Hellyer the hellion”
- “I was a Brownie and loved playing in the local recreation leagues. Later I worked for the Los Angeles Recreation Department and officiated softball games”
- “I am proud of what I learned at Woodruff Junior High School...I learned how to repair bow & arrows”
- “We had square dancing classes at Woodruff and I used to dance with Gary Earnst”
- “At University High School we started an inclusion program for special education students in physical education”
- “When we began the movement for girl’s sports in the mid 1970’s, we had to fight the women as much as the men. I often felt like a ‘spy’ at the women’s’ meetings because many of them didn’t want change. They were very tightly aligned with the NGWS (National Girls and Women’s Sport) organization and felt they would lose power if we aligned with CIF and the NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations)”
- “My main goal was always do what is right for the student athletes and for boys and girls to respect each other in sports”
- “Many of the men and women were afraid of change when it came to girls sports.
- “Morrie Ross, Tony Balsamo and Bob Packer were very instrumental in girls sports being accepted in the CIFSS”

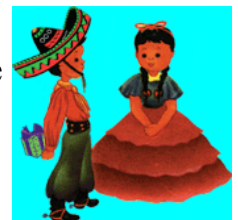


- “The fight with the men (“the good old boys club”) was more on an individual basis and had a lot to do with facility usage and pay of coaches”
- “The best barometer of the early success of girls sports was track and field when girls and boys competed on the same track and respected each other as athletes”
- “When I went to the State Legislature Hearing on Girls Sports, the gallery was half men (in the back) and women in the front. When I testified with the proactive attitude that girls could succeed in interscholastic sports some of the women had scowls on their faces while the men gave me an applause”
- “When I feel I have to speak my mind, I will. I think I got that from the fire of my Hispanic Mom and my Irish Dad”
- “I have a great deal of respect for Sheri Ross, AD at El Toro High School, even though she did not have a field hockey team...he! he! Barbara Wilson and Margaret Davis were both pioneers in the girls sports movement”
- “I was a so-so athlete, but I really believe I was a good coach. I miss that the most. At University, I asked the parents to be at the games and support their kids. I asked the athletes to give me their parent’s phone numbers at home so I could get them to the games. I felt good when the kids volunteered that information the next year and fully realized that they really wanted their parents to be there and support them”
- “Ray Plutko, who hired me as an Assistant Commissioner, was a real mentor to me and I really respected him along with Dean Crowley...they taught me how to do my job”
- “I am proud of my leadership role in the CIFSS”
- “I am very proud of the fact that now girls have sports to play in they can be competitive and understand what team work is all about. I really stressed that to my field hockey teams and they will carry that life-long skill forever like the boys always were able to do. Without interscholastic sports, girls would never of had that bonding situation”
- “I feel I very regimented and organized”
- “I like sharp pencils and that is why I have all those sharpened pencils in the cup on my desk. When they get down to the top of the cup I get rid of them and get newly sharpened ones. I press hard when I write and the electrical pencils just don’t work”
- “I love horses and will try riding more when I retire”
- “I have a nice place in Colorado that I like to go to”





