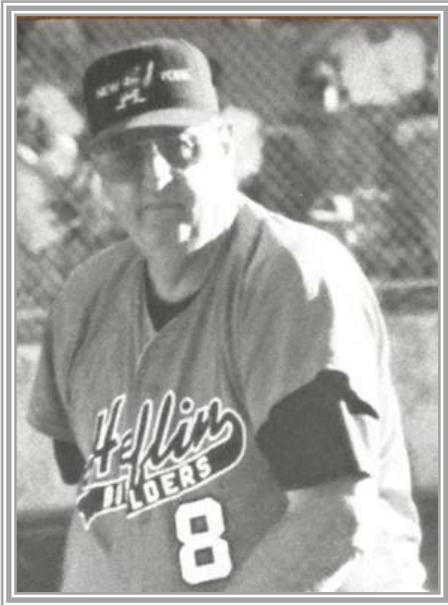


Tom McAvoy - HoF - 2009

Tom McAvoy – Biography Tom McAvoy – A Legend, Tom McAvoy, ISC Hall of Famer!



Tom McAvoy was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1937. At age ten he moved from Long Island, New York to Colorado. His grandfather had died and he had to go take care of his grandmother. It was there where “Mac”, as we all know him now, became an All State Basketball Player as a mere sophomore in high school.

Moving back to Schenectady, New York his junior year, he became a highly regarded left handed pitcher. He then stuck with baseball, all the way to the Major Leagues and the Washington Senators baseball club.

If not for two devastating arm injuries, I doubt we would be talking about Tom McAvoy in ISC circles. After all, he did strike out Ted Williams in a spring training game, and was highly touted as a rookie, along with good friend and now ‘Hall of Famer’ Jim Kaat. The Senators believed in Mac, but it wasn’t meant to be, as the arm just never got back to where it was.

So, once again, Mac headed back to New York, only this time---he was married. Mac had met Jean (Taylor) in 1958 in Charlotte, North Carolina while playing Single A Ball. They were married in October of 1959, and Jean has now been by Mac’s side for 50 years! It’s a good thing she likes ‘ball’, because Mac made many stops after being let go from the Minnesota Twins 40 man roster in 1961.

Although it seemed like his days of serious ball were over, Mac found a new game, or I should say it found him, and the rest iswell you know!

Next Stop for Mac – ISC Hall of Fame!

In 1965, friend John Salvatore asked Mac to play fastpitch softball with him and a bunch of Marine Corps buddies. Unfortunately, Mac had arthritis so bad; he pretty much just helped out and didn’t play. Thank God for all of our sakes, that’s when his zest for managing came to fruition.

From 1965-1972 Mac was coaching in Sportsman’s Park, Schenectady, one of the east coast’s premier fastpitch leagues. His teams won the league five out of seven years, and in the midst of those winning seasons he got a group of all stars together to form ‘Peckham’s Travel Squad’. They continued traveling for many years, competing in ASA State, Regional, and National tournaments; winning the ASA State and Regionals 1983, 1984, and 1985. These are only a few of the many state titles for Mac, not all with Peckham’s. It was in 1990 that Mac got his first taste of ISC fastpitch, when he was with a team called ‘Lieber’s’. They played in the World Tournament held in Victoria, British Columbia. Mac was hooked!

In 1992 he broke in to the ISC with a brand new team full of guys that played for OTB in Middletown, New York. This team included some of his old ‘Peckham’s’ players and had a sponsor named Garry Heflin. The team would eventually become ‘Heflin Builders’ and they finished 9th that year in Salt Lake City. This was the first of many top ten finishes for Mac at the World Tournament. He also had a 4th place finish in 1999 with the ‘Heflin Smokers’.

Through the 1990’s Mac’s Heflin teams were tough, competitive, and invariably winning. Even though the ISC World Tournament title has eluded Mac, his teams have always been in the mix! He’s been around even more with stints in St. Louis in 2005, back with Heflin in 2006, and his last team was Circle Tap of Wisconsin in 2007. Mac took time off in 2008 to settle some serious health issues and he’ll be back in January 2009 to defend the AAU International Championship. His teams have won three years in a row at the annual AAU Tournament.

Besides winning three in a row, Mac’s teams also have two runner up finishes, as well as top ten finishes every other time! Mac’s passion for fastpitch and the ISC has never wavered. He’ll tell anyone, it’s okay to play in certain tournaments, but the most prestigious, to this day is the annual ISC World Tournament! Mac’s leadership has always been appreciated by the players he coaches, and the many players they competed against. There have been hundreds of ball players who have played for Mac, this one included, and he’s not just a manager, he’s a mentor, a friend, and to some of us, like a second dad. Mac’s wisdom and foresight have taught many of us not just how to handle a riseball, but how to sometimes deal with life, and everyday problems.

While Mac recuperates from these health issues, anxious eyes and ears await that bark from the third base coaching box where Mac is totally at home. Nobody knows how long they are going to be able to do something they love, but we all know Mac will do it until he can’t anymore! The next time you see him, make sure of two things –

1. Tell him how proud you are of him for being a distinguished member of this year's ISC Hall of Fame class, and

Make sure you are looking at him, or speaking into his good ear, or he'll never hear ya!!