



Early Innings Illustrated

Vol. 2 No. 1

The Journal of the Vintage Base Ball Association
and Chronicle of Historic Baseball Re-Creation

March, 1997



Minutes of the Second Annual VBBA Meeting & Conference

by Brett Andrews, VBBA Secretary

1. The Second Vintage Base Ball Association (VBBA) Annual Meeting and Conference was held on 8 & 9 February, 1997 in the Sylvania Heritage Museum, Sylvania Ohio. The event was hosted by the Great Black Swamp Frogs of Sylvania. Mr. Boyd Montgomery served as the general chairman of the two day session ensuring reasonably close adherence to the busy schedule.

2. Base Ball Clubs in attendance included:

Akron Black Stockings
Athletic and Base Ball Club of Cooperstown
Brownhelm Millers
Canal Fulton Mules*
Clodbusters of Carriage Hill Farm*
Colorado Vintage Base Ball Associates*
Deep River Grinders*
Great Black Swamp Frogs*
Hardin County Bats
Kent Base Ball Club*
Ohio Village Muffins*
Old Bethpage Village*
Sharon Woods Shamrocks*
Summit County Merinos
Sycamore Grasshoppers*

(asterisk indicated clubs eligible to vote)

3. Registration of teams commenced at 11:30 A.M. on February 8th. This first day was intended to be a series of presentation to enlighten attendees on subjects of interest to all base ballists.

a. The program began with an oral and visual presentation on Civil War era civilian clothing given by Mrs. Judith Martin of Mrs. Martin's Mercantile & Millinery. Both her and her husband were bedecked in period attire and gave a truly interesting modeling session and talk on male and female fashion of the times.

Newsletter

*will be by Subscription
Direct to All*

by John Wells, Editor

At the general meeting of the VBBA this year in Sylvania, it was recognized that we need to directly involve individual people in our activities, both from within our member clubs and also from the ranks outside such organizations including visitors to the historic sites where we play and those who watch our matches. We want all interested folks to be able to participate in committees, submit stories for the newsletter, and generally be involved in vintage base ball.

It was felt that the best way to begin this was to get as many people as possible directly receiving *Early Innings Illustrated* so they would know what is happening and how they can participate. We also wanted to publish our newsletter more often without putting a strain on the VBBA bank account and cutting off other activities.

We also want to further improve the content of our

Differences in Rules & Customs

by John Husman

Base Ball as a Gentlemen's Game

- Matches are conducted according to the highest standards of sportsmanship, gentlemanly behavior, courtesy and respect for others.
- There is no: swearing, spitting, scratching, consumption of alcohol, chewing of tobacco, or wagering.
- Gentlemen shall forbear from commenting on the umpire's judgment, receiving it in entire silence.

The Umpire:

- Calls foul balls immediately, does not call fair balls.
- May ask players and spectators for assistance in making decisions.
- May call strikes after warning a batter who repeatedly lets good pitches pass, does not call balls.

President's Report

by Doug Smith

My foremost goal as President of the VBBA this year is to begin the process whereby individual club members feel more of a connection to our Association. Right now we are a grouping of clubs with some individuals who are committed to this Association and the growth of our game. In order to survive, the VBBA must tap into the hearts and talents of many more individuals currently involved in the playing of vintage base ball.

Involvement in the Association matters is open to anyone interested in taking part. I hope that no one thinks you must be a "club leader" to help the VBBA. Anyone reading this who is interested in serving on a VBBA committee, please step forward. You are needed! Telephone numbers are listed in this edition of *Early Innings Illustrated* for committee chairman. Contact them directly to be a part of their committees.

Our newsletter will be available this year by individ-

d. Mr. John Husman, VBBA's past president, then gave a stimulating discussion, supported with photographs, on Dr. Daniel Lucius Adams who Mr. Husman believes had as much to do with the formulation and advancement of the game of base ball as any of the others who are credited in one form or another as being the "father" of base ball.

c. Mr. Husman was followed by Mr. Al Dieckmann (Old Bethpage Village), Mr. Gordon Olson (Kent Base Ball Club), and Mr. Pat Massengill (Colorado Base Ball Associates). Each of these fine gentlemen gave a presentation of their respective games of base ball, how their teams were organized, the size of their operation, the era in which they play, and the uniqueness and variances of their style of play.

d. After the team profiles, Mr. Jim Tootle of the Ohio Village Muffins, gave an informative history of Henry Chadwick, his role in the early days of base ball, and Mr. Tootle's personal experiences in viewing original base ball documents and the grave of Mr. Chadwick.

e. Mr. Tootle was followed by Mr. John Well (Muffins), Mr. John Husman (Frogs), and Mr. Greg Rhodes (Shamrocks). Mr. Wells lead a very informative discussion, supported by Messrs. Husman and Rhodes, on how-to hints and precautions in interpreting period photos, sketches and paintings. Caution was advised about making too many absolute judgments while encouraging the notion that some inferences and speculations can be made which, if supported by other viable sources, could add greatly to improving the realism of our current style of play.

f. Mr. Tootle then turned the floor over to Mr. Doug Smith (Muffins), incoming VBBA President, who gave a short tutorial on the importance of realistic interpretation and the need to have an understanding of events of the period, as well as the customs and courtesies, in order to provide the most realistic portrayal of an era.

g. The next speaker would also be our dinner keynote speaker that evening — Mr. Morris Eckhouse of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR). Mr. Eckhouse provided a summary on the purpose, organizational structure, current activities and future initiatives of SABR. He indicated his great pleasure with the existence of VBBA, saw great things ahead for us, and emphasized SABR's 19th century base-

"VBBA Annual Meeting"
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Mr. Mike Lieber, the official *Sylvania, Ohio Town Crier*, seen here in a match between the Frogs and the Muffins, welcomed the VBBA representatives and opened the Sunday meeting in the style of the 1800's.



newsletters with more coverage of matches, historic articles for eras besides the very early years and Civil War times, and cover such things as equipment and locations where our teams play.

Toward these ends, it was decided to publish *Early Innings* six times per year and send it directly by mail to anyone who is a member of a VBBA club for \$5.00 per year. In addition, it was decided that anyone interested but not a member of a VBBA club could purchase an Individual Membership and also receive the six issues of the newsletter.

The very low cost of producing *Early Innings* is being made possible in several ways. My partners at the Quality Design Xpress have offered to donate their time, equipment, and supplies to prepare the newsletter for publication and to address it for mailing. One of our service providers, Temptco, will print the newsletter at rock bottom prices. And we will go to bulk mailing to member homes instead of sending packages to the clubs for distribution. Thus we can provide six newsletters for less than 85¢ per issue per subscriber.

Now you must do your part. We need two things from individual members of VBBA clubs:

- Your name and mailing address
- A check for \$5.00 to cover the first year's subscription.

President Doug Smith has sent subscription forms to each member club along with the report on the Annual Meeting. If

"Newsletter Subscription"
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ungentlemanly conduct.

In Pitching:

- The ball must be pitched (underhanded), not jerked or thrown to the bat.
- The ball must be delivered as near as possible over the center of the home base.

A Striker Is Out When:

- A batted ball is caught on one bound off the ground or on the fly, fair or foul.
- After three called or swinging strikes. Foul balls are not strikes.

Baserunner Out When:

- Forced at a base, the force remaining on no matter where the first out is made.
- Overruns first, second, or third base and is touched by the ball in the hands of an adversary.
- If, after any foul ball, the ball is returned to the base, after settling in the hands of the pitcher, before the baserunner returns.

Other Differences:

- Players do not wear gloves or other protective equipment.
- A batted ball is determined fair or foul by where it first hits the ground.
- A baserunner may advance at risk if a batted ball is caught fair on one bound.
- The leadoff batter is the

"The Gentlemen's Game"
continues on page 4

ual subscription. This will help fund *Early Innings Illustrated*. It should also help individual club members connect to the Association. John Wells explains the procedure for those who are members of clubs that are in the VBBA on this page.

In addition, non-members will also be able to receive the newsletter by purchasing a \$10.00 Individual membership. This is another goal for 1997 — to extend membership to those not playing vintage base ball but interested in it. We must not think that we are only trying to attract clubs to join the VBBA. We must include those who see matches, are connected with clubs, and others who want to be a part of the Association.

We have to reach out to individuals — whether they are currently a part of vintage base ball or not. For now, the most likely instrument to connect individuals with the VBBA is this newsletter.

