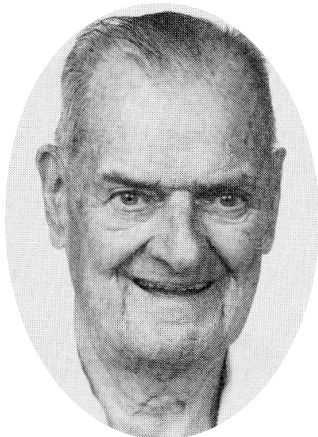


Dick Cross



Dick Cross had a fast ball and a curve that made him one of the top pitchers of his day 67 years ago.

Norwalk had an Industrial Baseball League in 1926 and 1927 and two of the teams in the league were the Norwalk Tire and Rubber Co. and the South Norwalk Post Office. Dick Cross pitched for both and amassed a great record against the teams of the period.

With Red Riley as his catcher, he pitched the South Norwalk Post Office to the Norwalk championship and then called up Bill Reed, who ran a semi-pro operation in Wilton. Pitchers were paid for pitching on Saturdays and Sundays in Wilton, but Cross told Reed he didn't have to pay him.

Pitching against the Bridgeport Sokols, the Bridgeport Rosebuds and Greens Farms, Cross won on successive Saturdays. He won a fourth game as well.

As a result of his feats in Wilton, Cross was invited to a tryout with the Detroit Tigers in Florida by Art Olsen, then a member of the major league team, but Dick's mother dissuaded him from making the trip.

On one occasion, Cross pitched the So. Norwalk Post Office team to a 4-2 victory over the Laurels, beating the famed Joe Beers. With runners on second and third and one out, he fanned Rinky Christopher and Bill Meehan to seal the victory.

The games were all played at Amusement Park in the '30s and he remembers games played against teams like the Hard Hustlers and Rowayton.

Later, he was to pitch for Wilton with George Buschbaum as his catcher.

Cross was a basketball player as well, remembering games in the Old Town Hall on Wall Street. He played center with Norwalk Tire. In 1926 he recalls Norwalk Tire won the city championship with two out of three victories over Nash Engineering.

A native Norwalker, he is retired from the South Norwalk Post Office. He and his wife Celeste have 10 children, 28 grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.