

*Special Award
Russell A. Kelly*



Russell A. Kelly was a standout pitcher for Manhattan College and several teams in the Norwalk Twilight League between World War II and the Korean War.

Kelly was the mound mainstay of the Norwalk Potato Chips, Norwalk Tire, Strawberry Hill, Pastimes, and Rowayton baseball clubs during his years with those teams, a time prior to television when games drew hundreds of spectators each night and on the weekends to Duffy Field (now Veterans Park) and the old Norwalk High School field.

A right-hander with a sidearm fastball that dominated right-handed batters and a sharp-breaking curve ball that victimized hitters from the port side, Kelly moved Manhattan into a contending position in the tough Metropolitan Baseball League while posting wins over Fordham, St. John's, and NYU. He threw three no-hitters in his amateur career in Norwalk while leading several local teams to titles. During his last year of competition in 1952, he led the Rowayton club to the County Baseball League title.

A native of New York City who summered in Rowayton as a youngster, Kelly became a full-time resident in 1946 after discharge from the army where as a sergeant in the infantry he saw action in the Battle of the Bulge and spent six months in a German prison camp. Although he had shown well in tryouts with the New York Yankees in the summer of 1941, his four-year Army stint ended hopes of any career as a professional athlete.

The father of five boys and one girl, Kelly has an advanced case of multiple sclerosis that has confirmed him for the past seven years to the State Veterans Home in Rocky Hill where he would appreciate cards or letters from friends and former teammates.