

Tom Hallion

Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame Inductee

2009



Major League Umpire
Tom Hallion

The Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame Club has selected Tom Hallion as a 2009 inductee. After reading Tom's journey from his hometown Saugerties sports experiences to becoming a Major League Baseball Umpire, you may readily see why he was elected to the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame.

Tom was born in Saugerties, NY on September 5, 1956. He was raised by his parents, the late Francis and Alice Hallion, with his sisters Kathy Cotich, Maribeth and brother Francis. In Tom's words "When I was growing up my family's love and support was always there in helping me to pursue my dreams."

Like many in Saugerties Tom started his sports interest in the Saugerties Little League and Babe Ruth baseball along with the youth basketball programs. A spectator or an opposing player would readily notice his competitiveness and his always giving 100% effort in the pursuit of winning the game, not only for himself but also for his teammates. He continued on during his high school years. He was a member of the football team for four years playing running back and defensive back. He played four years of basketball, two years of JV baseball (second base for Hall of Famer Pete Kramer) and two years of track which included cross country racing, 440 relay team and pole vaulting.

After high school Tom participated in the SAA Half Court and Premiere basketball leagues for six or seven seasons. He was always among the league leaders in free throw percentage. Over this period of time he also played in the highly competitive SAA Softball "A" League. As a softball player his primary positions were pitcher and shortstop and occasionally playing second and third base and was selected as a league all star player for several seasons.

Jack Keeley gave Tom a summer job as a Saugerties Athletic Association softball umpire. At the time he was attending the University of Buffalo working toward a degree in Engineering. During

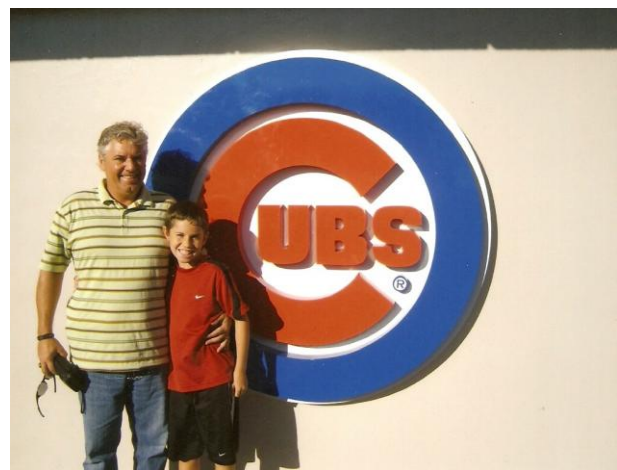
the softball season Tom realized that he really liked umpiring. In fact he liked it so much that he approached Jack and asked him what he knew about umpiring opportunities. Jack told him he knew very little but he would look into what was a possible route to pursue. Jack came back to Tom with a professional umpiring school in St Petersburg, Florida. At the very same time Tom was being encouraged to follow his dream by his very good friend Larry Panella. Tom credits his many conversations with Larry for his making his final decision to follow his dreams and it had a great deal to do with his choice of profession.

In 1979, Tom attended a two week umpiring camp which he learned about from Jack Keeley. He then attended the Bill Kinnaman Umpiring School and was selected in the top five of his class, which enabled him to move on in the pursuit of becoming a Major League Umpire.

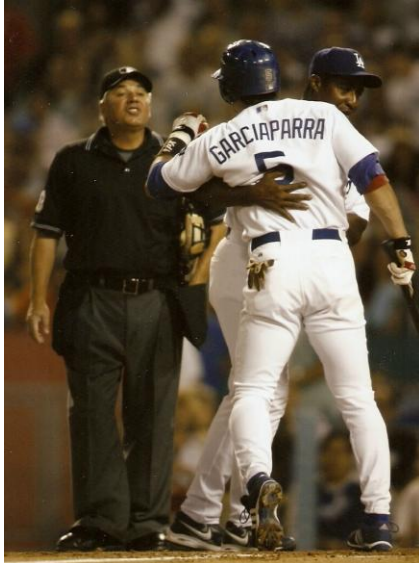
In 1980-1984 Tom worked his way through the ranks. In 1980 and 1981 he worked Class A ball in the Carolina League. After the 1981 season he worked in the Baltimore Orioles Instructional League held for their minor league players. In 1982 Tom was promoted to AA working in the Eastern League. He worked in the extended spring training league in April and May and in June moved on to the New York Penn League. In 1983 Tom was promoted to AAA and the American Association where he worked from April to September. On September 11, 1983 Tom married Betsy Carnwright in Saugerties, NY and in October 1983 he worked in the Dominican Republic Winter League. In 1984 Tom moved to Louisville, KY to pursue his career and worked the same assignments as 1983. In 1985 Tom was called to the National League spring training camp. He started the 1985 season in AAA and in June was called to the major leagues. In 1986 there were two National League umpire job openings and our very own Tom Hallion got one of them. From that point until September 1, 1999 Tom continued as a Major League Umpire. During the 1999 season there was a Major League Umpire strike which eventually resulted in Tom's (and others) contract not being renewed. The baseball owners broke the Umpires Union and Tom was a strong backer of the Umpire Union. He believed it was his duty to respect the Union Leader's position on the issues. Through the support of his wife Betsy and his three sons Corey, Kyle and Jake, Tom found out what the love of family means in life. Tom gives them all of the credit for helping him through one of the toughest periods in his life. With perseverance and family support Tom made his way back to the majors in 2007 and today is a well respected Major League Umpire.



**Tom's Family front row (left to right) Sons, Kyle, Jake and Corey.
Rear wife Betsy (Carnwright) Hallion and Tom**



Tom with son Jake at Wrigley Field in Chicago



Tom ejecting Nomar Garciaparra of the Los Angeles Dodgers



Making a dream come true for Aunt Maureen "Sis" Miller on the field with Tom at Shea Stadium. Sis is an avid Mets fan.

Tom's most memorable season was 1985 when he worked his first big league game. He made his major league debut July 6, 1985 umpiring a game between the Atlanta Braves and San Francisco Giants. Tom's biggest sports thrills include working the 1992 All Star Game in San Diego, working the 2008 All Star Game in Yankee Stadium and working the 2008 World Series played by the Philadelphia Phillies and Tampa Bay Rays.

The Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame Club extends its congratulations to Tom for his induction to the Saugerties Sports Hall of Fame. Your remarkable career journey has made your family and your Saugerties community very proud.