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# Vermont Senior Baseball News

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The newsletter of the Vermont Senior Baseball League Inc., founded 1984 by Floyd Brown

Vol. 2, No. 2

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edited by Mike Wagner

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### Results of Sunday, May 25:

Burlington 4, Mad River Valley 0  
Champlain 7, Northfield 2  
Williston 8, Winooski 6  
Lake Region 7, Chelsea 6  
Killington 7, South Royalton 6  
Morrisville 9, Caledonia 2  
Jericho 11, Danville 5  
Montpelier 10, Newport 0

### Standings:

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Morrisville	4	0	1.000	-
Burlington	3	0	1.000	.5
Lake Region	3	0	1.000	.5
Mad River Valley	3	1	.750	1
Jericho	3	1	.750	1
Killington	3	1	.750	1
Champlain	2	1	.667	1.5
Caledonia	2	2	.500	2
Chelsea	2	2	.500	2
Montpelier	2	2	.500	2
Northfield	1	3	.250	3
South Royalton	1	3	.250	3
Williston	1	3	.250	3
Newport	0	3	.000	3.5
Danville	0	4	.000	4
Winooski	0	4	.000	4

### Schedule for Sunday, June 1:

Williston at Jericho  
Burlington at Winooski  
Morrisville at Montpelier  
Champlain at Mad River Valley  
Killington at Northfield  
Chelsea at Danville  
Caledonia at Lake Region  
South Royalton at Newport

Two games were postponed from the first week of the season, April 27. Newport at Champlain will be played Wednesday, June 18, 6:00 PM, at Montpelier High School. Lake Region at Burlington has not yet been rescheduled.

### David M. Yarnell, 1945-2003



David Yarnell, who played in our league with the Pour House and Winooski teams, passed away May 19 after a brief illness. All of us who were privileged to play with or against him extend our sympathy to his family, including his brothers James Yarnell and Bob Yarnell, who are active players in our league.

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## Wood Bat Progress Report



This is a selection of comments from each team's manager or spokesperson regarding our league's switch to wood bats. Teams are listed in alphabetical order.

### Ronn Winn, Burlington Cardinals:

Wood bats are doing okay. We have broken a few including my \$55 maple in our first game. Composite types are holding up good. We have been hitting the ball and even a couple of guys have gone yard. I think the members of the Cardinals are in support of wood bats for now. We feel that the league needs to play a season and then listen to comments at next years winter meeting.



### Dave Recchia, Caledonia Bucks:

We have broken quite a few bats and the cost is higher than we wanted, but most of our guys enjoy using the wood bats. We also have a couple of guys who want to go back to metal.



### Eddie Krasnow, Champlain Whales:

The crack of the bat the last few weeks has stirred the Whales to feel like we are truly playing baseball again. Not since high school in the sixties have most of us enjoyed the joys of wood. Using the composite Baum bats which feel and sound just like wood with less sting has resulted in good



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*Wood Bat Progress Report, continued*

hitting, no broken bats, and a renewed sense that we are all playing with more equitable equipment. Also, there is a relaxed sense from our pitchers that they are in fact in less danger on the mound.



**Blake Thomsen, Chelsea:**

It's no secret that Chelsea has been pushing for wooden bats for four years now. We appreciate everyone giving it a fair trial. We have had three of the best baseball games we've ever had. None were decided until the ninth or tenth inning. "Label up" is a general

rule. Check where the ball is impacting your bat and adjust your grip accordingly. This should result in less breakage.

**Randall McGrath, Danville Dragons:**

Negative: definitely expensive (especially Northern Ash) due to breakage.

Positive: safer for pitchers and more fun.

I personally feel that wood composite is the bat of the future for amateur leagues.



**Clint Erb, Jericho Indians:**

Our team likes them. No one has made any negative comments and many players have said that they are glad that the league has made the switch. It has also brought "small ball" back into our games. In our games there has been more bunting and moving the runners up than in past years. Also all our games have been close going into the last few innings.