Please subscribe to it. Encourage fellow club members and the spectators you talk with at matches to do the same. The VBBA is open to anyone who wants to be a part of it!

Changes Made

In Constitution and Bylaws

Some changes were made in the VBBA Constitution and Bylaws at the annual meeting in Sylvania this year. A complete printing of both documents appears on page 7 of this newsletter.

Note that changes appear in italic type so you may quickly identify them.

VBBA Annual Meeting

from page 1

ball committee.

h. The day's events concluded with Mr. Greg Rhodes (Shamrocks) providing a highly stimulating review of his latest research effort into base ball of the 1845 to 1860 era. Many of his findings and conclusion generated great conversation. Such subjects as the extensive supporting data that players stole bases (advanced), lead off, and that pitching may not have been as simple as the slow pitch approach so many teams have adopted. His thoughts provided tremendous fuel for discussion and the meeting portion of the day ended on a very energized note.

i. That evening the true bonds of camaraderie were reinforced when virtually the entire VBBA attendee entourage meet at the Oliver House in Toledo, Ohio for an evening of good food, light hearted conversation (mostly about base ball), and concluded with an address by Mr. Morris Eckhouse of SABR who enlightened us with some tales of base ball lore and more insights into the doings of SABR.

4. At approximately 10:00 A.M. on February 9th, 1997, Mr. Mike Lieber, the Town Crier of Sylvania, opened the proceedings with a welcome and proclamation of the VBBA purpose. Dressed in his period attire and sporting a commanding voice, his re-enactment of the duties of a town crier made you feel like it was the mid 1800's. The meeting of the VBBA was then formally called to order by Mr. Boyd "Good Hands" Montgomery who immediately introduced the honorable Craig "Cat" Stough, Mayor of Sylvania and the behind for the Frogs Base Ball Club. Mayor Stough welcomed all the delegates and visitors to Sylvania and took a minute to explain the projects underway to create a complete historical village in the community. Mayor Stough was followed by Mr.

(5) Sideline Interpreter Committee:
No chair

e. Mr. Ed Shuman, Chair of the Nominating Committee, formally announced the results of the elections. In the aggregate, 21 ballots were received with 34 votes cast from 17 clubs. Two clubs did not respond. Mr. Shuman indicated a correction was needed to the results document and that a final copy would be provided at a later date. Once received, a copy should be attached to these minutes. The results of the balloting were reported as follows:

(1) Vice President: There were three candidates (Mr. Al Dieckmann [12 votes], Mr. Kevin Lehr [12 votes], and Mr. Pat Massengill [10 votes]). Since none of the candidates had a majority of the votes per VBBA Constitutional requirements, the membership would need to formulate a solution.

(2) Treasurer: Ms. Joanna Shearer ran unopposed and was reelected

(3) Secretary: Two Candidates (Mr. Brett Andrews [21 votes], Mr. Ed Shuman [13 votes]. Mr. Andrews was elected Secretary.

(4) Trustee: Only one trustee position was up for election. There were four candidates for the position (Mr. Gordon Olson [15 votes], Mr. Dave Zeis [8 votes], Mr. Kevin Summers [6 votes], and Mr. Jim Wilson [4 votes]. Again, because no candidate had a majority of the votes per the Constitution, the membership developed process to be established and employed for the vice presidency would also apply for the election of the trustee.

(5) Historian: Mr. Don Andersen (Muffins) ran unopposed and was re-elected.

NOTE: The following identifies by club and name those delegates present and authorized to cast votes on any matter before the VBBA requiring such action. If an eligible voting club is represented by one delegate, that delegate is

VBBA Treasurer's Report

Report Covers September 1, 1996 to February 1, 1997.

Correction on September 1, 1996 report:

Expenses reported twice/credit cash	\$62.24	
Balance on 9-1-96	\$809.34	
Add Credit	62.24	
Corrected balance 9-1-96/beginning available cash		\$871.58

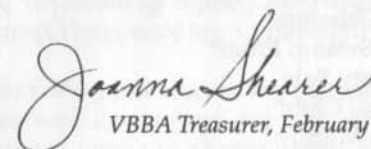
Income:

Organizational Dues	\$10.00	
(\$10.00 each: Old Bethpage Village)		
1996 Full Membership Dues	200.00	
(\$50.00 each: Sweepers, Merinos, Lah-De-Dahs, Old Bethpage Village)		
1996 Associate Membership Dues	0.00	
1996 Individual Membership Dues	20.00	
(\$10.00 each: Chip Anderson, Jay Ferguson)		
Total Income		\$230.00

Expenses:

Brad Briddell		
(1997 VBBA annual meeting expenses)	\$250.00	
John Wells		
(Printing & mailing expenses for first edition of newsletter)	198.20	
Total Expenses		448.20
Ending Available Cash		\$653.38

Respectfully Submitted



VBBA Treasurer, February 1, 1997

ed the VBBA Secretary a written motion and asked that the motion be read. The motion read, "Move to amend the VBBA Constitution by the addition of the following statement at the end of Article III(2)(B) [In the event there is no simple majority, a run-off election shall be conducted between the two candidates receiving the most votes. Ties not otherwise addressed shall be decided by a stone toss]" The motion was seconded by Mr. Bachelder. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unani-

in a state (likely Ohio) and apply to the IRS for tax exempt status. Some of the advantages include: we would become a tax write-off for anyone or organization donating to us and purchases made by VBBA would be tax exempt. It is expected to cost approximately \$200 to \$225 to process all the applications. A formal motion was made by Mr. Massengill to the affect "I move that VBBA become a not-for-profit organization in the state of Ohio and pursue 501C tax exempt status after prudent review and approval by

John Husman who gave a few parting remarks as the outgoing President and challenged the new President, Executive Council, and clubs to continue their efforts to advance the cause of VBBA. The formal part of the meeting went as follows:

a. Mr. Doug Smith began by thanking Mr. Lieber and Mr. Husman. He then outlined the rules of conduct for the meeting and that we would stay as close to the Robert's Rules of Order as we could. Mr. Smith distributed copies of the 1996 version of the VBBA Constitution and a document outlining his vision of goals and objectives for the VBBA. He was clear to point out that these goals and objectives were not intended to be met in a year but rather to serve as a guide to future activities. He spend a few minutes detailing his background and concluded his opening remarks with a run down of the formation of VBBA in 1996

b. Mr. Smith then asked the Secretary, Brett Andrews, to perform a roll call of clubs. Each club in turn stood and each of its members present identified themselves. Clubs in attendance were detailed above. A listing of all registrants for the conference was not available at the time of the preparation and submittal of these minutes.

c. Ms. Joanna Shearer, VBBA Treasurer, gave a treasurer's report (copy attached) which indicates that for the period September 1st, 1996 to February 14, 1997; a beginning balance of \$871.56, an income of \$230.00, expenses of \$448.20, leaving a balance as of February 1, 1997 of \$653.38.

d. Mr. Doug Smith then identified the VBBA committees and their chairs. They included:

(1) Rules and Customs Committee: Mr. Greg Rhodes (Shamrocks)

(2) Nominating Committee: Mr. Ed Shuman (Mules)

(3) Judiciary Committee: Craig Stough (Frogs)

(4) Public Relations Committee: Mr. John Wells (Muffins)

gained two votes per Article III(2)(A) of the VBBA Constitution.

