

Dick Pobanz, Decatur, IL



Hall of Famer Dick Pobanz, left, throws the ceremonial first pitch as he stands next to catcher Tim Hamann of the Quad City Sox during the 2009 ISC World Fastball Tournament opening ceremonies on Friday at the Greenvalley Sports Complex in Moline.

Stephanie Makosky

Ask Dick Pobanz his most memorable moment of a career that started as a 13-year-old in 1940 and ended with a shutout at the age of 53 in the 1980 ISC World Tournament — yes, he remembers it was a 2-0 victory over Ogden, Utah, while pitching for MONY (Mutual of New York) — and you might as well settle in for a conversation worthy of extra innings. In 1956, Pobanz pitched all seven ballgames for his Siebren Hybrids of Geneseo, IL., finishing in second to the Long Beach Nitehawks, dropping a 1-0 decision in the final. Pobanz would go on to coach with Decatur in the 1980s and 90s, winning an ISC title in 1984 and finishing second in 1987.

Dick was well-known for his softball talent both as player and coach. An outstanding pitcher and hitter, he played the game for 40 years. In 1956, he led the Geneseo Sieben Hybrids team to the World Softball Tournament, and was named to the All-American Softball Team. He went on to lead 13 All-State softball teams and earn numerous league and tournament honors. In 1988, he was inducted into the International Softball Congress Hall of Fame. He is featured in the book “Quad Cities Sports Greats,” by Brad Baraks.

In retirement, Dick moved to Texas to be near his family ... and the golf course. Ever the fierce competitor, he continued coaching and golfing well into his 87th year. On the golf course, he consistently scored below his age, humbling younger golfers on a daily basis.