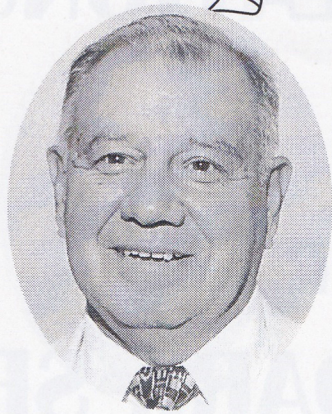


Pete Barrella



Pete Barrella has enjoyed two different, yet equally successful sports careers in his life.

He spent the first 33 years in Portchester, N.Y., where he was born and raised and excelled in sports in high school and as a young adult.

Then in 1965, he moved with his wife and two sons to Norwalk, and the local sports community has been richer ever since.

In his "first career," Barrella played football, basketball, baseball and softball in the Shoreline League for the Williams Street Bears, neighborhood teams a few blocks away from the Washington Street home where he

grew up. He would go on to play four years of football at Portchester High School as an end on both offense and defense.

In 1952, Barrella was drafted into the Army and served in Korea with the 3rd infantry division and 10th combat engineers, earning the rank of sergeant.

Shortly after moving to Norwalk in '65, Barrella became involved in local sports, particularly baseball, with his two sons Peter and Alan. He coached in the International Little League and eventually took over the startup Cap League for one year before moving up and managing his own team, Pacific Plumbing, for four years and leading them to the playoffs.

He would move up again and manage the Merchants Bank team in the Pony League for 13-14 year-olds, winning a pair of championships, and later managed in the Colt League for 15-16 year-olds. In fact, he once coached teams in both leagues at the same time.

But it was in the Pony League that he made his biggest mark, spending 14 years as a coach and board member, and filling in one year as league president when Tom Harrigan took ill. It was the trio of Harrigan, the late Mike Giantassio, and Barrella who were the driving force behind the Pony/Colt leagues for years during the 1970s.

Barrella still calls the summer of 1972 his biggest thrill in sports when the Norwalk Pony League all-stars, managed by Giantassio, "Mr. G," with Harrigan and Barrella as his assistants, beat the perennial champion Gil Hodges League all-stars from Brooklyn, N.Y., to win the district championship. The team then went deep into the New England tournament in New Hampshire and nearly made it to the World Series before finally being eliminated. It was the best run by a Norwalk all-star baseball team since the 1952 Little League all-stars won the World Series 20 years earlier.

And when the Pony/Colt leagues eventually discontinued, Barrella, always looking out for other youth baseball leagues in town, donated the wooden bats and other equipment from his league to the Norwalk Senior Babe Ruth League.

While baseball was Barrella's first love, he was also involved in other youth sports. He helped coach the Rangers Junior Midget team in the local Pop Warner Football program. He also coached the St. Thomas junior and senior basketball teams in the Recreation League where he won a pair of championships, while also coaching the Merchants Bank team to a runner-up finish in the Norwalk Jewish Center Biddy Basketball League.

Barrella continued to stay involve with local sports even after his sons were done playing. A catcher and right fielder during his younger fast-pitch softball days, Barrella played for LaRosa's Restaurant in the Norwalk over-40 slow-pitch softball league on Sunday mornings until he was 52.

More recently, he has picked up the game of golf, and for the past decade Barrella has been an active board member with the Laurel Athletic Club, serving as president of the local club in 2002 and '03.

And for the past few years, Pete Barrella has embarked on somewhat of a "third career" in sports, working as a member of the security staff in the successful athletic department at New Canaan High School. In fact, he can be found at many of the Rams' home sporting events.