

All Ontario champions twice

ries, this time against the Dundas Merchants, a red hot team from Western Ontario. But the Kenmors didn't find them that tough. The first game went their way in a lopsided victory, 12-0. The second bout ended similarly, 11-3. Then the Merchants rallied back in game three and reversed the tide with a 15-7 win. Game four went to the Kenmors again. The series came down to the fifth game and it went into extra innings. It was the first close game of the series. The teams were tied 4-4 in the 11th when a Kenmor batter connected for a single and drove in the winning run.

Asselstine would have had an unheard of third championship the following year had it not been for one of those unfortunate occurrences that sends one's heart sliding in to his stomach. The team was leading the Galt Terriers 3-2 in the third showdown in a best-of-three series. It was the ninth inning with two out. Soden was pulled and replaced with pitcher Stan Reid in a move that some commentators would, with the benefit of hindsight, strongly question. Reid walked the first slugger he faced and then gave up a single. With one man already on,

the bases were loaded. The next batter stepped up to the plate, swung and popped up between second base and right field. Asselstine almost jumped for joy believing the game was theirs, but in one of those inexplicable moments in sport, three players missed the ball by inches. The runners poured into home plate and the Terriers took the championship 6-3. "I saw that pop fly going up for months after that," says Asselstine.

Fortunately, Asselstine wasn't one of the three under the ball that day. Perhaps that pop fly would still haunt him if he had been.

But hitting, not fielding, was his forte. Asselstine says he was never a slugger — he left that to Larry Goyer, Moe Hunter and Larry Mavety. But he was good at connecting with singles and doubles. "I always got my share of hits."

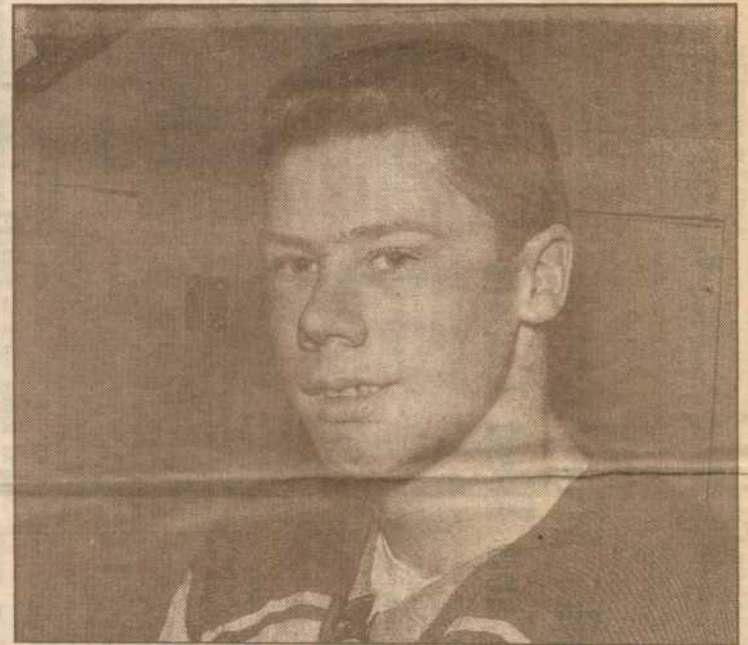
In 1969 the Kenmors became Joyce Realty (with almost all the same players) and made it to the semi-finals, going down to defeat at the hands of an Orillia team. For what it was worth, Orillia went on to take the All Ontario Championship that year, so at least the Kenmors lost to the best in the province.

That was the last for senior baseball in Belleville until 1977 when it resurfaced as the Cornerstone Blues, but Asselstine had retired from the game by then.

When ball wasn't in season Asselstine switched to hockey. In 1958 he went to Guelph for a Junior 'A' tryout with the Biltmores and made the team. Biltmore was a hat manufacturing company and the team

became unofficially known as the Mad Hatters. He also served as captain of the Lambert-Rollins Junior 'B' team, which later became the junior McFarlands after the senior team folded. But he figured baseball took a lesser toll on a player and gave up hockey after 1960.

His victories in baseball proved he made the right move. He coached ball for a couple years in the late 1970s. Today he teaches math at Centennial High School.



Pat Asselstine suited up for Guelph Biltmores, 1958.

*Intellectuals, Remember
Lohan.*

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Asselstine, Pat



Pat Asselstine