

A Brief Report on the 2009 VBBA Conference

Cincinnati, March 28, 2009 – After a hearty breakfast, the conference opened with remarks from Dave Brooks, a member of the host club, the Cincinnati Vintage Base Ball Club. After welcoming the more than 70 registered participants, Mr. Brooks briefly reviewed the nine sessions available to participants and **the rest of the day's activities.** Although the Saturday breakfast marked the first formal activity, many enjoyed a casual social hour at a Cincinnati bar & grill called **Arnold's the evening before, where** many traded the shirt off their back to another vintage enthusiast. After the Saturday sessions, many registrants and their guests enjoyed a tour of the Great American Ball Park (home of the Cincinnati Reds) and then a visit to the Reds Hall of Fame. The day was completed by a banquet with 100 attending in the fashion of bygone days, complete with a speech by author and news reporter (Cincinnati Enquirer) John Erardi. Mr. Erardi stepped back in time and took the persona of Harry Millar, the reporter of 1869 who traveled with the Red Stockings throughout their undefeated season.

Sunday morning was reserved for business, as the board met then convened the business meeting of all delegates. After this final business in the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Hotel, many adjourned to Heritage Village, the home for the Cincinnati Vintage Base Ball Club (CVBBC) and braved the elements in an abbreviated match.

The CVBBC wishes to thank all who participated in the 14th conference of the VBBA, especially those who bid on and those who generously donated the silent auction items. Special thanks too to the advertisers in the conference newsletter: Phoenix Bat Company, K & P Weaver, LLC, 19c Base Ball, Inc., and Bulldog Bat Co.

VINTAGE BASE BALL ASSOCIATION TRUSTEES' MEETING CINCINNATI, OHIO 29 MARCH 2009; 9:10 AM

Present: Glenn Drinkwater, Rich Arpi, Paul Salamone, Gary Hetzel, Ed Elmore, Helen DeGeatano, William Dieckmann, and Scott Westgate

Action Item One: It was moved and seconded that the term limits imposed on the Officer Title of Treasurer be removed. This action item was deemed plausible due to the logistical inconveniences of the physical location of the VBBA's bank, its checkbook, and all other instruments to maintain accurate financial records. It was deemed feasible that Rich Arpi, current Treasurer and holder of the checkbook with the local bank, continue as Treasurer without term limits.

Action Item Two: Marcus Dickson of the Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs presented, as a visitor to the Trustees' Meeting, a request to obtain the VBBA's contact list in order to perform a study. Dr. Dickson is a professor at Wayne State University in Detroit of Psychology. His study will center on the states of competitive spirit and friendship bonds between vintage base ball clubs and current day baseball clubs. Data collection should convene in the summer of 2009. Publicity for the VBBA should transpire from the publication of said study. The Trustees approved Professor Dickson's request and a letter of approval was provided to Professor Dickson from the VBBA Secretary, Scott Westgate.

Action Item Three: It was moved and seconded that the 2010 VBBA annual convention be located in Port Huron, Michigan hosted by the Welkins Base Ball Club. The floor is open for for discussion for the 2011 location, however, there is strong support that the location will be Hart-

ford, Connecticut.

Items of Discussion:

Silent auction proceeds at the annual convention are to be kept as a separate line item from the general dues line item

The goal of each annual convention is for the convention to be self-contained financially with a zero profit and zero loss

Approximate cost of Cincinnati convention is \$10,000

VBBA objective to e-archive the VBBA's P&L and the Convention's P&L Statements

Glenn Drinkwater maintained an objective to provide VBBA presence coast-to-coast...not just the Atlantic Coast and the Midwest

VBB factory is not timely providing base balls to its customers. Paul Salamone was going to personally intervene in this situation to help VBBA members obtain their base ball orders. The VBBA's 501c3 status is not finalized. Scott Westgate will be taking over this project to its hopeful fruition. Rich Arpi is working on the finalization of VBBA membership cards. VBBA needs a new "webmaster". Rules Committee continues to mull over vintage rules