**Bill Bauer, Killington**

**Summit Lodge Saints:**

I do not have a strong opinion one way or the other. However, I was not (nor was my team) a supporter of wooden bats and we still are not. I do not see any significant difference in the playability but do see a significant difference in the cost of running a team (we have broken five bats at approximately \$45 each). I do not believe there is any great difference towards threat of injury to fielders and pitchers between the two. However I have witnessed flying broken wooden bats that were threats to fielders and spectators. If metal bat speed is everyone's concern, we could limit the ratio between bat length and weight. My position has always been to spend this additional bat money on truly improving the quality of our games by providing two umpires.



**Rich Carbonetti, Lake Region Rangers:**

We have now gone two games without breaking a bat and with an increasing use of the composite wood bats I see this as a trend. More importantly it is better baseball. Lower scores, bunting, hitting for

situations, etc. It really is a better brand of baseball. I strongly suggest we need to address leading and passed balls to make for more scoring opportunities as well as get us even closer to real baseball. The sound of the bat, the use of bunts, lower scores and closer games are all good for our game.

**Doug Bergstein, Mad River Valley:**

Our overall reaction is mixed. Some people love the feel and the sound of the wooden bats. Others don't like the sting of a badly hit ball. Still others don't see much of a difference at all and are just going about their business. Although our broken bat total isn't that high, it will clearly be a much more expensive endeavor to go the wooden bat route. The balls hit to the infield are generally softer, but there have still been some mighty blasts to the outfield. Regardless of the decision, people will adjust.



**Charlie Barasch, Montpelier Monties:**

Our team has enjoyed playing with wooden bats, despite having broken two ourselves and having two broken meat ends come whirling at us on the field. We've hit just as well (in other words, weakly) with wooden

bats, as have our opponents (in other words, over our outfielders' heads). We like the sound and feel of the wooden bats. (I umpired a high school game today and, already, the metal bats didn't sound right.)

**Dave Geoffroy,**

**Morrisville Merchants:**

We really don't like the wood bats. We broke our 10<sup>th</sup> one on Sunday. All our bats are ash. We are going to try some maple and composite but we wish we didn't have to go through this.



**Mike Coutu, Newport:**

It's too soon to tell whether this was a good idea. Nobody on our team has said anything overly favorable or opposed. The game is different, there have been some shots that would have gone further with metal, but whether that's a good thing or a bad thing we don't know yet.

**Erik Nielsen,**

**Northfield North Stars:**

So far wood bats are working well for us. We have broken one, in the first game, and have found not a whole lot of difference in terms of overall offense. We've hit some shots and our opponents have hit some. Except for the lack of leading and stealing it seems more like real baseball now with walks, errors, bunting (i.e., "little ball") contributing to games' outcomes a lot. We're enjoying the switch (and remember, we were one of the teams that voted AGAINST the switch last July).





**Gerard Thompson,  
South Royalton Royals:**

The Royals are still a team divided on the issue of wooden bats. We've noticed a serious drop off in fly outs and general outfield action. Game 3 did see an increase, so hopefully that's a sign of everyone's adjustment. Our other concern will be the amount of money lost to breakage. This

could dissuade many guys from wood, when 2, 3 or more bats get turned to kindling. But there's nothing better than hearing wood hitting rawhide to remind us why we play. Let's wait until the season ends and see what our reactions are then.

**Dennis Johnson,  
Williston Armadillos:**

The Armadillos overwhelmingly enjoy the feel of wood bats. At the same time, this is an expensive proposition. We have already broken at least 12 bats, about half being maple. While one of the stated reasons for change was safety, we had two maple bats sawed in half during our games. One almost hit the third baseman and the other the shortstop. Perhaps a league- wide sponsor, with a set allocation to each team to defray the costs would work.



**Rich Regimbal, Winooski A's:**

I think the season is going well, as a team we have lost a lot of bats early on but in the last game none were broken. I think everybody on our team likes wood but also the cost is somewhat of a concern at least with some of the team.



