

Joe Rossi HOF Committee

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|----------------|---------------|
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CHSAA Administrators

John Sullivan – Baseball
Mike Book – Officials
Monica Tillman – Officials

The Colorado High School Baseball Umpires Association

Presents:

The 2025 Joe Rossi Hall of Fame Banquet

at

Denver-Lakewood Holiday Inn

Lakewood, CO

February 1, 2025

Noon – 4pm



Special Acknowledgements

Master of Ceremony and CHSBUA Joe Rossi Hall of Famer **Keith Bailey** began umpiring in 1976 and served as a Denver Area Director and CHSBUA State President. Keith was a CCUA leader and involved in the Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinics. He worked



three High School state championships over 10 years. As an AABC umpire, Keith worked many post seasons including five Connie Mack World Series and two Stan Musial World Series. Keith was named the AABC National Umpire of the Year in 1994.

As a player, Keith pitched the University of Northern Colorado to the CWS by defeating #1 Arizona. He played professionally with the San Francisco Giants and served as scout for the Chicago Cubs. Keith served as the umpire coordinator for both the USAFA and UNC as well as the Cherry Creek Diamond Club. He is also a member of the UNC and Cherry Creek Diamond Hall of Fames.

Keith has been married to Marlis for 45 years and has two children and three grandchildren. He spends his time Marshaling at Murphy Creek Golf Course.



Official photographer **Pat Klein** served 29 years in the US Army while also working football games whenever he was allowed. Pat has been a football official for 53 seasons, wearing the white hat most of those years. He has been an advanced amateur photographer for most of his life and has captured the highlights of many the football championship games over the past 20 years.



Outstanding New CHSBUA Umpires Recognized



Jacob Becklund – Denver
Alex Bohner – Colorado Springs
Michael Gugliuzza – Denver

Jesse Meryhew – Gypsum
Alec Perney – Fort Collins
Dennis Robinson – Denver

2025 Hall of Fame Keynote Speaker

Jamie Hamilton – Grand Junction, CO



Jamie Hamilton graduated from Regis High School in Denver, Colorado in 1974 as an All-Conference player. He attended Mesa College graduating in 1978 with a teaching degree. He played four years on the baseball team, becoming an All Conference, Academic All American, and Honorable Mention All American. After graduating, Jamie signed a free agent baseball contract with Golden West Baseball California Angels and played up to the AA level in El Paso in 1981. He was an

assistant baseball coach for Mesa from 1982-85 and umpired in the SWL and RMAC from 1986-89.

Jamie is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Home Loan & Investment Company, and Home Loan State Bank, an insurance and banking operation. Jamie is active in many community ventures. He was recognized as the State of Colorado Volunteer of the Year in 1995; inducted into the Mesa State College Hall of Honor in 1997; and awarded the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce 1999 Citizen of the Year. Jamie has served on Community Hospital's Board of Directors and the Governor of Colorado's Commission on Science and Technology. He has also served as a Trustee to the State Colleges in Colorado and to the Mesa State College governing board. Jamie was awarded the 2002 Meritorious Service Award by the American Baseball Coaches Association in Orlando, Florida. In January of 2006, Jamie was named the Athletic Director at Mesa State College and served as Associate AD thru 2009, serving in the contractual capacity that endowed scholarships for student-athletes. In January, 2010 Mesa State College held the dedication for their newly constructed Hamilton Recreation Center.

Jamie has been involved with the NJCAA JUCO World Series in Grand Junction since 1986. He served as the Co-Director of tournament play for 7 years before becoming the Tournament Chairman in 2003 for 21 years. Jamie is now the Chairman Emeritus since 2024. Jamie was inducted into the Colorado Dugout Hall of Fame and NJCAA Hall of Fame in 2011.

Jim Paronto Memorial Award

Teacher. Coach. Administrator.

Sean Grogan embodies the essence of Jim Paronto Memorial Award with his commitment to leadership, training, and support to the community. Sean began his umpiring career, first working little league and then moving on to high school in a career that began in 1985 and is still going strong today. Along the way, he's been selected to work 9 High School Championships, numerous NJCAA Region 9 post-season tournaments and a RMAC championship.

