

Pat Malone "Always Had The Floor"

By Neil Rudel
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Tom Irwin, Sr. was a young major-league hopeful in the Cleveland Indians organization when Pat Malone was closing out his distinguished career.

When the Indians visited Yankee Stadium, Irwin sought out his fellow Altoona native.

"I went into the (Yankee) dressing room and Rosey Ryan was coming out. He was their Yankee shortstop at that time," Irwin recalled. "He told me to go in, and he said the guy who was yelling the loudest was Malone."

"He was the leader of their ballclub. He had the floor."

Irwin approached Malone and can remember the veteran pitcher making him feel at ease.

"I didn't know Pat at the time, but I knew he was from Altoona," Irwin said. "I went in and talked to him and he knew a lot of people from Altoona, and he asked about them. Then when I took infield with the Cleveland club, he stood on the sidelines and was giving me encouragement."

Malone was well paid in his day, making more than \$25,000 a year.

"I was making \$250 a month and he (Malone) was telling me how to invest my money," Irwin said.

Malone pitched seven years with the Cubs, primarily as a starter, and closed his career as a reliever for three years under Joe McCarthy of the Yankees.

His career record was 134-92 with 1,024 strikeouts, 705 walks and a lifetime 3.74 earned-run average. Malone pitched in 358 games and 1,915 innings. He also appeared in three World Series – in 1929 and 1932 with Chicago and in 1936 with the Yankees. He was 0-2 in the 1929 Series and 0-1 in '36.

Malone led the National League in wins (22), strikeouts (166) and shutouts (five) in 1929. He led the league in complete games (22) in 1930 and was a two-time 20-game winner with the Cubs.

Former Cubs' second baseman Billy Herman is one of the few Hall of Famers still living who played with Malone. Herman, who managed the Pirates in 1947, is 77 years old and living in Palm Beach, Fla.

"He had outstanding stuff," Herman said. "He could throw hard. He was a little bit on the mean side and really took charge out there."

Herman has fond memories of Malone.

"We kind of hit it off right from the start," Herman said. "He took a lot of the young



Pat was a two-time 20-game winner in Chicago.

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Pat with daughter Patty (13) at Yankee Stadium.

kids and palled around with them. He made them feel comfortable. He was just an outstanding person."

Malone made quite a reputation for himself on the field. Off the field, well, let's just say he liked to enjoy himself.

"Pat was known to take a drink once in a while," Irwin said. "He opened a pub here in Altoona, Pat Malone's Bar it was

called, in downtown Altoona. It might have been called the Colonial Inn."

"He was a happy-go-lucky practical joker who just had a lot of fun," Herman said. "Everybody was crazy about him. He was always playing practical jokes on people in the clubhouse, tying their shirt sleeves together. But when he was on the ballfield, he was very serious."

Malone was a big man in his era, a 6-foot, 200-pounder with a crackling fastball. He also fought 41 professional fights, most of them at the Jaffa Mosque in his youth under the name of Kid Williams.

Malone, whose real name was Perce, died May 13, 1941. He was 43.