



NOMINATION FORM



Nominee JOE RENDULICH Birth date 1-5-57

Address 6405 COUNTY ROAD 5 NE City/State NORTH BRANCH, MN Zip 55056

Softball Community where major accomplishments were achieved DULUTH, MN

Is that softball community's program currently affiliated with the MSF, the MN Softball Hall of Fame Administrator/Custodian? Yes No

Home Phone () Cell Phone (651) 587-4193

Email Address ROODSOLO@AOL.COM

- Check the Nomination Category:
- Superior Performance
 - Meritorious Service
 - Pioneers of Yesterday

- Check all that apply:
- Player Manager/Coach
 - Promoter Administrator
 - Umpire Sponsor

- Check all that apply:
- Fastpitch
 - Modified Pitch
 - Slowpitch

Nominated by DON OLSON *Don Olson* Date of Nomination Dec 2, 2024
(If a relative, must have a seconding nomination by non-relative)

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Seconding Nomination Name JOE SINNOTT *Joe Sinnott*

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NOMINEE'S PERSONAL STATS

- * Stand-out pitcher for many years for one of the top women's slow-pitch softball teams in Duluth winning several City Championships and many state-wide major tournament Championships that included tournaments in Bloomington, Anoka, White Bear Lake, New Hope, Osseo, Brainerd and Duluth
- * Winning pitcher for all games as the team was crowned the undefeated MN State Champs in 1976
- * Winning pitcher for all games as the team was crowned the 1976 National Champions in York, Pennsylvania
- * Stand-out hitter with a batting average consistently between .450 and .520 for first five years playing in the league
- * Averaged approximately 35 home runs per season

NOMINEE'S PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- * Named "First Team All-American Pitcher" at the 1976 National Tournament, York, PA
- * Stand-out pitcher that gained State and National recognition for her 20-30 foot high arcing pitches that she could drop within 6 inches behind home plate
- * Winning pitcher for several years for above mentioned major Championship games that were City, State-wide, and National levels

NOMINEE'S TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- * 1976 National Champions- Rustic Bar
- * 1976 MN State Champions - Rustic Bar
- * 1980 MN State Champions - Spirits
- * Rustic Bar was one of the top Duluth Women's Softball teams for years winning several City Championships and many State-wide major tournament titles.
- * Rustic Bar was highly successful at the prestigious Tessier-Waltman Tournament that was held in Duluth winning the Championship title 3 out of 4 years in a row.
- * Years later, Sue played for the Spirits, a combination of Duluth's two powerhouse teams, Rustic Bar and Mr. Frank's East. The Spirits also became considered as one of the top teams in Duluth. The Spirits won several City Championships, many State-wide major tournament titles and a trip to Nationals

Sue's love of softball began at a very young age. As soon as she could, she started playing in the Duluth playground recreational league until she was 16 years old when she became a member of the Duluth Rustic Bar women's softball team. Rustic Bar was considered to be one of the top Duluth women's softball teams for several years to come winning several City titles, many state-wide tournament titles and the first women's slow pitch team from Minnesota to ever win a National Championship.

Sue was a versatile player who was also a power hitter. She started out playing outfield and pitcher, but pitching is where she gained State and National recognition. When the league briefly changed the pitching rules to "unlimited arc", Sue saw this as a unique opportunity to "elevate" her pitching game. By the start of the 1976 season, she had mastered throwing a 20-30 foot high arc while dropping the ball within 6 inches behind home plate. There was no other pitcher in the state that was known to duplicate this feat. The best hitters in the state had difficulty connecting with Sue's high arcing pitches.

As mentioned earlier, Sue was a power hitter known for her numerous home runs and triples. Her batting average was consistently over .450 every year for the first five years of her softball career. In 1976, her batting average for that year was described by a local sports reporter as ".458 with power".

The year 1976 proved to be a banner year for Sue and the Rustic Bar team as they went undefeated in the MN State Tournament behind Sue's pitching. Rustic Bar allowed only a total of 6 runs in 5 State tournament games. This win earned them a trip to York, Pennsylvania, to compete in the National tournament. In between the State and National tournaments, Rustic Bar also won the Championship game at the prestigious Tessier-Waltman Tournament in Duluth for the second year in a row with Sue as the winning pitcher.

