

Mary Conner



Meritorious Category
Inducted November 1998

Mary Conner spent most of her life working with and for youth teams not only in her home state of Indiana but around the country as well. The continued development of Fast Pitch Softball in her later years became the focus of her life. Mary's vision with Fast Pitch Softball surpassed the times, when slow pitch was the biggest game around. Her vision allowed her to see that fast pitch in the late 70's, all through the 80's and early 90's would someday lead to full scholarships to *any* major college in the country, when the nation was divided between Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch. She envisioned Fast Pitch as an Olympic Sport prior to it becoming a reality. She along with Chuck Middleton envisioned NSA as the leading Association in Youth Fast Pitch. So the two of them worked in tandem to place NSA's version of Fast Pitch Softball # 1 in the world. For those visions, Mary is most remembered.

Mary was the first female Director in any capacity with the NSA as she was appointed the Youth Fast Pitch State Director for Indiana. Mary was appointed the Region 5 Youth Fast Pitch Director shortly thereafter, and was also appointed the Assistant National Director for Youth Fast Pitch in 1994. Mary wore her trademark *red hat* to thousands of tournaments throughout her tenure as head of all three of those positions even though her health was failing. The youth of our Nation was Mary's life.

After Mary's death in 1998, the NSA named its youth fast pitch award the Mary Conner Fast Pitch Achievement Award, which is presented every year at the National Convention. This award goes to the director that exemplifies the standard which Mary too dedicated her life. You'll find Mary's footprints forever in NSA's Youth Fast Pitch Softball. Mary Conner "*the lady in the red hat*" became the first female inducted into the NSA Hall of Fame in November 1998.