

Work takes a beatseat when Ridley's Delmarva Shorebirds take to the field

Shayne Ridley was at the plate for the Delmarva Shorebirds with the bases loaded and one out.

Delmarva is in or near Salisbury, Maryland I've figured out, and is a team in the Class A South Atlantic League, a farm club of the Baltimore Orioles.

They have an excellent web site (www.theshorebirds.com) that shows all the stats, game stories, box scores, and has pictures of their stadium. Most importantly, however, their games are on the radio and broadcast out over the Internet.

Ridley, the announcer had noted earlier, was from Milton, Ontario, Canada. I stopped working so I could pay full attention to his at bat, silently urging him on. "Ridley hits it on the ground... AND THROUGH THE INFIELD! One run is in, another run is in..."

The announcer for the Shorebirds is excellent and easy to listen to, but I wouldn't likely be listening to their games if a hometown boy wasn't on the team. It makes it special — somebody to cheer for.

It was the same in the winter with hockey. I listened on the Internet to Bryan Gent star for the Utah Valley junior team in the all star game and the playoffs. He was even interviewed at the all star game where he made reference to hometown Milton.

Darren Haydar and Jeff Haydar were playing for the University of New Hampshire Wildcats this winter. All their games were archived on a web site, so I could listen to them whenever I had time.

I'd put my hand where I knew the score would be on the screen, and press the links, and I could listen to the previous Saturday night's game on Sunday night or Monday morning while I was working.

There's something about sports on the radio that has always appealed to me, often preferring it to the television broadcast.

I can listen to any NHL hockey game, NFL football game, or any major league baseball game on my computer. The NBA idiots want us to pay for the privilege.

It wasn't always so easy, of course.

When I was a kid, I had this radio that either plugged in or ran on batteries. Probably about as wide across as your telephone. I doubt that you would even see one of them nowadays and for sure you couldn't buy one.

It was the best radio I've ever owned. It got zillions of AM stations. I'd turn the dial ever so slowly and I was all over the United States. Turn it this way or that and I could get even more stations.

During the winter, I'd listen to the Philadelphia 76er's games. I didn't have a schedule, so I never knew when they were playing, but I'd try to find them every night. When they were on I couldn't be happier.

Their big star was Billy Cunningham, and I'd hope like crazy he'd get 20 points cause I knew that was a big deal.

Much of the time I'd have to listen to the games under the covers with the volume as low as I could get it so I wouldn't get caught by my parents who would take the radio away if they caught me. I could never sleep, even as a kid, so it was either Hardy Boy books by flashlight or the radio.

During the summer I'd listen to whatever baseball game I could find, which was usually the St. Louis Cardinals games. They were on KMOX, which had a very clear signal back then and still does now. Later, it was the Montreal Expos games.

On a hot summer night, with the breeze blowing through the



On the loose

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popular trees in the yards behind us and a baseball game on the radio, I can still remember what a nice feeling it was.

I can't listen to the Blue Jays games on the radio because I can't stand the announcers. Tom Cheek talks in cliches that makes me absolutely nutty.

Lots of people like him, though, but I think that's because they never heard the old-time play by play guys. Although, many seem to have nice memories of sitting in their backyards or porches on summer evenings listening to Blue Jays broadcasts during their glory years.

Nowadays I can pick and choose whatever game I want to listen to through the magic of the Internet. And I don't have to do it under the covers.

Right now my team of choice is the Delmarva Shorebirds.

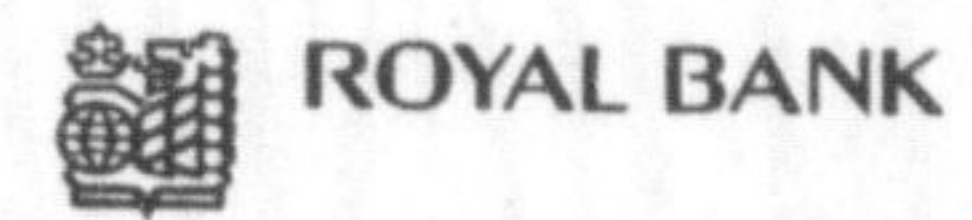
Be sure to read up on all your local sports teams here every Tuesday and Friday.

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Triathlon training begins on Tuesday

The Milton Women's Triathlon has been gaining steam since its inception in 1995.

And event founder Tina Braam is hoping to get more local ladies in peak condition for the annual fall competition.

To that end, she's once again offering a series of triathlon clinics — the first of which takes place at the Milton Leisure Centre Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m.

The initial clinic — and two that'll follow it — aims to introduce the sport to women and provide opportunities for learning training techniques and building confidence.

Participants should come dressed for an easy stretch and run as part of the evening program. The cost for a single session is \$25 while the price for all three clinics — collectively entitled "Learn, Experience, Do" — is \$65.

To register, or for more information, call Sue Leeder at 878-7329.

The 2001 Milton Women's Triathlon will be held Sunday, Sept. 2 at Kelso Conservation Area. Two different distance triathlons plus a duathlon will be offered, giving both novice and advanced athletes the chance to compete.