



Richard “Dick” Orzel

Year of Induction: **2012**

Year of Graduation: **1960**

The dream of playing professional baseball is one held by nearly all young boys who choose to play the sport, but it is one that is rarely achieved. Richard (Dick) Orzel, JCHS Class of 1960, not only achieved this dream; he did so by playing for his hometown team, the former Binghamton Triplets. Mr. Orzel’s accomplishments on the baseball diamond place him among the elite players in Johnson City history.

Dick was a standout student-athlete for Johnson City High School from 1958-1960. He earned eight varsity letters during his high school years: four in basketball and two each in football and baseball. Dick was a member of the 1958 JC football team that captured the Southern Tier Conference championship. He was also the captain and MVP of the Johnson City basketball team during his senior season in 1960. His contributions on the football field and basketball court validate Dick’s athletic ability, but his accomplishments on the baseball field are what truly set him apart from his peers.

Dick starred on the Johnson City baseball teams of the late 1950’s. He was a first baseman and a pitcher for the Wildcats and led his junior year team in 1959 to a runner-up finish in the Southern Tier Conference. Once his scholastic playing days had finished, Dick went on to play professional baseball in the Chicago Cubs and New York Yankees organizations. Overall, he appeared in over 50 games on the mound as a professional pitcher. In 1965, his final year of professional baseball, Dick became one of the few local players to achieve the honor of pitching for the Binghamton Triplets.

After remaining active in local baseball leagues as a player, Dick contributed to his community in a variety of ways. He was a coach for both the Johnson City Post 758 and Endicott Post 82 legion baseball teams, and also coached a youth softball team in a national tournament. Dick has also volunteered as the head of Off Ice Officials for the AHL hockey league and has been the head marshal for the B.C. Open and the Dick’s Senior Open.

Dick truly made a mark on the local baseball scene in the late 1950’s and 1960’s, and he has given back to his community through his volunteer efforts ever since. It is for these reasons that the Johnson City Athletic Hall of Fame is proud to welcome one of the few Wildcats ever to play professional baseball, Richard (Dick) Orzel, JCHS Class of 1960.