



Families aren't they wonderful. Although there isn't a cast system in our country, it is not unusual that a child follows in the footsteps of his or her parents. Even our last inductee followed the same career path as her Mother and Father. Henry 'Dutch' Dotterer Sr. was a pretty good athlete in his own right. Going to Dean Junior College, even without a high school diploma, Dutch excelled on the girdiron and on the baseball field. After a career in the majors, he became one of the nation's most respective baseball scouts. When looking for prospects, in one case he had to go no further then his Grant Boulevard home. He saw in his son, Henry, all of the qualities that he was looking for in a player. So even at a young age, young Dutch was being groomed for a baseball career.

So when he came to CBA he was already a gifted athlete. He wanted to play all sports, but one his father wouldn't let him play was football. He was concerned that an injury might curtail his baseball career. Remember, that was still the days of the leather helmets so who knows! Although brother Tom remembers watching him play in recreational leagues on Sundays and remembers him as quite the player. He did play basketball and was a role player on the Joe Byrne coached teams of the mid forties but baseball was his forte.

Back in the simpler times, he and neighbor Regis King would spend many an afternoon at MacArthur Stadium practicing, learning the ins and outs of the game from the Chiefs. So it was only natural that the hard work he put into the game would pay dividends somewhere down the road. And that road started at Schiller park. That was the Brothers home field at the time and during his three years on the varsity the team won three consecutive league championships. Dutch (as it seems the entire family was called) was a gifted catcher. And while at CBA formed a battery with his fellow northsider King and the combination was deadly for the opposition. During that time it didn't take much offense for CBA to win games. For those that remember, King was quite the talent. In Dutch's last three years in high school, King struck out 411 batters that means 1233 pitches that didn't get hit. Boy, that's a lot of work for a catcher!

But for Dotterer his CBA career was only the beginning. He accepted a scholarship to Syracuse University, where he was fraternity brothers with Dick Clarke, Al Davis, and Roy Simmons. In 1950, Dutch was drafted by the Reds and for the next 13 years embarked on a career that took him to all parts of the western hemisphere.



He started his pro career with Lockport of the late PONY league. He spent two years in the navy where as a catcher on his base team in Bainbridge Maryland he became friends with a young slugger named Willie Mays. When he resumed his career, he spent time in Nashville where he had his best season, hitting .303 in 1957 and finally made it to the majors at the end of that season. For the next five years he played with the Reds and the Senators before completing his career back home with the Syracuse Chiefs. Dutch had one of the strongest arms in the league. It was almost impossible to steal a base on him. At times he even used it as a way to show his displeasure to a pitcher by returning the ball back to the mound with faster than it got to the plate.

He loved to play baseball year round so in the off seasons he would spend time catching in leagues in Cuba, Columbia, Peru, and Venezuela. It was here that he decided on his path after baseball playing in those places that caused him to earn his masters degree in international Relations from Syracuse University.

Dutch is famous for a number of baseball feats during his career. While with the Reds, he caught a ball dropped from a helicopter flying 585 feet, the height of the Washington Monument, above Crosley Field. He was also only one of six players to hit a grand slam off Hall of Fame pitcher Sandy Koufax. Dutch is also the only player to twice beat the legendary Warren Spahn with extra inning pinch hits. Some of the feats were infamous, like how he helped Reds pitcher Joe Nuxhall get into the baseball record books with four strikeouts in an inning when he let a third strike go by in Aug of 1959.

After his playing days were over he eventually landed in Santa Ana California and taught bilingual education there for over 17 years and before returning to Syracuse where he passed away in October of 1999.. Dutch was an intelligent, well spoken man who always had a story to tell. One sportswriter summed it up best when he wrote about Dutch, he wore the tools of ignorance, but in his case it was a disguise. A member of the Greater Syracuse Hall of Fame since 2005, he can now take his place next to his Brother in the LaSallian Athletic Hall of Fame.

