

Pounding the SPORTS BEAT

THE SENIOR INTERCOUNTY baseball association weathered a number of its shaky pre-season organization periods this spring. At one point in the annual spring mix-up it looked like only three teams, Galt Tanners, Guelph Royals and Stratford Red Sox would be able to start the season.

The situation was viewed with alarm by the three surviving starters. Guelph Royals even went to the extreme of sending out feelers regarding the possibility of entering the Halton County intermediate series in the event the intercounty folded.

Last minute financial transactions on behalf of the tottering Kitchener and London entries resolved the situation, however, and the senior circuit will start the season with five clubs.

It seems inconceivable that teams in cities the size of Kitchener and London should experience financial difficulties in years when lavish spending on sports events is commonplace. Somewhere along its storied and rose-strewn path the intercounty must have taken a wrong turning. Fans in both cities wouldn't just drop baseball as a spectator sport unless it was no longer interesting.

Baseball must have degenerated to the point where a good TV program or a spot of fishing was preferable to diamond exploits of the intercounty variety. The exit of St. Thomas, Stratford and Waterloo, all hotbeds of the sport in past years, seems to bear this out.

Unimaginative promotion, too many imports at fancy prices and failure to spawn players in minor leagues all probably irritated the situation. When the sports-mad post war years lost their impetus fans no longer flocked to the turnstiles. They could watch major league baseball with the flick of a switch or the turn of a dial.

The money that should have been used for promotion and sprucing up the ball parks went to creaky old pros who earned a few extra bucks for their declining years. It went to the point where a dozen or so old pros from Galt were taking on a like bunch from Guelph. There was no civic pride involved. Most of them just went through the motions, saving themselves for the long, hard winter.

Suddenly the intercounty, along with other senior leagues in Ontario, found the well had dried up. Interest was declining rapidly. That should have been a time for a re-appraisal of the situation. It was for some.

GUELPH ROYALS was one club that picked up their collective socks, re-organized and got something like a going concern entered in the league. They used local players when the could and found college players on their way up to augment the roster instead of professionals on the way down.

The calibre of baseball improved. Fans started coming back to the park for games that again had sparkle and bounce. Under the leadership of Mike Wallace, Royals scoured the province for good, young players. They found some.

Now it's not unusual for a Guelph boy to try out for the team. He doesn't have to muscle his way through a covey of players with pro records as long as your arm. He's assured of a fair tryout.

This season, three players from last year's Acton club, are trying out for spots on the Royals. The Lawson brothers, Pete and Paul are both angling for a berth. Pete at short and Paul on the first sack. Also practicing is Bob Brattain, southpaw Guelph native, who played in Acton for the past three seasons.

Pete Lawson played for Guelph Juniors last season and was one of the outstanding prospects along with Don Currie of Milton. Paul Lawson had one of his best years in an Acton uniform last semester and was one of the stars of the Halton County All Stars in the annual All-Star game with Guelph in Campbellville.

For Bob Brattain it could be a vindication year. Bob was a good southpaw singer with Guelph juniors before he came to Acton. He never was quite good enough for the intercounty. He improved under the tutelage of Duke Lindsay to the point where he was Acton's winningest pitcher in a league only a notch below the senior circuit.

With baseball on the threshold of another season, this corner mourns with other fans here, the demise of the sport in Acton for this season. We'll miss the big-league in the park. But we're somewhat in the same position as those clubs who folded in the intercounty — financially unstable.

SOME OF THE SIX TEAMS entered in the Acton Softball Association this semester have been out practicing already. The 30 game schedule — three games a week — starts Tuesday, May 21 with last year's champions, Fire Fighters, taking on Dominion Hotel in the opener.

Outside of a few players who jumped from one team to another, the league remains almost the same as last season. There is one new entry — Station Hotel — replacing the Junior Farmer club of last season.

Cries of anguish are being heard from a couple of the clubs who accuse others of pirating their players. Last year's champs, Fire Fighters, are reputed to have lost at least two of the players, one to retirement and another to a rival. If someone should steal Frank Daley they'd really be in a fix.

Target for the league is a set of lights to enable games to be played after dark. A sizable sum, hundreds of collections and dances has been set aside for the project, but all the shekels not needed for the league's operation this season will likely find their way into the kitty for lights.

It's a worthwhile project. When in the early spring and late summer it is impossible to finish nine innings in daylight and it's difficult for officials to call games for darkness when one team is only a run or two in arrears.

