

JOHN AMSBAUGH

NOMINEE FOR THE IOWA MEN'S FAST-PITCH SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME

2017

John Amsbaugh began his fast-pitch career in the small town of Norwalk, with the local team. He started with the Norwalk team in 1971 and stayed with them until 1973. It didn't take John long to show his talents to higher quality teams in the Des Moines area.

Reames, a local powerhouse team, picked John up for advanced play in both 1972 and 1973 and in 1974, John joined Reames on a full-time basis. John would become a mainstay of the "Noodlemen" team until the end of the 1981 season when Reames dropped their sponsorship.

During his tenure with Reames, Des Moines' fast-pitch softball was quite competitive. There were three or more teams doing constant battle for league, city, sub-state and state titles. Although John never played on a State Champion, he was a major player on Reames' teams that won City Championships in 1975, 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1981. He played on Sub-State Champs in 1974, 1977 and 1981.

John generally batted in the top of the Reames order as he was a deft bunter, and a great "hit and run" man. Although not known as a power hitter, he was a team leader in runs-batted-in (RBI's) many times. Known as a clutch hitter, Amsbaugh seemed to hit as well, if not better, against the strongest competition. John was a slick, dependable shortstop, but was versatile enough to play other positions when called upon to do so.

On the 1981 Reames team, which was almost completely a different team, player-wise, than in previous years, John was one of only four holdover Reames players. John and the other three players were joined by the nucleus of the powerhouse Des Moines Bomber's team and formed an outstanding team that year. The result was a dominant team that won 24 out of 25 tournament games played in Des Moines. The team also won numerous weekend tournaments throughout the Midwest. Many nationally renowned teams were amongst Reames' victims that year, including the eventual national ASA Champion Decatur ADM with David Scott, and the Canadian Champions Calgary Brake. John was Reames' leading hitter in three of these highly competitive tourneys, and was named to numerous all-tourney squads that summer.

After sitting out the 1982 season, John was beckoned by Collins Radio of Cedar Rapids in 1983. In 1986 and 1987, John played with Henry J's/La Pizza House and added a 6th & 7th City Championship as well as another Sub-State title to his accomplishments. 1987 would mark the final season of John Amsbaugh's career.