Matthew Russell - CT Lacrosse Hall of Fame - Class of 2014

Matt Russell began playing goalie in CONNY competition for Madison Youth Lacrosse. At Fairfield Prep he was named All-State three times and All-America twice. In 2002 he entered the US Naval Academy where he was a backup as a freshman and started the 2004 season the same way. Following a 12-9 loss at home to 20th-ranked Ohio State, Navy Coach Richie Meade gave the sophomore a chance by starting him in the Mids' third game at fourth-ranked North Carolina. He guided the Mids to a 9-8 overtime victory (even assisting on the winning goal), which helped propel a nine-game winning streak and an eventual National Championship appearance. Despite suffering a broken collarbone, Russell stayed in the National Championship Game against Syracuse until he could no longer hold his goalie stick in front of him, exiting the game with eight minutes to go and the score tied at 11. Syracuse eventually prevailed 14-13. That year Russell received the Ensign C. Markland Kelly Award as the NCAA Division I Goalie of the Year ... the only Connecticut-connected player to receive that award since its inception in 1949. He was a three-time First-Team All-Patriot League selection and three-time All-American. In 2006 he was the Mids' team captain and recipient of the Naval Academy Sword for Men, which recognizes the graduating midshipman who most excelled in athletics over his career. Russell deployed to Iraq in 2009 and to Afghanistan in 2011 as a member of the Marine Corps. While his opportunity to play professional lacrosse was constrained by his duties as a Marine, Russell enjoyed a successful professional career with the Baltimore Bayhawks and LA Riptide from 2006 to 2008. After returning from Afghanistan, he played on the LXM Pro Tour through 2014, where he served as team captain for four seasons. Russell currently resides in San Francisco where he works for Goldman Sachs. Matt Russell is being inducted into the Connecticut Lacrosse Hall of Fame as a truly great player.