At Nationals, Rustic Bar was undefeated going into the championship game behind Sue's pitching. Rustic dropped the first game of the double elimination tournament to the heavily favored U.S. Army All-Star team which was stacked with their best players from across the United States. Rustic Bar, made up of Duluth local talent only, persevered and went on to win the Championship in the final game. It was a history making day for a Minnesota women's slow-pitch softball team to win a National Championship. Sue was the winning pitcher of all games and was named as a "First Team All-American pitcher". This was also the last time that Sue would be able to pitch her 20-30 foot high arcing pitches as the following year the league limited the pitching height to 12 feet.

On an entertaining side note: Fresh off Rustic Bar's win at Nationals, famed men's fastpitch pitcher and entertainer Eddie Feigner, who was well known as the "King and His Court", was in Duluth with his four-man team for a sold-out exhibition game. Somehow, Sue's high arcing pitching ability and the team's recent National win caught the attention of Feigner. Always thinking of the entertainment value, Feigner approached Sue and the Rustic Bar team managers to pitch the idea of having Rustic Bar play in the preliminary exhibition game prior to his show. He thought it would be great fun to see if his guys and other members of a local men's fastpitch celebrity team could hit Sue's "sky ball pitches". Feigner was so impressed with Sue's pitching that he promoted the preliminary game as the "Queen and her Court". Unfortunately, due to the unpredictability of Duluth weather, the game was rained out and unable to re-schedule. However, this speaks volumes to the recognition and popularity that women's softball was achieving in the mid-seventies.

Years later, she became a member of the women's slow pitch team, the Duluth Spirits. The Spirits team was a combination of Duluth's two powerhouse teams, Rustic Bar and Mr. Frank's East. The rivalry between these two teams was so fierce that when they faced off in local games, anywhere between 200-700 fans packed the stands to watch. Both teams set aside the rivalry and became close teammates. Sue remained a versatile player for the team splitting pitching assignments or playing infield or outfield, wherever the team needed her. Her hitting ability continued to keep her in the games. The Spirits dominated the Duluth women's softball league for years and competed in State and National tournaments. They were also successful in winning many state-wide major tournaments. The Spirits were active in the softball world for several decades.

Sue has always promoted the game of softball in many different capacities, whether it was volunteering at tournaments, assisting coaching the North Branch High School girl's fast pitch team or just being an avid fan of the sport. Her love for the game continues to this day.



Rendulich



Pehl



Bussio



McClernan



Lyons



Crain

1976

Rustic women gear up for trip to nationals

RUSTIC BAR'S women's slow pitch softball team has been grabbing quite a few headlines this summer, having won the Class A division of the State Tournament a few weeks ago in Anoka and repeating at Classic Division champion of the Waltman-Tessier Memorial tournament last weekend in Duluth.

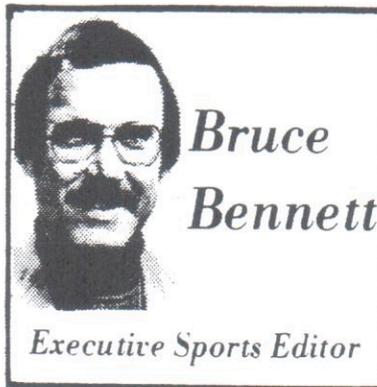
By winning the state Class A, Rustic will represent Minnesota beginning a week from tomorrow, Sept. 3, at the women's nationals in York, Pa. A fund-raising drive to get the team there (and back) is well under way and being well-received in the community, according to early returns, and the players are awaiting the trip with anxious anticipation.