**Our league is affiliated with the Mens Senior Baseball League (MSBL), a national organization representing over 40,000 players. Here is a brief list of benefits:**

- Hardball Magazine, 5 issues per year
- Participation in regional and national tournaments (see page 7 for an entry form for the MSBL World Series)
- Liability insurance for all playing fields
- Special offers from MSBL Sports Store
- Discounts on insurance and travel

Visit the MSBL web site for more information  
[www.msblnational.com](http://www.msblnational.com)

**On And Off The Disabled List**

*Lefty Guillette, the ageless first baseman of the Jericho Indians, is recovering from a heart bypass operation. We asked him for an update on his condition.*



I went in the hospital Monday 23 Dec 02 after having chest pains over that weekend. Took a stress test and failed. I was more shocked than anyone as I had played basketball two weeks prior up at Patrick Gym with the college kids and felt great.

Had a 3 hour operation on the 27th for a quadruple bypass. There was no damage to the heart thank God. Was discharged on the 4th of Jan 03. Started rehab on the 25th of January and am still going, but only twice a week for an hour.

After fighting in Korea, being wounded and a POW for 34 days and then going to Vietnam and wounded twice there, I guess this little setback really isn't too bad.

I won't be able to play until about the middle of June and it's killing me just to sit and keep score. After playing this game for 63 years I guess I can't complain. I have been coaching the Essex High varsity baseball team along with Ed Poland and Steve Ferreira as that doesn't require much work. Just waving my arms sending players to second base. But enjoying it immensely.

I am hoping that the Doc gives me the OK sooner as I took BP this past Saturday and felt great. But the BOSS (MY WIFE) says not any sooner than the 27th of June. We'll see.

I want to convey my thanks to all the folks who sent me cards and called me both at the Fletcher Allen Hospital and at home while I was on the mend. People I hadn't even met before this year. This is from the heart and not this computer. ♦

*Steve Wright, Lake Region's 61 year old pitcher who had a brain tumor removed last August, made his first mound appearance May 18 against Northfield, going 3 innings. On May 25 he pitched 5 innings against Chelsea. Steve filed this report for the newsletter:*



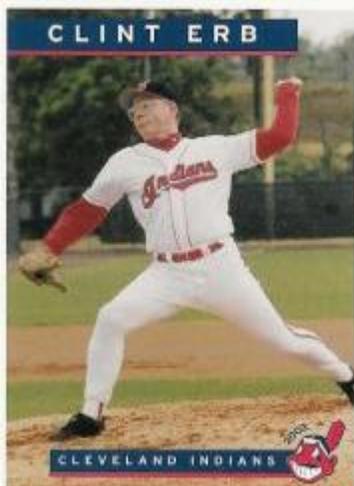
I'm a little wobbly out there, but my real problem is soreness after the game, because I spent a lot of time just lying on the couch over the winter. Playing baseball again is a motivator to get me back in the gym to work out. From my pitching motion I get real sore in the left upper gluteus maximus, but I can't get any of my teammates to massage it for me.

Don't forget to mention that against Northfield I was 3 for 3 at bat; you don't need to know how I did against Chelsea, but the guys I left on base will probably tell you. ♦

## Clint and Wayne's Excellent Adventure, or The Realities of Fantasy Camp

by Clint Erb, Jericho Indians

It was a baseball fantasy come true when Wayne Davis and I traveled to Cleveland over Mother's Day weekend to play ball at Jacobs Field. This was the wrap up of the 2003 Cleveland Indians Fantasy Camp, which started in January at the Indians spring training home in Winter Haven, Florida. During January many of the major league teams hold similar fantasy camps at their spring training facilities. This was Wayne's first Indians camp and my second. I had attended several Red Sox camps at Fort Meyers. The camps differ in some details, but the main format is similar. A group of baseball lovers gathers to play ball in a major league setting with some of the team pros of the past. The camps are open to men and women age 30 and over. About a half dozen women campers participated at the Red Sox camps I attended, some very good. But none attended the Indians camp.



