

SPORTS

It's wild, it's weird, it's Milton Red-Sox baseball

By MURRAY TOWNSEND
Special to The Champion

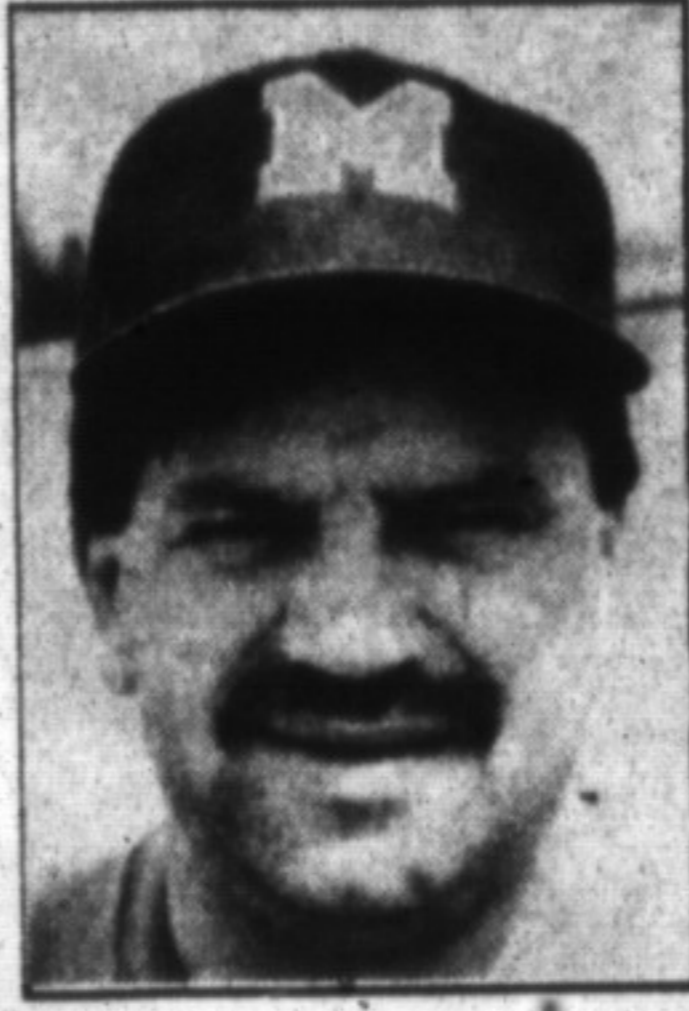
When last we left the saga of the Milton H.J.M. Insurance-Red Sox they were entrenched so far into the basement that they were thinking of changing their name to the Milton Moles.

But things are looking up for the senior team despite a nail-biting 5-4 loss to Sheridan on Saturday at Brian Best Park. They've now improved their record to 5-6, and more importantly are playing with renewed confidence. Earlier in the week they pummeled Streetsville 19-8.

Tim Chapman started on the mound for Milton against Sheridan. In the first inning a bloop single to open the game was followed by a long home run over the left field fence. Chapman settled down after that, allowing only two more hits through the seventh inning. In 8 1/3 innings on the mound, he struck out 11.

Milton got both runs back in the second inning. After Sean Davidson walked, Paul McCutcheon drove one past the first baseman to put runners on the corners with none out. When McCutcheon attempted to steal second, the catcher threw it down and Davidson raced for home. McCutcheon was safe and the throw came back to the catcher. Davidson slid and appeared to be safe as well, but the umpire called him out.

"Tsk, tsk, shame on you," said



John Blasko (left) and Doug Dunn (centre) worked a strange but effective play while Rick McTrach (right) debated with the umpires in fine Milton tradition.

Davidson to the umpire, or something to that effect.

John Blasko followed with a solid single to left-centre to score McCutcheon and then Matt McCandless hit one past the first baseman to tie the game.

Sheridan hit a home run in the fourth to go up 3-2, and that was it for scoring from both sides until the eighth inning. Then Sheridan scored two more on an error and a couple of hits. In the bottom of the inning, however, Milton got two back after impressive newcomer Jeff Carey and Tim Blackadar both worked walks. Then Davidson smashed one to centre to score them both.

Umpires probably cringe when they get the call to work a Red Sox game. The Milton team doesn't like to lose and they just plain don't like umpires, whom they punish verbally for any

calls they deem incorrect. And there are a lot of those. It does seem they get the short end of the bat more than their share of the time, so it's obvious the men in blue don't take the easy way out.

They probably thought they were going to get off relatively unscathed on Saturday before the spit hit the fan in the ninth inning.

On a play at first base, Skip McTrach had to leap high in the air for a throw. As he came down, the Sheridan runner going to first banged into him, accidentally on purpose, it appeared. McTrach took exception to that and they had a few words, followed by a few pushes, which brought more than a few players from the benches for a few minutes. When order was restored, a few players were ejected, including McTrach and the Sheridan runner.

A few batters later, a Sheridan hitter turned into a pitch and took one on the hands. Chapman argued that it had hit the bat first, but the umpire disagreed and the argument raged on while the player writhed in pain on the ground. Meanwhile, George Moore was being brought in to pitch and Chapman was thrown out of a game he was leaving anyway.

With players and umpires arguing all over the field, Moore waved them away from in front of the pitching mound. "Can you guys please fight over there," he asked politely. They moved over, picked up where they had left off and Moore was able to warm up.

That wasn't it for the weirdness in the ninth. With two out, a Sheridan batter hit a high pop-up to Doug Dunn at first base. He caught it and then dropped it, not having held it long enough. A Sheridan runner thought the inning was over and sauntered back toward second base to take his position in the field. Dunn threw it to Blasko, who tagged the unaware runner out.

The Red Sox had their chances in the ninth. Blasko led off with a grounder to short and made it to first when the fielder couldn't make the play. Milton already had five easy stolen bases in the game, so Blasko was running. The catcher, who hadn't thrown out a runner at second since July of last year, pegged a perfect throw to get him. McCandless fol-

lowed with a double to right centre and then Dunn worked a walk. Carey followed with a ground ball that got Dunn at second. That put runners at the corners with two out and John Turner at the plate.

What were the chances that the catcher would throw out two in a row or even make a throw at all with a runner at third? Pretty good, because that's exactly what he did, gunning down speedy Carey at second base to end the game.

As long as the umpires show up, the next home game for the Red Sox is Saturday at 1:30 p.m. against Streetsville at Brian Best Park.

Central Ontario Baseball Association Standings

Andrews Division					
	W	L	T	Pct.	GB
Dundas	6	1	0	.857	-
St. Catharines	5	1	1	.786	1/2
Burlington	5	2	1	.688	1
Hamilton	4	4	1	.500	2 1/2
MILTON	5	6	0	.455	3
Glanbrook	3	4	1	.438	3

Johnson Division					
	W	L	T	Pct.	GB
Brampton	8	0	0	1.000	-
Sheridan	4	5	1	.450	4 1/2
Erindale	2	3	1	.417	4 1/2
Oakville	3	6	0	.333	5 1/2
Streetsville	2	7	0	.222	6 1/2
Bloor	0	8	0	.000	8

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