

Ambrose Clifton (Amby) Foote

Amby Foote lettered in seven sports in one school year at the former Sherrill High School in his hometown of Sherrill, New York. These seven sports were soccer, football, bowling, volleyball, basketball, track and baseball.

He started his professional baseball career in 1947 with the minor league team in Orlando, Florida. While there he attended the Jersey Joe Stripp Baseball Camp. Later, in 1949, he pitched for the Smithfield-Selma Leafs, a minor league team in North Carolina's Tobacco State League. That year he won 18 games and was credited with 20 complete games. It was in Smithfield that he met his future wife, Sue Evelyn Ennis.

His ten-year playing career (professional and amateur) also included stops at Burlington, Greenville, Rocky Mount, Lexington, Granite Falls, Reidsville, St. Jean Nova Scotia, Winston-Salem, New Orleans, Waycross and Syracuse.

In 1949 Mr. Foote was in spring training with the Brooklyn Dodgers organization in Vero Beach, Florida. In 1953 he was in spring training with the Pittsburgh Pirates organization in Orlando, Florida.

He also played professional basketball in the 1950s in Pennsylvania and New York with the Continental Pro Basketball League.

On two occasions, Amby Foote served as the Johnston County American Legion Post 132 Baseball Coach.

From 2003-2012, he served as the pitching coach for Smithfield-Selma High School. The SSS team was very successful in that ten-year period as they won six conference championships and made the playoffs eight times. He was most proud of the fact that 30 players earned college scholarships. Jerry Sands made it to the major leagues, playing for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Tampa Bay Rays, Cleveland Indians and Chicago White Sox. Jay Cox (Lloyd Jehu Cox Jr.), while at the University of North Carolina, played in the 2006 College Baseball World's Series in Omaha, Nebraska. He played five years in the minor leagues with the Colorado Rockies organization and later in the Independent League in North Dakota.

Starting in the 1970s, Amby Foote umpired high school and college baseball for over 30 years and was a basketball referee for 35 years. In 1996, he was recognized as the top baseball umpire in North Carolina. During much of that time, he was a booking agent for high school baseball umpires

In the late 1960's Mr. Foote started the first integrated basketball program for seventh and eighth graders in Johnston County. A few years later, he started a girls 6th grade recreation basketball league. Some of those girls received the first women's college athletic scholarships at Smithfield-Selma High School.

Mr. Foote was inducted into the Johnston County Athletic Hall of Fame in 2012.

Mr. Foote's son, Barry was a star athlete at Smithfield-Selma High School in several sports. Barry played 10 years of major league baseball and later spent 14 years totaling 24 years as a manager and coach in professional baseball.