For the Indians camp we flew into Orlando on Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup> and were bused from the airport to the Holiday Inn in Winter Haven. The camp started with a barbecue at the motel under a large, white tent. Introductions by the pros and campers were the first night's activity. Appropriate and often inappropriate comments by the pros set the atmosphere for the rest of the week.

For many campers this was a gift from wives, family and/or friends for birthdays and anniversaries. Approximately half of the campers were veterans, some having attended seven or more previous camps. This time there were 96 campers and 16 pros, including Max Alvis, Joe Azcue, Scott Bailes, Len Barker, Gary Bell, Jim Bibby, Joe Charboneau, Bob Feller, Mudcat Grant, Woodie Held, Brook Jacoby, Rick Manning, Kevin Rhomberg, Duke Sims, Pat Tabler, and Rick Waits.

### The First Day

At 6:30 Sunday morning vans take campers and pros to the Chain of Lakes Park. All breakfasts and lunches are eaten at the player's cafeteria at the park. The food is good. The campers use the minor league locker room. The first task is finding your locker and making sure everything is there. After dressing and eating, each camper selects a wood bat that they take home at the end of the week. No metal bats are allowed. If your bat breaks, you are given another one. There are 30 minutes of stretching, calisthenics and one lap around the field. Campers are then divided into groups that gather at various stations where the pros give clinics on hitting, fielding and pitching.



After lunch campers play intra-squad games where they are evaluated by the pros in anticipation of the draft. In the late afternoon the pros gather to draft the teams. Each team of 12 is managed by two pros. After dinner everyone gets together in the tent for a kangaroo court and announcement of the team rosters. Wayne and I went as a package so we could play together. Pat Tabler and Joe Charboneau were our managers. The eight teams are divided into two divisions.

Each team plays 6 games within their division and one inter-divisional game. There are 6 fields at the park – the stadium plus 5 minor league fields. The camp uses all the fields during the week. At the end of the week the first place teams in each division play for the championship. The quality of play is reasonably good. Most of this year's teams would be competitive in our league.

### Daily Schedule

Monday through Wednesday consists of stretching and calisthenics followed by a morning and afternoon game, each 7 innings, and then the kangaroo court after dinner at night. A seventh game is played Thursday morning with the championship game that evening under the lights in the stadium. On Thursday afternoon and Friday morning each team plays against the pros. The week ends with a banquet Friday night at a local country club where the major awards are handed out. Saturday morning everyone is bused to Orlando to catch departing flights.

### Kangaroo Court

Pros and campers alike get fined at kangaroo court. Gary Bell is the judge with Mudcat Grant as side judge. Fines can be for anything from wearing a watch, leaving your glove at the field, forgetting to put on a batting helmet to being of large girth or making a bonehead play. This court is not a politically correct event. At the end of the week the Indians and camp directors match all the fines and the total is donated to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Polk County, Florida.

### Hanging Out With The Pros

Usually some of the pros will stay after kangaroo court for informal bull sessions. The possibility of Pete Rose getting back into baseball was a hot topic. Most, if not all of the pros are against his reinstatement. Bob Feller didn't mince words when commenting on it. The pros are very accessible throughout the day and will give tips or tell inside stories about their years in the Show. Playing is fun, but equally enjoyable are the stories and interaction between the pros and campers.

*continued on page 5*

## Some Help From The Trainers

The minor league team trainers are there to treat all the physical ailments of the players. The line to the trainers' room grows longer as the week progresses. Pulled muscles and various sprains are generally the big injuries for the week. Wayne pulled his groin in the second game and hobbled around the rest of the week. Injured players get courtesy runners. In spite of the injuries everyone continued to participate and enjoy themselves.