VBBA BOARD of DIRECTORS

Glenn Drinkwater, Pres.
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Scott Westgate, Secretary
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Gothams play at Old Bethpage

Old Bethpage, NY - 4/19/2009 - The Mighty Gothams ventured out to Long Island by ferry and horse-drawn carriage to battle for the annual New York/New Jersey cup at beautiful Old Bethpage Village. On this beautiful day the Gothams thwarted a long streak of victories by Long Island clubs to be the first club from the big city to take the great Cup back with them outside of the Village in glorious Victory. The Gothams stormed out on their quest for the Cup with a hard-fought victory over the current champions, the Mutuals of New York, by a final Tally of 15-11. Next on the Gothams schedule was a contest with the fierce Mineola Washingtons, who had earlier lost a battle to the Flemington Neshanock. On this fine day, the Mineola club could not hold back the Gotham onslaught as the Gothams were again victorious, but this time by a more decisive final tally of 22-10. By virtue of a Mutual Victory over the Flemington Club and the Gothams fine record of 2 victories to nil, the Gothams took the Cup. Huzzah!

Game 1 vs. New York Mutuals - 1864 Rules:

The Gothams began this new season with haste as the Fleet-footed Collector began the game by taking an ordinary one-base hit and making it a 2-base hit and would not stop there. He quickly took advantage of not one, but 2 wild pitches by the Mutuals pitcher to tally the Gothams 1st ace of this young season. Flytrap, Scratch, and Shoeless followed with one-base hits and a couple acts of thievery on the bases to tally twice more to give the Gothams a 3-0 lead, which unbeknownst to all would never be relinquished. Coach shut the Mutual batsmen down quickly with the aid of fine fieldwork by shortstop Flytrap and 3rd base-tender Shoeless. Zacker, Stacks, and Hanky kept the Gotham momentum with base hits and several pilfered bases to tally 2 more times in the 2nd, but it was a flurry of base hits by Dutch, with some adventurous base-running, Flytrap, Scratch, Coach, Shoeless, and Wombat which led to four 3rd inning aces and an insurmountable 9-0 lead after 3 frames were complete.

Coach continued his fine display of pitching by Chicagoing the Mutual Club for the first 4 frames. The Gothams, however, slowed their pace a bit and failed to tally in each of the 4th and 5th frames. The Gothams were led by fine fieldwork of catcher Scratch, Left Fielder Collector and shortstop Flytrap for 4 frames, but all Gothams began to falter in the 5th as they kicked the ball around to allow the Mutuals to tally twice and get a bit of momentum on their side. Collector, Flytrap, Scratch, and Coach continued their fine batting display in the 6th, with each Gotham reaching safely with one-bases hits, swiping a base and all but Coach tallying an ace to build the lead back up to 12-2. Unfortunately for the Mighty Gothams, they would not tally again until the 9th inning.

The Mutuals forced their way back into the game by finding hole after hole on the right side of the field. They tallied twice in the 6th, but were thwarted from more by a fine play by 3rd base tender Shoeless, who snared a line drive from the air and stepped on 3rd base to put the final 2 Mutuals out on one play. The Mutuals kept coming in the 7th by tallying 5 more times to bring the score to a respectable 12-9 and make it a match once more. If it weren't for the Gotham catcher Scratch fielding foul-tick after foul-tick the score might have reversed in the Mutuals favour. Neither team could muster an ace in the 8th frame, but thanks to Flytrap, Scratch, and Coach once again, the Gothams were able to tally thrice more to build a more comfortable lead, which could have been more had Wombat not taken 27 minutes to run from 2nd base to home before being put out at the plate. The match, was yet to end here though, as the Mutual Club would not back down. They tallied twice to get within 4 aces in the bottom of the 9th, but as the game began with the fleet-footed Collector on the bases, it ended with the fleet-footed Collector keeping Mutuals off the bases with a fine running/diving one-handed catch in left-centerfield to end the match with a 15-11 Gotham victory! This was only their 2nd victory all-time against this powerful Mutual Club...what a match it was.