His off-field involvement is what sets him apart through recruiting, training, and professional development. Sean founded the Northern Colorado Sports Officials group. He also held the directorship of CHSBUA Area 9 for many years. Under his guidance, NCSO and Area 9 brought many officials into the ranks. "Many of those guys started in youth sports with us," Grogan recalled. "We assign for High Schools in the northern area, Triple Crown, and USSSA. If it is up here, we pretty much are assigning it."

Sean's recruiting master plan with his Northern Colorado group is a study in best practices. He gets the word out through city agencies, school districts, and campus employment offices. "We are constantly trying to get people interested." He starts training in April with the newly recruited umpires to allow work on the youth recreational diamonds. Once he determines potential high school officials, they are provided with advanced training for new (and returning) CHSBUA umpires during a six-week program of classroom, cage work, and on-field practice.

Sean develops officials by hosting on-line meetings during the season to keep everyone current. He also directs a scholarship fund to send top prospects to college-level umpire and professional schools with one caveat. "We keep the returning umpires to help us instruct." While Sean may be responsible for charting the NCSO course, he gives a nod to the organization guys. "As far as the training piece... it is not just me. There is a whole team up here that does it. We have paid thousands of dollars to send guys to camp."

On his tenure as President of the Colorado High School Baseball Umpires Association (2007-09) Sean was asked about his legacy to CHSBUA. He remembered the training program he helped start. "The UTEP Program (Umpire, Training, Evaluation, and Promotion)... I liked to think we started the conversation about training, playoff assignments, and things like that."

2025 Hall of Fame Inductee

Ray Belfiore – Aurora



Ray Belfiore began umpiring right out of high school and took the high school test in 1982. In those early years, he was closely associated with the group of umpires from Aurora directed by his skills working games in a demanding crucible provided by The American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC) in the Connie Mack (18+) and Stan Musial (Collegiate) classifications.

Working Connie Mack and Stan Musial, allowed Ray work a lot more games with a lot of the same guys which allowed them to help each other get better. It was not long before Ray was recognized as a top newcomer and established himself as a trusted and competent professional eventually working multiple championships at both levels. Ray worked 30+ years in these leagues.

Ray's quest for improvement eventually led him to the Brinkman Professional Umpire School in 1987, an eye-opening experience for sure. He did not really know much when he went there and they taught him what it takes and the time required to be a great umpire. "The stories that the big-league umpires told were great." When Ray returned to Denver, he was immediately tabbed to provide instructional assistance for the CHSBUA sponsored Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinic. "None of our current instructors had a professional background. Ray now could provide to the group with current information and professional-level development. Ray was a wonderful resource for the clinic. He trained the students, but more importantly, he trained the instructors" commented Kieth Bailey. Part of Ray's curriculum included his personal blueprint for success which was "Go out and work hard every game no matter what the game or the score is. Take time to listen to the veteran umpire and learn from what they tell you. You are always learning something during a game so take that information to make yourself better."

Soon, Ray was promoted into the collegiate ranks taking games in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (Division II) and several Division I baseball conferences including the Mountain West Conference, Western Athletic

Conference, Big XII and West Coast Conference. As the years passed, Ray's demanding schedule would not allow him to accept many high school games for the CHSBUA, but he remained a valuable instructor for all the years the UTEP/Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinic was in operation. All told, Ray worked baseball at the high school and collegiate level for 40 years and retired with a list of impressive accomplishments to his name.

