

## Jack Fireman, Toronto, ON



The tale began simply and modestly - Jack Fireman grew up in Toronto and played elementary school softball. Dedicated to academics, Jack received multiple degrees from University of Toronto (BA); Osgoode Hall Law School (LLB); New York University (LLM) and was appointed as Queen's Counsel.

At this time in his life, Jack became hooked on softball, initially in the lawyers' co-ed lobb- ball league, where, not surprisingly, his team did not lose a game in five years. In 1992, friends Mark Bendahan and Bob Green successfully engaged Jack in fastball, and the York Merchants became the York Gators (short for LitiGators in deference to Jack's legal career).

His squad instantly became a competitive force. In their 1993 ISC debut season, Jack's Toronto Gators became the first Canadian team to win the coveted ISC Championship,

downing the powerhouse Sioux City IA NHCD. A week later in Waterloo ON, Gators captured the first of three Canadian Championships. In 1994, Gators lost the championship game to Green Bay WI All-Car Roadrunners, but followed up with a 2nd ISC title in 1995. That second run-to-the-championship featured the memorable epic 11-game win-streak following the Gators' surprising opening round loss.

In 1999, following a two-year hiatus, the team re-emerged as the Oshawa Gators. In 2002-03, Jack aligned with the Waterloo Twins, finishing 3rd and 5th respectively. Jack's sponsorship has been significant as well for the Maccabi Canada program, providing eligible players opportunities to compete in Israel in the "Jewish Olympics".

In 2010, with an emphasis on local players, the Toronto Gators were yet again resurrected and continue to compete in the ISC. Jack Fireman is many things to many people. To the fastball world he is passionate, generous, competitive, flamboyant – and a winner. In 2016, the Gators would win their third ISC Championship, while his 1990s Gators won the Legends Championship. It would be the final year for the Gators organization.

Jack is staunchly loyal to his alumni and has rekindled enthusiasm in his 1990s players highlighted by a gold medal at the 2013 World Masters' games in Italy, and continuing participation in the ISC Masters competitions. Citing his own personal greatest accomplishment, Jack stated "keeping a group of guys together for 22 years and building close personal friendships with the boys. Little did I know when I started down this road in 1992, that some of my closest friends would come from the Gator fraternity". In response to his opinion on the most memorable players, Jack shared that Darren Zack was the best pitcher, Mark Sorenson the best hitter and relative new-comer Ben Enoka is the best all-round player.

While Jack's career as a trial lawyer for half a century has earned him prosperity and respect in the legal profession, his quarter century in fastball has truly been equally as successful. Jack is the proud father of son James, who with wife Emily have provided grandson Sam, and daughter Belinda who has twin daughters Olivia and Zoe, and son Cyrus.