

THE ALL-STAR

Official Newsletter of the Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association



Winter 2008-09

News and Notes

Clinic numbers on the rise

The IHSBCA hosted another successful clinic at the White Sox Academy in Lisle on January 30-31. According to Membership Chairman Don Sutherland of Cary Grove H.S., there were 620 attendees at the week-end clinic and 285 people at the Hall of Fame dinner on Saturday evening. Both these numbers are an increase of over 10% from last year.

Also on the rise, according to Sutherland, is membership in the association. Currently, there are 750 coaches who are members of the IHSBCA.

Baden becomes official baseball

This January, the IHSA signed a five year contract with Baden Sports that will make Baden the official ball of the IHSA. The state's contract with Illinois-based Wilson Sporting Goods will end after the 2008-09 season.

Six coaches inducted into IHSBCA Hall of Fame

On the evening of January 31 at Bobaks Signature Events and Conference Center in Lisle, six more coaches were officially inducted into the IHSBCA Hall of Fame. The IHSBCA would like to congratulate new Hall of Famers Don Alton, Phil Fox, Carl Hunckler, Tom Mueller, Ron Smith, and Skip Sullivan. The biographies of these coaches were originally printed in the official Hall of Fame dinner program and are reprinted below:

Don Alton—Rochester High School

Don Alton has been a baseball coach for 26 years. Coach Alton graduated from Tower Hill High School in 1967 and graduated from SIU-E in 1971. He was coach for Mt. Auburn 1978-1979, 15-11 record; Riverton, 1980-1993, 202-117-1 record; and Rochester, 1995-2004, 189-106-1 record. Lifetime career record for 26 years, 406-234-2. Sangamo Champions undefeated: '89, '92, '93, '97, '02; Regional Champions: '85, '88, '89, '92, '93, '98, '03, '04; Sectional Champions: '92, '93, '98, '03; went to State: '92, '93, '98 and finished 4th place in State in '93. Alton coached Mickey Mantle, Connie Mack, and American Legion teams in the summer for more than 15 years. Coach Alton also began the American Legion team in Rochester in 2001.

Phil Fox—Downers Grove South High School

Coach Phil Fox coached at Downers Grove South High School and Oregon High School. He has coached the Stevenson Showcase, the Jack Kaiser All-Star Game, the Peoria All-Star Game, and the Chicago White Sox Prospects All-Star Game. Fox is a retired coach after 32 years and an IHSBCA Board Member; served nine years on the IHSBCA Board; Hall of Fame Chairman; 1st Vice President Elect; and All-Area Chairman and Chicago White Sox Liaison. Coach Fox is an instructor at the Chicago White Sox Academy. IHSBCA Man of the Year in 2008 for his commitment to Illinois baseball. His overall record as a head varsity coach is 397-222-3 with 12 conference championships. His number 21 was retired after the 2007 season. His total record of 606-321-3 includes the summer program with two Elite Eight finishes. Fox won one sectional championship. He has written for many coaching magazines and newspapers and currently writes articles for Trib-local for the Chicago Tribune. He is also writing instructional materials and coaching handouts for the Chicago White Sox Academy. Fox is married to Penny, his real Head Coach, and is lucky to have five children: Paul 31, David 30, Nick 28, Jessica 20, and Greg 18.

Carl Hunckler—Naperville North High School

Carl Hunckler was born in Joliet, one of eight children to Carl and Kathleen Hunckler. He attended Joliet Catholic High School and earned both All-Conference, All-Area recognition in football, baseball, and basketball. During his senior year, Hunckler was a starting defensive back on Coach Gordie Gillespie's first state football championship team. In 1976, he continued his educational and athletic career at the College of St. Francis. Gillespie, John Morrey, and Pat Sullivan all would influence Carl during this time. During his sophomore year the Saints would play in the College World Series. Upon graduation, Hunckler was hired at Joliet Catholic where he would coach both football and baseball for nine years. As a lower-level coach, his teams won over 200 games and several conference titles during an eight year stretch. During his only season (1989) as Catholic's head coach, Hunckler's team won 25 games. In the fall of 1989, Hunckler was hired as the head baseball and assistant football coach at Naperville North. He has held these two roles since

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his arrival. During the twenty years he has been a head coach, Hunckler's teams have won 410 games while losing 249. In addition, his Huskies have recorded seven conference championships and two regional titles. Carl's 1996 Huskies captured the Summer State Championship. Twice Naperville North has placed second in the summer series along with several final eight appearances. Carl and his beautiful wife Debbie are the proud parents of three wonderful children: Carl 23, Ellen 20, and Alyssa 20.

