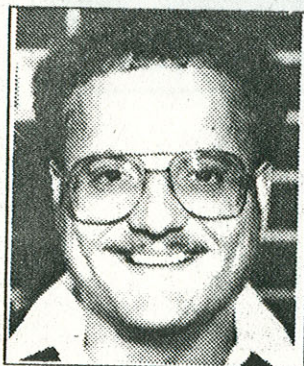


# Canino to leave Central with class

No matter whom you talk to at Hinsdale Central, the name of Tony Canino usually will find its way into the conversation. The people at the high school show great respect for this individual, and the talk is always very positive.

After listening for a while, you can understand why this man is so highly regarded by his peers. In his 31 years of coaching, 29½ years at Central, Canino is best known for putting Central gymnastics on the map.



**KEITH BURALLI**

FROM THE SIDELINES

In his 18 years as head gymnastics coach, Canino took his teams to 18 conference championships. The team also won four state championships during his tenure.

Under his direction, the program produced nine individual state champions and nine individual national champions.

Although he also coached football and tennis at the high school, Canino always will be known as Mr. Gymnastics at Central.

Canino, who has been away from coaching since 1975, plans to retire from his position as physical education department chairman at the end of this school year. Although he is just 56 years old, Canino thinks the time is right.

"I've had enough now of teaching and coaching," Canino said. "I feel I have accomplished all that I'm going to do. I haven't done any coaching for a while anyway. I feel I want to spend some time with my wife and do some other things. I'm going to be like a young yuppie and retire early and take it easy."

Canino plans to take off for Florida and enjoy the warmth. "I'll do some sailing and fishing and do a little real estate business on the side. That should keep me busy."

As a student teacher in 1957, Canino introduced gymnastics to the Central curriculum and to the extracurricular activities. In 1958 he became a teacher-coach at the University of Illinois, but the following year Canino returned to Central.

"It was always in the back of my mind to return to Central," Canino said. "It was the best move I ever made. My family and I have enjoyed the experience tremendously."

A graduate of Wells High School in Chicago, Canino received his master's degree from the University of Illinois in 1961. In 1965 he became divisional coordinator of physical education at Central.

During a nine-year stretch as head gymnastics coach at Central, Canino compiled an overall dual meet record of 206-6 on all levels. His teams also won eight district championships and four sectional championships.

In 1970 Canino was named Coach of the Year by the Illinois High School Gymnastic Coaches Association and in 1971 was named National High School Coach of the Year by the National High School Gymnastics Coaches Association.

In 1981 he was inducted into the National Collegiate Hall of Fame for gymnastics. "I remember the late 1960s and early 1970s, when we would fill the gym up for our dual meets," Canino said. "No doubt Central was considered a gymnastics power. People couldn't believe that we dominated like we did. We had some very dedicated performers on the teams that I coached."

Canino's reason for giving up coaching in 1975 was very simple. "I was burned out," Canino said. "People don't realize how demanding coaching can be. You don't get much relief. As I got older, I got to worrying too much. The new routines these kids were trying were getting more

and more complex.

"I felt I had accomplished everything I could in the sport and felt it was time to give it up to someone younger. I saw no reason to continue, because I had lost that vitality to coach."

During his reign as gymnastics coach, Canino had a simple coaching philosophy: Keep it simple. During my time as coach we would hit 90 percent of our routines. I'd say that's a pretty good percentage."

Neil Krupicka, who coaches the girls' and boys' gymnastics teams at Central, was co-captain of Canino's first conference championship team.

"I like Neil a lot," Canino said. "I feel he has done a great job with the gymnastics program. I was real happy for him this year, when he finished third at state. It was quite a dry spell for him. When I gave the coaching reins to him I knew I was putting them into good hands. He is very aggressive and a tremendous worker."

In 1969 Canino wrote an article that was published by the 84th Convention of High School Physical Education Teachers. It was called "Magic of Gymnastics, The Foundation of All Physical Education Activity Curriculum."

Magic is surely the word one would use to describe what Canino has done for gymnastics and Central on the whole.