Game 2 - vs. Mineola Washingtons - 1864 Rules:

The Gothams again jumped to an early lead in this 2nd match of the day. Collector again led off the match with a base hit and a theft of 2nd base. He tallied the 1st ace of the game on a base hit by Flytrap. Scratch, Coach, Ringer, El Presidente, and Dutch all followed suite with base hits and the pilfering of bases, with the big blow being Ringer's 3rd 2-base hit of the day. When all was said and done the Mighty Gothams had tallied 6 times before the Mineola club came to bat. The Mineola Club would tally twice in the 1st as well and were thwarted from tallying more on a fine play by the Gotham center fielder El Presidente making a fine catch and throwing a 2nd runner out at 2nd base to end the inning with the Gothams up 6-3. Shoeless, Stacks, and Collector combined to tally 2 more aces for the Gothams in the 2nd whilst Coach Chicagoed the Washingtons. A big 3-base hit by Scratch led the way to the Gothams lone ace in the 3rd, whilst Mineola tallied twice more to bring the score to 9-5 Gothams after 3 frames were finished.

After a scoreless 4th the mighty Gothams began to show their might again in the 5th to take over the match. Trolley led the way with a one base hit, but to the surprise and delight of all, managed to use the speed that none knew existed to pilfer both 2nd and 3rd base to get the massacre started. Stacks, Grubbs, and Collector each followed with base hits and acts of thievery before Flytrap and Coach blasted 2-base hits to bring the inning total to 6 aces and a commanding 15-5 lead. No aces would tally for the Mineola club this inning. The Gothams tallied once more in the 6th in spite of poor base-running maneuvers by both Dutch and Shoeless, which seemed insignificant at the time, but when Mineola tallied twice more in their half inning the Gothams began to worry as the score was now 16-7, but Washington was more confident in their task.

Trolley again led the Gotham charge in the 7th with a 2-base hit and pilfering 3rd base before tallying his ace on a well-struck ball by Stacks. Grubbs, Collector, Flytrap, Coach & Zacker all followed with safely struck ball, thefts of bases and 4 more aces. Neither team would tally again until the 9th frame when El Presidente, Shoeless, and Trolley smashed their way to 2 more aces and a 22-7 lead going into the bottom of the final frame. The Mineola club would not go down meekly though, they managed to tally 3 times before being put out for good, leaving the final tally in the Gothams favour at 22-10.

Overall, on this beautiful afternoon in the fine town of Old Bethpage, 4 clubs battle hard and fairly, but in the end it was the Mighty Gothams that were victorious in the battle to claim their first New York/New Jersey Cup championship. Until next time...Huzzahh!!! Submitted by Trolley Schlapp

The Finest Game Ever Played

The Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first admitted all-professional team in 1869. They went undefeated that year, and their success continued through 1870 until that fateful day in August when they ran into the Brooklyn Atlantics. Although the number of games in that winning streak has been debated, several sources claim it reached 91 victories. At any rate, it was an unbelievably great winning streak. Then on June 14, 1870, they arrived at the Capotoline grounds to face the Atlantics, before a reported crowd of 20,000. A well-respected gentleman and former player, Charles Mills, who was deemed impartial and "well up on the rules". Was selected as umpire.