## What It Costs

The camp costs a little over \$4,000 including round-trip air transportation from Cleveland to Orlando. The cost is reduced by \$200 if you fly to Orlando on your own. Also included are 8 day / 7 night double occupancy motel accommodations, breakfast and lunch daily at the ballpark, dinner at one of two local restaurants each evening except Thursday when there is a cookout at the park during the championship game. Each player receives a complete Indian uniform including white and blue jerseys with your name and number, a long and short sleeve undershirt, pants, socks, belt and cap plus an Indians major league warm-up jacket. Players need only bring their glove, jock and rubber cleats. Each player's uniform is laundered every day. In addition to their game bat, each camper gets

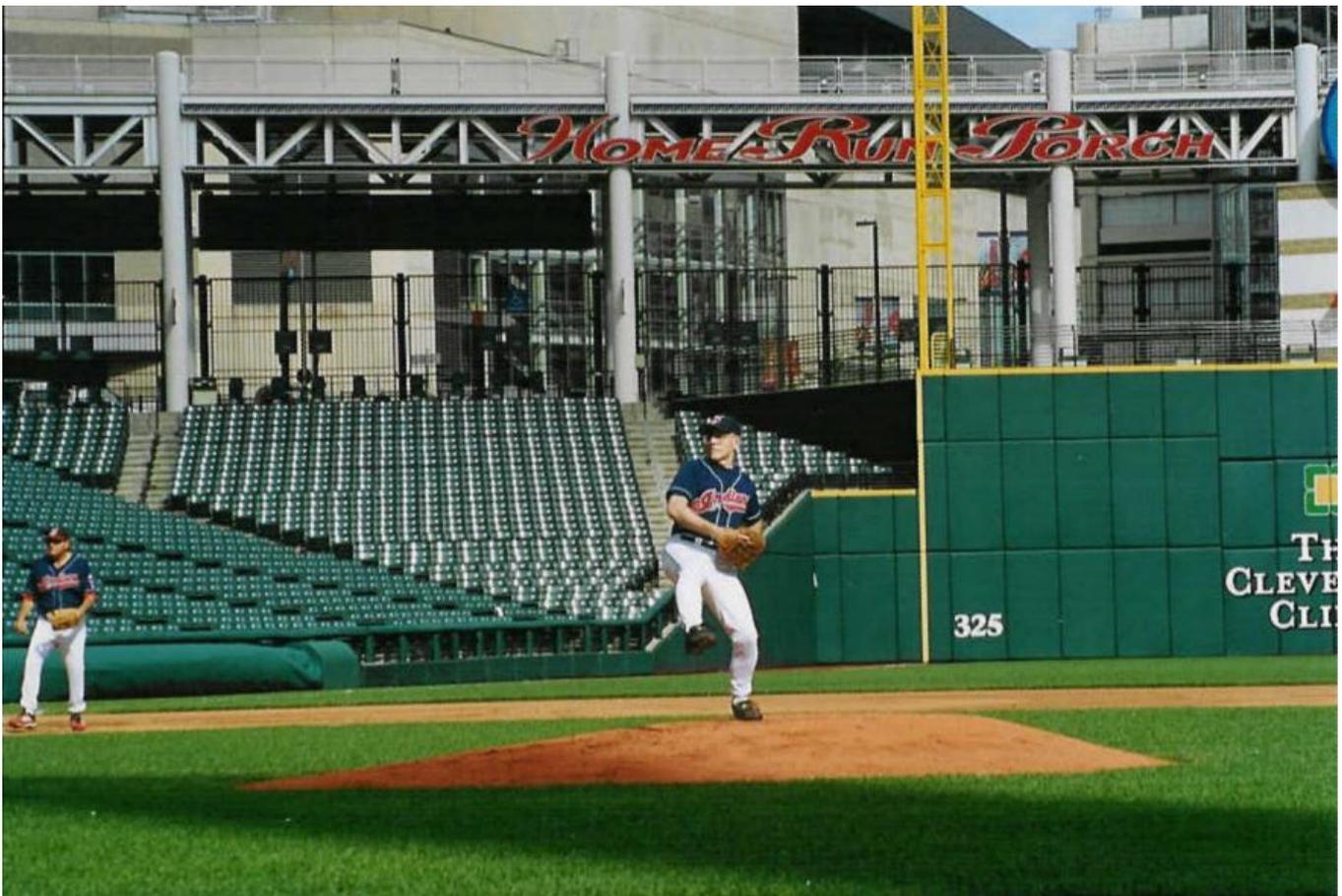
50 personalized baseball cards, a team picture, and a highlights video that is personalized with clips of that camper over the course of the week, and an autographed bat signed by all the pros present at camp. There are professional photographers taking videos of all the action as well as still photos, which are available for purchase. At the start of each evening they show of the video of that day's plays.