BEAT BITS Registration for the pee wee baseball team Monday evening attracted enough applicants to staff two teams. Acton Open is set for the Elm golf club this season. Watch for further details. Only a few interested bowlers showed up to register for lawn bowling at a meeting Monday in the Community Centre.

The hydroplane regatta slated for Fairy Lake, here June 14 will attract from 75,000 of the speedy craft. Grapevine now says Lyn McLaren may not coach Georgetown Cottons in the Halton league this season. A tip of the old chapeau in the direction of the high school athletes who missed bringing home a championship by a few paltry points Saturday.

Cheaters

Cheating on a school test was the subject of an excellent National Film Board movie, "The Test," which the Rotarians saw Tuesday. They were very much

interested in the film which showed how the children's morals were subtly influenced in the home.

Baseball practices have been cancelled by bad weather.

Six Teams Enter Softball League Opens May 21

Six teams made the deadline for entry into the Acton Softball Association this season and five of them will attempt to wrest the title from last year's champions, Acton Fire Fighters.

The schedule has been drawn up and the opening game is slated for Tuesday, May 21 with the title-holding Fire Fighters meeting Dominion Hotel. Each club will play 10 games.

Following is the complete schedule with the home club the last mentioned.

Tuesday, May 21 — Fire Fighters vs. Dominion Hotel.

Wednesday, May 22 — IGA vs. Legion.

Monday, May 27 — UPWA Tanners vs. Station Hotel.

Tuesday, May 28 — Fire Fighters vs. Legion.

Wednesday, May 29 — Dominion Hotel vs. Station Hotel.

Thursday, May 30 — IGA vs. UPWA Tanners.

Tuesday, June 4 — Station Hotel vs. Fire Fighters.

Wednesday, June 5 — Legion vs. UPWA Tanners.

Thursday, June 6 — Dominion Hotel vs. IGA.

Tuesday, June 11 — Dominion Hotel vs. Legion.

Wednesday, June 12 — UPWA Tanners vs. Fire Fighters.

Thursday, June 13 — Station Hotel vs. IGA.

Tuesday, June 18 — IGA vs. Fire Fighters.

Wednesday, June 19 — Legion vs. Station Hotel.

Thursday, June 20 — UPWA Tanners vs. Dominion Hotel.

Tuesday, June 25 — Station Hotel vs. Dominion Hotel.

Wednesday, June 26 — UPWA Tanners vs. IGA.

Thursday, June 27 — Fire Fighters vs. Legion.

Tuesday, July 2 — Fire Fighters vs. Dominion Hotel.

Wednesday, July 3 — Legion vs. IGA.

Thursday, July 4 — Station Hotel vs. UPWA Tanners.

Tuesday, July 9 — Fire Fighters vs. UPWA Tanners.

Wednesday, July 10 — IGA vs. Station Hotel.

Thursday, July 11 — Legion vs. Dominion Hotel.

Tuesday, July 16 — Legion vs. Station Hotel.

Wednesday, July 17 — IGA vs. Fire Fighters.

Thursday, July 18 — Dominion vs. UPWA Tanners.

Tuesday, July 23 — Station Hotel vs. Fire Fighters.

Wednesday, July 24 — Dominion Hotel vs. IGA.

Thursday, July 25 — UPWA Tanners vs. Legion.

ACTON FIRE FIGHTERS' sponsored bantam hockey team were feted Saturday night at the fire hall when they received individual inscribed trophies from the firefighters during a banquet. Front row left to right are Steven Townsley, Terry Cole, Alan McNabb, Garry Taillefer, Barry Elliott, Rick Lambert and Bruce Casburn. Second row left to right Jim Barden, Bert Logan, John McGeachie, Jim McCoy, Kevin Hall, Ken Malby and Allan McKenzie. Back row left to right coach Harold Townsley, manager Herb Dodds, and trainer Bill Knight.

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The Acton Free Press, Thursday, May 9th, 1965

—W. Duval Sr. won the Acton Firefighters 50-50 draw this month.

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How many thrills will you get sitting around at home tonight?

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We're not saying it isn't going to be pleasant. But will you get a real charge out of it? We offer a suggestion that can turn just another week-night into a big-time thrill night. Head for harness racing at new Mohawk Raceway in Campbellville. The action starts at 7:45 and we put on nine heart-stoppers before we turn off the lights.

Special busfare - and - admission deal from Hamilton (Canada Coach), Toronto, Guelph and Kitchener (Gray Coach) or drive 401 to the Campbellville cut-off, north 1/4 mile.

9 RACES NIGHTLY AT 7:45

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Look for the captive balloon!

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