
Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County



Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

October 2011

Lakewood Rod and Gun Club Donates to CSHOF Fund



The Lakewood Rod and Gun Club recently made a donation to the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame Non-Endowment Fund established at the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation to assist with the renovation project currently underway at the CSHOF.

Larry Dorler (left), president of the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club made the presentation to Russ Ecklund (right), secretary of the CSHOF.

Ecklund stated, "We sincerely appreciate the generosity of our friends at the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club. We have enjoyed a fine working relationship with the Club. They always do a fabulous job as the host site of our annual induction banquet. This money will help us purchase paint, carpet and other supplies needed for our expansion."

Julian Buesink Family Donates Racing Films

Vicki Fiet and Bev Weber, daughters of 1950 NASCAR National Championship car owner Julian Buesink, have donated 27 reels of rare 1950s stock car racing film to the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame. The 8mm home movies were taken by Buesink at various tracks where he competed during his pioneering career as a car owner in both NASCAR and MARC (Midwest Association for Race Cars).



Vicki Fiet, Randy Anderson, Bev Weber

Julian Buesink (1921-1998) was a resident of Findley Lake and owned automobile dealerships in several locations in Chautauqua County and northwest Pennsylvania. In 1949 he first became involved in NASCAR with drivers Bill Rexford of Conewango Valley and Lloyd Moore of Frewsburg. The following year Rexford won the NASCAR championship and Moore finished fourth in Buesink owned race cars.

Buesink was active in the sport of stock car racing for nearly 40 years. Among other drivers who wheeled his cars were NASCAR legends Cale Yarborough, Buddy Baker, Jim Paschal, and Fireball Roberts. Local driving aces Jim Scott, Tom Dill, Bob Duell, Floyd Fanale, Paul Wilson, Fred Knapp and Marty Rater also steered Buesink prepped machines.

Julian's outstanding contributions to the sport were recognized with his 2009 posthumous induction into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame.

The Buesink home movies show racing action at such tracks as Daytona Beach (FL), Langhorne (PA), Detroit (MI), Canfield (OH), Grand Rapids (MI), Thompson (CT), Dayton (OH), Martinsville (VA), Darlington (SC), Hillsboro (NC) and Bainbridge (OH). The races are from 1951 through 1958.

“We are extremely excited and honored to receive these vintage racing films from the Buesink family,” stated Randy Anderson, president of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame. “They offer a rare insider’s look at the early days of NASCAR and MARC stock car racing from the perspective of one of the pre-eminent car owners of the time. I sincerely thank Bev and Vicki for their important contribution that helps us preserve the legacy of Julian Buesink.”

Collins Construction Assists in CSHOF Renovation

John Collins, owner of Collins Construction Co. in Jamestown, has designed and built a doorway that allows passage between the existing room and the newly acquired space at the CSHOF. All labor and material were contributed in honor of John’s great-uncle, Louis Collins, a 1995 inductee.

“John Collins is a long-time friend and supporter of the mission of the CSHOF,” President Randy Anderson noted. “We are so very appreciative that he shared his skill, expertise and resources on this project in memory of Louie.”



Louis Collins was born in Jamestown on December 4, 1890. He played left end and was captain of the 6-0-1 Jamestown High School football team of 1909, which outscored its opponents 102-22 with four shutouts. Collins performed at end for three seasons, weighing only 128 pounds and was fast as a deer in the open field.

In the spring of 1910, he played third base on the 7-0 baseball squad that outscored the opposition 59-16. While in high school, Collins also went out for basketball, but the team was disbanded when some of the players made off with a tub of ice cream left in the gym for a teachers’ party.

Collins graduated in 1910 and played baseball, football and basketball at the YMCA and was one of the original members of the well-known Spirals basketball team. His baseball career ended, believe it or not, when he hurt his arm throwing green apples. While playing for the YMCA football team, he was on the field the day the locals whipped Alfred University, 88-0, in a scrimmage. The Alfred team was so banged up it was forced to postpone its next game.

Collins performed for the All-Jamestown football team, an independent outfit noted for its big men, but Collins certainly held his own for several seasons although he was only 5-foot-5 and 120 pounds. “It was a thrill of a lifetime for me to be asked to play with those fellows,” said Collins in an article written by the late *Post-Journal* sports editor Frank Hyde.

For eight years, he was a basketball standout for the Spirals. The latter played the finest clubs in Jamestown, Buffalo, Cleveland, Syracuse and Rochester. They lost to the famed Buffalo Germans, winners of the Pan-American games, by only a 62-60 count in Buffalo.

Collins started Collins Sport Shop on East Third Street in Jamestown in 1914. It had two locations on East Third Street before moving to Cherry Street where it went out of business in the latter part of the 1980s. It also had a store at the Chautauqua Mall.

He formed the Chautauqua County Baseball League in 1921 and that league is now known as the County-Grape Belt League. It is the longest continuous operating amateur baseball league in the country.

Collins put together Class A, B, C, and D Baseball Leagues in Jamestown and formed softball leagues for both men and women. His major effort was obtaining sponsors. "I tramped the streets for many miles and about every road in the county looking for people to back the sports programs," he stated.

He attended the national semi-pro tournament at Wichita one year with the Jamestown team. There he was presented a plaque by Ray Dumont, who headed up the National Semi-Pro Baseball Congress in appreciation of his efforts for sandlot baseball.

One of Collins' major promotions in baseball was bringing the New York State Semi-Pro Tournament to Municipal Stadium, now Russell E. Diethrick, Jr. Park.

He also formed tennis, ping-pong, dart ball and softball tournaments as well as promoting the first college football game in the city when the Kiwanis Club sponsored the appearance of St. Bonaventure and Waynesburg at the old Washington Junior High School Field.

Kit Klein, an Olympic gold medalist, and Charlie Jewtraw, another Olympic winning skater, along with Bobby McLean were nationally known ice skaters brought to Jamestown by Collins for appearances. Additionally, Collins was able to bring in the famed woman golfer, Babe Zaharias, who also excelled at track and basketball.

Collins and Murray Davidson organized the Jamestown Skeet Club with Louie being the first secretary. He also staged the first ice carnival held at Lakewood Skating Rink on Chautauqua Lake. For several years he was also secretary for basketball, football and softball leagues around the area. Collins formed the American Air Cadets, a model airplane building club which had several hundred members. Boating was a hobby for Collins and once he took a speedboat to races in Detroit and returned with \$500 for his feats. Collins attended hundreds of banquets in which he passed out trophies as well as received many.

Before the city named Jim Sharp as its first salaried city recreation director years ago, people would come to Collins to start a league or to put across some sports promotion. Louie laughingly called himself "Jamestown's non-salaried city recreation director."

Louis Collins passed away on November 22, 1983. He was inducted into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame in 1995.

For additional articles about Louie Collins visit
<http://www.chautauquasportshalloffame.org/louiscollins.php>

To make a charitable contribution to the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame Non-Endowment Fund, please go to the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation's website
<http://www.crcfonline.org/Donors/DonateNow/tabid/332/txtSearch/sport/ProductID/1070/Default.aspx>