## Follow-up At The Jake

The final event is the day at Jacobs Field in May where each team is scheduled to play a one-hour game. Not all campers attend, so it is possible to play in more than one game. I played in three of the four games. It was quite a feeling to be there. Every camper walked out on the field and looked around in awe; and then ... the thrill of pitching off the same mound as Bartolo Colon, Roger Clemens and Pedro Martinez. It doesn't get any better than that. ♦

*If you are interested in attending a baseball fantasy camp and want more information, contact Clint Erb by email at: [cerb@adelphia.net](mailto:cerb@adelphia.net)*

Below, Clint Erb on the mound at Jacobs Field in Cleveland, May 12, 2003.



## Interview: Neil Stanzione



*At age 54 Neil Stanzione is entering his 12<sup>th</sup> year in our league. He has been on league championship teams and league doormat teams. His intensity during a game is evident to teammates and opponents alike. Last year Neil played for the league's team at the MSBL World Series.*

**VBSN: Have you always been bald?**

**Neil:** No, I lost my hair at age 5, they said I had a nervous disorder. When I was growing up in an orphanage in New Jersey I was always the target of the other kids because I was different. Nowadays you see a lot of bald guys, so its no big deal.

**VBSN: So you grew up in an orphanage? Until what age, and where did you go next?**

**Neil:** I was in an orphanage from age 7 to 9. Then I went back home but my father died when I was 10 and my mother 3 years later, then I lived with my grandfather. My brothers went to aunts and uncles.

**VBSN: Were you interested in sports in school?**

**Neil:** Me and my brothers got into sports, my 2 brothers were pitchers, and another brother got a basketball scholarship to Connecticut. We all played football too, through high school in New Jersey. I got a football scholarship from a college in Pennsylvania but I didn't go because I knew my grades weren't good and I had no confidence.

**VBSN: How did your baseball career develop?**

**Neil:** I tried out for an Essex County league team, which was a semipro league, I played there about 2 years. Then I played in a mostly Negro league that was sponsored by the New York Yankees. I played for the Newark Dodgers and Newark Astros. I was pitching then, doing okay.

**VBSN: What was your most memorable moment while playing in the semipro league in Newark?**

**Neil:** Probably the time I fell asleep on the mound. I was working two jobs and I got off work and went to the ballpark just in time to go out and pitch the second game of a doubleheader. There were a lot of people in the stands. I was really tired and got through the first 2 innings. I walked some guys and then there was some delay, while a coach was arguing with the umpire about a pitch and I'm standing out on the mound waiting, and the next thing I knew the umpire was shaking me, 'cause I had fell asleep while standing out there. The next batter hit a 2 hopper back to me but I fell down and everyone was safe. Next guy, same thing, I couldn't get the ball out of my glove. So I just went home and went to bed.

**VBSN: How did you get from New Jersey to Vermont?**

**Neil:** In 1979 my wife and kids moved to Pennsylvania because she thought it was safer than Newark. I stayed because I could get work there. I was living with a friend in South Orange, and these people from the Community

Church came to meet my friend. I liked what they had to say about how they lived together and shared everything, and it seemed like a place for my kids to grow up in a safe place, so we all moved to Island Pond in 1983.

**VBSN: What was it like with the Community?**

**Neil:** They got us jobs like construction and body work, and it was okay for 3 or 4 years. But I didn't like it that they took control of the children and they were abused. So I took my 3 boys and moved to a friend's house in Hardwick. My wife stayed there with our 2 daughters, and that was the beginning of the end of our relationship.