Tom Mueller—Schaumburg High School

Tom graduated from Quigley North Seminary in 1972, where he played baseball for four years and was captain and MVP his senior year. He attended Niles College of Loyola University and played two year of basketball and four years of baseball. He graduated in 1976 with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications. He earned a Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling in 1984 from Roosevelt University and is currently a counselor at Schaumburg High School. Overall, Tom has coached thirty-three years to date. He coached basketball for twenty-two years and was an assistant on the 2001 State Championship team. Tom continues to coach baseball and holds an impressive record. In 1987, Tom joined IHSBCA Hall of Famer Paul Groot as his varsity assistant on the Saxon baseball team. While coaching together for the last 22 years, Paul and Tom earned a State Championship in 1997, State runner-up Championship in 1989, Summer State Championship in 2003, Elite Eight appearance in 2005, a super sectional championship, four sectional championships, 12 regional championships, nine divisional titles, and five Mid-Suburban League Championships. Together they have coached over 500 wins at Schaumburg. Tom and his wife Cynthia reside in Streamwood. They have six adult children and one grandson between them: Anne Marie, Kimberly, and Kevin Mueller; Colleen (Brian) Skotnicki, Elizabeth and Kevin Barrow; and a new grandson, A.J. Skotnicki.

Ron Smith—Olympia High School

Coach Smith graduated from Carthage Community HS in 1971. He was a three-sport All-Stater (football, basketball, baseball) and attended University of New Orleans on a baseball scholarship. He transferred to Monmouth College in 1973 where he continued to play football and baseball. He was voted Division III Baseball All-American. In 1975, he signed with the Milwaukee Brewers. In 1977, Smith began teaching and coaching at Olympia High School where he was assistant coach in football, basketball, and baseball. He was named head football coach in 1980. In his 14 years at football coach, his career record: 60-61 with four play-off appearances-'85, '86, '90, '91; State runner-up in 1985. In 1991, Coach Smith was named head baseball coach which he has been for the last 17 years. Career record: 403-172; two Corn Belt Conference Titles; nine regional championships; six sectional championships, two super-sectional championships; five state final appearances; two state championships in 2002 and 2008. Coach Smith was named Class "A" Baseball Coach of the Year in 2002, inducted into the Monmouth College Hall of Fame in 2003, named Class "2A" Coach of the Year in 2008. His player accomplishments include: 38 college baseball players, seven Division I players, 10 All-State players, and one professional player.

Skip Sullivan—Oak Lawn High School

Skip Sullivan is a 1969 graduate of Oak Lawn High School. He was a three-sport varsity athlete in football, basketball and baseball. He continued his football and baseball careers at Iowa State University. He graduated from ISU in 1973 and returned to his alma mater to teach and coach. Skip retired from teaching in 2006 and continued as part-time athletic director and head baseball coach until 2008. Skip started coaching baseball at Oak Lawn High School in 1980. He was named the head coach in 1994. In the past 14 years, he has won 268 games, two conference championships, and helped many players go on to play Division I, II, and III baseball. Skip's accomplishments as a baseball coach include: 1996 Pitch and Hit Coach of the Year, 1993-94 and 2007-08 Oak Lawn High School Fred Parks Coach of the Year, 1994 and 2000 Worth-Palos Reporter Baseball Coach of the Year, and 2005 SICA Baseball Coach of the Year. He has also coached football, boys and girls' basketball, and golf. Skip is the son of Gene and Doris Sullivan. He has three sisters, Nancy, Janet and Gwen. Skip has been married to his wife, Patti for 35 years and they have two children, Mike and Dana.

Summer Dates

The following are important dates concerning the 2009 Summer baseball season:

Starting Date:	June 15
Regional Play Begins:	July 20
State Tournament:	July 27
Championship Game:	July 31

More News and Notes

Policy change for All-Staters

At its January board meeting, the IHSBCA Board of Directors changed a policy concerning players' All-State eligibility. In the past, in order for a player to be nominated for All-State recognition, he needed to first be named to the All-Area team. Those who were not voted to the All-Area team could not be eligible for All-State recognition.

A problem with this policy is that over the years a few quality players with the statistics and talent to be considered for All-State honors were left off the All-State team because, for various reasons, they were not nominated for the All-Area team.