The Ray Belfiore file is virtually unmatched by any other Colorado umpire. Among his many accolades are the following entries:

- 2 – Connie Mack World Series
- 2 – JUCO World Series
- 12 – Mountain West Championships
- 10 – Division I Regionals
- 2 – Division II Regionals

An alternate umpire for AAA baseball in the American Association (Zephyrs), PCL (Sky Sox) for over 15 years

Keith Bailey offers a personal insight into his sometimes misunderstood Big XII partner. "Ray was fearless. Some say he was brash or arrogant. But to know Ray, he took umpiring very seriously and expected nothing less from his crew. He had so much confidence in his ability, rule knowledge and field mechanics, that he had no equal. He was passionate about umpiring. Ray did not want to be good. He wanted to be the best. Ray was demanding of himself and his crewmates, always adding a spark both on and off the field." Keith recalls, "You knew if Ray was on your crew, you were going to have fun. But make no mistake, he would hold you accountable for your performance. Post-game discussions of situations and field mechanics were never ending with Ray always wanting to know how the crew could have done something better, gotten somewhere faster, found a better position or angle to get the play right."

It is no surprise that Ray was assigned the tough games. Coaches, players, and fellow umpires were always glad to see Ray take the lineup cards. It must be mentioned that Ray's influence did not end with the final out. Ray believed it was paramount to give back to the local umpiring community. He would share his rules and mechanics knowledge of umpiring to youth, high school and collegiate level umpires at umpire clinics, umpire camps, and the CHSBUA Area meetings. Ray assisted with more than 20 years of the CHSBUA Master Clinics as a mentor or Master Clinician. He was an umpire's umpire.

2025 Hall of Fame Inductee

Steve Heuer – Arvada

Steve Heuer has done it all, literally. After coming to Denver in 1967, he registered with the Colorado High School Activities Association and embarked on a career spanning seven decades. His resume includes arguably the most extensive involvement of any high school official beginning with football, basketball, and baseball then later softball, soccer, lacrosse, and



ice hockey when they became CHSAA-certified sports. His career can be described in a single word - **AMAZING**.

Steve began his umpiring journey as a little league umpire at age 16, and later formally registering with the National Federation as a freshman at the University of Illinois in 1962. While there, he officiated intramural sports instead of handing out towels in the locker rooms to satisfy costly scholarship requirements. Pay back then was meager and like all officials of his generation, his pay reflected the cost of living. "High school official's sports fees were \$11.00 for varsity games and \$7.00 for JV, but gas was \$0.30 per gallon at that time," Steve remembers. Despite a very busy officiating schedule, he also was able to fit in a remarkable career as a student/athlete. Steve attended the University of Illinois on a football and track scholarship graduating with a five-year degree in chemical engineering. In football, he was a defensive back and flanker. In track, Steve ran the 100, 200, and 400-meter dashes. He earned three letters in each sport, and Steve played in the January 1, 1964 Rose Bowl against Washington won by Illinois.

Steve's introduction to high school and summer baseball in Colorado came by way of the Aurora Sports Officials run by Dave and Mert Letofsky. Working games for Jefferson County Baseball Umpires' Association exposed him to CHSBUA Hall of Fame legends Julius Carabello, Ed Stevens, Lou Nolin, Bud Schoepflin, Bill Vincent, and Joe

2025 Hall of Fame Inductee

Terry Reed – Aurora



Rossi. “Looking back at the Hall of Fame pictures on the CHSBUA web site brings back so many great memories of umpiring partners. It also reminds me of the days when new umpires were simply thrown onto the field with minimal, if any, on-field training compared to the extensive training started some years ago and continued up to this day by the CHSBUA,” Steve states.

Despite the lack of training, Steve rose through the ranks and was selected to officiate multiple district, regional, and state finals in all his sports; specifically, three state championships in baseball including one very memorable assignment. “I was extremely proud of being named the plate umpire for a state championship game in 2023 when I was 79+ years old.” he recalls.

By his own count, Steve estimates that he has umpired close to 10,000 baseball games during his career, and perhaps close to 30,000 games in all sports combined. He is the senior member of CHSBUA in his 62nd year of officiating, but has retired from several sports and now limits himself to umpiring baseball and softball.

Off the field, Steve was a high-value asset in his professional endeavors. While stationed at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal in 1967, He was given a direct commission to captain so that he could assume command for special Arsenal projects. Steve retired from Amoco Oil Company’s hazardous waste treatment division in 2012 but not before he developed several processes and equipment patents for treating and recovering viable oil from hazardous refinery waste.

