

Tom Downey III - 50 Years of Baseball

Tom Downey began playing baseball in 1957 in the Amenia Little League, going on to Babe Ruth, Junior League, Webutuck High School team, Sharon Legion #2 team, and the Amenia Monarchs - a baseball career lasting over 50 years.

In all those years, however, the event Tom Downey is most proud of, including his own induction into the Dutchess County Baseball Hall of Fame in 2001, is the dedication and opening of the 'Doc' Bartlett field at Beekman Park June 10, 1984. Of all his trophies and honors, Downey's most treasured object is the baseball that opened that field. Doc Bartlett presented the baseball to Tom that day.

In 1967 Joe Carroll was Tom's first coach on the Monarchs, and by 1972 Tom himself was coaching the team. John McEniff and Pat Caldarelli told Tom, "you get the players - we'll raise the money".

Downey's long coaching career continues up to the present day. It includes three years coaching Little League; Senior League; Connie Mac from 1990 to 1994 and from 1998 to 2000; Monarchs from 1972 to 1995, during which the team won nine championships; Sharon American Legion in 1995; and a return to the Monarchs in 2004, where he continues to coach today.

The work on Beekman Park facilities was of great importance to Downey. The first game was played on the Little League field in 1983, and the 'Doc' Bartlett field opened in 1984. The softball field was dedicated to Bob Coons in 1985. The lights were installed about 1990. Most of the work there was completed by many volunteers. Bud McDonald volunteered and maintained the fields from '91 to '95.

Ron Lyon wrote about Tom when he was honored by being inducted into the DC Hall of Fame:

"Tom Downey was an All-Dutchess County selection at Webutuck Central in 1967, after posting a .478 batting average. He played his entire semi-pro career with the Amenia Monarchs in the Tri-State Baseball League from 1967 to 1995, where he won multiple MVP awards, including being the top hitter of the league in 1980 with a .528 mark. In 1967, he hit three home runs and had nine RBI in a playoff game versus Lakeville. He was player-manager from 1972 to 1995 and led the team to several championships. Downey coached the Mid-County Senior League All-Stars (1996-1998) and the Connie Mack League (1993-1995 and 1999-2001) and won championships in 1995 and 2000 before returning to coach the Monarchs again in the Tri-State Baseball League in 2004 and serves as an advisor on the Tri-State Board of Directors. Downey was part of the volunteer committee that designed, built and raised money for Amenia Park, where Bartlett Field is. Lights were added in 1990. In addition, he was the chairman of the Park Commission, took care of all the scheduling and also took care of Bartlett Field with his uncle Bud McDonald. Downey was never in it for the glory - just

to give kids a place to play baseball. "

Tom's current coaching work with the Amenia Monarchs is well documented on the Amenia Town Website at:
<http://ameniany.gov/orgs/Monarchs.htm>.

Additional Notes:

- In 2007 at the Tri-State Old-Timers game held at "Doc" Bartlett field the service road at Beekman Park was officially named "Downey Drive" in recognition for his achievements and generosity.