The Red Stockings scored twice in the top of the first inning, and once more in the third, while holding Atlantic scoreless through the first three. Atlantic then scored twice in the fourth, and again twice in the sixth to take the lead, while holding the Red Stockings at bay, but they then scored two in the seventh to retake the lead. Atlantic pushed one run across in the eighth, and both teams were held scoreless in the ninth. A 5 - 5 draw would end the winning streak. Atlantic, and its fans, were content with a draw, and started to leave the field. Red Stocking captain, Harry Wright, insisted the game continue to a decisive conclusion, according to the rules, to which umpire Mills agreed. As the Atlantics had vacated the field, Mills was about to award the game to the Red Stockings, but Atlantic captain Robert Ferguson appeared and brought the team back to conclude the game. Atlantic blanked the Red Stockings in the top of the tenth, and then threatened to win the game in their half. They had runners on first and second with only one out, when George Wright, the shortstop, cleverly dropped a pop fly and turned it into an inning ending double play to stymie Atlantic. The Red Stockings then scored two runs in the eleventh inning to go ahead, and seemingly keep their streak alive. Smith led off the Atlantic eleventh with a hit

to centerfield. Start then hit the ball to rightfield, out of the reach of McVey, and made it to third base as Smith scored. Chapman grounded out to third baseman Waterman, with Start holding at third. Ferguson, batting lefty to avoid hitting to Wright at shortstop, pulled a single to rightfield to score Start with the tying run.

Zettlein made the second out, and Ferguson somehow (not recorded), ended up at third base. Hall then hit a hot liner to first baseman Gould, who could only knock it down, but then couldn't handle it cleanly as Ferguson crossed home with the winning run. The game was reported to the Cincinnati press as "the finest game ever played."

The editorial in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle the following day stated: "It was the greatest game ever played between the greatest clubs that have ever played, and as usual, when Brooklyn is pitted against the universe, the universe is number two."

Contributed by Ed Elmore & Jim Dragonetti, Atlantic BBC



Editorial

What is the role of an editor? What do you expect from an editor? My intention is to publish information about vintage base ball, the people, clubs and games of today and the people, clubs and games of a century and more before. I will write some things myself, but it will be more interesting if you, the reader, takes an active part in the content of this newsletter. Send your text files to this editor, Dave Brooks and I will put it into the future issues of the Base Ball Player's Chronicle. If you do not want to write an article or submit a few paragraphs, let me know what topic you want to know more about. I

CINCINNATI

	O	R	1B	TB	P	A
G. Wright, ss	2	2	3	3	4	3
Gould, 1b	6	0	0	0	9	0
Waterman, 3b	4	0	2	2	4	3
Allison, c	2	1	3	3	5	0
H. Wright, cf	4	0	1	1	3	0
Leonard, lf	5	0	0	0	2	0
Brainard, p	3	2	2	3	0	1
Sweazy, 2b	2	2	2	2	4	5
McVey, rf	5	0	0	0	2	0
	33	7	13	14	33	12

ATLANTIC

	O	R	1B	TB	P	A
Pearce, ss	3	2	3	2	1	2
Smith, 3b	3	2	1	3	2	0
Start, 1b	3	3	3	5	14	0
Chapman, lf	4	0	0	0	2	0
Ferguson, c	3	1	2	2	4	0
Zettlein, p	5	0	1	1	1	1
Hall, cf	4	0	0	0	3	0
Pike, 2b	4	0	0	1	4	7
McDonald, rf	4	0	2	2	2	0
	33	8	12	16	33	10

Policy # # # #

will find a willing writer. If you have a copy of an old newspaper account of some interesting bit about base ball, pass it on to share. Let's have a lively forum about the game we love. One warning: editors sometimes change content and spelling. Another warning: my typing is not foolproof and my proofreading is sometimes done by a fool, so you may see errors of spelling and grammar. Please let me apologize in advance for the errors I may commit. Mea Culpa.

Send copy to dbigdogbrooks "AT" breynet.com

St. Louis Vintage Base Ball Expands for 2009

And then there were two.

The Greater St. Louis Base Ball Historical Society (GSLBBHS) will be fielding two clubs for the 2009 season.

The society's longtime entry in the vintage base ball community, the St. Louis Perfectos, will be joined this campaign by the Lafayette Square Cyclone BBC.

Both clubs are based on storied St. Louis teams.

