They were as alike as separate but equal bookends. The coach wanted to win with a passion – and so did he. The coach knew that when you played the game at Rutgers-Newark, you were adding a new dimension to the expression “student-athlete” because just finding whatever plot of ground had been designated as the home field for the day was a treasure hunt in itself – and so did he. Consequently, while Steve Senko was the unchallenged king of his dugout, it was only natural that the shortstop became the coach’s alter ego once the game began – particularly in view of who that shortstop was.

For three years Sandy Pollack was the guts of the Rutgers-Newark infield. A consistent .300 batter, who alternated with teammate Burt Ironson in leading the team in hits and stolen bases, Pollack joined him as co-captain his senior year. When you ask Senko about him, he will tell you that Pollack was “extremely aggressive and a strong fielder with a powerful throwing arm.” While all of this was true, it does not begin to express the impact which Pollack had upon those ball clubs, particularly when you match it against Senko’s description of Pollack as “the best shortstop who ever played for me.”

His ability to get on a base and his ability to make the play that shut down impending disaster cannot be measured by any statistical line. For this team, which used “somebody else’s car” for a locker room and “somebody else’s diamond” for a home field, he was the leader.

Pollack lives in West Orange with his wife, Greta. They have four children – David, Richard, Cheryl, and Michael. Long a distinguished coach in football, baseball, basketball, crew and softball, he has been an educator for 31 years and is currently a guidance counselor in the West Orange School System.