**VBSN: How did you get started playing in our league?**

**Neil:** I was living in Newport and I heard about it. Floyd Brown was the manager of the Newport team then and he let me try out. I was 42, so I couldn't pitch, and I mostly played third base. When I turned 45 I could pitch, the limit was 6 innings then.



**VBSN: What are some of the memories you have of playing in our league?**

**Neil:** They're not all pleasant ones. I saw a guy keel over on the mound and die from a heart attack (*ed. Note: Dave Fleming of Milton, 1996*). And when the Newport team split up to make the Lake Region team there were some bad feelings, but I think everybody is over that, I know it don't bother me none, and last year I played in Phoenix with Mo and Johnny K. Now there's a clutch player, Johnny K, he's slowed down a little but I always liked watching him play.

**VBSN: I remember a game in which you got sick while on the mound. What was that about?**

**Neil:** I have Crohn's disease, an eating disorder, so I have to watch what I eat, and when I play ball if I didn't eat right and I'm out in the sun too long I could get sick.

**VBSN: What keeps you coming back to the ballpark?**

**Neil:** I love baseball, I love the competition and I like it when guys accomplish more than you think they can. ♦



Above, Neil pitches against the Boise Hawks during the MSBL World Series in Phoenix, last October

## Sign Up Now for MSBL World Series

Official signups have begun for the annual post-season MSBL World Series tournament in Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 22 - Nov. 1, 2003.

If you want to play, send an e-mail message to Mike Wagner at [mike@wagner-usa.net](mailto:mike@wagner-usa.net) or call 802-334-7514. Be prepared to pay \$275 by July 15. This will cover the tournament entry fee and uniform jerseys and hat (those who played last year pay \$200 if they still have the uniform). Checks should be made out to Mike Wagner and mailed to Mike at PO Box 10, Newport VT 05855.

### What is it?

An annual end of season tournament played on major league training fields around Phoenix, Arizona. It attracts about 5000 players on 400 teams, in different age and skill divisions. The games are 9 innings with full rules: stealing, etc. Each team plays 6 games in 4 days, then playoff and championship games as needed. The event ends with an awards banquet on Saturday night; usually there is a guest speaker at that event.



### Our team:

Our league's team is called the Vermont Catamounts. The league does not subsidize the cost, it is up to the players to pay their own way. We will have a team in an age 48+ division. If enough younger players sign up then we can also have a team in an age 38+ division. Under MSBL tournament rules a player is eligible if their qualifying birthday occurs any time through December 31. So if you will turn 38 on December 15 then you can play in an age 38+ division. Our league's age restrictions for pitching DO NOT APPLY to MSBL tournaments: everyone is eligible to pitch. We will also reserve a practice session the day before the tournament starts.

It is highly recommended that players arrive a day or two early, in order to get used to the climate and to participate in the team practice.

### Travel - air:

Last year most players got tickets from Burlington to Phoenix for about \$250 round trip per person.

### Travel - rental car:

Avis and Enterprise offer discounts for MSBL members. Last year we rented a couple of vans and the cost worked out to about \$100 per player for the whole week.

### Travel - hotel:

The team stays at the Marriott at Phoenix Airport (44th St.), which is conveniently located to the main MSBL field at Tempe Diablo Stadium, and to other fields. It has a dining room, weight room, pool with Jacuzzi and full hotel services (laundry, room service). Basic rate is \$99 per room per night, plus tax. This is a team rate for a minimum of 10 rooms. Each player can take a room or 2 players can share a room, same price.