The St. Louis Perfectos currently are the longest standing Missouri VBBA team. Founded in 2002 by Matt "Five Finger" Philip, the team began play with a modest schedule. Most matches were against the Washington Eagles (the club Philip had played for in 2001) and the Rock Springs Ground Squirrels of Decatur, Ill.

During the 2003 season, the club embarked on a full schedule with Lafayette Park, located in south St. Louis, as the club's home ground. Since that time, the Perfectos have become a fixture at the Ohio Cup Festival. As a tournament host, the Perfectos have established two very popular events, the Shepard Barclay Festival (which coincides with the Lafayette Square Home Tour each June) and the Jeremiah Fruin Festival, which has been contested in September.

Highlights in the Perfectos history include the 2007 Missouri Cup championship.

The Perfectos take their name from the 1899 National League entry. That club was a charter member in the American Association as the St. Louis Browns under colorful owner Chris Vonder Ahe.

After Vonder Ahe lost his franchise following the 1898 season, the club was sold and eventually came into control of Frank and Stanley Robison, brothers, who already owned the Cleveland National League entry.

To change the team's image, the colors were changed from brown to red and the team was given a new nickname, the Perfectos. It was the only year the team would be called the Perfectos. In 1900, the team nickname changed to the Cardinals.

The Perfectos enjoyed uncharacteristic success for St. Louis National League entries in the 19th Century. The team went 84-67, finishing fifth. The Robison brothers had quite a bit to do with that success. Moving players from their Cleveland team to St. Louis made the Gateway City's entry a powerful one. Players making the move from Cleveland to St. Louis included the immortal Cy Young, Jesse "Crab" Burkett and Bobby Wallace, all who went on to become Hall of Famers.

Patsy Tebeau was the team's player-manager.

Cyclone BBC

Longtime Perfecto Rick "Sting" Rea will be leading the GSLBBHS second entry into the vintage game this season. Rea, a charter Perfecto, heads the Lafayette Square Cyclone BBC.

The team is named for the community, which surrounds Lafayette Park. Community support has been vital for the survival of the organization. The locals are loyal cranks for home matches and each year field a team to take on the Perfectos.

The Cyclone BBC takes its name from the original St. Louis club to play in Lafayette Park. The Cyclone club played in 1859-60, but eventually disbanded at the outbreak of the Civil War.

According to the St. Louis Republic, April 21, 1895, the Cyclone Club was "the first in St. Louis, and the first west of the Alleghenies."

The new Cyclone BBC will try to match the uniforms of the original team. The same newspaper article cited above stated that the club's uniforms consisted of a blue cap, blue pants with white stripe and white leather belt.

Members of the original Cyclone Club included many who would go onto fame with their respective armed forces during the Civil War.

Merritt Griswold played base ball in New York prior to coming to St. Louis. He was a major influence in changing St. Louis from Town Ball to Base Ball.

Joseph Fullerton received a brevet promotion to brigadier general at the close of the Civil War for his staff functions with the Union Army.

Frederick Benteen served a lengthy U.S. Army career after proving to be a capable commander in Missouri during the war. Part of his later service included time in Custer's 7th Cavalry. Fortunately, his command was not with Custer on that fateful day on the Little Bighorn River. Benteen always had a base ball club with his military units. And this club always carried on the Cyclone name. He retired as a brevet brigadier general.

Basil Duke was a brigadier general in the Confederate forces, serving mainly with his brother-in-law, John H. Morgan.

Edward O. Matthews went on to become a commodore in the U.S. Navy. Alex Crosman rose to the rank of captain in the U.S. Navy.

Edward Bredell rose to the rank of lieutenant in the Confederate Army, serving as a staff officer for Brig. Gen. John S. Bowen, ended up fighting with Mosby's Rangers in Virginia, where he was killed in action.

Members of the new Cyclone BBC won't have to worry about civil war breaking out. Instead, there will be cordial matches between brother clubs this summer in St. Louis.

