

2024 Hall of Fame Inductee Dan Weikle – Broomfield

To say that Dan Weikle's ongoing umpiring career, which began in 1975, is saturated with accomplishments would be an understatement. Dan's focus as the CHSBUA President (2000-2003) was to improve CHSBUA umpiring through on-going training and evaluation. His philosophy was simple; give any CHSBUA umpire a path leading to the elevation of their talent; to meet and exceed expected standards of performance. The creation of the advanced training and professional standards for CHSBUA umpires was taken from the NCAA Umpire Development Program presented almost 40 years ago when Dan and Keith Bailey attended the first NCAA National Umpire Development Meeting in Kansas City, MO in the dead of winter. The next year this duo, with the help of Ray Belfiore, convinced NCAA Umpire Development to come to Denver, knowing it was better to bring the training here rather than have Colorado umpires brave the frozen hazards he and Bailey had endured on I-70 in January.

Dan took this a step further by inviting Jon Bible, the first NCAA Umpire Coordinator, to come to Denver and meet with all interested umpires, some of whom were on the cusp of entering into the college ranks, but most of whom were interested in improving their skills as CHSBUA umpires. Following an open-invitation meet and greet dinner, Bible attended local Connie Mack and Stan Musial summer games to observe some of Colorado's best CHSBUA umpires. Fast forward a few years with Dan, Keith, Ray, and Jim Paronto organizing The Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinic featuring instruction from the finest nationally recognized umpires in America featuring Bob Jones, the first NCAA Umpire Development representative assigned to the Mid-west who functioned much like Bible had done earlier. The program eventually became a success with over two-thirds of CHSBUA umpires selected for high school post-season games receiving continued professional development through the Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinic.

While Dan's resume never compared to many of the MHAUC grads, it was evident that his greatest contribution was organizing opportunities for umpires to learn and develop their craft. Toward this end, during the late 1980's, Dan met with the AAA Denver Zephyrs general manager Tom Mahoney and lobbied for the members of the advanced training clinic to be guests of the Zephyrs so they could watch and learn from professional umpires. Dan's request was for a game or two; the Zephyrs G.M. responded with season passes for all umpires in the development program. Later, as a CHSBUA Area Director, Dan successfully organized and scheduled Denver Area Umpire meetings to be held in a suite at Mile High Stadium in conjunction with Zephyrs games.

During a career spanning six decades, Dan was responsible for creating several umpire instructional clinics, both locally and nationally. The Mile High Advanced Umpire Camp was one of his first. After developing the MHAUC and the Umpire Training, Evaluation, and Promotion (UTEP) arm of CHSBUA, Dan went on to develop a national umpire training and evaluation program in his new (2010-16) position as the NCAA Division II National Umpire Coordinator. Dan's mandate from the NCAA was to insure the best umpires from around the nation were observed, evaluated, and promoted to the eight Division II post-season tournaments including the national championship. The creation of two separate NCAA clinics, The Palm Beach Challenge in Florida and The Desert Challenge in Phoenix helped meet that mandate. Both clinics featured first-ever Division II Regional Advisors headed by Tim Hatfield, Dennis Whalen, and Kirk Knowles-all former MHAUC instructors and CHSBUA members, who were largely responsible for the selection process leading to the naming of the NCAA Division II National Championship umpire staff.