Above, infielders Jay Holzinger and Ken Bean and outfielder Mo Tinker wait for the next pitch during the 2002 MSBL World Series

## Application Form For MSBL World Series, Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 22 – Nov. 1, 2003

Which division: age 38+ wood bats Oct. 22-26 \_\_\_\_\_ age 38+ metal bats Oct. 27-Nov.1 \_\_\_\_\_  
age 48+ wood bats Oct. 22-26 \_\_\_\_\_ age 48+ metal bats Oct. 27-Nov.1 \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City-State-Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Regular team name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth (month-day-year): \_\_\_\_\_  
Played on the team in 2002? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If no, desired uniform shirt size (M-L-XL-2XL) \_\_\_\_\_  
and desired number \_\_\_\_\_  
Positions played \_\_\_\_\_

Entry fee \$200 due by July 15. Add \$75 for uniform (2 jerseys and hat). Make check payable to Mike Wagner.

Mail this form to:  
Mike Wagner  
PO Box 10  
Newport, VT 05855

or copy the above information into an email and send to: [mike@wagner-usa.net](mailto:mike@wagner-usa.net)

## Letters to the Editor

Send letters by email to [baseball@neknetwork.com](mailto:baseball@neknetwork.com) or by regular mail c/o Mike Wagner, P.O. Box 10, Newport, VT 05855. Every letter must be signed, but your name will not be printed if you so request.

### To the Editor:

I know we don't have runners advance on a passed ball or wild pitch. But what if the catcher drops a third strike and the ball rolls away, can the batter try for first base? Does the catcher have to tag the batter? What's the rule?  
Mickey Owens (not his real name)

*Mickey,*

*Any pitch that the batter doesn't hit and that doesn't hit him and the catcher doesn't catch, is either a passed ball or a wild pitch, no matter what the count is on the batter. This includes a pitch that is strike three to the batter. Since we ignore passed balls and wild pitches, the batter is out and the catcher does not have to tag him or throw down to first base.*

*That would be the end of the story except there are some people in our league who have recommended that we start allowing runners to advance on a passed ball or wild pitch. The majority has been against it. But maybe we should consider requiring that the catcher hold the ball when it is strike three to the batter. If the catcher doesn't hold the ball, the batter could try for first base and any other runners could try to advance.*

*A similar situation occurs when a pitch that is ball four gets away from the catcher. In full baseball rules, this is also a passed ball or wild pitch and base runners can try to advance, including the batter, who can run down to first base and then keep going. So if we consider the exception for strike three, we would also have to consider the exception for ball four. ♦*

### The next league meeting is the annual midseason meeting:

**When:** Sunday July 13, from 3:30 pm, following that day's games

**Where:** Evergreen Eddy's Wilderness Grill, in Williston on Route 2A at Marshall Ave, north of exit 12 on I-89

**Who should attend:** at least one representative from each team, but all players are welcome

## Bottom of the Lineup

By Mike Wagner, Editor



As you can see from the photo, it's hard to give up metal bats. I've tried 3 different wood bats and finally found one that I can swing comfortably. It's a maple bat from Easton, 33 inches with a thin handle. It's a team bat, so I can't hide it in my own equipment bag, and I can't complain if one of my teammates is using it when it breaks. When we play Champlain I will ask Eddie Krasnow if I can try one of the Baum bats he has touted (see his comments on page 1).

For what it's worth, one anecdote from our game at Killington illustrates the change in the type of game being played. They were leading 4-1 and batting in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. The first batter was their shortstop, Steve Wright, who bats left-handed and hits third in the lineup (he is not related to Lake Region's Steve Wright). Steve hit a drive over the head of our center fielder, but the ball stayed in the park and he was held to a triple. We then played the infield in to cut off the run at the plate, and the next two batters popped out harmlessly. Then we got the third out. It was very exciting to work our way through that inning without yielding the run. This is my take on it; I didn't ask Killington how they felt.

With a metal bat, Steve's hit would have been over the fence, the score would have been 5-1 with none out and none on base, and it would have been an ordinary parade of guys coming up and taking hacks, with no particular defensive strategy except to catch the ball.

So the question is, how much money are you willing to pay (to replace the inevitable wood breakage or for 'unbreakable' wood bats) to enjoy a more creative and strategic brand of baseball? ♦

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