

Les Novak - HoF - 2002

Les Novak, New Hope, Minnesota



In 1933, Les Novak was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. As fate often provides an opportunity for destiny, in 1957, Les was sitting in the stands of a slow-pitch game, and the scheduled umpire was a "no-show". So, Les was plucked from the stands to officiate the game...and a new career was launched! Les was quickly attracted to fastpitch, enjoying the pace of the game especially the speed of the pitched ball.

As Les honed his umping skills, he advanced through the ranks of the boys in blue, and served as Umpire-In-Chief for Minnesota in 1964, and has continued in that role to become the longest serving UIC In the United States. His credits include officiating in 10 ASA Nationals, 13 ISC World Tournaments, 16 NCAA National Championships, three NCAA World Series and three ISF (International Softball Federation) World Championships.

Memorable moments include his first US National Tournament in 1961, his first ISF Game in 1968, and his working his first ISC Tourney in Kimberly, Wisconsin in 1984, including calling the plate in the Championship game.

His experience and skills have been shared, as Les has conducted clinics and trained young umpires not only in Minnesota, but internationally in Japan, Thailand, Korea, Philippines and New Zealand (twice). In total, Les has donned the blue apparel and been the arbiter for over 15,000 fastpitch games.

Most recently, Les has supported the sport as a driving force behind the creation of the Carrol Forbes Lifetime Membership Foundation, authoring articles for the Fastpitch Chronicle and Fastpitch Bulletin, and has served as the ISC Assistant UIC since 1998, and as an ISC Commissioner since 1999. Les is retired, lives in New Hope, Minnesota (the land of 10,000 lakes), and has four daughters Wendy (45), Wanda (43), Carol (41) and Cathy (41).