



The road to CBA is different for each of us. For Jay Sferra, the road went through the CBA Locker Room. A star at Holy Trinity, in fact the second best free throw shooter in the CYO, second only to future teammate Peter Waters. When he was in eighth grade, his Dad brought him to a game and he was taken by legendary coach Frank Cappelletti for a tour of the locker room. It was there that he met Denny Jordan. Jordan was the star of the day back then and he made a great impression on young Jay. It was at that moment that Jay knew he was going to make the trek to Dewitt and become a Brothers boy.

In Jays sophomore year, legendary parochial league coach Bob Felasco was lured to CBA to take over for Tom Burns as coach of the Brothers. He wanted to prepare for the future and chose Jay and fellow sophomore Jim Fletcher to be the cornerstones of the CBA program for the next three years. It didn't take long for that investment to pay dividends. In the 71 season, CBA started out quickly, won six of their first eight games and quickly became contenders for the league Championship for the first time in many years. They finished in third place that year and Jay was the teams third leading scorer averaging almost 12 ppg. Now just so that those of you that didn't know Jay back then, here is a description written in the herald journal, believe it or not this is a quote .."Sferra is a young man the league will hear more from. Jay is 5'6 and weighs 100 pounds..MAYBE . He looks anemic and is thin as a wafer. He could easily double as a jockey at Fngerlakes. The white sweatbands on his wrists and the religious medal suspended from a chain around his neck appear to serve as weights to keep him from being blown away on some opponents' fast break." Jay didn't lack confidence however, during a game against grimes that season, Jay was at the line in a tie game with 5 seconds to go after hitting the first shot, he looked over to the sidelines and winked at one of the grimes cheerleaders. then calmly sank the second. The girl was incensed at the jays arrogance. CBA won that game, but more importantly Jay eventually won that cheerleaders heart and has been married to Gerrie for 34 years. Work commitments took coach Felasco away from CBA and he was replaced by Butch O'Brien. Jay had another great year averaging 16.4 ppg but the team still was unable to get over the hump to win a championship. They finished in second place that season. On a side note, up until the 70-71 school year, the catholic schools played in a diocesan basketball tournament at the end of season. In Oct of 1971, however, by a resounding 30 – 29 vote, private schools in Section III were allowed to become members of the New York State Public High School Association and therefore allowed to compete in sectional tournaments. In our first ever sectional basketball game that season, the Golden Tornadoes defeated ESM but then lost to UFA in the second round.



Then came his senior year, back came Felasco and with him the rise to the top. Jay was simply outstanding. He, Fletcher, Waters, Larry Stirpe and Hiram Sapp formed a starting five that was the best the city league had seen in a long time. They tore through the league and along the way and Jay put up some amazing numbers. For example, The Ludden rivalry was hotly contested at the time and the first time the teams played that season, Jay did not; he and Stirpe were under the weather and the Gaelic knights prevailed. In the second meeting, Jay did play, 28 points and 13 assists later the Brothers got their revenge. In the game that clinched the league championship, Jay scored 24 points and dished out 12 assists in a game vs. Nottingham. That championship marked the first CNYCL Basketball title for CBA since Kevin Harrigan led the team to the 1963 – 64 Championship. Remember back then there was no state tournament and the sectionals at least for CBA were not fully understood, so the League Championship was the most treasured prize of the time. Jay was recognized for his achievements... the most explosive offensive player in league history...one of the finest assist men in league history, his passing was a thing of beauty, all written about that boy 100 lb boy from the north side

As accomplished as he was on the hardwoods, Jays main sport (if you can call that) was baseball. Even before entering CBA, Jay was excelling in youth league baseball leagues. Playing on the varsity as a freshman he learned about success early in his career as the Erardi and Riccelli led Brothers won the CNYCL Championship under Bob Powers. Powers was replaced the next year by Jim Burton and for the next three years jay was a regular. During his time he pitched and hit his team to two league championships and was twice chosen to the all CNY team.

Sooo... to sum up Jays high school career... in 1972 and 73, in baseball and basketball, if there were any ALL team (all city, all catholic, all area, all state)... Jay was on it! He was one of the most decorated athletes to come out of CBA.

When it came time to move on to the next level, Jay had a choice to make..... or did he. He had become one of the best two sport athletes ever to come out of Central New York but what sport would he choose. During the summers he had not only played baseball but also attended several basketball camps and had caught the eye of Bernie Fine and Dave Bing and they vowed to help find Jay a place to play basketball.... But he wanted to do both and at the highest level. He had to go halfway across the country but he found the place for him, the University of Colorado. They were the one school that wanted him for both sports, and he didn't disappoint them. While in Boulder, Jay earned seven varsity letters!! In basketball he was a three year starter and chosen Honorable mention Big Eight twice and is still fifteenth in career assists, In baseball he started all four years . An All-Big-Eight selection and honorable mention All-American in 1976 and '77, he still ranks at the top of several all-time Buff categories. He holds the all-time record in Colorado history with 621 at bats and holds the NCAA record for most at bats in a single game with 10, in a 22-inning game vs. Nebraska just to name a couple.



When his playing days were over, he did play one year of pro ball but then it looked like his baseball days were over... then, over a decade later he got a call from fellow Hall of Famer Pat Murphy to see if Jay would be willing to help coach his Arizona state program. He accepted and for 15 years coached some of the finest baseball players to play the game.

Jay, you are probably one of the top athletes to ever come out of CBA. It is my pleasure to extend to you this long overdue honor and welcome you into the LaSallian Athletic Hall of Fame.

