

# Adam Smith - HoF - 2012

ADAM SMITH, Ontario – 2<sup>nd</sup> Baseman

As Adam's sponsor over many years, he requested that I write the article to appear in the Hall of Fame program.

I have interviewed two people for their observations and comments: Terry Baytor, who coached Adam on the National Team and on the Gators, and Larry Lynch, who watched Adam from the other side of the field for many years, and coached him for a few years towards the end of his career. Everything I wanted to say has already been said by these two gentlemen, so I echo their comments.

Firstly, quoting Terry Baytor: "Adam Smith was, without question, one of the three top players I have ever coached over my 32 year career. He exemplified everything that is good about the sport of softball and he played the game with a passion and a commitment to excellence that was second to none.

As both a Toronto Gator and Canadian National Team player for many years, he set the standard to which all others aspired. Simply put, he was in a "league of his own" as a second baseman, and his major contributions both offensively and defensively made the difference between championships won or lost.

Mr. Baytor is of the opinion that he had no equal when it came to playing "above and beyond the call of duty", and what is most impressive, is how he was able to inspire his teammates and will them to be better players and winners.

As his coach for many years, I do not believe I will ever see another player that had all the qualities and abilities of Adam Smith. It was not only my pleasure to have coached Adam, but also my privilege and joy to have worked with him."

And from Larry Lynch: "There are many nouns that best describe Adam as a player, as leader and as a champion, but the word that first comes to mind is warrior. I have had the rare opportunity to have played against him in the late 1980's; to have coached against him in the 1990's; and to have shared the same bench with him from 2000 to 2003. He was without doubt one of the most amazing players of his era.

He was the type of player who could make the impossible look simple. He would dive, jump or slide to stop any ball; he would cover the front end of a double play, defying any runner to take him

out; he would then pivot and throw, and make the back end of the play at first. If you were lucky enough to have watched him in his prime, you would marvel at the number of times he was carried from the field after a sensational play at second only to return and blast a home run, securing another victory. He transcended pain as such was his veracity as a player and a leader.

He was the captain of the Toronto Gators, a team loaded with talented individuals and Canadian National teammates. He earned the respect and admiration of everyone he played with and against. He simply refused to lose.

Adam was a natural athlete, who made his passion for softball secondary to his responsibilities in life. He is a devoted father and husband, who has worked his farm, along side his dad, for many years. He worked as hard as he played, but work and family came first. He made his sacrifices on the diamond with his body and for his family, always finding a way to get the tough job done. That's what real Warriors do.

So there you have it. As one who has watched Adam play for so many years, I can tell you that the Toronto Gators, without Adam Smith, would not have been World Champions. He was virtually as important to this team as was anybody else.