Name	Club
Mr. Ed Shuman	Mules
Mr. Brett Andrews	Clodbusters
Mr. Jim Basala	Grinders
Ms. Joanna Shearer	Grinders
Mr. John Husman	Frogs
Mr. Craig Stough	Frogs
Mr. Kim Mohr	Grasshoppers
Mr. Fred Malone	Grasshoppers
Mr. Gordon Olson	Kents
Mr. John Bachelder	Kents
Mr. Don Andersen	Muffins
Mr. Doug Smith	Muffins
Mr. Al Dieckmann	Old Bethpage
Mr. Greg Rhodes	Shamrocks
Mr. Mike Piccolo	CVBBA
Mr. Pat Messengill	CVBBA

f. The motion was made by Mr. Craig Stough "Move to accept election results as reported". Seconded by Mr. Fred Malone. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

g. The attention of the membership was next taken to the matter of the development of a procedure that could be applied to the election of the Vice President and Trustee. Several variations of the same motion were made and seconded and when opened for discussion, then resulted in the withdrawals of the original motion in favor of a better worded one. Most open discussion revolved around the use of plurality versus majority for the vote. Ultimately, Mr. Smith, VBBA President, tabled further action and asked Mr. Stough and Mr. Massengill to meet during break and formulate wording for a motion to amend the Constitution. This amendment was intended to correct a perceived deficiency that could result in not obtaining a majority vote should multiple candidates (more than 2) run for an office. After the break, Mr. Stough hand-

mously.

h. The next matter was to apply the new election procedure to the decision for Vice President and Trustee. Because only the top two vote getters were eligible in the run-off election, Mr. Massengill was removed from further consideration as Vice President. The VBBA President then decided for a roll call vote. Mr. Andrews read off all the names of eligible delegates and recorded their responses. Mr. Lehr was elected Vice President over Mr. Dieckmann by a vote of 12 to 8. Upon announcement of Mr. Lehr's election, Mr. Don Andersen, VBBA Historian, announced his resignation as Historian due to the Constitutional requirement that no more than two members from the same club could serve on the Executive Council. Since the VBBA President, Mr. Smith; Mr. Lehr, the newly elected Vice President; and Mr. Anderson were all on the Muffins Base Ball Club, one of them had to relinquish office. Mr. Andersen did so. By acclamation, Mr. Al Dieckmann was elected to and accepted the position as VBBA Historian.

i. Once the issue of Vice President was settled, the matter of the election of a trustee was addressed. Although the top vote getter in the original election, Mr. Gordon Olson withdrew his name from further consideration. This left Mr. Dave Zeis, Mr. Kevin Summers, and Mr. Jim Wilson. Since Mr. Zeis and Mr. Summers were the next two highest vote getters, Mr. Wilson was removed from further consideration. The same procedure as was used in determining the Vice President was applied to the election of the trustee. Mr. Andrews once again took a roll call vote and Mr. Zeis was elected by a vote of 18 to 2.

j. With the elections complete, it was on to other business. Mr. Pat Massengill made a presentation to the members about the benefits of VBBA becoming an incorporated not-for-profit organization with tax exempt status. According to Mr. Massengill, although VBBA has a constitution, we do not exist in a legal sense. We would apply for incorporation with-

the Executive Committee. Expenditure to obtain this status to not exceed \$225". The motion was seconded by Mr. Husman. A voice vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed

k. Ms. Barbara Shinn of the Cooperstown NY Baseball Hall of Fame made a short presentation on the Hall of Fame museum and invited teams to consider coming to New York to play on Double-day Field.

1. Fred Malone from the Grasshoppers gave a quick rundown on a special sledding contest they sponsored in the city of Sycamore which seemed to draw considerable interest. They planned for 100 kids and got about 250. The Grasshoppers provided hot chocolate, setup various age brackets, and gave ribbons for placing as well as participation. Fun was had by all. Mr. Malone encouraged other to consider a similar project as a way of spreading the word about your team.

m. Mr. John Wells of the Muffins lead a discussion on publicity and internal communications. He mentioned that he prepares and distributes about 450 copies of the VBBA's Early Innings Illustrated newsletter. He pointed out that when and if we get incorporated the cost of mailing will decrease significantly because we'll be eligible for bulk rates. We currently are spending about \$200 per mailing. He also suggested that clubs develop press kits that contain team photos, team background information, newspaper articles, etc. This kit should be readily available when needed rather than running around trying to put something together at the last minute. Mr. Wells stated and the membership agreed that we want individual members to identify with the VBBA not just their clubs. We need to draw members in more. Mr. Wells did propose the creation on a "subscription fee". Currently clubs receive about 15 copies of the newsletter to do with as they will. Mr. Wells suggested, as a money maker, to sell individual optional subscriptions

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A Game Played in a Meadow, too

by Andy Shuman

Henry Chadwick brought it to life in New York newspapers, while Harry and George Wright brought it to life as players. Popular well beyond Elysian Fields, it was played widely in ante-bellum Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Harper's Weekly (1868) called it "a constant exercise of muscle in batting and running, and skill in bowling and catching the ball". Bowling? Yes, bowling. Before baseball, America played cricket. Having "been there", and "done that", cricket is a resource we can use to learn about baseball.

Baseball was a child's game with no virtue, but cricket was played by men with true skill. It was this attitude that made cricket seem unapproachable for the average person. It was also seen as slow and unsuited for the changing character of America. Those same arguments are made today by other sports regarding baseball's slumping popularity. The truth is that baseball retains many characteristics from cricket.

The goal of both cricket and baseball is to score as many runs as possible. Both hurlers deliver the ball with an almost identical straight arm motion to a striker waiting opposite them. The cricket striker's goal is to protect his wickets (rather than a plate) positioned 22 yards from the bowler's wicket. Cricket strikers are not limited to a line or box for striking, but they may be put out if they cross a "safe-line" in front of the wickets without hitting the ball. These "safe-lines" may be one reason baseball required batters to stand on a line when striking.

The hurlers are equally restricted; they must release the ball from behind a line. In both games, the distance between hurler and striker is similar. At a distance of just over 60 feet, it would seem that the dirt path extending between home plate and the pitcher's mound on a baseball field is a carry-over from cricket where this ground serves as the delivery area (pitch) for the bowler (pitcher).

These comparisons were the basis of a cricket demonstration at Ohio Village where Muffin club members took a few swings of the willow. Don Andersen took several swings and walked away scratching his head. Dr. Jim Tootle was so bewildered by one toss that he said it had "eyes" of its own. He took the balls home with him for study. George Golding quickly learned the game was played in the round (360°) when he had his feathers ruffled by a sideways tick. Building on the townball demonstration at last year's Ohio Cup Festival, we were hoping to further educate members on early baseball history.

Having played cricket against their sister club in Canada last year, the Frogs should agree that whether playing wicket keeper or behind, bowling or hurling, soaking runners or wickets, our programs can use Cricket to further educate bat and ball enthusiasts. For those interested in learning the rules and techniques of cricket, I would suggest *Cricket for Americans: Playing & Understanding the Game*, by Tom Melville, and for information on cricket's early connection to baseball, I would suggest *A Sporting Time: New York City & the Rise of Modern Athletics, 1820-1870*, by Melvin L. Adelman.

An Invitation To a Festival

In this, its inaugural year, eight teams will assemble in Broomfield, Colorado on Saturday June 14, 1997 for the National Vintage Base Ball Festival. Games will be played from 9:00 A.M. to



7:00 P.M. in conjunction with an old-fashioned family picnic which will be held from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. The festival will feature teams from Colorado including the Broomfield Swans and a celebrity team with professional sports figures and local media personalities.

However, players from across the country are invited to bring their local team uniforms and join in the fun. Each player will receive a souvenir t-shirt or hat.

The goals of the festival are twofold:

- To preserve the tradition of pre-professional baseball by promoting the growth of vintage baseball throughout

the country and

- To generate funds for worthwhile charities.

This year's Festival will benefit the Bal Swan Children's Center in Broomfield which integrates physically and mentally challenged children with "typical" children in a comprehensive learning environment.

Starting with our exhibition game in

A Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association adversary takes a swing while team members and the Swan behind gaze upon the action.

1996 and this year's modest festival beginning, we hope to grow the festival into a premier family oriented event celebrating the origins of the sport that has become our national pastime. The vision of the festival is to bring teams from across the nation to Colorado every June to play ball before cameras from ESPN or Fox Sports.

Plans already are in place for a 1998 National Vintage Base Ball Festival scheduled for June 12-14. Our goal is to attract 16 to 24 teams.

The National Vintage Base Ball Fes-

Calling Web Ones and Surfer Dudes

by Charles Trudeau

This is a call to all VBBA members who also happen to be on-line. We are going to try and compile a directory of e-mail addresses and vintage base ball web sites. The list would just be another way for teams and individuals who are scattered around the country to keep in touch.

In addition to passing on VBBA information we could post interesting baseball links or even, heaven forbid, suggested reading material in the paper form.

Hopefully we can get at least one address per team. If you are interested please send a message to

phoenixbats@ee.net

with addresses and/or site data. I will publish the list electronically to all interested parties and also here in the next issue of Early Innings Illustrated.

Here are some e-mail address of people you may wish to contact in the vintage base ball movement:

Don Andersen

Send him team schedules for publication.

103103.2451@CompuServe.com

Greg Rhodes

Rules and Customs Committee Chair.

Roadwest@aol.com

Bob Sanders

A Muffin in New Zealand.
rms@ccu1.aukuni.ac.nz

Andy Shuman

Past chair of the Nomination Committee and fan of cricket. See his article on this page.

drushu@aol.com

Dennis Thompson

Writer of witty stories for *The Muffin Tin* newsletter.

