

2024 Hall of Fame Inductee Jim Paronto – Grand Junction

Jim Paronto built a solid reputation as a football player and coach before he became known as one of Colorado's premiere umpires. Paronto played quarterback at Adams State University, graduating in 1966 after serving as team captain in 1965. He earned accolades of Academic All-Conference, Academic All-American, and All-Conference. While at Adams State, he also played on the school's baseball team. He later served as the head coach for both football and baseball at Adams State.

Jim began a coaching and officiating career began at Central Union High School in California and later moved back to Alamosa where he began teaching and coaching at Monte Vista High School. Soon there was a move into the college ranks beginning at Adams State College, then to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where he earned a doctorate of education in athletic administration in 1983 and helped coach the Cougars to a Division I National Championship. His final stop before returning to Colorado was at Oregon State in Corvallis, Oregon. Eventually, Jim landed back in Grand Junction at Colorado Mesa University and took the Mavericks to the NAIA football championship game in his first year at the helm.

Besides enjoying a reputation as a successful educator and coach from the Western slope, he established also himself as a premiere umpire eventually leading to his election as the CHSBUA President from 1999-2001. After his tenure as part of the Executive Committee, he helped establish the CHSBUA Umpire Training, Evaluation, and Promotion (UTEP) serving as its co-director. Jim was also involved in the creation of the Mile High Advanced Umpire Clinic where he served as a senior clinician training over 200 high school umpires during the ten years of the UTEP umpire training initiative. Jim enjoyed a storied career as a CHSBUA umpire working numerous league, regional and state finals for years. Jim was a fixture at the AABC Connie Mack World Series in Farmington, New Mexico where he also umpired and supervised the national championship staff.

He was also a college umpire of note representing CHSBUA in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference both as a staff umpire and coordinator, and on the Scenic West staff where he was also the umpire supervisor. Nationally, he worked in the Western Athletic Conference, the Mountain West Athletic Conference, and the West Coast Conference. He later supervised umpires in the MWC and was named NCAA Secretary Rules Editor where he served for 12 years – the only CHSBUA umpire to serve in a national NCAA capacity.

Jim is a tremendous individual and is very deserving to be inducted into the Joe Rossi CHSBUA Hall of Fame.