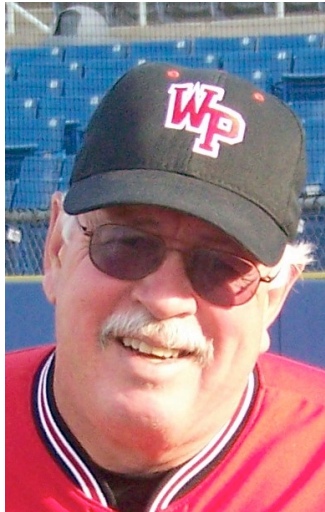


BCA Hall Of Fame



Mel Gardner



William Penn High School
New Castle, Delaware

Mel attended Newark High where he played on Delaware's 1st two state championship teams in 70 and 71. He also played on the Senior Babe Ruth all-star team that went to the World Series in 71 and was captain of Newark High in 72. He attended South Georgia College until an injury forced him to red shirt. Upon his return to Newark he started coaching as a 19 year old in Babe Ruth for 3 years along with assisting a Senior Babe Ruth team. He then started an expansion team in Senior Babe Ruth coaching for 5 years (76-81) and a weekend team for several years in the Vic Willis league as player/coach. During those 8 seasons he coached many all-star teams with several winning state championships and advancing to regional play. Mel was an assistant coach at his alma mater Newark High during the 76, and 78-80 seasons.

He started coaching at William Penn High in 1981 and coached 30 years retiring with a 370-208 record. His teams won 11 Conference Championships, one state championship (1991), and four other finalists. He was selected Blue Hen Conference Coach of the Year 10 times, ABCA District 2 Coach of the Year in 2006 and elected to the State of Delaware Baseball HOF in 2008. Around 100 of his players played college baseball and 10 had pro careers. He strived to get his players the recognition they deserve with honors at the conference, state, regional and national levels. His teams have also won the Umpires Sportsmanship Award three times, reflecting their respect for opposing players, coaches, umpires and the game of baseball.

Since 1981 Mel served as Blue Hen Conference rep. for the DEBCA, Vice President for 5 years, President for 3, and since his retirement from coaching, Executive Secretary of DEBCA. Mel was instrumental in creating a computer program for all State ballots where all coaches in the state vote. He conducts the balloting for POY, Assistant and Head Coach of the Year. He sets the rosters for the Blue Gold All Star game along with a pre season poll for top 10 teams and a pre season all state team. During the season he does a bi weekly poll for the top 10 teams. He has also coached the Blue Gold All Star game 10 times, Carpenter Cup seven times, member of the Delaware State Baseball Hall of Fame Committee for four years, State Tournament committee member 17 years (four as chairperson), an active participant in fund raising for Big Brothers Big Sisters, University of Delaware graduate in 1976 where he served as an undergraduate fall assistant to Coach Bob Hannah in 1975 and also was assistant coach in

the falls of 1981-83.

Mel is a charter member of NHBCA (23 seasons). As a member of the association, he has written articles for the BCA publication, been a clinician, was District 2 representative from 2009-11 selecting the All District team, district POY, All American team and National POY, serves on Mid Atlantic ranking committee and is currently a member of the Executive Board as the Mid-Atlantic Representative. As he has done at the state level, Mel also works hard to promote the players, coaches and teams, not only from Delaware but also the District level with the NHBCA.

In June of this past school year Mel ended his 37-year career in public education. He had served as Department Chairperson of Guidance Counselors for 13 years, Assistant Athletic Director in charge of Eligibility, Recruiting and Awards for 13 years and the last 4 years as Visiting Teacher in charge of truancy for the Colonial School District. Mel resides in Newark with his wife of 35 years, Betsy, and has two children Megan (31) and Scott (26).