Thompson.12@OSU.Edu

Charles Trudeau

Maker of bats with bats in his belfry.
phoenixbats@ee.net

Chris Wells

Base ball trivia writer for *The Muffin Tin*. If you have some neat trivia, send it along.

cwells@mtcols.com

John Wells

Editor of *Early Innings Illustrated* and Public Relations Committee Chair (Send lots of articles via e-mail so he doesn't have to re-type them)

JohnCWells@CompuServe.com

The Laurels Return to the Field

by Kevin Summers

The present-day Middletown Laurels are a recreation of an actual base ball club which existed in Middletown, Ohio. The original Laurels were formed some time before the 1886 season as research turned up a newspaper article announcing formation of the

team "at the club meeting rooms on S. Main Street" on April 15th. John Miller was the Laurels' first manager. The Laurels played home games at the West Side Grounds next to Wolverton's Farm. This ball park was the site of base ball in Middletown until 1915. The Laurels' season opening match was a Decoration Day (Memorial Day) tradition. The match was preceded by a parade to the grounds and was followed by a band concert after which the crowd followed the band to Peter Weber's Beer Garden.

In 1890 a league known 'as the Kentucky-Ohio-Indiana League was founded. Charter members included the Laurels; arch-rival Hamilton, Ohio; Miamisburg, Ohio; The Dayton (Ohio) Shamrocks; Connorsville, Indiana; Chester,

Indiana; Covington, Kentucky; and Newport, Kentucky. The clubs competed on Thursdays and Sundays as well as holidays from May until October. Special trains often carried the club and its kranks to away matches.

The 1891 season featured a young newspaperman playing in centerfield for the Laurels named James Cox. Mr. Cox would go on to become an Ohio congressman, governor, and in 1920, the Democratic Party's candidate for President. Cox's young running mate was Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1896 the name "Laurels" disappeared into history to be replaced by "Clippers". That is until 1993 when the Laurels were resurrected in time to compete in the Ohio Cup. The Ohio Cup appearance was followed by full seasons in 1994 and 1995. 1996 was an off year due to illness and the team returns in 1997.

Parallel to the Laurels of old, the modern day edition plays their home matches at the West Side Base Ball Grounds, a few hundred feet from the site of the original diamond inside Smith Park, which was known as Wolverton's Farm.

Curiously, the modern Laurels were formed at a South Main Street home which is located near the original founding site. The home was built in 1886, the year the first Laurels began.



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to players for a \$5.00 fee. This would get the newsletter and other VBBA special publications mailed directly to them.

n. Mr. Wells' talk brought into discussion the issue of payment of annual dues. To ensure only clubs in good standing are included in the following year's election, a motion was proposed by Mr. Don Andersen as follows. "I

meeting in New York to be hosted by Old Bethpage.

s. Mr. Anderson, in his capacity as outgoing Historian, gave a status report on club 1996 History inputs. Mr. Andersen indicated that only about 50% of the clubs had submitted there 1996 season tallysheets and statistics. He reminded everyone that these inputs are significant in being able to determine if a club retains its "good standing" status per Article I (1)(D) and per Bylaw 3.

The Gentlemen's Game

from page 1

player who follows the player making the last out in the previous inning.

- The striker must stand on a line drawn through the center of the home base.

Terminology

Nine - Team

Home Base - Home Plate

Pitcher's Point - Rubber

Playground - Field

Spectator - Fan

Hand Lost - Player Out

move the second sentence of item 1 in the VBBA Bylaws be replaced with "The invoice for club membership dues shall be mailed out with the election ballots. Payment of club dues must accompany the returned ballot and be received not later than 1 Dec.' ". The motion was seconded by Mr. Stough. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

o. Mr. Massengill addressed the issue of the confusion in the Constitution and Bylaws caused by the criteria that amendments to the constitution require a three-fourths vote and changes to the Bylaws take a two-thirds vote. Mr. Massengill made the following motion, "I move to change Article V, item (2) by replacing the requirement for a three-fourths majority of votes cast with a requirement a two-thirds majority of votes cast". The motion was seconded by Mr. Piccolo. A voice vote was taken and passed by an overwhelming majority.

p. Mr. Massengill also proposed the following motion, "I move to amend item 8 in the VBBA Bylaws to state, 'The Association will meet annually in February on a date to be determined by the Executive Council' ". The motion was seconded by Mr. Andersen. A voice vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

q. Mr. Andersen then revisited the issue raised by Mr. Wells that of a subscription fee to the VBBA Newsletter. Mr. Andersen proposed a resolution, seconded by Mr. Piccolo, to authorize the Public Relations committee to charge a subscription fee of \$5 for the Early Innings Illustrated newsletter. This should entitle the subscriber up to 6 issues annually and possible other publication produced by the VBBA. Teams are to advertise the availability of individual subscriptions. Eventually, the number of copies sent to the clubs (currently 15) will be reduced. A voice vote was taken and the resolution passed unanimously.

r. Mr. Dieckmann then took the floor for a few minutes to invite the membership to consider holding the next VBBA

t. Mr. Greg Rhodes of the Rules and Customs Committee then addressed the activities of his group. They held one meeting this passed year in Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Rhodes passed out several handouts highlighting some of his findings which seem to indicate we may not be playing the game (1858 rules) as they were played originally. He enlightened the membership on his research findings which included such matters as:

(1) Fans were not called "cranks" until the 1880's. We should not use the term cranks if we play pre-1880's.

(2) He has evidence of leading off and stealing (advancing)

(3) Runner may have been susceptible to being put out on a fly ball.

Some discussion took place concerning interpretation and information sources and there was cautious reservation voiced about jumping into any significant changes such as these. Mr. Rhodes, as well as others, strongly suggested that teams should only try a few games using the different rule interpretations to see how they work. There is no intent on the part of the VBBA Executive Council to push for any immediate changes.

u. Mr. Richard Schuricht of the Muffins provided some insights into the need for gentlemanly umpiring and for others to get involved in learning this skill.

v. Mr. Massengill volunteered to chair the Sideline Committee.

w. Mr. Andersen volunteered to gather and publish the combined schedules of the VBBA teams for 1997.

x. Mr. Smith made a few last parting comments about considering attendance to the Old Bethpage Village for a VBBA base ball festival. He also announced that the VBBA was looking for a host for 1998 VBBA sponsored all star game and reminded everyone of the Ohio Cup on Labor Day weekend this year.

y. Mr. Andersen made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

• Because of the uncertainty of when sliding began, it is not practiced.

Some liberties are taken with the rules of 1860 which did not permit substitutions. At participants are on the batting list and substitutions are made on defense.

Adversary - Opponent
Behind - Catcher
Scorer - Score Keeper
Ace - Run
Make a Base/Advance - Steal
Leg It - Run to Base
Huzza or huzza - Hurrah
Striker/Batsman - Batter

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Vintage Base Ball group has national meeting in Sylvania

The Vintage Base Ball Association's (VBBA) Annual Meeting and Conference was held in Sylvania Feb. 8 and 9. The event was hosted by the local Great Black Swamp Frogs Base Ball Club and held at the Sylvania Heritage Museum. Vintage clubs recreate base ball matches of the mid-nineteenth century and their Association is comprised of more than two dozen clubs and individuals. About 60 persons attended the two day event.

Presentations highlighted Saturday activities and featured Judith Martin of Mrs. Martin's Mercantile and Millinery of Sylvania on Civil War Era Civilian Clothing and Dr. James Tootle of The Ohio Village Muffins on Henry Chadwick, "Father of Baseball." Other sessions included 19th century photography and art interpretation as well as comprehensive discussions of how the game was played led by Greg Rhodes of The Sharon Woods Shamrocks of Cincinnati, Chairman of the VBBA Rules and Customs Committee.

Sunday's business meeting was begun by Sylvania Town Crier Mike Lieber and welcome

comments by Mayor Craig Stough. Highlights included the election of officers for 1997. Doug Smith of the Ohio Village Muffins of Columbus succeeds

John Husman of the Frogs as President while his teammate Kevin Lehr was elected as Vice President. Joanna Shearer of the Deep River Grinders, Hobart IN was reelected Treasurer while Al Dieckmann of Old Bethpage, NY was elected Historian with Brett Andrews of the Carriage Hill Clodbusters, Dayton, OH, as Secretary. Dave Zeis of the Grasshoppers of Sycamore, OH was named a Trustee joining Mike Picollo of the Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association, Denver, CO and Craig Stough of the Frogs as well as Husman on the Executive Council.

