

Herbert F. Dietrich, well-known coach and umpire, dies at 71

By Karen Vetrano

For the Rockland Journal-News

Herbert F. Dietrich, a "pure baseball thoroughbred" who dedicated much of his life to Rockland County sports, died at his home in Henderson, N.C., on Monday, Sept. 12, 1994. He was 71.

A coach and an umpire for more than 30 years, Dietrich was a patient teacher and a role model, colleagues and players who knew him well said.

"He had an unrelenting desire to give back to the game and the officials," said James Kane, who was in charge of assigning umpires to baseball games in Rockland County for 20 years.

When people saw Dietrich coming onto the field they knew that they were in for a good, fair game. He definitely had charisma, Kane said.

Dietrich began playing baseball in Rockland County in 1946 when he joined the Nyack Rockies, an entry in the North Atlantic League, a minor-league circuit. He played for the Rockies for two seasons before taking a full-time



Played in the minor leagues

position with New York Telephone in 1948.

In 1950, Dietrich married Rockland native Joan Harring and set up house in the county.

For the next 12 years he played baseball and softball and

then began managing Little League and Babe Ruth Leagues before becoming involved in the Rockland County Umpires Association.

By 1968, Dietrich was the association's rules interpreter. He became the group's president in 1971, and remained in that position for a decade.

"He was the best that Rockland County had to offer as far as umpires go," said Rich Raff, who knew Dietrich for more than 30 years.

Dietrich served on the Babe Ruth Baseball International Advisory Board from 1976 until his death.

After working as a line supervisor at New York Telephone for 37 years, he retired in 1985 and moved to North Carolina.

"He was the type of person that had a Will Rogers personality. He never met anyone he didn't like," said long-time friend Bill O'Brien.

Dietrich is survived by his wife Joan Harring Dietrich of Henderson, N.C.; three sons, Glenn Dietrich of New City, Chris Dietrich of Charlotte, N.C., and Kyle Dietrich of North Royalton, Ohio; one daughter, Kim Baron of Fayetteville, N.C.; one sister, Carolyn Saucyn of Bergenfield, N.J.; one brother, Ronald Dietrich of Indian Mountain Lakes, Pa.; and eight grandchildren.

Calling hours will be tomorrow from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. at J.M. White Funeral Home in Henderson, N.C.

A private cremation will take place tomorrow evening.

Memorial donations can be made to a charity of choice.

Herb Dietrich obit

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