Submitted by Bill Battle

CLUB PROFILE

The next issue of the newsletter could contain profile of your club. Send your club information, history, and experiences to Dave Brooks and spread the word about your club. Is your club named for a team from the past? Are your players young, old or a mix? Where do you play your home matches? What rule set do you play? Why did your club choose that rule set?

Spalding in 500 words – Impossible; Part I

Submitted by Eric Miklich

I have decided to write this piece so that the reader would be motivated to look into Albert Spalding in more depth as he was unquestionably the most important figure of the 19th century professional game.

ALBERT SPALDING had three exceptional careers in baseball. He was the first dominant pitcher of the professional era, some believe of the 19th century. While still a player he starting his own sporting goods business, which quickly became the most popular and lucrative sporting goods business in America and eventually he was the most influential person in baseball, essentially the governing body of the National League into the 19th century.

Spalding started playing baseball for a junior nine in Rockford, IL from 1863 to 1866. He played first base and then became a pitcher and in 1866 he pitched for the Forest City Club of Rockford. He helped defeat the powerful Nationals of Washington (DC), 29-23, during their famous 1867 Midwest tour, in which they would thoroughly defeat eight other clubs and finish the trip with a record of nine wins and one loss. Spalding was lured by the Excelsior Club of Chicago, a rival of Forest City, for the beginning of the 1868 season and was given a \$40 per week job as a grocery store clerk.

In 1871 legend Harry Wright, brought Spalding, at a salary of about \$2,000, and Ross

Barnes, Spalding's shortstop on the 1867 Forest City Club, to Boston to play for the Red Stockings during the inaugural season of the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players. Spalding would lead the league in wins with 19, but Boston would finish second to a solid Athletic of Philadelphia Club, who were not named the champion until the season was well completed. In 1873, Boston embarked on an August tour of Canada, winning all 14 games and outscoring their opponents 524-48.

Early in 1874, Harry Wright selected his star 23 year-old pitcher, Albert Spalding, to sail to England and to garner interest for a baseball tour featuring the Boston Red Stockings of Boston and the Athletic of Philadelphia clubs. The teams left America on July 16th from Philadelphia. Al Reach, a top Athletic player, declined the invitation to stay home and tend to his newly born sporting goods business. Reach would eventually be bought by Spalding and his sporting goods empire.

Spalding led the National Association in wins all five years of its existence. He was the first professional pitcher to win 20, 50, 100, 150 and 200 games, finishing with a 207-56 record. He also was the fifth overall NA leader in hits.

In a coming issue - part II.

Submit an article to the VBBA Newsletter and spread the word about the your favorite topic.

LETTERS:

Note from the editor: Readers, your comments and concerns will make this a better newsletter. Please send me yours.

D. Brooks dbigdogbrooks@brecrenet.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Eric Miklich writes:

Dave Brooks e-mailed and asked me to write a 500 word piece on Albert Spalding for the latest VBBA publication. "I think I can squeeze it in," I wrote back, "however I am also currently involved in other literary projects." I went over some notes, re-checked some facts in various books I own and reviewed the current bio I wrote on him before I began. Seven paragraphs later I am about to cover his post-playing career. I used a feature few probably knew existed in Microsoft Word called 'Word Count' and I was already over 800 words. I e-mailed Brooks and said I was having a hell of a time with 500 words. He sarcastically replied, "You mean that it is too hard to write just 500?" Somewhere Ed and Andy Shuman along with Mark Heppner are laughing.

Eric's first article appears to the left. Editor

JOIN THE VBBA

Individuals - join for just \$10 per year!

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See web site for details:
www.vbba.org

I’ve always loved baseball. I remember keeping track of the 1961 homerun race between Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris when I was 6 years old. I remember crying when the Yankees lost to the Dodgers in 1963 and then to the Cardinals in 1964 (and then to the @#%\$% Diamondbacks in the ninth inning in 2001). I’ve also always loved history. From the times my parents took me to Colonial Williamsburg (I still go there every year), to my fascination with archaeology and Egyptology, I was always lured to anything old.

