

# Gary Ward

Gary Ward is a legendary baseball coach and former two-sport athlete who has a deep history with New Mexico State University (NMSU). He is renowned for his extensive coaching career, which includes multiple Hall of Fame inductions, and for his success in developing some of the top players in the history of the sport.

## Coaching Career Highlights

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Ward's coaching career spans several decades and levels of competition. He served as an assistant coach at NMSU for his son, Rocky Ward. His coaching tenure includes a previous stint as the Aggies' head coach from 2001 to 2002, during which he earned his 1,000th career win. He led NMSU to a Sun Belt Tournament Championship and an NCAA appearance in 2002.

His most notable success came as the head coach at **Oklahoma State University** from 1978 to 1996. During his 19 seasons in Stillwater, he compiled a stellar record of 953-313-1, leading the Cowboys to **16 consecutive conference titles**, 17 NCAA Regional appearances, and **10 trips to the College World Series**. His teams were national runners-up three times (1981, 1987, and 1990) and were consistently ranked in the top 10 nationally. Ward finished his career with a remarkable record of 1,022-361-1, ranking him 24th on the NCAA all-time wins list.

Before his time at Oklahoma State, Ward achieved success as the head coach at **Yavapai Junior College**, where he led the team to two national championships in 1975 and 1977, earning NJCAA Coach of the Year honors both years.

## Accolades and Legacy

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Ward's coaching excellence has been recognized with multiple prestigious honors. He was inducted into the **College Baseball Hall of Fame** in 2008 and the **American Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame** in 2011.

He coached numerous talented players who went on to have distinguished careers, including **Robin Ventura**, the 1988 Golden Spikes Award winner, and **Pete Incaviglia**, the NCAA's career home run leader. He also produced **15 first-team All-Americans** and 58 total All-Americans during his career.

## Personal and Athletic Background

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Ward's connection to NMSU began as an athlete. He played both baseball and basketball for the Aggies from 1960 to 1962 and was later inducted into the **New Mexico State University's Hall**

**of Fame** for his athletic accomplishments. He was born in Ramona, Oklahoma, and graduated from NMSU in 1963, later earning his master's degree from the university in 1968.

In addition to his coaching, Ward founded the **Mid-America All-Star Baseball School** and produced instructional baseball videos. He is married to Catherine Gardner and has three children, Rocky, Roger, and Sherri.