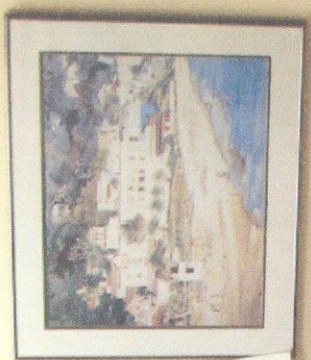
- “I love my dogs”
- “I want to take some plumbing and electricity classes at Home Depot when I retire. I have fixed a few things and I am very handy, but I not sure if I have done the right thing with some of the electrical issues”
- Karen has taught me so much and was our “go-to-person’ when we needed information
- No one will ever call roll at the CIFSS Council Meetings like Karen...I can hear her melodious voice saying, “Sierra, South Coast, Southwestern, Suburban, Sunbelt, Sunkist, Sunset, Sunshine, etc.”
- She is really a good person at heart and always wants to the best for kids
- She is a strait shooter and abides by the rules
- Most knowledgeable about CIF rules and their history than anyone
- She loves **Baby Ruth** candy and will select just that type out of a tray of candy
- When she went to lunch with Bill Clark, he would eat part of her food and she would eat part of his
- She loves Laguna Beach and hung in there during the tough times of the rain slides
- She really loves her dog
- She logs every call
- When it is 12:00 p.m. it is “Hellyer’s Lunch Alarm” and it is time to eat
- She likes to golf
- She likes to shop, just ask Kelly Johnson on their shopping excursion in Jackson, Wyoming at the Section 7/8 meeting
- She is truly a professional
- Karen really cares about CIFSS
- Loves her “double vanilla latte” at Starbucks
- Loves Mexican food at Don Jose’s
- She is always asking someone for the “pink box” of donuts from the Donut House in Los Alamitos...she won’t eat the whole donuts but uses a knife to slice off a nice section that she wants





