

# Wayne Tolleson - 2020 Hall of Fame Class



**Wayne Tolleson**

Baseball/Football

Western Carolina (1974-78)

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## Bio

A middle infielder who fashioned a 10-year MLB career with the Texas Rangers, Chicago White Sox and New York Yankees, Wayne Tolleson was two-sport star at Western Carolina, earning spots on the SoCon's 75th Anniversary Baseball Team and the Western Carolina All-20th Century Football Team.

The Catamounts' first-ever Southern Conference Male Athlete of the Year in 1977-78, Tolleson was a two-time All-SoCon selection at shortstop and the 1978 SoCon Player of the Year in baseball and earned all-conference honors at wide receiver in 1977, the first season Western Carolina played a SoCon schedule after joining the league in 1976. Also a two-time All-Atlantic Region pick in baseball, Tolleson hit .340 with 58 stolen bases in his two SoCon seasons in that sport and finished his collegiate career with 10 WCU season and career records. He led the SoCon in stolen bases in each of his two seasons in the league, swiping 29 both years. On the gridiron, Tolleson led the nation in receptions per game in 1977 with 6.6 and led the SoCon with 100.1 receiving yards per game. His 73 catches and 1,101 yards that season were school records.

Tolleson made his MLB debut with the Rangers in 1981 and spent the first five years of his career with the organization before being traded to the White Sox after the 1985 season and then to the Yankees in the 1986. He was a member of Western Carolina's inaugural Hall of Fame class in 1990.

### Tolleson says:

"First of all, so much of my life perspective comes from my faith, so I like to give God all the glory for this recognition; it's about him, not me! Second, I'd like to thank the Southern Conference for allowing me to be a part of this prestigious 2020 Hall of Fame class. I'm humbled and honored. And congratulations to all the other new members: Lynne Agee, Eric Breitenstein, Terrell Owens and Rod Thorn.

"Also, thanks to the Western Carolina and Spartanburg High School coaches and administration for giving me the opportunity to play both football and baseball. Both institutions were the perfect spots for me to advance in both my education and athletics. I'm forever grateful for the difference they made.

"Lastly, thanks to my family and friends for their unwavering support throughout the years. Thanks especially to my wife, Kim, who was with me every step of way, high school till present. Thanks to my sons, Steven and Clint, who I have encouraged to be impact people and in return they have impacted me in such a positive way."

**Gallery:** (6-10-2020) Wayne Tolleson HOF gallery

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