



Bruce Bierman - HoF - 2018

Bruce Bierman, 75 of Ayr ON has enjoyed a lengthy career in softball, initially as player and coach, and later as an umpire and official.

Born in Waterloo in his grandparents' home, he initially lived in Erbsville and at age nine moved to New Dundee. Softball was a fixture in rural communities and Bruce recalls playing whenever the weather permitted, and he also participated in basketball, football and volleyball while attending Waterloo Oxford High School.

Following graduation he was offered football scholarships at two Canadian universities, but he opted to stay at home and help on the farm.

His fastball career continued into his thirties with the New Dundee and Ayr Intermediate teams and he also played in the Kitchener Fastball League for several years. His team won an Ontario Rural Softball Association title and Bruce pitched in several league All-Star games.

Later, he coached his daughter Laurie's teams for a number of years – ironically when Laurie married, her father-in-law was one of Bruce's first catchers – Orlan Weber. In due course, Bruce ventured into officiating, initially as a member of the Hespeler ON Umpires Association.

In 1985 he was appointed the Zone 3 UIC for Softball Ontario and the following year became the UIC for the Ontario ISC Travel League. In 1987, he assumed the role as the Umpire in Chief for ISC qualifiers.

In 1997, Bruce achieved his Level 5 Designation from Softball Canada at the Senior Men's Canadian Championship in Victoria BC, and two years later, umpired in the PAN AM games in Winnipeg MB. Bruce served as the UIC for the inaugural ISC II Tournament in Kitchener in 2002 and then again in 2006.

In 2006, he also assumed the role of UIC for the ISC and has held that position for twelve years. Bruce acknowledges Bill Weichel, his high school Phys Ed instructor, for teaching game rules in his early years as a basketball official and Gus Kitzman for inviting Bruce into the Hespeler Umpires Association in his early softball officiating days.

Bruce worked as an insurance broker for many years and upon semi-retirement, he commenced a career that is now eighteen years strong working for the Ontario Lottery Gaming Corporation at Casino Brantford.

As well, Bruce enjoys wood-working, gardening and has accumulated a small coin collection as well as 150 antique coal oil lamps.

With his spouse Cheryl Henhawk, they have four children – Debbie, Laura, Christa and Jeff - and are blessed with ten grandchildren.

Bruce was recognized as a "Legend" in the Officials category of the Kitchener-Woodstock based Legends of Softball tournament in 2008, and was inducted into the Softball Canada Hall of Fame in Winnipeg MB in 2015. For the ISC, Bruce has been a valued and well-respected official and leader in the ISC for thirty years.