

## Joe Williams

### Personal Contributor/Fast-Pitch Softball

In the sport of fast-pitch softball, there are many hats to wear. Joe Williams has worn every one of them in his 30-plus years: player, coach, manager, sponsor and organizer.

His start came on the baseball diamond in high school, where he played second base all four years. He played baseball in college and then in a semi-pro league at Bellevue Park for a couple of years.

Not wanting to hang up his cleats, Joe took his first step into fast-pitch softball when he formed a team with friends who wanted to play in 1978 and called themselves the Memphis Rebels. Joe played with that team for the next two years, and the fire was lit for the next three-plus decades.

Joe next played with the AAA Termite from 1980-83, finding a starting role at second base as he had in his baseball days. He helped lead that squad to the 1981 City Championship, including a key bases-loaded double to put his team ahead late in the title game.

Joe continued to play, but his next steps in fast-pitch softball expanded his interest in the game to roles of manager, coach and sponsor. His first time wearing all those hats came in 1984 and ran until 1995 with Williams and Sons Construction/Development. The team played in the Memphis Fast-pitch League and traveled to tournaments all over the Southeast. The squad won several tournament titles and posted more than 250 victories in 12 years.

Joe moved on to form his next team, Roadkill, in 1998. The team played in three national tournaments and won more than 150 games. Next up for Joe was The Dawgs, where he served as a player and coach. With the Dawgs, Joe was a part of more than 450 victories, six League Championships and seven top-10 finishes in national tournaments from 2000-10. A year later in 2011, Joe played and coached in the 50 and Over Nationals in Salem, Oregon.

For his career, Joe had a lifetime batting average of .325. He was also a player, coach, organizer and sponsor of teams that won more than 800 games. Perhaps, though, more than all the numbers, Joe passed on his love of the sport to those he coached and played with. Joe gave back to the sport through the way his teams played with incredible teamwork and respect for competition, along with mentoring younger players. He was also active in the Memphis Park Commission Kids Ball, teaching the next generation about fast-pitch softball.

Please welcome to the Hall of Fame, for contributions to fast-pitch softball — Joe Williams.