

Jimmy Moore



One thing was obvious during the heyday of fastpitch softball: If you were on the field with Jimmy Moore, you wanted him on your side.

The strapping pitcher from Butte Falls was the best in the world for a good chunk of the 1980s.

Jimmy Moore was born in Medford and graduated from Butte Falls in 1973. He now lives in Everett, Washington, largely because his phenomenal pitching for Blitz attracted the attention of one of the best teams in the country.

Moore didn't begin pitching until Ron Sizemore — himself a state hall-of-famer from Butte Falls — began tutoring the then 22-year-old.

In the late 1970s, Moore refined his riseball, dropball and changeup and dominated offenses.

It was an unlikely happenstance that Moore wound up with Blitz in 1980 and led them to nationals.

That year, Moore pitched for D&D Radiator out of Butte Falls and led it to the Jackson County Softball Association (JCSA) title, ending a string of six straight championships by Malot's Mudhens. But before the state playoffs, Moore was in a motorcycle accident and wasn't his usual overpowering self.

The top three teams advanced from state to the Northwest Regional, and Gary Glass recalled Blitz facing D&D and trailing 6-1 entering the top of the seventh.

"Jimmy Moore has probably never given up six runs in an inning in his life," said Glass.

But he did this time, and Blitz eliminated D&D, 7-6.

Teams could add players for regionals, and Moore was only part way through the handshake line when Blitz snagged him.

"We got him, right on the field," said Glass, adding that Malot's tried to land Moore moments later.

With Moore's right arm and its own booming bats, Blitz won the regional in Missoula, Montana, then headed to nationals in Oswego, New York.

Blitz was the first Southern Oregon team to advance to the 64-team national finals, where it lost, 2-1 in 10 innings. Nevertheless, Moore was the most valuable player and was mobbed by New York fans at game's end.

Blitz hoped it was a marriage made in heaven, said Gary Glass, but teams with deeper pockets came calling.

The following year, Moore was recruited by a Florida team he had ousted at nationals. As he drove east to join it, he got word from his father that a Seattle team had a nice offer on the table: join it for three days in Hawaii, then three weeks in New Zealand. He would pitch for the team, no strings attached.

Moore turned around, went to Seattle and stayed.

“We were thinking we were going to destroy the world the next year,” said Gary Glass, “because Jimmy was just getting better and better.”

Blitz returned to nationals in 1981 and placed fifth.

Moore retired from major fastpitch competition in 1992.

His Seattle team won three ASA open national titles and three International Softball Congress World Tournaments from 1982-90.

In 1985, it became the first team to win those championships and the gold medal at the National Sports Festival, earning the Triple Crown. Seattle repeated the feat the next year. During those two years, Moore was 104-9.

He was named all-world four times and three times was the MVP of the ASA nationals and ISC tournament.