Who are these women who'll carry the city and state banner into the nationals, what do they do, where to they come from and can they really play ball? These are questions you might ask yourself if you read about them, but if you saw them play you'd readily know the answer to the last one: **The team is good.**

Here's a rundown on the Rustic line-up, personality sketches of the team members, provided by head coach Pat Koskey and team manager Paula Bergren:

Sue Rendulich, pitcher: Answers to the nickname "Hardee" and is in her third year with the team... she's versatile, an ability that keeps her in the line-up when not pitching...batted .458 with power this year...her pitch probably has the highest arc of any in the state...she'll attend UWS this fall.

Reenie Pehl, pitcher: Called "Angel," she's a Denfeld graduate...she helped her team to three straight city softball titles in high



Bruce Bennett

Executive Sports Editor

you'd be surprised at her quickness...has been with the team four years...like Bussio, started as a fastball player and was a standout on Merritt kids teams...flashy but sure-handed fielder...a switch-hitter whose average has been either second or tops on the team all year...also establishing herself as a softball umpire.

Kris "Brenna" Lyons, second base: Has been with the team three years, but was a "pick-up" player before that...exceptional "place-hitter" with great bat control...a graduate of Bemidji State in speech and theatre, she is a substitute teacher in Duluth...was an All-Midwestern Conference field hockey player in college...a ventriloquist, she has been on TV with her dummy, Sonny O'Shay.

Cathy Crain, third base: Played six years of fast pitch softball, primarily as a catcher, when she played on two state championship teams...has a wicked side-arm throw which is very accurate...possessor of an unorthodox but effective batting style...a solid hitter and a smart, fast base-runner.

JEANS short-stop: Graduated from UWS last

lot of line-up juggling and her defensive abilities were missed patrolling center...her leg has mended now and she's ready to play...also a member of the Roling's state championship broomball teams.

Julie Wegner, right field: A senior at Bemidji State, she's doing her internship this summer at the Environmental Protection Lab and she intends to do graduate work as an aquatic biologist...played last year for Rec Lanes of Rochester, which took second in the state (ahead of Rustic's third)...called "Chuckie" by her teammates, she's played several positions before settling down in right field.

Cindy "Bee" Bijold, left center: Second year with the team, "Bee" played mostly infield last year and filled in admirably in the state tournament in 1975 when one of the regulars couldn't play...she earned a starting spot this year mainly due to her speed on the bases...often stretches singles into doubles...she's a phy. ed. major at UMD, where she'll be a sophomore.

Debbie Mayhew, left center: A recruit from Community Credit Union in Superior, this is her first year with the team...a graduate of UWS in physical education last spring, "Puff" is job-hunting...noted for her diving catches...in the state tournament she made two of them which stopped rallies...also has a strong throwing arm.

Cathy VanPoucke, first base, utility: A college volleyball star at UWS, where she'll be a senior this fall...played for CCU in Superior last softball season and is in her first year with Rustic... "Pokey" has played several positions for the team this year.

Winning no stranger to Rustic softballers

The Rustic Bar woman's softball team knows what winning is all about.

This past winter seven of the softball team members, current leaders in the women's commercial slow pitch American League, played on the state broomball champions.

And this past weekend they added another title to their trophy case when Rustic won the Bloomington Fire Department's Slow Pitch Tournament in the recreation division with a pair of wins over the Locker Room of Columbia Heights in the final games.

Rustic had lost a 5-1 decision to the Locker Room earlier Sunday in the double elimination tourney, but battled its way back into the championship bracket with an 8-1 win over Bungalow behind home runs by Sue Rendulich and Denise Smith and a 13-2 trouncing of the Bloomington Fire Department when Kathy Bussio clubbed a homer.

Barb Kurtovich, one member of the state broomball champs, slugged a homer in Rustic's 12-1 victory over Cozy Cafe of Minneapolis which set up the championship showdown with the Locker Room.

Rustic won the opener 6-5 on homers by Mary Sinnott, another broomball star, Lynn

Brasgala and won the title with an 8-1 win.

"We played a lot more games than the Locker Room," said Paula Bergren of Rustic, "yet we still were fresh out there. I think they only played five games, while we played seven."

Bergren has been on the team for each of the seven years it has been around and has played on four city champions. It has its hopes for another and a berth in the state tournament Aug. 3-4 at Faribault.

