

## **2008 Hall of Fame Inductee Robert 'Bus' Campbell – Fort Morgan**

Robert “Bus” Campbell was born in Fort Morgan and moved to Denver when he was 8 years old. He died from an unfortunate fall at the age of 87. He is survived by his wife Helen, Daughters Patricia, Cindy, and Sandy; and his son, Gary. Another son, Randy Campbell, who coached baseball at Heritage High School, died in 1987.

Bus graduated from Denver Manual High School in 1939 where he lettered in three sports including baseball, basketball, and football. He became a member of Manual State Basketball Champions in 1938.

After high school, Bus became a member of the United States Coast Guard from 1942 until 1945. He attended the University of Denver and graduated in 1959 with a Bachelor’s degree in Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

For the next 22 years, Bus worked as a physical education teacher in the Littleton Public Schools, and in 1970 his efforts earned him the honor of Littleton Public Servant of the Year. While teaching, Bus also maintained careers as a major league talent scout and a local pitching coach. It was as a pitching coach that he distinguished himself as one of the best in the business.

Bus coached with numerous organizations including local high schools, colleges, the American Legion and High School baseball. Soon becoming involved with the program at the University of Colorado and eventually becoming a key member of the highly successful Boulder Collegians Semi-Pro baseball team.

He began scouting in 1951 with the Milwaukee Braves and his career as a major league talent hunter spans 30 years with five different clubs. Many a young Colorado man got his chance in professional baseball because of Bus Campbell.

Bus was scouting for the Blue Jays when he began working with the Arvada 14-year-old Roy Halladay in 1995. Toronto drafted Halladay in the first round out of Arvada West High School. That Christmas, Halladay gave a grandfather clock to Bus "because he's like a grandfather to me." Roy spoke regularly with Bus about pitching fine points after his games, which Bus watched regularly via the satellite dish Roy gave to him.

As a pitching coach, Bus has distinguished himself as a man without peer in Colorado. No less than 82 of his former pupils have gone on to pitch professionally in the Major Leagues. Some of that long list includes Roy Halladay, Burt Hooton, Mark Huismann, Scott Elarton, Jamie Moyer, Brian Fisher, Bob Welch, Brad Lidge, Danny Jackson, Ed Lunch, Craig Lefferts, Tim Lollar, Jay Howell, Mark Knudson, Mike Trujillo, Darrel Akerfelds, George Frazier, Clint Zavaras, Steve Busby, Dick Ruthven, and Nick Willhite.

In 1985, 25 former Campbell pupils pitched in the Major Leagues, winning 107 games, and saving 80 more. They appeared in a total of 731 major league games!

During a reception in Colorado Springs honoring Gossage’s election to the Baseball Hall of Fame, Rich "Goose" Gossage made special mention of Bus. He said most pitchers who came out of this area lost one of their biggest mentors. "Bus Campbell was at the top of the chart as a pitching coach and as a person. He broke down pitching in terms that everyone could

understand. I didn't meet Bus until later in my career, but he helped add three or four years to my career."

Bus Campbell is unique among nominees for this prestigious honor. He does not have a head coaching record, nor is he a household name. He has preferred to remain in the background, gaining all his satisfaction from the success of those with whom he has worked. He has never sought any kind of reward for this work; instead, he settles for quiet satisfaction when he sees former pupils achieving widespread acclaim. To compliment the established players, he adds a new crop of Campbell pupils he was proud to coach like Mark Langston, Danny Jackson, and Brian Fisher.

It has been well publicized that Colorado has turned out more than its fair share of professional baseball players. It is no coincidence that most of them are pitchers; Bus Campbell has been a major reason. Many of us owe our careers to him.