



## FIRMIN SIMMS 1929—2020

It is with great sadness that Babe Ruth League bids farewell to our dear teammate, Firmin Simms, of New Orleans, Louisiana who passed away from natural causes on May 9, 2020, at age 91.

Simms, who was inducted into the Allstate Sugar Bowl Greater New Orleans Sports Hall of Fame in 1986, spent 35 years (1955-90) with the New Orleans Recreation Department as a volunteer coach at Bunny Friend Playground in the Ninth Ward.

Simms was also inducted into the Babe Ruth League International Hall of Fame and he was named Mr. Louisiana Basketball by the Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches in 2007. Simms was also named National Amateur Baseball Coach of the Year in 1999.

Simms was a highly decorated Babe Ruth League coach for over 40 years, guiding his New Orleans-based teams to five World Series championships. He was one of the most significant individuals in youth baseball in the New Orleans area in the 20th century with his experience with the Babe Ruth League program, the New Orleans Recreation Department, and with the Jefferson Parish Recreation Department (West Bank).

What Firmin accomplished for the Louisiana Babe Ruth program was phenomenal. He touched a lot of young people's life. His mark on baseball in the city is pretty evident. You cannot talk to a baseball person that did not play for him. His legacy will live for a long time.

During his remarkable coaching career, which featured a 372-82 win-loss record, Firmin Simms had coached many future Major League stars, future Mayors, doctors, coaches and two clergymen. The list included MLB players Rusty Staub, Will Clark, Barry Butera, Blair Barbier, Ronald Marigny, Tookie Spann, Charlie Borders, Gerald Clessi, Manny Colletti, and several others.

While Simms was known for his baseball exploits, he was equally as accomplished in basketball, coaching area teams to 10 national titles on the Bidy level. Simms eventually earned the title of National Director of Bidy basketball.

Simms began as a volunteer coach and ascended to the top of the ladder in two sports. In all sports combined, Simms guided teams to well over 50 district and state championships, as well as 18 World Series.

