WHEN A GUY NAMED JOE MANAGED THE MONARCHS

Amenia has always been a baseball town

Joe Carroll (far right) running a game with "Doc" Bartlett keeping score (center)

Between 1961 and 1973 the Amenia Monarchs won 3 championships, changed leagues once, and were involved in protests in 1961 and 1966 that were decided by League officials, one for and the other against the team. They were also the years when Joe Carroll took on the management of the team on which he had been playing since the late 1950's and continued to play as needed. He took his baseball very seriously, was dedicated to all aspects of the game including care of the field, and a spirited contender who did not hesitate to question a play.

Joseph Carroll, is an Amenia native who attended local schools, worked locally, served in the military during the Korean War, raised his family in the town of his birth, and lives in the region.. He played basketball and baseball while in Amenia High School. He was a member of the high school baseball team that won the Bi-Valley Championship in 1950.

As a member of the Amenia Monarchs team in the late 1950's he played in the1957 no-hit, no-run playoff final, a thriller that was won by Canaan "between the snowflakes" as was recorded by Doc Bartlett. In 1959 the Monarchs won the regular season Inter-State League Championship. Some of Joe's teammates who were on both of these teams were: Babe Foley, Cart Bates, Bud McDonald, Joe Kain, with Roger Callahan catching and Cliff Savage, Bud Brandow and Billy Ostrom sharing the pitching duties.

Amenia, always known for its competitive play, did not change when Joe assumed leadership of the club in 1961. That year the Monarchs won the Inter-State Play-off Championships and had four out of sixteen of the Leagues Leading Hitters Batting Over .300. They were Cart Bates who won the batting crown with a .450 average, and Cliff Savage .370, Billy Ostrom .357 and Howie Mann .351. Howie Mann had joined the lineup at second base that year and became their lead-off hitter for over two decades.

Joe also led the team to the Championships in 1968 and 1969, now the Tri-State League. In 1968 Amenia, as the underdog team with a 5-5 record, won against first place Winsted with an 8-2 record. In 1969 they won against Lakeville with 16 year old Bill Bartlett III pitching, and hitting in the winning runs. In the early 1970's Tom Downey III joined the club as a pitcher, and a pitcher who could hit. The team was now benefiting from the youth leagues and the Webutuck School programs in which many of these young men had participated. Added to the veterans already on the team, Joe's Monarchs remained in contention between 1970-1973 as either runner-up, tied for first place or in the League playoffs.

Cart Bates, long-time teammate, said that Joe C was great in the outfield, very competitive, hated to lose, was strictly a team player; and took care of the field at the Amenia School grounds where they played during those years. The players wanted to win for him, Cart added. Joe Kain, a teammate in both high school and on the Monarchs, said that when Joe C. reacted to a team event it was always for the team's benefit. He also remembered Joe C. working along with Bud McDonald to take care of the field. Myron, "Mike" Bates said that Joe C. could sure chase balls down out there in the outfield, and if he was a player short he went to find one. He laughingly recalled the time Joe C came after him at his home. "I changed my clothes right in the car", Mike said. On the other hand if there was a player missing, manager Joe would cover the position himself. 1971 local newsprint told of how "Joe was pressed into service as a catcher when the regular receiver failed to show up".

So here's to you Joseph Carroll, Sr. for all the years you kept Amenia's baseball legacy alive. MANY, MANY, THANKS.

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