

1993 Hall of Fame Inductee Roger Kinney – Denver

Colorado has been a part of Roger Kinney's life from day one!

Born and raised in Denver, Roger's involvement in sports started in the early 1950s as a standout basketball and baseball player at East High School where he led the city's prep league in batting. He continued his baseball career at the University of Colorado where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1960.

An accountant with a master's degree from the University of Denver in 1964, Roger started his "behind the scenes" involvement in the Colorado sporting community in the 1960s as a member of the Metro Sports Committee.

After assuming the leadership of the Metro Sports Committee along with becoming the president of the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame, Roger organized the effort to bring the NCAA national basketball tournament to Denver and McNichols Sports Arena.

With the help of Colorado Sports Hall of Famers Vince Boryla, Eddie Crowder and Bill Daniels along with the likes of President Gerald Ford, Mayor Federico Peña, Johnny Dee, Dick Eicher, Arnie Ferrin and Bob Lee, Roger's stewardship led to Denver's hosting NCAA regionals in 1985 and 1989 before staging the "Final Four" in 1990.

"We wanted to do something to put Denver back into the national spotlight after we had turned down the 1976 Winter Olympics," said Roger in a 2010 Denver Post article by Irv Moss. "We were told to try to do something special with our bid. We had a committee member hand-carry our bid and personally present it to each of the selection committee members."

Roger's Metro Sports Committee involvement also led him to his contributions in bringing a Major League Baseball franchise to the "Centennial State". He was a member of the Metro Stadium Authority along with being the executive director of the Denver Baseball Commission.

Once MLB awarded Denver a franchise in 1991, Roger became the first employee of the Colorado Rockies where he served as the club's executive director of the Colorado Rockies Foundation and director of Community Outreach Programs until 2003.

"The baseball campaign was different," Kinney said in the Denver Post article. "In both cases, we had well-meaning people, and everybody worked together. The Final Four is the greatest basketball tournament in the world. Major-league baseball has been a reward for Denver. The impact of the two has been pretty darn exciting."

Roger said his "accounting background had led me into a community service project where I could combine business with my passion for sports. I know that that the success of the national basketball tournaments had a positive impact for Denver, especially for future sports events, tourism and the convention business."

As former Denver journalist Sam Adams wrote in his recommendation for Kinney's induction into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame, "The man has 100 hands, it seems, all having been put to great use over

the years – from playing infield at East and CU, to pointing toward new opportunities to enhance Colorado’s presence on the national sporting scene.”