When I saw the Smithsonian Magazine article about 19th Century Base Ball (10/98), I knew immediately this was something I wanted to get involved in. It was Kismet; combining both history AND baseball. That weekend, I packed up the family and went to Old Bethpage Village to see it first hand. It just so happened, they were having their Old Tyme Festival that weekend and I was able to see clubs from many states compete. I was able to find the only club from New Jersey at the time, the Elizabeth Resolutes, and asked if I could play for them. I did, loved it, started the Flemington Neshanock the next season in 2001, and the rest is history.

The Flemington Neshanock were an actual club who played in the area in 1866 and 1867. The Neshanock (it means goose neck in Lenape Indian) were apparently not very skilled ballists and often lost to their chief rivals, the Lambertville Logan, by the close scores of 77-25 and 71-47. Unfortunately, no records of the Neshanock are apparent after August 1867.

I believe 19th Century Base Ball is the best way to give people an appreciation of our National Pastime. By showing them how the game was played at its inception, they can see the purest form of the game without the money and the commercialism and the steroids.

But the game is only a small part of what we stand for. I believe the “Living History” part of our presentation is probably more important. That’s where I feel I can do the most good.

As my years have increased and my playing time has diminished, I act as sort of a “front man” for my club. I usually give a talk on the history of baseball before the game, which always begins with “Casey at the Bat”. I circulate throughout the crowd before, during and after the match answering questions and explaining the finer points of bare handed base ball. I encourage people to participate by feeling the equipment, yelling at the players (as they would in the 1800’s) and even playing an inning or two (I have picked up a few players that way). Yea, I can still play and still love playing, but I also love getting people involved and get great satisfaction when I see the same people come back year after year and plan a family outing just to see us play.

With some perseverance and a lot of luck, I’m proud to say the Neshanock roster has grown to over 25 ballists since 2001. Our large roster has encouraged us to form a second club, the Newark Eureka, which started playing in 2008 and will play an increased schedule in 2009. I’m also proud to say, I helped with the startup of the Elkton Eclipse who through the perseverance of their President Bruce Leith, has helped start up a number of other clubs in the Delaware-Maryland area.

Submitted by Brad Shaw

Member Profiles wanted for future issues of the VBBA Newsletter. Nominate someone you want to know more about or send in your own profile.

Next year, the Vintage Base Ball Conference will be held in Port Huron, Michigan. The Welkin Base Ball Club will be the host, and Mr. Jim Fisher is getting his plans together for this event. Mr. Fisher hopes to offer a new activity for the conference attendees. More on that in future issues of the newsletter.

Port Huron, a city of over 30,000, is known as the Maritime Capital of the Great Lakes. Millions of tons of freight travel past Port Huron as the freighters leave Lake Huron and enter the swift flowing waters of the St. Clair River. The Fort Gratiot Lighthouse has been guiding shipping since the **1820’s. This has been a strategic place for many years.** French explorers established **a post here in the 1680’s.** The population grew for over 150 years and the city of Port Huron was incorporated in 1857. Ten years later the Welkin Base Ball Club played **their first matches. Today’s** Welkins model themselves after that old time team. Now the city has the Olde Town Historic District and many waterfront restaurants. Visitors to the city can cross the Blue Water Bridge to also visit Sarnia, Canada.

RULES FORUM

Some clubs play by the rules of 1860. Others use the rules of 1888 to play. My club uses 1869 rules. As a frequent visitor to the home grounds of other clubs, I am subjected to many rules, and some of them confuse me. How did the rule changes evolve? Is there a good history of why the rules changed? Where can an interested person go to learn the reasons? If you have any suggestions about how to clear the air about a rule, please share.
Dave Brooks

Look! Upcoming events.

