

Maracle could mow 'em down

MARACLE
PATTY.

*Fastball legend
earns his place
in local shrine*

By Tom Gavey

The Intelligencer

Whenever oldtimers get together to talk about fastball, once Quinte's king of summer sports, the name Patty Maracle is sure to come up.

He may well have been fastball's answer to Gordie Howe, and then some.

Like the hockey great, Maracle combined excellence in his game with incredible longevity.

"It's hard to say why he was able to play so long," says son Ron. "He never smoked and he worked hard all his life."

While Maracle, who died in 1991, is best remembered as perhaps the finest pitcher ever produced in this area, he was also a fine hockey player who was still lacing on the blades well into his 70s.

And for those reasons, he'll be posthumously inducted into the Belleville Sports Hall of Fame on Sunday, Sept. 14 at 1 p.m. at Market Square. Maracle joins long-time soccer and tennis supporter Dr. Tom Woodley and two other personalities to be announced next week as the 1997 inductees.

Born in Belleville on May 4, 1917, Maracle would live his life in the Deseronto area and father eight children, many of whom carried on his athletic endeavors.

Maracle pitched at least one perfect game and tales of his match-ups with Peterborough legend Ray Judd tell of two men who were at the pinnacle of the game.

The righthander toiled for a number of local teams, but most notably for the powerhouse Point Anne Cementmen who dominated not just locally but across the province. He also hurled for teams in Belleville, Trenton and other area centres.

A Mohawk, Maracle also led teams from the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory to competitions far afield, always excelling.

The City of Trenton, recognizing his contributions both in fastball and hockey, gave him a day and he was feted by local businessmen.

Maracle also enjoyed horse-shoes, bowling and pool.



Photo submitted

Ernest "Patty" Maracle ... newest Hall of Famer.

At the age of 68 he was still pitching, and pitching well, for a team in Kaladar. And, at 73 he was still playing hockey with one of his sons.

Ron Maracle says his dad confounded hitters with four different pitches, including a devastating changeup, and when not pitching played other positions and was also dangerous with a bat.

"He would really enjoy this, going into the Hall. I know it would have been a tremendous

thrill for him," says Ron Maracle.

Local sports buff and historian James Hurst remembers watching Maracle as a youngster.

"He could make the ball dance," he says.

When Maracle wasn't confounding hitters or defencemen he was a welder for 35 years at the Point Anne Cement Plant.

Patty Maracle died in April, 1991 at the age of 73.

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