

## Tom Stasik - HoF - 1995



Tom Stasik was born in Bay City, Michigan in 1947. He began playing softball at the age of seven for Seal-O-Co Gas Station. Tom played Little League, Pony League, Colt League, American Legion, Bay City Federation, and ended his baseball career in Midland Michigan in the Northeastern Michigan Baseball League.

Tom graduated from Bay City St. Mary High School. He played varsity baseball for four years, as well as varsity football and basketball for two years.

Tom was a Navy Seabee from June of 1966 until June of 1968. He was wounded in action in Hue Phu Bai, Vietnam and received the Purple Heart. He was discharged from the Navy in Long Beach, California the day that Bobby Kennedy was assassinated.

Tom began playing fastpitch in 1969 with his brother Dick's team, Spinning Wheel. He played part time until 1971 when the Bay City Federation baseball league folded. He put together his first softball team at that time, as well as continued to play baseball on weekends in Midland with Ed Green Lincoln Mercury. The first team was Imperial Bar. Tom met the sponsor during a bowling league in the winter.

The bowling team became the nucleus of a very good softball team. The first uniforms were unique. They were the Cincy Redleg looking uniforms. Unfortunately, they had Carlings embroidered on them.

The players had to get their uniform top embroidery removed so they could be repaired and used. We were the holiest team in the league. Thanks to Dan Dukarski of D and J Embroidery we looked pretty good.

Bay City Made Rite took over our sponsorship in 1972. They continued sponsorship of our team through 1979. We became the best team out of Bay City throughout those years. Guy Manke, a great pitcher and hitter in his day, was our top pitcher throughout those early years. Our first state championship was very memorable. We lost our first game, and our catcher, Clint Beane, Manager of the Midland Explorers was absent because wife Ellen was delivering Molly into the world. Clint came back the next day and we ran off 7 straight wins to win the championship.

We played together and won several tournaments and had a great time on the circuit as we went along. We played in the city, and then a travel league was formed between Bay City, Saginaw, Midland and Flint. Tom was teaching in Mt. Morris from 1973 and driving from Bay City. In 1977 Tom and Nancy moved to Clio, in the Flint area. He began coaching the softball team at Mt. Morris in 1977.

In 1977, Tom played for the Flint American United Life "Hawks". This was Tom's first season with ole 11, Jimmy Doyle. He was willing to take the ball against anyone at any time. He was a winner. AUL won the Open state championship and played in the ASA National Tournament in Midland, MI and finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place. In 1978 we went to Madison, WI for the Regional, but lost out.

In 1979 we were all set to play for AUL, but at the last minute the team folded. Tom went back and played weekends mostly with Made Rite in Bay City. Made Rite won the ASA Open and once again played in the ASA National in Midland. The team finished 18<sup>th</sup> that year. Tom was picked up by the Saginaw Bolters and traveled to his first ISC World Tournament in Bakersfield, CA. The Bolters shocked the ISC behind one of the greatest pitching performances of all time as Kevin Herlihy dominated and led the team to the World Championship. Tom played with the Bolters in 1980.

Made Rite and Jimmy Doyle won the ASA Open championship in 1980. Tom was playing for the Bolters at this time as was voted Most Valuable Player with them as they finished runners-up. The Bolters that year brought Michael White to the United States. Mike and Brad Riengnette from Northern Ontario were our pitchers. Brads team had won the Canadians for Niagara the year before.

The Saginaw Bolters and Bay City Made Rite merged in 1981. The Bolters won the Michigan ASA and hosted the ISC in Saginaw, Michigan. The 1981 ISC still holds several records. The famous 34 inning game, plus several others. One paper had Mark Smith hitting 104 on radar.

Tom played for the Bolters in 1982. This was the final year for the Bolters. They won the Michigan Area State Championship, played in the Nationals in Midland, won the ISC Michigan Area Tournament and played in the Big Show in Kimberly, WI.

Tom was playing for Flint AUL in a tournament in Midland, once again, and he injured his knee and had to have two surgeries after that. The team went on and won the Class B State Championship that year in Cadillac.

Throughout the years since 1977, Tom has been coaching high school softball. In 1984, Tom's team, the Mt. Morris Panthers won the first and only state championship in any sport for Mt. Morris. He was awarded as the Michigan High School Coach of the Year. The championship was won on the same field that the ISC World Championship will be held in 2010. Midland, Michigan has been very good for Tom.