Boyd Montgomery of the Frogs headed the Committee of Frogs that included Brad Briddell, Treasurer, Brad James and Mike Smith that coordinated all the weekend activities including a banquet at The Maumee Bay Brewing Company at the Oliver House. Morris Eckhouse of The Society for American Base Ball Research was featured as keynote speaker.

Terminology

For Vintage Base Ball

by The Sideline Committee

The following terms, while by no means totally inclusive or exhaustive, will provide the living history interpreter with a solid language basis for portrayal on and about a base ball field in the mid-19th Century. Sources included Ohio Historical Society's *Muffin Tin*, The National Baseball Library, *Dickson Baseball Dictionary*, *If I Never Get Back*, and others. Dates given are when the term first showed up in print, usually according to *Dickson*, but may not necessarily indicate first use.

The Participants And Field:

Crank (also cranke or krank): a spectator of cricket, which may not have been used in base ball until the 1880's; also **bug**, **Crankess** (female); *fan* was not used to describe base ball spectators until 1889 and was not derived from "fanatic" but rather from *fancy*, a spectator of boxing.

Striker: [1845] early name for the batter [1869].

Mascot: the boy who tended to the equipment until 1909 when he became the *batboy*.

Home Base: was actually a one-foot diameter iron plate; began being called *home plate* in 1869.

The Garden: [1869] another name for the outfield.

In the Hole (or hold): [1872] the next batter to strike; replaced by *on deck* in 1881.

Diamond: [1858] another name for the infield.

Fair-Foul Hit: a ball struck intentionally with a downward, chopping motion which first hits fair and immediately bounds into foul territory.

Defensive Ball:

Baulk: [1845] interruption of the hurler's motion, results in a base for all runners.

Double Play: [1858] to record two outs on one batted ball; also *triple play* [1869].

Error: [1858] failing to field the ball cleanly; synonyms include *muff* [1869], *juggle* [1873], *boot*, *mug a ball* [1874], *loose fielding* [1861].

Handle: fielding the ball cleanly; synonyms include *make a play* [1858], *cover* [1861], *assist* [1865], *put out* [1869], *freeze* [1868], *cut off* [1863], *force out* [1869], *tag*, *nip* [1868] and *stop* [1864].

Whitewash: [1851] no scoring; synonyms include *goose egg* [1867], *drawing a blank* [1854].

Three Hands Out: the side is retired.

Battery: [1868] the combination of hurler and behind.

Pace: [1865] the speed at which a hurler works; other pitching terms include *red hot* [1867] (a very fast pitch), *curveball* [1874], *outcurve* [1865] (a pitch which appears to curve outward), *in-shoot* [1871] (opposite of outcurve), *over-pitch* [1862] (pitching the ball overhanded, resulting in a baulk), *deliver* [1866], *jimjam* [1862] (a wild pitch).

Other Useful Language:

Warmed: to beat an opponent handily.

Sizzled: to beat an opponent very badly.

Knickerbocker

Base Ball Club Matches

by John R. Husman

The Knickerbockers intended their game for themselves. They played intra-club matches on their playground each Monday and Thursday afternoon from late April until their traditional season ending Thanksgiving day match. With the advent of additional clubs, the Knicks (they called themselves that) engaged in occasional match games as

shown in the list below.

In comparing scores from year to year, recall that the original Knickerbocker rules provided that a game consisted of "twenty-one counts or aces". Beginning in 1857 the standard was "nine innings to each side". Also, the progressive Knickerbockers were early advocates of the fly game (no bound outs) and made it a condition of their match-making in 1859. The fly game was written into the rules in 1865.

These data show that their game was a fast paced one, a lot of runs in a short time. Accurate re-creators should consider this facet of the vintage game.

New York Knickerbocker Base Ball Club

Match Game Results 1846-1866

Compiled by John R. Husman, January 1997

Date	Results		Inn	Location	Remarks	Source
1846						
Jun 19	New York 23	Knick 1	4	Elysian Fields, Hoboken		2
1847						
Sep 16	Knick 21	Knick 15	5	Elysian Intra	Club Match	1
1851						
Jun 3	Knick 21	Washington 11	8	Red House, Harlem		2
Jun 17	Knick 22	Washington 20	10	Elysian		1, 2
1853						
Jul 5	Knick 21	Gotham 12	6	Elysian	Begun July 1	1, 2
Jul 5	Knick 5	Gotham 2	1	Elysian		1
Oct 14	Knick 21	Gotham 14	9	Red House		1, 2
1854						
Jun 30	Gotham 21	Knick 16	16	Red House	3 Hr	1, 2
Sep 20	Knick 24	Gotham 13	9	Elysian	2 Hr 15 Min	1, 2
Oct 26	Knick 12	Gotham 12	12	Red House	2 Hr, Dark	1, 2
Nov 10	Eagle 21	Knick 4	5	Elysian	1 Hr, Knick 2nd Nine	1, 2
Nov 17	Eagle 22	Knick 21	5	Elysian	1 Hr 30 Min	1, 2
1855						
Jun 1	Gotham 21	Knick 12	11	Red House	2 Hr 15 Min	1, 2
Jun 5	Knick 27	Eagle 14	4	Elysian	1 Hr 15 Min	1, 2
Sep 13	Knick 22	Gotham 7	5	Elysian	1 Hr 30 Min	1, 2
Sep 20	Knick 21	Eagle 10	6	Elysian	1 Hr 15 Min	1, 2

Bull Pen: the area along the foul lines where the spectators sat.

Chaffing: [1863] to complain about an umpire's decision usually resulted in a fine of 10 to 25 cents.

Team: 9 players plus reserves; synonyms include *nine*, *match nine*, *club*, and *side* [1864].

Change Player: a non-starter, a reserve.

Telegraph Board: score board.

Base ball fever: [1866] used to describe the epidemic spread of the game.

Bat: wooden equipment used to strike the ball; synonyms include *ash* [1874], *willow* [1871], *timber* [1868].

Offensive Ball:

Leg It: aggressive base running, trying to *stretch* [1867] a hit into another base.

Dead: synonym for being put out; also *hand out*.

Run: [1854] getting a base runner home safely; synonyms include *ace* and *tally*.

Base on Balls: [1858] synonym for a *walk* [1866].

Murderers' Row: [1858] any lineup of power hitters; *not* invented for the 1927 Yankees.

Rally: [1858] a scoring surge, especially from being behind.

Fly Ball: [1865] a ball struck into the air; synonyms include *air-ball* [1862], *skyer* [1862], *cloud-hunter* [1874], *sky-scraper* [1866].

Ground Ball: a ball struck along the ground; synonyms include *bug-bruise* [1874], *daisy-cutter* [1866], *grass-clipper* [1868], *skimmer* [1868], *ant-killer* [1874], *trimmer* [1870].

Other hit descriptions include *knock* [1866], *hammer* [1869], *stinger* [1868], and *stunner* [1868] (all hard hits), *line ball* [1866], *line drive* [1868], *fungo* [1867] (a scratch hit), *sucker* [1868] (a bloop hit), *red-hot* [1867] (extremely fast), *brander* [1869].

game on purpose by not performing as well as possible, usually to win a bet.

Hippodroming: playing to the odds ... winning, but not by as much as possible to also win a wager.

Muffin: from the word *muff*, an insult; also *milkboy*, *boyo*, *cheese* (braggart), *sharp* (gamblers and their ilk), *pinchpen* (tight-wad).

Swell: a fancy gentleman, a compliment; also *square* (proper), *hunky* (OK), having *pluck*, *ginger* or *muckle* [1862] (determination, courage or resolve), *cuts* a *dash* (very handsome).

Thunderation: an exclamation of anger or frustration; also *blame my but-tons*, *botheration*, *by thunder*, *confounded*, *dog my cats*, *doggone it*, *drat*, *go to thunder*, *good gravy*, *land sake*, *mad as a wet hen*, *lordy*, *sake's alive*, *go tell it to the marines*, *what the blazes*, and *ye gods!*

Flapdoodle: an expression meaning nonsense; also *fish story*, *humbug*, *folderol*, *flumdiddle*, *fiddlesticks*, *pshaw*, and *whopper*.

