

# THE ALL-STAR

Official Newsletter of the Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association



Fall 2008

## News and Notes

### Two Illinois coaches posthumously elected to BCA Hall of Fame

Last year the National High School Baseball Coaches Association elected former Oak Park-River Forest coach Jack Kaiser posthumously into its hall of fame.

In his amazing 48 year career as skipper of the Huskies, Kaiser won 892 games, captured the state crown in 1981, and garnered several coach of the year awards.

Coach Kaiser died on March 28, 2000 after a 12-year battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

This year the BCA will induct former Niles West head coach Jim Phipps into its hall of fame.

Phipps, who coached at Niles West for three decades, won 10 conference championships and captured two state titles (1972 and 1975).

Jim, who was a charter member of the BCA, will be inducted posthumously in December.

## Summer state trophy gets a name

The Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association is pleased to announce that beginning in 2009, the summer state championship trophy will be named The Phil Lawler State Trophy in honor of its long-time tournament director.

The IHSBCA Board of Directors voted unanimously in favor of naming the award after Lawler at the September board meeting. President Jeff Bonebrake (Benet Academy) cited the years of tireless dedication and effort Lawler has put into running the summer state tournament as a major reason for honoring the Hall of Fame coach.

Lawler, who is the pitching coach at Naperville Central High School, was extremely humbled by the honor. He commented, "No one gets into coaching for the recognition, but over time when your efforts are noticed, it makes you feel good, especially when the recognition comes from such a great organization like the IHSBCA."

The summer state tournament certainly has flourished under the direction of Lawler. In 1984, when he began his tenure as tournament director, 67 teams played summer baseball. Today, it is 170 teams strong. Lawler is also proud of the fact that each year more teams that are not necessarily from the Chicagoland area are joining the league, including squads like Rock Island.

Lawler has also spearheaded some of the positive changes in the summer state tournament. His "Cream of the Crop" prospect list was one of the first of its kind in the Midwest. Also, for years, the final games of the tournament were played as a four team single elimination tournament. In 1984, Phil introduced the four team double elimination format, the eight team double elimination format in 1986, and the eight team pool play format in 1995. Always attempting to improve his tournament, Phil may make another change by making the final series a combination of pool play and double elimination for 2009.

## On-line seeding in our future?

For the upcoming 2009 season, coaches could see a marked change in the way their team gets seeded for sectional contests. The Illinois Athletic Directors Association and the IHSA advisory committee are looking into the possibility of replacing the traditional seeding meeting with an on-line seeding format.

Essentially, on-line seeding would begin with each coach completing an on-line form describing his team's season. Next, based on the criteria set up by the IHSA and the coaches' comments on the on-line form, voting would be done on the computer by the coaches. Naturally, the biggest change from previous years would be the loss of the face-to-face interaction and discussion that takes place at sectional meetings. Many coaches fear that this new format will make it easier for unethical coaches to rank teams unfairly because they can "hide behind a computer screen."

Dave Gannaway, the new IHSA administrator for baseball, doesn't feel this is such a major issue, however, if coaches are doing their job the right way. "Coaches shouldn't have to meet face-to-face," he commented, "if they are being honest and true. I think 95% of our coaches will do it effectively, and the ones that don't, are probably the ones that aren't being fair in the meetings we have now, anyway."

The IHSA actually experimented with this type of format two years ago when some basketball, soccer, and volleyball sectionals seeded teams by fax rather than during a meeting.

Whether the on-line seeding format is implemented or not could be determined later this month by Illinois principals' votes.



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### Recent Milestones in Victories

<u>Coach</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Wins</u>
Greg DeCoursey	Marquette Catholic	600
Blayne Smith	Cobden	600
Jim Workman	Tremont	400
Neal Bertram	Rockford Lutheran	300
Dale Hartman	Byron	300
Gregg Wikierak	Marian Central	300
Brian Wujcik	Richards	300
Chris Hawkins	Normal West	200
Steve Stanicek	Lockport Township	200
Ron Czarnecki	Oak Forest	100

### Coaching Milestones Form

The IHSBCA would like to recognize high school and college head coaches who have recently reached a milestone in career wins (ie. 100, 200, 300, etc.) The names of these individuals will be published in our next newsletter. If you reached a milestone in the spring of 2008, please fill out the following form and mail it to the address listed below.

Milestone Victory #: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Years Coaching: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Present School: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
 Reavis High School  
 Attn: Don Erickson  
 6034 W. 77th Street  
 Burbank, IL 60459