AUGUST, 2009

The 3rd Annual Washington DC 19th Century Base Ball Classic will take place August 1 and 2, 2009 on the Elipse in Washington DC. The fields are surrounded by the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. The Classic is the same time as the National SABR Convention which will be taking place in Washington that weekend. This no frills event brings in clubs from all over the country that typically would not play each other. Each club plays 4 matches over 2 days and has to umpire 2 other matches. Each club has to bring its own water and bases. The format of the tournament and schedule is determined by the number of participants and fields assigned by the DC Department of Recreation. Clubs already signed up for 2009 include: The Potomac BBC of Washington, The Elkton Eclipse, the Chesapeake Nine of Baltimore, the Havre de Grace Dauntless, the Talbot Fair Plays, the Diamond-state BBC of Delaware, the Flemington Neshanock, the Akron Black Stockings, the Clodbuster BBC, St Croix BBC, and the Williamsburg Pastimes.

OCTOBER, 2009

Huzzah Hoosier Pennant held Saturday, October 3, is hosted by the Village of Winona Blue Laws. This will be the fifth year for the festival. Nine clubs participated in 2005, ten clubs in 2006, twelve clubs in 2007, nine in 2008. There will be 16 clubs maximum. All clubs play three seven-inning matches in one day under 1858 rules with an entry fee of \$100 per club. No overnight stay required. With this semi-competitive format, a club must win at least 2 matches to qualify, then Tournament Champion is determined by an all-clubs vote from the pool of all qualified candidates (one vote cast per club). Club Awards are Huzzah Hoosier Pennant Tournament Champion Club and Crank's Choice Club. Individual competitions include: Billy Sunday Home to Home Speed Contest, Golden

Arm Longest Throw, Heavy Lumber Longest Strike, Dead-Eye Accuracy Throw, Chalk the Line Best Tally Keeper, and Square Deal Best Umpire.

FEBRUARY/MARCH, 2010

The Vintage Baseball World Series will be contested among many teams traveling to the Phoenix area. Surprise, Arizona will host this event at the same time as the Major League players begin their spring training games. The Arizona Territorial Vintage teams will work with local organizations to provide fields, lodging and special deals to teams willing to travel to Surprise for this early season event. Base ball teams traveled many miles in the early days of base ball. This event will give many teams a chance to emulate their early heritage.

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FUNDRAISING

How do you raise money to support your team? Some clubs have generous donors who contribute thousands of dollars a year. Many teams have to scrap and beg and sell to have money for their program. Please share how you get money to cover your expenses. Send me your secrets of fundraising.

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MARKETING

How many spectators do you have at your matches? If you have more than six wives and thirteen children, how do you get them there? What marketing tips can you share with the clubs that never draw more than family members. Let us know how to get people to come to the match. Spectators can grow into donors.

NEW CLUBS

Vintage base ball has grown because men and women go through the effort of forming clubs and putting teams onto fields across North America. Thanks to all of you who have done this is the past. This year more new teams are forming. Please support the new teams in your area. Here are some that are new:

Bell River Base Ball Club of Rising Sun, Indiana. This team takes their name from a club playing ball in Rising Sun in the 1860's. This club has 6 dates on their schedule.

The Jersey City Skeeters in Jersey City, New Jersey are coming back to play according to the customs of the first decade of the 20th century.

St. Charles Territory Capitals, St. Charles, Missouri plan to begin play in May of 2009.

The Kentucky Dukes are in need of some matches. They have one scheduled with the Rising Sun on July 11 and one with the Hoosiers on July 25th. They are looking for a team to play there in Kentucky on Aug 29 at one of the top 10 events in Kentucky, the Heartland Festival. This is about 1 hour south of Louisville. They will also be scheduling a game in Bowling Green at the home of the class A team of the Tampa Bay Rays. This new club is looking forward to hearing from anyone who would be interested in helping out a new club. They are ready to schedule for 2010 as well.

Please let me know of other clubs starting this year and how they are doing. Dave Brooks

The Base Ball Player's Chronicle

The newsletter of the Vintage Base Ball Association
Edited by Dave Brooks

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