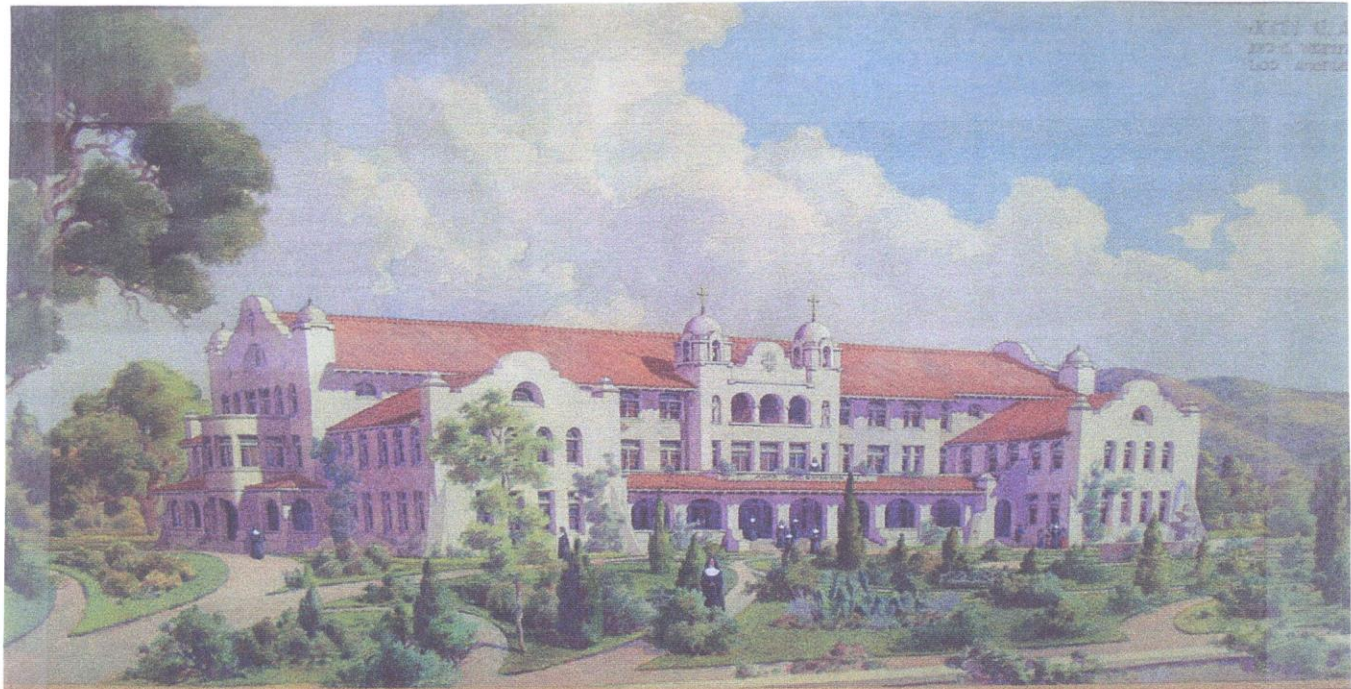


Chick with brains





KAREN HELLER  
1952-53  
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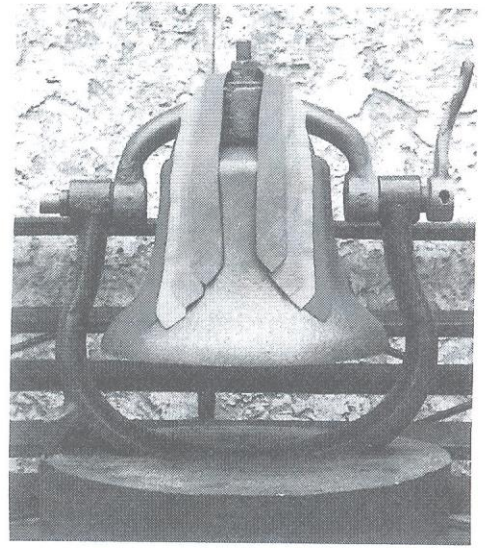
St. Mary's Academy  
FOR  
THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH



KAREN HELLYER

Student Control 4; Latin Club 1, 2, 3; Science Club 3; Lettermen Club 4.





Saint Mary's Academy



Hellyer, Karen







## UNIVERSITY GIRLS WIN CIF-SS FIELD HOCKEY TITLE

The third time's the charm and the University High girls field hockey team came through with flying colors Saturday to capture its first-ever CIF championship with a 4-2 triumph over Charter Oak at Orange Coast College.

"This was our third time in the finals and we finally won it," Coach Karen Hellyer said after the game. "This team played the most balanced attack I have ever seen my team play and not one of the players had a bad game.

"They played the kind of field hockey I know high school kids are able to play. It was a totally coordinated team effort."

Lesley Speros and Lori Fyffe each scored two goals for the winners who were never behind. University scored the first two goals, before Charter Oak hit its first goal at the 25-minute mark of the first half. Then the Trojans made it 4-1 eight minutes into the second half.

Emily Redmon's Charter Oak Lancers were 19-1-1 coming into championship action at Orange Coast College but the Trojan offense scored four times while the defense held tight with University coming out on top 4-2.

## 1981 GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY RESULTS

*First round:* University 1, Westminster 0; Azusa 4, Claremont 2; Marina 1, La Habra 0; Santa Ana Valley 2, Saddleback 0; Garden Grove 3, Buena Park 0; Colton 1, Santa Ana 0; Edison 1, Santiago 0; Charter Oak 6, Bonita 0.

*Second round:* University 4, Azusa 2; Santa Ana Valley 1, Marina 0; Garden Grove 4, Colton 1; Charter Oak 2, Edison 1.

*Semi Finals:* University 3, Santa Ana Valley 0; Charter Oak 1, Garden Grove 0.

*Finals:* University 4, Charter Oak 2.



Ellie Minor -  
Garden Grove H.S.



Sandy Blumenthal -  
La Habra H.S.



Karen Hellyer -  
University H.S.

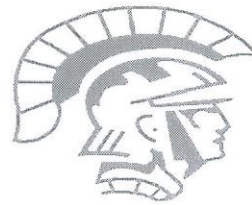


Emilie Redmon -  
Charter Oak H.S.

Special Thanks to the 1981  
Girls Field Hockey Advisory Committee.  
Not pictured, Pat Hardin, Glendora H.S.



# University High



Karen Hellyer



Karen Hellyer



Karen Hellyer



Karen Hellyer:  
horseback riding-Santa Claus-Cabaret



# COACHES



## HELLYER NAMED OUTSTANDING SO. SECTION ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

University High School's popular Girls' Athletic Director Karen Hellyer was recently named the Southern Section's outstanding athletic administrator by the California High School Athletic Administrators Association at their annual conference in Palm Springs.

