

## **Frank Trejo - HoF - 1990**

FRANK TREJO; VACUUM CLEANER AT THIRD BASE;  
OUTSTANDING HITTER --- AND ALWAYS A WINNER!  
By: Gordon Wise --- ISC Information Officer

You've got to want it bad --- real bad --- to learn to hit a softball by swinging at bottle caps with a broomstick.

But if you're a poor kid, growing up in south Phoenix, and you can't even afford to buy a ticket to the movies, a broomstick may have to suffice for a bat, and bottle caps are at least some sort of substitute for a ball. And besides being cheap, bottle caps can be thrown in ways that produce curves, drops, and rise balls

International Softball Congress Hall of Fame member Frank Trejo looks back on those rough days from his youth and credits those broomsticks and bottle caps with helping him and his buddies sharpen their eyes and their reflexes.

And sharpen his eyes and reflexes they did! Those early experiences on the vacant lots in south Phoenix helped turn Frank Trejo into one of the most feared hitters competing in the International Softball Congress during the mid and late 1960's when his teams won two ISC World Championships, finished third in two others, and he was voted to the All-World Tournament team FOUR TIMES.

Trejo, described by Arizona Republic sportswriter, and a fellow ISC World Tournament competitor Steve Wilson as "a vacuum cleaner at third base and one of the best hitters I ever saw", came from a modest economic background. Those early days found money so tight that, according to Trejo, "We couldn't afford things like movie tickets. When we went to the Strand Theater downtown, we got in by walking backward just as people were leaving. Worked every time."

All of that early experience hitting and fielding tiny objects like bottle caps resulted in Trejo's becoming a fine baseball player. That was followed by a four-year stint in the U.S. Navy.

After the military service, Trejo took up the great game of fastball. First he played for what he describes as Arizona's best team, Hayes Roofing. Before long his reputation as a fine hitter led to his recruitment by the Pomona (California) Bombers.

Playing third base "like a vacuum cleaner", Trejo hit an amazing .565 and led the Bombers to the 1965 ISC World Tournament championship where he was named to the first of four All-World teams.

In 1966 and 1967, Trejo brought his hot bat and glove skills to the Harrelson Motors team from Moline, Illinois, an aggregation which finished third in the ISC World Tournament in 1966 and won the world championship in 1967.

Trejo was also All-World Tournament again in 1968 playing for Der Weinerschnitzel of La Mesa, California, as that team finished in third place in the ISC World Tournament.

Frank Trejo's exploits on the diamonds of fastball led to his election to the International Softball Congress Hall of Fame in 1990.

Following his great career in fastball, Trejo operated a catering business and later worked as a purchasing agent for Phoenix Greyhound Park.

Today he remains active in sports - - - and in particular with support for American kids learning to play baseball. After watching youngsters from Taiwan win numerous Little League World Series titles, he decided that American kids just didn't get enough practice hitting. This conclusion led him to design a low price batting cage utilizing plastic balls, recruit financial support to allow the use of a number of these cages, and saw to it that they became a feature in the Boys and Girls Clubs of the south Phoenix area.

A determination to learn, a commitment to rise above modest circumstances, a love for the game - - - and for the young people who play the game - - - plus the contribution of those broomsticks and bottle caps - - - it all added up to the amazing career of Frank Trejo - - - a true ISC Hall of Fame legend.