

# Women's History Month 2024

## Maria Nolan

Having a 30-5 record attached to your name is a great accomplishment for any coach.

Consider then the case of Maria Nolan, who had that exact record coaching her Secaucus and Immaculate Heart Academy girls volleyball teams in NJSIAA state championship matches.

Quite simply, upon retiring after leading IHA to another state title in 2022, Nolan did so as one of the greatest coaches in the history of New Jersey high school sports.

Her achievements are even more impressive considering they were compiled at two different schools, one public and the other parochial.

She coached Secaucus for 27 years, from 1975 through 2001, and at Immaculate Heart from 2004 through 2022. Her overall record was 1,101-116, for a .905 winning percentage.

At Secaucus, her teams went 520-70, winning 16 NJSIAA Group championships (12 in Group 1 and four in Group 2), along with 15 Hudson County championships. The four Group 2 titles were in succession from 1983 through '86. She left there with a streak of seven straight Group 1 championships, from 1995 through 2001.

After a two-year break from coaching, Nolan took over the Immaculate Heart program in 2004. Her teams then went 581-47 throughout her tenure. If you thought your team could win a match at IHA during her time there, it was pretty much wishful thinking - the Blue Eagles were 214-1 at home during her 19 years.

Immaculate Heart lost to Bridgewater-Raritan in the 2004 Group 4 final. The Non-Public championships began the next year, and IHA lost to Roselle Catholic in the 2006 Non-Public A final. But after that, the Blue Eagles won the championship the next 13 years.



The NJSIAA Tournament of Champions was held from 2002 through 2021, and IHA won the event 10 times, which is seven more than any other school.

Perhaps most impressively, only two schools in the history of New Jersey girls volleyball have won more than four straight Group state titles, and both were coached by Nolan: The IHA streak of 13 straight from 2007-22 and the Secaucus string of seven consecutive from 1995-'01.

Aside from her coaching, Nolan is also known for her service, both with the NJSIAA, NFHS and the New Jersey Scholastic Coaches Association.



Nolan is one of the few coaches in any sport to be a two-time Star-Ledger State Coach of the Year, and is in even more select company by earning the honor at two schools (Secaucus in 1998 and IHA in 2009). She was also the NFHS National Volleyball Coach of the Year in 1999. She's earned a slew of other local, regional and national awards.

Nolan was a 1989 inductee into the NJSCA Hall of Fame and was part of the 2003 NJSIAA Hall of Fame class. She is also in the Hudson County Hall of Fame, and the Halls of Fame at Secaucus and Immaculate Heart.