Ms Hellyer, a graduate of UCLA and the recipient of a Master's Degree from Pepperdine, has been Girls' League Coordinator for the South Coast League for the past four years, and has been selected to serve in the same capacity in the new Sea View League.

She has served the CIF-Southern Section as a member of two Season of Sports Calendar Committees, representative to the State Conference on "Status of Girls Athletic Programs in California Public Schools", and also as a member of the Commissioners Field Hockey Coaches Advisory Committee.

One of the most successful coaches in the Orange County area, Ms Hellyer has been the Field Hockey and Softball coach at University for the past four seasons. Her Field Hockey squad lost to Sonora, 1-0, in the finals played on a very wet soggy field this past season.

Her outstanding leadership has done much to enhance interscholastic athletics and we congratulate Karen Hellyer, a deserving recipient of this outstanding award.



Karen Hellyer

## HELLYER ASSUMES DUTIES AT CIF-SOUTHERN SECTION OFFICE

The CIF-Southern Section is very pleased to introduce Karen Hellyer as the newest CIF-SS administrative assistant, replacing Margaret Davis who has accepted a position with the State CIF.

Hellyer is not a newcomer to sports administration, having served as girls athletic director at University High School for the past eight years. Previous to that position, she served as a teacher and dean of girls in the Downey Unified School District.

Majoring in physical education, Hellyer received her AA at Los Angeles City College, BA at California State University, Los Angeles and her MA at Pepperdine. She is currently completing work on her administrative credential.

While at University High School, Hellyer coached the sports of softball and field hockey, winning the 1981 CIF-SS Field Hockey Championship.

Hellyer has been active in hockey, having organized and hosted a national coaching clinic and National Olympic Developmental "D" Camp for Womens' Field Hockey, and has coached selected players for Los Angeles Field Hockey Association.

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### **Hellyer . . .**

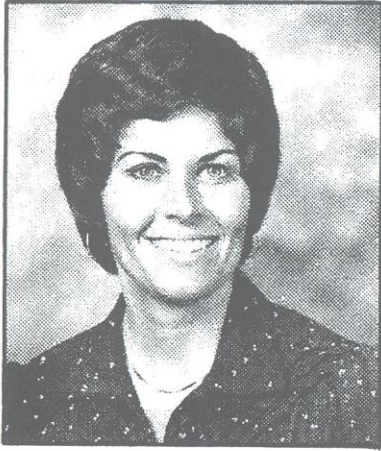
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Professional activities include serving as girls league coordinator for both the South Coast and Sea View leagues, participating in various committees including CIF-SS Field Hockey Advisory Committee, CIF-SS Official Fees Com-

mittee, CIF-SS Sports Calendar Committee, State Athletic Committee and Orange County School Administrators Athletic Forum Organizational Committee.

She was selected to serve on the CIF-Southern Section Executive Committee and was chosen 1978 CIF-SS Athletic Director of the Year.





CIF SOUTHERN SECTION  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HONORED BY  
NATIONAL FEDERATION

The National Federation has invited CIF Southern Section Administrator, Karen Hellyer to serve as a member of the National Federation Field Hockey Rules Committee. Hellyer will begin her four year term on the working committee, which writes the playing rules for high school competition throughout the United States, immediately.

Although Hellyer has been with the Southern Section staff for only one year, her long-time expertise in the sport of field hockey makes her a perfect choice for this committee. Previous to assuming her present position, she taught at University High School in Irvine where she coached hockey winning the 1981 CIF-SS Field Hockey Championship.

In addition to coaching at the high school level, Hellyer, who is a member of USFHA has been actively involved in the sport of field hockey for many years. She organized and hosted a national coaching clinic as well as a National Olympic Developmental "D" Camp. She coached selected players for the Los Angeles Field Hockey Association and for the past two years has served as a member of the National Youth Hockey Developmental Committee.

Our congratulations to Karen on her appointment. We know she'll serve us well.