

Ferd Gottscham



Pitching for the Connecticut Potato Chips in 1947, Ferd Gottscham amassed one of the longest winning streaks ever recorded in Norwalk, winning 17 straight games. His streak included 13 in a row in league play, which earned him the title of the Norwalk Recreation League's top hurler, and he won four more non-league games.

A pitcher throughout his career, which was cut short by a broken wrist in 1948, Ferd started pitching in ninth grade. He was on the Norwalk High roster in 1942 and '43, under Ike Kern, and in the summer pitched for Winnipauk, Stamford Holy Name, the Colonials and Strawberry Hill.

He cut short his high school career by enlisting in the Air Force during his senior year, and did some pitching in the service, both on the mound and as a tail gunner on a B-4 Liberator. He played with the David Monthan Air Force Comets in Tucson, AZ, before shipping out to Foffia, Italy,

where he pitched the 827th Bomb Squadron to the group championship.

He was discharged from the service in 1945 and the following year joined the Potato Chips, sponsored by Ben Steinberg and managed by Abe Tarlov. 1947 was his banner year on a team, which included 14 players who have already been honored by the Old Timers. Mickey Connolly was the coach and Joe Santo was the manager. Gottscham never played any position other than pitcher, but he had a great bat.

He broke his wrist sliding into second base in the first game of 1948 and this ended his career, though he did play two years of fast pitch softball with the Knights of Columbus several years later.

Gottscham played two years of hockey as a defenseman during high school, and in the 1950s coached Cranbury Little League with Tom Kindilien and Brien McMahon Babe Ruth with Bill Ireland.

Ferd is a member of American Legion, Veteran of Foreign Wars and the South Norwalk Boat Club. This year he assumed the chairmanship of the American Legion Post 12 Baseball Committee.

A building contractor for 40 years in Norwalk, he is retired and enjoying boating and golf at Oak Hills. He is married to the former Vivien Osborne and they have two children.