



Hall of Fame

Jim Mathis

Cleveland, Ohio

Inducted in 1977

As a sixteen year old sophomore at Cathedral Latin High School, Jim was involved in a serious car accident that left him with a paralyzing injury to his spinal cord. After many months of rehabilitation, Jim returned to high school to graduate in 1950. Upon graduation, at the tender age of 19, Jim founded the Cleveland Comets Wheelchair Sports team that went on to compete at the local, national and international levels in multiple sports. As if this weren't achievement enough for a young man, he also served as a Board Member for the Northeast Ohio Rehabilitation Association; Boy Scouting for the handicapped; Cleveland Wheelchair Sports; and was also named to Chair the Governor's Subcommittee for the Elimination of Architectural Barriers. Jim also served as an accessibility consultant for the Cuyahoga Regional Transit Authority.



In all of his spare time, Jim was also an outstanding athlete, particularly in Archery. He was the National Wheelchair Archery Champion in 1957, 1958, 1959 and 1967. He was a member of Team USA at three Paralympic competitions: 1960 in Rome; 1964 in Tokyo; and 1972 in Heidelberg, Germany. Jim garnered 2 Paralympic gold medals and 2 silver medals in his career. In addition, he competed in three Stoke Mandeville Games (1961, 1962, 1963) and took home five gold medals and a silver. He also was a member of Team USA at the 1967 Pan American Games in Winnipeg, Canada where he won a gold and silver medal. Jim also was an avid bowler and was the Class 1 National Champion at the National Wheelchair Games in 1963, 1966 and 1968.

His peers at Cleveland Wheelchair Sports said this about Jim: "Jim has not only been a great athlete because of medals won but has truly been a credit to the National Wheelchair Athletic Association and its creed of 'friendship, fellowship and sportsmanship'. He has never let individual accomplishments overshadow the needs of his community. Whether it is a first place finish or just finishing the event, Jim Mathis has always stressed the importance of developing as much as possible of a person's talents."