

## A Tribute to a Legend

October 2, 2024 in Micksburg, Ontario

It all started in the Spring of 1978 at Ma-te-way Park in Renfrew, Ontario when George Findley first stepped on a diamond as an Umpire - who knew the legacy he was about to create in the ensuing 46 years.

George developed his skills as an Umpire from 1978 to 1990 locally and provincially until his first Canadian Championship in 1990 in Milverton, Ontario, all the while establishing the Ottawa Nepean Umpire Association (ONUA) in 1985 (today known as the Eastern Ontario Umpire Association, EOUA). Before the development of a Board of Directors, George was the President, Assignor, Treasurer, Secretary and Trainer all at the same time. Interesting fact, George's personalized license plate of "ONUA" still exists today.

At a local level, George has recruited and mentored hundreds and hundreds of Umpires. If you are an Umpire or have been in the last 40 years anywhere in Eastern Ontario, chances are George has had a positive impact on your Umpiring career. George has assigned 170,000+ local games and officiated in 4,000+ of them.



Individually itemizing all of George's Canadian and International Championships are far too many to mention. In summary, George has participated in 16 Canadian Championships as either an active Umpire or a Supervisor and 4 International Championships. Notable accolades include:

1990 – Midget Boys in Milverton, Ontario where he achieved his Level 4

1999 – Recipient of the Indicator Club Award at Blue Convention in Richmond, BC

2003 – ISC World Fastpitch Tournament in Kimberley Wisconsin, USA

2005 – Senior Canadian Men’s in St. Thomas, Ontario where he achieved his Level 5

2009 – Recipient of the Jim Bradford Award recognizing leadership

2011 – Obtained his ISF Certification and Master Evaluator and Instructor designations

2012 – ISF Junior Men’s Fastpitch World Championship in Parana, Argentina

2014 – ASA Major Men’s Fastpitch Championship in South Bend Indiana, USA

2015 – WBSC Men’s World Championships in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

2018 – Inducted to the Ottawa Sports Hall of Fame

George is a humble man, never asking for anything in return for all that he gives. His generosity has benefited many often leaving him short financially yet never asking for repayment in any way. Interesting fact, George and Joanne have provided shelter and financial aid to several down on their luck, helping to rehabilitate them to wellness.

George has always been adamant about the need to give back - “as a Senior Umpire, it is your responsibility to give back to the game”, and that he has. George has spent a tireless amount of time improving the quality of Umpires, resulting in an improvement of the game at every level.

My personal favorite quote from George is “If you show a genuine respect for the players, coaches, fans, your fellow Blue and the game in general, you will be rewarded multifold, it’s a game of respect”. This will forever be engrained in my mind, and I will always be guided by this principal.

George fulfilled his working career having worked for both Bank of Montreal then Artistic Landscaping. He and his lovely wife Joanne decided to retire to Renfrew from Ottawa in March of 2018 where they live today.

This tribute would be remiss without acknowledging the contribution of his wife of 51 years, Joanne. George is the first to admit that Joanne is just as deserving of any accolades as she held down their home and local association duties during his multiple absences while pursuing his Umpire goals. Joanne, his 3 children and 5 grandchildren are clearly his proudest of achievements. His son Gary is now in his 7<sup>th</sup> year of Umpiring and currently the President of the EOQA.



And now, on this Wednesday, October 2, 2024 at the age of 75, George has decided to call it a career and officiated his final game. The venue and the teams could not be more appropriate with the Micksburg Twins playing host to the Quyon Flyers in game 1 of the Greater Ottawa Fastball League final.



George, you are a loved, respected role model and an inspiration to more Umpires and athletes than you will ever know. Your contribution and dedication to the game is that of a legend and we salute you on this official day of your softball retirement. Thank you for EVERYTHING you have done and may God shower you and your family with blessings forever.