

1990 Hall of Fame Inductee Julius “Julie” Carabello – Denver

Julius “Julie” Carabello was involved in baseball since growing up in Curtis Park and playing for Sacred Heart Elementary School and Sacred Heart High School, where he graduated in 1935.

He continued his involvement with baseball when he coached St. Joseph’s High School before joining the Navy to serve in World War II. The Navy recognized his talent and passion for athletics, assigning him coaching duties for the Navy’s recreational basketball and baseball teams stationed in the Philippines Islands. He coached a team anchored by Dom DiMaggio, among other outstanding players serving their country.

After returning from his service in the Navy, he co-founded an organization called the Junior Parochial League. The JPL provided organized athletics to Catholic elementary school students, many of whom would eventually play for the Parochial League, Denver’s Catholic High School league. An iteration of the JPL continues today, having thrived for nearly 70 years.

As the co-founder and longtime director of the JPL, he introduced innovations like girl’s sports, weight-classifications to boys playing football, consolation brackets for the annual postseason basketball tournament, and enrollment classifications to ensure competitive fairness. He was not only the face of the JPL; his energy and commitment were the engine which drove the organization.

His passion for sports morphed into officiating and umpiring, resulting in an outstanding career as a baseball umpire. Julie was rated the top umpire in the region, according to polls conducted by local and regional college coaches. He umpired hundreds of games for the University of Colorado, as the Umpire in Chief for longtime coaches Frank “Chief” Prentup and Irv Brown.

Other colleges he worked for were CSU, AFA, DU, Wyoming and UNC. When he wasn’t umpiring these colleges, he worked for the Boulder Collegians, National Baseball Congress tournaments, Denver Post Tournaments at Merchants Park, and an event he cherished, the Junior College World Series in Grand Junction. He served as UIC for Sam Suplizio in the Junior College World Series for many years. He also worked NCAA Regional Tournament games in Albuquerque and Salt Lake City.

Julie was invited to Florida to train as a professional umpire, but family obligations prevented him pursuing this opportunity. But he found the thrill of calling balls and strikes for major league players in exhibition games in Denver, when he was hired to umpire major league teams which annually played exhibition games at Bears Stadium after they broke camp from spring training. He was the alternate umpire for the Denver Bears, filling in occasionally for an injured or ill minor league umpire. He was also the UIC for a barnstorming MLB “All Star” game which found its way to Denver a couple times in the mid-1950s.

Julie founded and was the President of the Rocky Mountain Umpires Association for many years, leading and enhancing the status and professional development of umpires across the Front Range. After Rocky Mountain Umpires Association, Aurora Umpires and Umpires Association of Colorado combined, Julie

became the first president CHSBUA and presided from 1963 to 1975.

He was awarded a Pioneer Award by the Colorado Rockies in 1997, recognizing his impact on baseball in Colorado. This award is a permanent enshrinement in the press room at Coors Field.

In addition to coaching, he was an area sub-scout for the Pittsburgh Pirates and the New York Mets for close to two decades.

Carabello passed away in 2008, but his impact on baseball – especially umpiring - lives on today