Lucky for CHSBUA umpires, Steve has not completely retired and continues to be a valuable asset to the membership. He combines an encyclopedic knowledge of the rules of baseball with almost instant recall. He is often called on to settle disagreements over rules sometimes arising during meetings. One area director stated, “It is far easier just to ask Steve what the rule is instead of taking time searching for it in the book. He is always correct and nobody to my knowledge has ever disagreed with him. He really has the final word.”

If Terry Reed was to begin to recruit new umpires, he could sum up one of the major benefits of the job. During his career, Terry has met so many fellow officials and coaches that have become his friends and it is fair to say that he has thousands of friends. By his own count, he has worked several thousand games and officiated

numerous district, regional, and state tournaments along with several state championships in baseball and softball which are a great honor for Terry.

Terry’s reputation as a top arbiter has garnered him recognition beyond CHSAA and the Colorado High School Baseball Umpires Association. Terry was invited to work the 2018 Dreams Park in Cooperstown in New York and was able to attend the baseball Hall of Fame Museum while there. He has been recognized on a national level for his expertise on the diamond. Terry has several Umpire of the Year awards and has managed to pick up some impressive hardware in the process. Terry received the bronze, silver, and gold medal along with the National Indicator Fraternity for ASA/USA softball.

Terry has been a two-term area director on the softball side. Why softball? Like many of his generation, senior baseball was in its infancy and in Colorado, softball was king. Terry played men’s fast pitch and slow pitch for several years before becoming an umpire 40 years ago. Soon, like many players, his interest gave way to what is often referred to as the dark side. Terry enjoyed umpiring so much that he became a 3-sport official with CHSAA for baseball, softball, and basketball.

There is a light side to the Terry Reed saga as well. Originally from Hays, Kansas Terry grew up in Hill City, Kansas playing baseball on the local travel team. After a third move to Great Bend, Kansas, in 1967, he attended and graduated from high school. Terry came to Colorado in 1976 met a lady named Penny and married her in 1977. That was 47 years ago.

Now the Reeds have their own starting lineup with three beautiful daughters and 6 grandchildren with whom he has enjoyed teaching and playing softball and baseball.

The game of baseball is not without its challenges where success is often followed by failure. A sunny spring is often followed by overcast. For Terry, the clouds gathered during April of the 2023 baseball season. He had to quit umpiring because of so much pain in his lower abdomen area. In May of 2023, Terry was diagnosed with a tumor in his hip and pelvis the size of a grapefruit. The biopsy showed the malignancy that started in Terry's kidney had spread to his bones.

Terry thought he was in the last inning of the game and made plans for a final farewell to baseball. Terry thought he only had a few months left to live and said his goodbyes at the last baseball meeting. CHSAA bestowed him the honor of throwing out the first pitch in the 5A championship game at All Star Park with all his family watching. It was a special day and meant the world to him.

Yogi Berra once said, "It ain't over 'till it's over" and for Terry the game has gone into extra innings. After beginning radiation treatment and starting immunotherapy and infusions right after at the Rocky Mt. Cancer Center, Terry Reed found out the true meaning of the baseball maxim "hope springs eternal." During one of his radiation treatments, the doctors thought he would be a candidate for a revolutionary surgery that could let him walk again without crutches or a walker. The surgery was performed on July 3, 2023 and four weeks later he was walking and even jogging. The successful surgery put Terry back in the game umpiring some baseball and softball. He worked the regular season of baseball in 2024. Terry reports he is now "back to almost 100 percent." The last Bone Scan and MRI shows he was cancer free but will continue to take infusions once a month to keep the cancer away. Reed now has a few more pitches to call and a few more games to work. Yogi was right.

Terry sees it another way as he believes God still has plans for him. All the support and prayers he received during this time from family, friends, fellow umpires and even coaches, provides hope of many years left to umpire the sports that he loves. Terry is forever grateful.

