

Frederick M. Janci



Frederick M. Janci, born in Norwalk, had a great athletic career as one of the leading speed skaters in this area and as a minor league baseball player.

He joined his brother, Joe, in speed skating on area ponds and did some bicycle riding with him, but he turned to baseball in the summer. He was an outstanding baseball player at Norwalk High School, graduating in 1935.

As a youth, he played with a host of local teams including the American Legion, C & K, Old Wells, Pastimes, Colonials, Laurels, Texas Lunch, Night Raiders, and Community All Stars. His teams played in the Norwalk Twilight League and in independent games.

He went to Bridgeport to play with Carl Brunetto's Americans, also saw service with the Lenox AC in the

Bridgeport City League, and with the Lazy Nuro nine in the Stamford Twilight League.

Going into professional baseball, Fred played with the Bridgeport Bees of the Class B Colonial League; Bristol, VA, in the Appalachian League, and with Tallahassee, FL, in the Class D Georgia-Florida League. He was scouted and was recruited by Bill Snith of Bell Island for pro baseball.

Fred was a fine speed skater. One of his great feats was taking second place in points in competition against the U.S. Olympic skaters in Newburgh, NY, in 1940. He came in second in the 440 and third in the 220.

Norwalk High had a skating team in those days and Fred was captain.

He won speed skating championships in the New Hampshire Lake Region in 1938, and took the New Hampshire state title in the same year at the Dartmouth Winter Carnival at Hanover, NH. He was also the Rhode Island state champ in 1939. Fred won a host of skating titles, occasionally sharing top honors with his brother, Joe, in northern and southern New England competition, and also took the Berkshire Hill crown in Pittsfield, MA. Like his brother, Fred has a host of trophies won in competition until he entered the U.S. Air Force in World War II. During the war, he was strictly military and had no opportunity to compete in sports.

After the war he became a building contractor in Craftsbury, VT. Presently he has a restaurant in Hardwick, VT. Fred and his wife Anna have six children: Fred, Jr., Edward, Jocelyn, Rolanna Janci, Kenneth and Penelope Kuhn.