O.K.: yes; also, *you bet your boots* (*hat or life*), *uh-huh*, *I don't care if I do*, *that's a fact*, *make no mistake*, *yessiree*, *as sure as shooting*.

Words relating to love, courting and marriage: *wooing*, *love cracked*, *flirt*, *fickle*, *pop the question*, *beau*, *better half*, *fi-ancee*, *flame*, *gentleman friend*, *hubby*, *lady killer*, *lady's man*, *sparking bench* (sofa), *get hitched* or *double up* (get married), *bridal tour* (honeymoon).

Faro Joint: gambling house.

Eagle: a \$10 gold coin.

Case Note: your last dollar.

Ain't in the Dimes: broke.

Dinger: a real surprise.

Come a Dodge: to attempt to fool someone.

Freezin': having a great desire to do something.

Puff: bragging.

Making Chin Music: snoring.

Touched: insane; also *crackbrain*.

Felicitations: greetings.

Aug 30	Knick 21	Empire 21	8	Elysian	3 Hr 15 Min, Dark	1, 2
Sep 5	Gotham 21	Knick 7	7	Red House		1, 2
Sep 19	Eagle 24	Knick 17	3	Elysian		1, 2
Sep 25	Knick 21	Empire 12	7	Elysian		1, 2
Oct 9	Eagle 21	Knick 10	6	Elysian		1, 2
1857						
Jun 8	Eagle 25	Knick 17	5	Elysian Rain		1, 2
Jun 24	Knick 37	Empire 23	9	Elysian		1, 2
Sep 10	Empire 28	Knick 17	9			1, 2
Sep 15	Knick 18	Eagle 17	9			1, 2
1858						
Jul 8	Excelsior 31	Knick 13	9	South Brooklyn near Carrol Park		2
Jul 29	Eagle 25	Knick 18	9	Elysian		1, 2
Aug 20	Excelsior 15	Knick 14	9	Elysian (Gotham Grounds)		1, 2
Sep 22	Knick 21	Empire 21	8	Elysian	Dark	1, 2
Oct 6	Empire 45	Knick 38	8		Muffin Match	1
Oct 14	Empire 55	Knick 38	9			1
1859						
Jun 30	Excelsior 26	Knick 22	9	Elysian	2 Hr, Fly Game	1, 2
Aug 2	Excelsior 20	Knick 5	9	Excelsior	1 Hr 45 Min, Fly	1, 2
Aug 11	Knick 60	Empire 33	9	Elysian	3 Hr, Fly	1, 2
Aug 22	Excelsior 41	Knick 37	7	BKN, foot of Court St.	3 Hr, Muffin, Fly	1, 2
Aug 29	Eagle 43	Knick 16	9		2nd Nine Match	1
Sep 12	Excelsior 56	Knick 47	6	Elysian	Muffin	1, 2
Sep 26	Star 33	Knick 11	9	Elysian		1, 2
1860						
Aug 25	Excelsior 32	Knick	9	Excelsior Grounds, BKN	3 Hr 35 Min, Fly	2
1863						
Sep 3	Knick 22	Excelsior 20		Elysian		2
Sep 22	Knick 56	Excelsior 45		Excelsior Grounds		2
Oct 12	Excelsior 42	Knick 13		Elysian Chadwick Scorer		2
1864						
Jul 11	Excelsior 36	Knick 27		Elysian	2 Hr 15 Min	2
Jul 21	Excelsior 85	Knick 35		Brooklyn		2
Sep 22	Excelsior 53	Knick 48		Elysian		2
1865						
Jul 6	Excelsior 29	Knick 25	11	Elysian		2
Jul 25	Excelsior 60	Knick 45		Capitoline Grounds		2
Aug 17	NY Club 58	Knick 13		65th Street		2
Sep 11	Greenburgh 26	Knick 23		Elysian		2
Sep 21	Knick 22	Excelsior 17		Elysian	1 Hr 45Min	2
Oct 5	NY Club 28	Knick 11		Elysian		2
Oct 20	Knick 31	Eclectic 31	7			2
1866						
May 25	Excelsior 56	Knick 42		Capitoline		2
Jun 4	Knick 39	Excelsior 27		Elysian		2
Jul 14	Knick 39	Palisade 17		Englewood		2
Aug 30	Palisade 37	Knick 28		Elysian		2
Sep 29	Palisade 42	Knick 27		Englewood	2 Hr 35 Min	2

Sources:

1: Knickerbocker Game Books.

2: The Book of American Pastimes, Charles A. Peverelly, 1866.

From the Bullpen

Notes from the Sidelines

by Pat Massengill

To begin, I wish to thank President Doug Smith for inviting me to chair the Sideline Interpreter Committee, which, to simplify matters, I will hereinafter refer to as the "Sideline Committee". I also want to disabuse everyone of the idea that this committee will deal only with umpires, tally keepers, mascots and cranks (more on this later). It will also cover the activities of *ballists*, aside from the rules and actual playing of the game because they, too, spend about half of each match on the sidelines.

In my opinion, the work of this committee will be every bit as important as that of the Rules or any other committee. For one thing, it is on the sideline that perhaps 90% of your interaction with the public takes place. In my 14 years as an interpreter of mid-19th Century life, both professionally and as a hobbyist, it is my experience that the most valuable asset we have is not what takes place on the field, be it base ball or military battle. It is in the in the camps

or on the sidelines where the best teaching and recruiting takes place. The battle or the match may catch someone's immediate attention, but it is the one-on-one communication away from the action that keeps it and brings them back.

"From the Bullpen", for those who don't know, refers to the area along the sidelines where spectators watched the early game of base ball. It was many years later that the relief pitchers absconded with the name. This seemed to me an appropriate vantage point for this column. I will be passing along information and suggestions to help everyone become a better informed, more confident, and more convincing historic interpreter. I know that many people have difficulty doing "first-person" interpretation, or trying to behave, talk, and even think like someone in another time period. But it is really just a matter of knowledge — the more you know about your subject, the more you will just naturally move into the role.

I will be including a wealth of information that has been collected by our Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association relevant to sideline interpretation. We take great pride in our efforts to enhance the experience of modern spectators

through the use of language, customs, and historical facts. We are far from perfect, and not always as good in this regard as we would like to be. But we keep trying and improving and it is anticipated that member clubs of the Vintage Base Ball Association will endeavor likewise. I encourage and welcome submissions and suggestions of a like nature from all our members. At the core, the purpose of the Sideline Committee is that shared knowledge helps us all.

About Cranks

Now about "crank". I realize that the Rules Committee has already somewhat stepped off the field to declare that the word "crank" as referring to a base ball spectator didn't occur 'till the 1880's. It is my understanding that this was based on not having seen it in any earlier printed matter, and that the *Dickson Baseball Dictionary* says as much. As a professional historian, I always take proof of a negative fact with a grain of salt. The simple fact of the matter is that in the past people didn't record every trivial fact of life.

I cannot state that "crank" is appropriate for use by base ball clubs wishing

to remain faithful to the 1860's because no physical evidence has been found — yet.

However, there is this anecdotal evidence which came to me a while back. The story goes that the term "crank" in this regard traces itself to a child's toy. They still exist today as a New Year's "favor", a gadget you spin around that has a ratchet which makes an obnoxious cranking sound. Well, these little gizmos have been around a long, long time — at least back to Colonial times — and probably earlier. The story continues that these cranks became a favorite among certain rowdy cricket spectators in England and as that game moved across the ocean, in America. As would be expected, these rowdies came to be called "cranks". (Dictionaries also list it as *cranke* and *krank*.) You would also expect that as cricket's popularity waned and base ball's grew, these same rowdies took to the stands. Plausible, yes. True, unknown.

This certainly won't be the last word on this word. If you can find any information on the topic, pro or con, please pass it along to myself or to *Early Innings Illustrated* so we can share it with all the clubs.

The Vintage Base Ball Association

The association of clubs re-creating early forms of baseball



Vintage base ball is much more than playing a game in "funny" uniforms and speaking old words.

It is the joy of re-creating a match of another time so accurately that a spectator will be taken back to that period in history. It is showing viewers what life was like in a time gone by.

