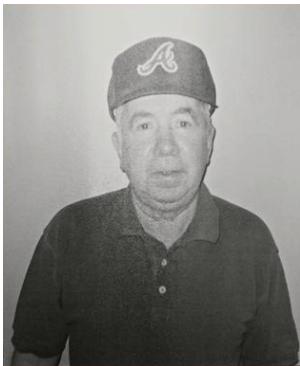


James Rubbelke - HoF - 2003

James T. Rubbelke, St. Paul, Minnesota (Nomination submitted by Tom Rubbelke, Maplewood, MN) Born - March 30, 1939 in Devils Lake, ND



In the 1950's, Jim, at age 17 responded to a request from his Uncle Ben to play a little fastpitch with the local Clover Club squad. Three years later, Jim donned the colors of the local 7-Up team in the St. Paul Classic League and had the luxury of going to the ASA Tournament in Long Island, NY. At the 1962 ASA National Tournament in Stratford, he and team-mate Ed Mathias were named all-stars as part of his team's 4th place finish.

In 1963, he was invited to join the prestigious Raybestos Cardinals in Stratford, CN. For spring training '64, Jim moved the family to the east coast, and worked and played ball for Raybestos. Jim fondly remembers his days with Raybestos, synonymous with men's/women's softball dynasty in the 60's. He played four years displaying cat-like defense at the hot-corner, and offensively, utilized a talent for bunting to capitalize on his legendary speed - while also unloading screamers to the outfield.

In 1971, Jim retired as a player and enthusiastically tackled a new role as team manager. For nineteen years, he assumed a myriad of responsibilities, managing, scheduling, fundraising and doing whatever it took to keep his St. Paul teams - Whitaker Buick, Arctic Cat, The All American Bar and Stroh's Gatsby competitive with the nation's best.

The All-American Bar club became involved in the ISC following an ASA ruling about player eligibility. Many in Minnesota were not that familiar with the ISC, nor vice-versa. The Bar "niners" quickly raised eyebrows in their first-ever appearance at the ISC World Tournament in Long Beach, CA,

in 1976. Scheduled against the always-tough Long Beach Nitehawks, The Bar rode stingy pitching by Al DeWall (the eventual '76 Most Valuable Pitcher) to win 1-0 in extra innings. That was the start of a memorable week that culminated with The Bar beating all comers... and returning to "The Land of 1000 Lakes" as ISC World Champions. Following that awesome championship debut, Jim's teams' made 13 more consecutive ISC appearances, including a pair of 4th place finishes in '78 and '81.

In 1977, Jim channeled his energy into establishing a local ISC league, and it quickly flourished to its current niche in the mid-west north. With Jim, the ISC may never have become established in Minnesota - quite simply, Jim was the "backbone of fastpitch softball" in the St. Paul area for more than 30 years

Jim recalls the infield of The All American Bar team with Tim Egan (1B), Jim McDonald (2B), and brothers Jerry (SS) and Danny (3B) O'Connor, and raves about the talents of shortstop Jerry who was "as good as anyone in the country".

Jim is a local softball icon, given his induction into the St. Paul and the Minnesota State Softball Halls of Fame. He works for 3M Tartan Park, and with wife Barbara, the Rubbelke family includes six children - Patty, Suzanne, Joan, Jim, Anne and Katy, and has grown to include 15