

BSB Interview Issue: Ray Shoup Helped Ohio State To Only Baseball Title



This is an excerpt of a story from the July print edition of the Interview Issue at Buckeye Sports Bulletin. For four free issues of the print edition, no card required, sign up at the link here: <http://www.buckeyesports.com/subscribe-4issue-trial/>

Ray Shoup is a member of an exclusive club at Ohio State. He was an outfielder for the 1966 national championship baseball team, the only in program history.

Much like men's basketball, which reached the title game three times from 1960-62 but came away with only one title in 1960, the baseball Buckeyes' crown came in the middle of a three-season run in the College World Series from 1965-67. They have not been back since.

The 1966 team was led by Steve Arlin, the Buckeyes' first two-time All-American. He played parts of six seasons in the majors with San Diego and Cleveland and was elected to the College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008.

Shoup, 77, recounts playing with Arlin as well as his high school and college teammate Bo Rein, a two-sport star in baseball and football who was as colorful off the field as he was talented on it. Rein died on Jan. 10, 1980, at 34 in an airplane accident shortly after being named head football coach at LSU.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin spoke with Shoup for the annual Interview Issue and in the two-page interview, Shoup discussed how he got to Ohio State, his career with the Buckeyes and his experiences in professional baseball. Here is a sampling of those questions:

BSB: How did you end up at Ohio State?

Shoup: "I grew up in Niles, which is outside Youngstown. My high school coach's name was Paul DeMont, and he'd played some pro ball and he got to know (OSU coach) Marty Karow through the

coaches association stuff. He got Marty interested in me and me in Ohio State. He took me down there for an interview with Marty, and Marty said, 'Well, we'd like to have him but all we can give him is a half scholarship.' Before I can say anything, Pepper (DeMont) said he's not coming here for half a scholarship. I about swallowed my tongue, you know.

"So, we talked a little bit and the next thing I knew I was going on a football scholarship. I had broken my leg my senior year in high school so I missed all but this one whole game of a doubleheader and I broke my leg in the second game. But anyway, my freshman year I wound up on a football scholarship.

"That was back in the days when they had unlimited scholarships, and I guess Marty went to Woody (Hayes) and said we have to have this guy but we don't have any money. So, they put me on a football scholarship. (OSU assistant football coach) Tiger Ellison actually signed my scholarship papers.

"The following year, of course, freshmen weren't eligible to play baseball then, weren't eligible for anything, so my sophomore year they moved me onto a baseball scholarship and I was on a full ride for baseball."

BSB: You mentioned how you "introduced" yourself to Los Angeles Dodgers Hall of Fame manager Tommy Lasorda early in both your careers when you had nine straight hits in a series for Orlando against his team.

Shoup: "Yeah. After the third game, Lasorda came over and talked to me and told me what a great thing that was. He was this really good guy. Then, later, when I played Triple-A ball in Portland in the Pacific Coast League, he was the manager at Spokane, so I got to talk to him a couple of times there again. I reminded him of Orlando and he said he remembered.

"I was in the Army Reserves at that time and I was traveling back to Orlando for weekend drills and the Twins were flying me back there. I had to rejoin our team in Spokane and I came into the airport and was going down the sidewalk outside pulling my suitcase and there comes this bus and it stopped. The door opens and Lasorda's (like), 'Oh, that's Shoup. You going to the ballpark?' I said yes and he said, 'Come on, get on the bus. We'll give you a ride,' so I got on the bus and they took me out there.

"Later on, he emceed our reunion. I think it was the 25th-year reunion of our national championship team, so I got to talk to him again there. He was friends with John Havlicek and that's how we got him to come back to be the emcee for the baseball team."

The full interview with Shoup can be seen in the July print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, available to subscribers. Subscribe at this link to receive immediate online access, or call 614-486-2202 to subscribe and receive online access, and ask about receiving our July interview issue.