VBBA member clubs play in eras from the first time rules were written down in 1845, through the Civil War where the game was spread throughout



Selling Fans

VBBA Memberships

by John Wells

This season we want to involve our fans (see Pat Massengill's column on the "politically" correct term for your era) in the Vintage Base Ball Association and its activities. To do this, the clubs at the Sylvania gathering decided to make an Individual

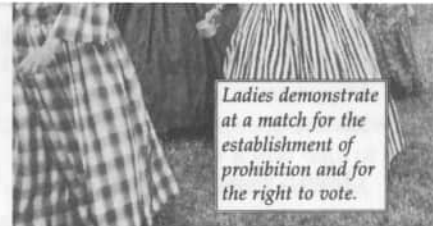


Two vintage teams played the "opening match" at Jacobs Field, Cleveland, before the modern version took the field.

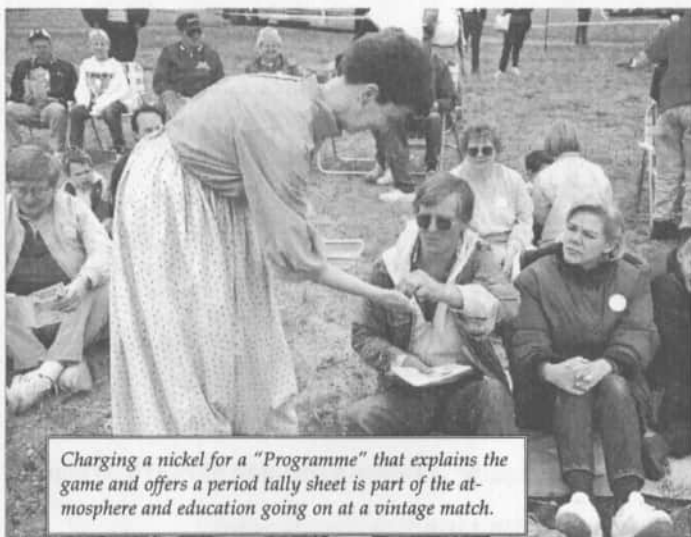
the nation, the times of its professionalization and spread to the frontier of the west, to the birth of the major leagues and even including the Black Sox scandals of 1919.

It is re-creation, seeing again how our nation and its game become one.

Vintage teams play in time periods from 1845 to 1919 using equipment, uniforms, and rules appropriate to their era.



Ladies demonstrate at a match for the establishment of prohibition and for the right to vote.



Charging a nickel for a "Programme" that explains the game and offers a period tally sheet is part of the atmosphere and education going on at a vintage match.



Often the equipment is homespun. Ladies stitch their dresses and gentlemen make their own balls, bases and bats.



Join the Vintage Base Ball Association

And receive its newsletter, *Early Innings Illustrated*, six times a year

We want all those interested in the history of baseball to join with the clubs who are re-creating it on the field. You can become an associate member of the Vintage Base Ball Association and receive every issue of its national newsletter, *Early Innings Illustrated*, for one year at a cost of \$10.00. The goal is to provide news, historical background, and reports on the activities of all clubs playing any form of historic baseball directly to you. Please complete this subscription form and send it with your check to

The Vintage Base Ball Association
P. O. Box 14105
Columbus, OH 43214

Please enter my Individual Membership to The Vintage Base Ball Association and send me six issues of its newsletter to the address below. A check for \$10.00 is enclosed. Please print.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Membership available that includes the six issues of *Early Innings Illustrated* for a year at a \$10.00 rate.

It is a way to build support for your own club and improve communication with the people who enjoy history, baseball, and re-creating another time of green grass under blue skies.

To help you in your task of spreading the word on what vintage base ball is all about when talking to fans at your matches (or other places), a handout has been prepared. It describes the activities of the VBBA and its member clubs and contains a membership application. Ask your club leaders for copies so you can give them to interested fans.

Club leaders: you may order this VBBA handout by sending the number you need to

VBBA Handouts
Vintage Base Ball Association
P. O. Box 14105
Columbus, Ohio 43214

You will be sent the handout by return mail for use at matches this season. Please give them to folks who show real interest in our game and urge them to become a part of it. The cost is quite modest and it will keep them in touch with the happenings in baseball re-creation.

A reproduction of the handout appears to the left. The goal is to show what vintage base ball is doing around the United States and Canada to promote history and an understanding of the development of the game within our dynamic society.

Constitution of the Vintage Base Ball Association (VBBA)

as adopted February 11, 1996
and corrected February 23, 1996
as amended February 9, 1997

Preamble: Mission Statement

The mission and purpose of the Vintage Base Ball Association shall be to preserve, perpetuate, and promote the game of base ball as it was played during its formative years in the mid-nineteenth century and other historic eras. This worthy objective shall be accomplished by the following activities and endeavors:

Presenting the game of base ball as it was actually played in accordance with the rules, equipment, uniforms, field specifications, customs, practices, language, and behavioral norms of the period.

Supporting the formation and strengthening of vintage base ball clubs by sharing vintage base ball information, setting standards of historical accuracy and participation, and providing a means to recognize and communicate with other vintage base ball clubs.

Encourage research and disseminating information in order to recreate the game in keeping with the highest levels of accuracy and authenticity.

Educating the public regarding the character, history, and growth of the game with attention to the historical context in which it originated and developed.

In order to achieve its goals and sustain the traditions and values which it

must continue to meet the membership qualifications and must support the activities of the Association by paying the dues specified in the Bylaws. A club must maintain good standing in order to retain voting privileges. Only members of clubs which are in good standing may serve as officers or chair committees established by the Association.

Article III: Executive Council

- (1) The business of the Association shall be conducted by an Executive Council composed of the following officers:

President
Vice President (President Elect)
Secretary
Treasurer
Historian
Past President
Trustee
Trustee
Trustee

- (2) In order to provide continuity in the operation of the Association and to create the opportunity for participation in the leadership of the Association, the composition of the Executive Council shall be determined as follows:

- (a) Elections will be conducted annually, with each member club casting two votes for each elected position. Each club shall determine how its votes will be cast.
(b) All officers are to be elected by a simple majority of all votes cast by member clubs. *In the event there is no simple majority, a run-off election shall be conducted between the two candidates receiving the most votes. Ties not otherwise addressed shall be decided by the stone toss.*
(c) All officer terms shall be one year

conventions as well as the dissemination of and interpretation of rules. The chair will be appointed by the President; members will be appointed by the chair.

(2) **The Nominating Committee**, consisting of the President Elect, President, and Past President, will facilitate the annual election of officers by presenting a slate of candidates for consideration. The Past President shall serve as the chair.

(3) **The Judiciary Committee** will rule on any questions or differences regarding rules and related matters that may arise between member clubs associated with the conduct of matches. The three trustees shall comprise this committee with the senior trustee (the trustee in the final year of a three-year term) serving as chair. If a member of the Judiciary Committee is also a member of one of the clubs involved in the matter at hand, that committee member shall ask to be excused temporarily from the committee in favor of another Executive Council member appointed by the President.

(4) **The Public Relations Committee** will communicate and publicize the activities and events of the Association and the member clubs to the general public, local and national media, and other appropriate audiences. The chair will be appointed by the President; members will be appointed by the chair.

(5) **The Sideline Interpreter Committee** will consist of non-playing members in period costumes. The chair will be appointed by the President; members will be appointed by the chair.

Article V: Adoption and Amendment

(1) This Constitution shall be adopted by a three-fourths majority of votes

cast by participants in the organizational meeting of the Vintage Base Ball Association held at the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio on February 11, 1996.

(2) Thereafter, amendments proposed by member clubs must be adopted by a *two-thirds* majority of votes by the member clubs, with each club eligible to cast two votes.

Bylaws of the Vintage Base Ball Association (VBBA)

as adopted February 11, 1996
and corrected February 23, 1996
as amended February 9, 1997

1. The annual dues shall be as follows, full member club, \$50, associate member club, \$35, individual associate member, \$10. *The invoice for club membership dues shall be mailed out with the election ballots. Payment of club dues must accompany the returned ballot and be received not later than 1 December.*
2. Club Officers and field captains shall be responsible for acquainting all their members with the mission statement of the Association before such members take the field of play in a match involving another member club.
3. After each match between and among member clubs, the home club shall furnish an accurate match report (along with any written accounts) of

"The Bylaws" continue on page 8

ciation and all of its members will conduct all matches, meetings, and other activities — both on and off the field — according to the highest standards of sportsmanship, gentlemanly behavior, courtesy, and respect for others which characterized the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club, established September 23, 1845.

