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SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: A RETROSPECTIVE -Larry Wolfe

Nearly ten years ago, I began this series of profiling members of the Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association. The purpose of the articles was to allow our members the opportunity to learn something about their fellow players “off the field” life and accomplishments. This is article number 100, so I thought it would be interesting to go back in time and revisit article number 1.

That very first article featured Jim Kilmartin. At the time, the 79 year-old held the distinction of being the oldest player in our league. And he was not just participating; he was successfully competing with players 10 to 20 years younger and more than holding his own. Jim would continue playing for another seven seasons before hanging up his cleats in 2014 at the age of 86 due to health issues. He began participating in Sun Lakes Softball in 1992 as a member of the original Sun Lakes Blues team which played other area teams. To my knowledge no one in our Association has played longer or to an older age than the “Jimmer.” He still comes down to the Field of Dreams regularly and helps out periodically by running the scoreboard. Jim also assists with

administrative duties such as conducting elections and registering our members. His heart still wants to be out there playing, but he knows it's time for the younger guys to carry on. However, he's still very much a valued member of our organization.

Here are a few snippets from the original article. You're encouraged to go to the Press Clippings page on our website (sunlakessoftball.com) to read the entire article. The other 99 profiles are also on that web page.

A native of the Bronx and a life-long Yankee fan, Jim actually lived within walking distance of the old Yankee Stadium and fondly recalls attending 20 to 25 games per year, sitting in the 25 cent bleacher seats and watching all the Yankee greats over the years, including his favorite: Joltin' Joe DiMaggio.

Jim's "claim to fame" is that he was a professional roller derby player for the New York Chiefs, the dominant team of the late '40s and early 50s. He later had a "real career" spending many years in the insurance business, primarily with the Hartford Insurance Company.

Jim and his first wife, Julie, were blessed with six children and many grandchildren. Julie passed away at a young age and Jim later married Joan, his current wife of over thirty years. Many of Jim's fondest memories center on his children and grandkids.

Like many of our senior softball players, Jim not only loves the game itself, but has enjoyed the camaraderie among the players. The friends he has made through Sun Lakes Softball are too numerous to count.

Jim was honored with the prestigious Spirit of Sun Lakes Softball Award in 2013. If anyone exemplifies that spirit, it's surely Jim Kilmartin. Many will say he IS that spirit!