But first it has to get by Mr. Frank's East, the defending city champ and current leader of the city National League.

RUSTIC UNBEATEN
BLOOMINGTON — Rustic Bar remained as one of 16 unbeaten teams in the recreational division of the Bloomington Fireman's Softball Tournament when it beat Apple Valley 8-4 and Richfield VFW 12-6 Saturday when Sue Rendulich and Sandi McClernan each socked two home runs.

Rustic Bar wins

SCANLON — Rustic Bar defending champions of the sixth annual Cloquet Softball Association Tournament again won the event Saturday.

Rustic Bar defeated Uncle Sam's 20-0 in its first game, ripped Mr. J's Blue 12-0 in the second and was victorious in the championship game against Mr. Frank's East, 3-2.

Mr. Frank's East was second and Superior Community Credit Union was third in the ten team tournament played at Sather field.

1975



Rustic Bar team members might well be thinking "that's the way the cookie crumbles" during this play in the opening round of the Waltman-Tessier Memorial Softball Tournament Saturday morning at Wheeler

Rustic Bar still unbeaten

BY BILL BROPHY
Of the News-Tribune Staff

It was not a good day for local women softball teams Saturday at the Waltman-Tessier Tournament.

In fact, of the nine Duluth teams that started the day in the rain and fog of Heeler Field, only Rustic Bar in the classic division remains as a genuine championship threat. The remainder will have to win the title the hard way through the long, involved losers' racket of the double elimination tourney.

Rustic doesn't have to worry about that due to victories over Royals of Minneapolis (3-2 in the first round) and Maplewood Bowl of St. Paul (3-1 in the afternoon's second round).

It was that final victory which put Rustic, the third place finisher in the re-

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cent state Class AA tournament, into today's 11 a.m. battle of unbeaten against Chuckwagon Americus and marked it as a good bet to unseat defending classic champ, Mr. Frank's East.

Rustic scored twice in the first on Sandi McLernan's sacrifice fly and Sue Rendulich's single to grab a 2-1 lead and was never headed in that game. Mary

Sinnott scored a pair of runs.

Rustic's arch-rival in the city, Frank's, was not as fortunate. After winning its first game, 14-4 over P.J.'s of Minneapolis, Coach Larry Trachsel said his team's game against Chuckwagon "would be the key to the tournament for us."

Frank's hadn't played Chuckwagon in two years, but it had heard of the Brook-

lyn Center team's record in state and regional tournaments. Even so, Frank jumped off to a quick 3-0 lead, highlighted by Lyn Brasgala's first inning tri and took a 5-0 lead into the seventh inning.

That's when the trouble started. Chuckwagon scored five runs with out to tie the score and won it in eighth with a single run, sent Frank's to the losers' bracket. That means it will have to win three games to reach the 6:30 p.m. championship game at Wheeler and repeat feat of last year.

Local teams fared little better in recreational division where the three remaining unbeaten teams from the Twin Cities — Ted's Bar of

CLASSIC DIVISION First round

Chuckwagon Americus 6, Ole Piper Inn 1, Mr. Frank's 14, P.J.'s (Mpls.) 4, Baker Auto (Mpls.) 9, Ma Barkers 4, Superior CCU 8, Roadrunners 2, Maplewood Bowl 13, LaBelles VFW 4, Rustic Bar 8, Royals Minneapolis 2

Second round

Chuckwagon (Brooklyn Center) 6, Mr. Frank's 5, Baker Auto 4, Superior CCU 3, Rustic 3, Maplewood 1

Third round

Chuckwagon 6, Baker Auto 5
Ole Piper Inn 5, P.J.'s 0, Roadrunners 7, Ma Barkers 4, LaBelles 4, Royals 0, Maplewood 5, Superior CCU 4, Maplewood 6, Roadrunners 2

Losers' Bracket

Losers' Bracket
Ole Piper Inn 5, P.J.'s 0, Roadrunners 7, Ma Barkers 4, LaBelles 4, Royals 0, Maplewood 5, Superior CCU 4, Maplewood 6, Roadrunners 2

GAMES TODAY