Article I: Membership

- (1) In order to qualify for membership in the Association, a base ball club must meet all of the following criteria:
 - (a) It must be a formally organized club of at least nine members.
 - (b) It must agree to support and embrace the mission statement of the Association.
 - (c) It must present itself on the field of play in a set of appropriate uniforms authentic to the mid-nineteenth century period or other historic era being portrayed
 - (d) It must have played a schedule of a minimum of six matches in the season prior to joining the Association and during each season of membership
- (2) Clubs not meeting the above criteria or individuals may apply for associate membership in the Association. Associate members will pay dues to cover the cost of communications, publications, and other expenses related to participating in the organization, but will not be eligible to vote or to have members elected as officers of the association.

Article II: Member Clubs

In order to maintain its good standing in the Association, each member club

for the trustees who shall serve three year terms.

In the formative years of the Association, the three original trustees will serve terms of three years, two years, and one year respectively. Thereafter, the term of one trustee will expire each year, and a new trustee will be elected. In addition, since the position of the past president will be vacant, an additional trustee will be elected during the first year of the Association, for a term of one year.

- (d) The Vice President (President Elect), the President, and the Past President will serve one-year terms in the logical progression of these offices. All other officers are eligible for re-election and may succeed themselves in their present roles or serve in new offices.
- (e) If any member of the Executive Council is unable to serve a full term, the Executive Council is authorized to name a new member to the council to complete the unexpired term.
- (f) In order to encourage full participation of all member clubs in the affairs of the Association, no more than two members of the same club shall serve on the Executive Council at the same time.

Article IV: Committees

The Executive Council shall be empowered to create and appoint such committees as shall be needed to carry on the business of the Association. There shall be five standing committees:

- (1) **The Rules and Customs Committee** shall conduct appropriate historical research into the way the game was played in the mid-nineteenth century and other historical eras and shall share its findings with the Association and member clubs in order to establish and improve historical authenticity. The scope of the committee shall include customs, uniforms, equipment, and

Newsletter Subscription

from page 1

you didn't get a blue form, just send your name and address with your check made out to the Vintage Base Ball Association to

P. O. Box 14105
Columbus, OH 43214.

But first, check with your club. Several have decided that the club will pay the \$5.00 for each of its members. The Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association has already sent in its list of members.

If your club is **NOT** a member of the VBBA, urge them to join. If that is not possible, you may subscribe by becoming an individual member of the VBBA for a \$10.00 membership fee.

One copy of *Early Innings Illustrated* will be sent to each club which maintains its VBBA membership, to the Baseball Hall of Fame Library (at their request), and several media organizations.

If you have any questions, please contact

John Wells
614-261-0454 (days)
or
614-261-1707 evenings or over the weekends.

Doug Smith
614-297-2652.

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The newsletter of the Vintage Base Ball Association

We want all participants of every member club of the VBBA to receive the newsletter of base ball re-creation delivered directly to their homes. The goal is to provide news, historical background, and activities of all clubs playing any form of historic baseball directly to you. To help cover the cost of mailing and printing, we ask each club member to send \$5.00 for a year's subscription of six issues. Please complete this subscription form and send it with your check to

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the match to the Historian of the Association. The Historian shall keep these records in an organized system that will enable the Association to maintain a permanent record of all matches between Association members. Each member club must submit at least six match reports to the Historian each season.

4. In order for a club to be considered for membership in the Association, the club must apply to the President of the Association in writing, supplying evidence that the club has met all published membership requirements including adoption of the Association mission statement by the members of the club. The President will forward the club's application for membership to the Executive Council where it must receive a three-fourths affirmative vote of the council to be approved.
5. If a club fails to meet the standards of

membership or its obligations to the Association, the Executive Council shall attempt to resolve the problem by informal means. Should a problem persist, a club's membership in the Association may be terminated by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Once terminated, the club must re-apply for membership through normal procedures.

6. Additions and amendments to the bylaws may be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the member clubs present.
7. Unless specified otherwise by the Constitution or Bylaws, all meetings and other business of the Association shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
8. The Association will meet annually *in February* on a date to be determined by the Executive Council.
9. Committees will meet as necessary to accomplish their objectives and report to the Executive council on their actions.

While Pat Messengill was in Columbus the night before the annual meeting in Sylvania, he met with several Muffins who are going to accompany the Colorado folks on the eastern tour. The ladies tried on their own period outfits while the gentlemen were fitted with uniforms that Pat brought and which they will wear on the trip.

Pictured here (top row, left to right) are Tracy Martin, John Francis, and Charles Trudeau. Seated at the center are Dulcy Francis and Dianna Frias. Upon the floor are Rudy Frias and son Ian. Not pictured but slated to make the trip is Shawn Trudeau.

After ten days of touring, the ballists will arrive in Columbus for the Ohio Cup where six more matches will adorn the schedule.



Colorado to Play 50 Matches Highlight Is Eastern Barnstorming Tour

by Pat Messengill

The Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association enters its sixth season of play with an ambitious schedule of some fifty matches. The first match will be Saturday April 19 and will feature the Central City Stars playing the Littleton Rough & Readies at Fort Logan Base Ball Park. The last scheduled match will feature the same Littleton nine against the Colorado Territorial All-Stars on Saturday October 18th, also at Fort Logan, in southwest Denver.

The CVBBA numbers about thirty regular ballists and a dozen cranks. In addition to the Stars, All-Stars, and Rough & Readies; the original team, the Denver Blue Stockings, will be in action. For 1997 the CVBBA has added a gentle-lady's squad, the Colorado Columbines. In addition to these five teams, individual members will occasionally and variously portray the Denver Pacifics, Golden Reds, Colorado Springs D&RG Reds, Trinidad Vampires, Kit Carson Sagebrush, Pueblo Soapweeds and Mastodon Mine Minstrels; all original clubs from the 1870's.

In Colorado, the vintage teams generally play the National Association Rules of 1862, the year base ball was introduced to the Territory. Deviations include the calling of "balls" (which was formalized in 1863), a modified version of "stealing" (only if the defense attempts a "pick-off"), and a very rigid in-

posed to less than 10 at 90 feet), which makes our results much more like the high-scoring affairs so typical to the period. It also, quite frankly, makes the game for the players and experience for the public a whole lot more fun!

Our new ladies' team, the Columbines, will be demonstrating base ball typical to the several documented teams during 1866 to 1875. They will not be in uniforms but will wear a variety of everyday fashions including hoop skirts and bloomer dresses. They will play using the same 1862 rules with slight modifications including rules for just seven players as used at Vassar College. The ladies currently have six matches scheduled.

The highlight of the season for the Pikes Peakers will be an old-fashioned "barnstorming tour" during the last week of August. Fourteen ballists and cranks will fly from Denver to Detroit, where they will be joined by eight members of the Ohio Village Muffins. From there, travel vans will carry them to eleven matches in ten days including contests with the Greenfield Village Lah-De-Dahs, Canal Fulton Mules, Chagrin Falls Forest Citys, the Athletic and Base Ball Club of Cooperstown, and the Bethpage Village Brooklyn Atlantics. En route we will spend a day at the Baseball Hall of Fame and another day touring New York City. The trip will conclude at the Ohio Cup Festival during Labor Day weekend, with matches against the Muffins, Carriage Hill Clodbusters, the 1922 NY Giants and three other clubs to be determined.

The CVBBA would like to invite readers of *Early Innings Illustrated* to think about us when your travel plans include Colorado. If we are playing while you're in the area we would love to have you stop in to watch or even

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balls which allow cranks and spectators to keep the ball in play. Teams also play with the antiquated base path distance of 30 *paces* (instead of yards) which, in mid-19th century parlance meant 75 feet. This shorter distance permits average scores above 30 per match (as op-

or friends in Colorado who you think might be interested in vintage base ball, please pass our phone number and address along. It is: CVBBA, 1640 Downing St. #4, Denver, CO 80218, (303) 832-6693.

We look forward to seeing many of our base ball friends in August.



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The Getty College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Music

March 7, 1997

The Great Black Swamp Frogs Base Ball Club
5911 Jeffrey Lane
Sylvania, Ohio 43560

To Whom in May Concern:

I was fortunate to attend a game on September 22 at O.N.U. It was one of the neatest, most charming experiences I have ever had!

Please send me your itinerary for 1997 as I would like to attend another game and perhaps take my 9 year old nephew who loves to play baseball.

I grew up in Chicago; the "pros" of today would do well to emulate the wholesome origin/manners of the game's original form.

BRAVO to you all - there was a beauty to the entire afternoon that touched me deeply and I cried as I truly realized why baseball is America's game.

Yours truly,

Rosemary Z. Williams