The policy change being implemented for the upcoming season is that recognition to the All-Area team will no longer be a prerequisite to being eligible to make the All-State team.

Scouts make donation

Steve Breen and a group of professional scouts were pleased to announce that they would be donating \$350 to lung cancer research in the name of Mike Herbert and the Herbert family. Mike, a former major league scout, lost his battle with cancer in 2006.

For the past three years the IHSBCA has honored Mike by awarding a Mike Herbert Distinguished Service Award at its annual Hall of Fame dinner. This year's recipient was Marmion Academy's Jim Reiland.

D'Anza takes on role of Historian for the IHSBCA

This past fall, IHSBCA President Jeff Bonebrake announced that the association would be creating a new position of Historian to its list of Board of Directors. The position will be filled by Tony D'Anza, who will continue to serve on the board as College Liaison and Photographer for the association as well.

D'Anza, former assistant coach for St. Xavier University, felt strongly that there was a real need for a position like Historian for an association like the IHSBCA that has such an interesting and storied past. "I would like to document the association's beginnings, especially for the young coaches we have now," D'Anza said, "so they can see how far we have come." D'Anza seems a perfect fit for the job as he has been an IHSBCA member since 1973 and has been collecting association materials, such as old clinic programs, pictures, and pamphlets for years.

One of D'Anza's goals is to ultimately create a written history of high school baseball in Illinois and post it on the website. He plans to begin his research by conducting interviews of coaches who were a part of the development of the association. First on D'Anza's list of interviewees is former New Trier coach and Hall of Famer Ron Klein, who was one of the original members of the IHSBCA.

If you have any IHSBCA historical items, especially from clinics dating back to the 1960's and 1970's, please give Tony a call at (708) 974-1604 or e-mail him at apd4400@att.net.

Illinois players from the 2008 draft

The state of Illinois was certainly well-represented in last year's Major League Draft. A total of 55 drafted players played either high school or college baseball in Illinois. Listed below is a list of Illinois players and the draft pick number they were chosen. Congratulations to all these players, their families, and their coaches!

25 Christian Friedrich	627 Mike Eifel	1053 John Ruettiger
32 Jacob Odorizzi	637 David Sever	1115 Daniel Jimenez
60 Tyler Ladendorf	684 Austin Wright	1120 Lucas Hileman
62 Thomas Adams	711 Otto Roberts	1138 Joe DeBernardis
116 Kyle Hudson	720 Brett Graffy	1167 Braden Kapteyn
135 Jason Kipnis	724 Kenny Smalley	1206 Wade Kapteyn
137 Phil Hollingsworth	731 David Cales	1260 Steven Sabatino
138 Ryan White	753 Tanner Roark	1349 Julian Kenner
176 Richard Zagone	795 Dean Anna	1377 Lee Fischer
180 Ken Williams	835 Greg Billo	1386 Anthony Zych
240 Kevin Dubler	909 Cody Dunbar	1391 James Cesario
260 Dan Brewer	941 Kyle Wilson	1429 Barrett Serrato
350 Raymond Kruml	943 Trevor Feeney	1448 Rob Scahill
385 John Flanagan	953 Kyle Gaedele	1449 Troy White
393 Edward Koncel	983 Kyle Hunter	1450 Kevin Hoef
397 Lenell McGee	1041 Collin Brennan	1458 Travis Otto
404 Scott Shaw	1044 Tyler Cox	1485 Steven Florence
476 Robert Stevens	1050 Harold Riggins	1504 Kyle Stroup
510 Jonathan Weaver		



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Recently upgraded your baseball facility? Tell us about it!

Over the past few years, many coaches have made amazing renovations/improvements to their program's facilities. The IHSBCA would like to showcase these programs and the work the coaches, players and community members have put into their fields. If you have recently completed any work on your baseball facility (ie. new infield, batting tunnels, bull pens, dug outs, storage buildings, etc.), please send Don Erickson a list/description of the improvements you have made. You can fill out the portion below and send it via mail to Don at Reavis High School, 6034 W. 77th Street, Burbank, IL 60549 or you can e-mail the information to derickson@d220.org. Also, if you have any photographs of the completed work, please sent them in the mail or in an attachment to the e-mail. The Sping newsletter will have the compiled list of teams who have upgraded their facilities, a short description of the improvements, and photographs of some of the renovations.

School:

Head Coach:

Improvements/Renovations: