



NYSHPA Hall of Fame Nomination

Harold Uncapher

We would highly recommend that Harold be accepted into the NYSHPA Hall of Fame. Our nomination of Harold is based on him being an excellent pitcher and a great promoter of our sport. Harold has been and still is a very active pitcher and a very involved member of the NYSHPA for the past 28 years, during which time he has been an exemplary example of good sportsmanship and commitment to the sport of horseshoes in WNY and throughout the state.

Harold began playing horseshoes at age 18 and had many accomplishments as a non-sanctioned player in many of our local WNY clubs and tavern leagues, which led him to become a sanctioned NYS player in 1987. As an active NYSHPA player Harold has averaged 12 to 25 tournaments per year and one year he had played in 31 tournaments. From 1987 thru 1997 Harold dominated the Town of Hamburg tournaments, both singles and doubles, where he usually finished first in one or both classes. Harold has been a member of the East Eden HSC for 50 years and was one of the top players in that club from both the 40 and 30 foot pitching platforms. Through his outstanding play Harold has encouraged many WNY players to get sanctioned and stay involved with our sport. As a forty foot pitcher Harold threw a one flip shoe and averaged 55% and has been one of NYSHPA best flippers and was one of the first to make our NYS championship class as a flipper. Among his accomplishments Harold had won 23 class champion patches. He had placed in the top three positions in his classes 19 out of 27 years of pitching. Harold due to medical problems moved up to the 30 foot elders class in 2008 and worked his way back up the ladder to become one of the first flippers to win both class and championship rounds. In 2009 Harold won the Elders Championship, 2010 he won the Elders A class and the championship, 2011 Elders class A and he also won the A class in 2010 & 2011 at the State warm-up tournaments in Leroy. Harold then repeated his winning ways by again taking the Elders class A and Championship in 2012. Harold averaged 56% to 65% during this time, again making him one of the top 30 foot flippers in NYS. Entered in the 2014 World Tournament, his first, Harold went on to win his elders class.

Harold's pitching accomplishments say a lot about his abilities but do not justify the numerous things he has done for the sport of horseshoes in our State.

Harold as a 50 year member of the East Eden HSC did more than just pitch he was one of the founders and was very active in the construction of the courts, maintenance of the club, arranged for a truck from his fire hall to make the installation of the lights a much easier task, organized many club vs. club tournaments and has been very helpful in buying and preparing food and beverages for the weekly club league.

Harold was also one of the founders of the Cowboys and Indians HSC in WNY and was the club president for 9 years. During this time he arranged many tournaments in WNY between our local clubs and our friends to the north in Canada. As a player Harold was a great ambassador for horseshoes and over the years was very encouraging to many players who also became sanctioned players in the NYSHPA. Harold also went on to organize a 1st time event and, through many hours of hard work and perseverance getting through all the red tape and hurdles, he arranged for the WNY players to have a fun tournament at the Collins Correction Facility with the inmates. The Collins Facility was very grateful for all of his efforts and Harold donated two pair of shoes to the top inmate players so they could continue to pitch upon their release.

For 20 years Harold arranged picnics, set up portable courts and conducted tournaments for the Woodlawn Fire Company. He also assembled and donated the many

trophies awarded at these events, thus helping many WNY players get involved and become part of the NYSHPA.

Harold also became involved in the Indoor horseshoe Pits in Hamburg where he devoted much of his time and work to help get them up and running. Harold was also responsible for getting many tournaments set up there with local clubs and our Canadian pitchers. He was also involved with the leagues that played there 3 to 4 nights weekly.

Harold also got involved in the Forestville HSC where he played in many tournaments and helped as tournament director for many of them. He made several generous donations to Forestville which included printing of the weekly league score sheets, brooms, shovels, rakes, number plates and a sign for the club.

Harold became an active committee member for the 2014 World Horseshoe Tournament and devoted much time during the 2 1/2 years of preparation. During the tournament he spent many hours in the practice courts assuring everything ran smoothly and everyone got the time to pitch.

Harold has also been pitching shoes in Canada at the Hamilton HSC for 20 years. During the last ten years he has consistently placed 1st or 2nd in the numerous tournaments he has played there. He has also attended and played in the Elmer Hohl Tournament in Wellsley Ont. for the past 15 years. He has been a very good ambassador for the NYSHPA by inviting and bringing many WNY pitchers to play in Canada and also bringing many Canadian players to WNY clubs, many came to our sanctioned tournaments at the Horseshoe Palace and the Forestville HSC. This has gone a long way to forming many lasting friendships, great competition, and promoting sanctioned horseshoes in WNY.

Harold has also been a local distributor, in WNY & Canada, for White Horseshoes for 30 years. Harold kept many shoes on hand allowing pitchers to try several different shoes, thus helping many players decide which shoes were right for them. He also helped Paul Thomas distribute Gordon horseshoes that many local clubs used in their leagues.

As you can see Harold has many accomplishments, but the one thing he has truly done, as a NYSHPA player to help preserve and promote the game of horseshoes in NYS, was to show others by his actions that there is more to the game than just throwing shoes. Harold has been and still is a very active member and always willing to teach and help our members. Harold has been responsible for many backyard and tavern courts keeping many NY players both sanctioned and not pitching shoes. He has always been willing to keep score, sell tickets, keep stats, judge, organize and run tournaments and do any other job to keep this sport running smoothly. His actions and love of this game speak clearly as to why he deserves this nomination into the NYSHPA Hall of Fame.

In closing I would also like to mention a fun fact about Harold. That he is the only player I know that has done a unique feat of having his horseshoe lock on the stake midway not once but three times during his years of pitching.

Harold has been a great inspiration to many players in NYS myself included and his friendship has helped me become involved in our sport on and off the courts.

Respectfully Submitted

Frank Kwiatkowski