

Beat: Miscellaneous

Vintage Base Ball New York Style

Brooklyn Atlantics rallied 8 VBB teams

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USPA NEWS - The Brooklyn Atlantics rallied eight Vintage Base Ball teams in this grand festival of champions; (NY) Brooklyn Atlantic, (DE) Diamond State, (ME) Dirigo, (NY) Eckford of Brooklyn, (NJ) Elizabeth Resolutes, (NY) Mutuals, (CT) Newtown Sandy Hooks, and the (RI) Providence Grays.

This past weekend in Long Island New York was like stepping through a window in time. Eight vintage base ball teams dressed in late eighteen hundreds uniforms and, for two days these teams played the base ball game of old before a cheerful crowd of spectators.

The Smithtown Historic Society sponsored this weekend's Vintage Base Ball Festival hosted by the Brooklyn Atlantic Base Ball Club. Executive Director of the Historical Society in Smithtown, Marianne Howard, greeted ball players, families and fans at the gate and on the fields throughout this two day celebration of our nation's national pastime. Elsewhere on the ball field was the Atlantic team captain Ed "Pigtail" Elmore greeting teams as they arrived and ensuring that everything was properly set up for the event. Meanwhile the remaining team captains gathered their players for pre-game warm ups.

After a staggering winter of ridiculous weather, these ball players emerged from their caves with stiffened joints, slightly rusty skills and massive amounts of determination to shake off the winter slumber by returning to the fields eager to play a new season of base ball, the old fashioned way.

Now playing vintage base ball is not for the faint of heart. We all cringed when New York Mutuals Vintage Base Ball Club catcher Tay Lor Rose dislocated her finger during a play. Ouch! What does she do? She reset her finger, taped it, shook off the pain, and with heart kept on playing. That is a true heart for vintage base ball. These rough old school guys and gals play hard, but they enjoy each others company too. On and off the field jokes, jaunts, and funny tales of games prior are flying through the air like baseballs.

Dedicated to the game they love, these troopers, at times, play in snow, freezing rain, muddy fields, sweltering heat, and in humidity so thick you can cut it with a knife. Couple that with the woolen uniforms, open fields with no shade, ticks, mosquitos, uneven rugged terrain, and bare hands and you are riddled with challenges that still do not deter these folks from playing. Think about some of these vintage base ball circumstances"

Your hands are stinging because they are ice cold, but the ball is hit straight at you and it's your job to catch that ball with bare hands or let your teammates down. Here is another one; the rain is making the bat, ball and your hands slippery and you must dive through the mud to catch the base ball to prevent another run from scoring. You won't find that on million dollar ballfields. But you will at a vintage base ball game if the weather permits.

Vintage Base Ball (VBB) is a little known commodity to the general public, however that is soon to change. There are over 300 teams in America spanning from coast to coast, with a few in Canada too. News article after news article is being written about VBB across America. TV news has made several VBB broadcasts and many VBB books have been written. Vintage Base Ball cards are entering the VBB scene and people are starting to be aware of the many worthy causes several of these teams champion.

Players from all walks of life are joining these teams across the nation. Currently, these weekend base ball warriors are working folks just like you and I. These diehard players are coming from diverse ethnicities, economic backgrounds and varied social standings. They make a living as public servants, service industries workers, business owners, educators, professionals, and college students, etc. You may even work with a few players. Their lives are just as busy as the rest of us. Yet, when the weekend comes you will seldom find them at home. However, you may find them playing on a base ball field near you.

Why play vintage base ball? These individuals are not looking for fame, endorsements or popularity when they play ball. They play ball for the love of the game, to keep VBB alive and to foster the growth of VBB. On a personal side, they champion causes that help the community too.

Saturday Game Results

We had a fine sunny day to open the Atlantic's Vintage Base Ball Festival. There were 6 games played on two fields, fans were watching base ball from sun up till the kids needed a nap.

Field 1

Game one were the (NY) Eckford of Brooklyn BBC vs (ME) Dirigo BBC - Eckford held on to win 13 to 2

Game two were the (CT) Newtown Sandy Hooks vs (DE) Diamond State VBBC - the Sandy Hooks triumphed 5 to 2

Game three the (NY) Eckford of Brooklyn BBC vs (CT) Newtown Sandy Hooks - The Eckford BBC eked out an 8 to 5 victory.

Field 2

Game one were the (NY) Brooklyn Atlantic (ABBC) vs (DE) Diamond State BBC

We covered this exciting match up. With the sun beaming down and a cool 65 degrees in the air it was a gas to watch players field fly balls, they must have seen white dots in their eyes for a good long while. If you have never seen a Vintage Base Ball game you don't know what you are missing. Once a striker (batter) gets on base things get crazy. These players steal more bases than a "Dirty Pirate" drinks rum. In the end, Brooklyn Atlantic team out hit a 19 to 6 victory.

Game two were the (RI) Providence Grays vs the (NY) Brooklyn Atlantic

Our second game of the day was one close to our hearts. We root for every teams success in every game, but the Grays are our home team. Add that fact to the dry spell the Grays have had against the Atlantic club and it was time for the Grays to win. They did 9 to 4.

Game three were the (RI) Providence Grays vs (ME) Dirigo BBC - the Grays slid by with a 15 to 0 victory.

Sunday Game Results

The deep storm clouds loomed over the festival grounds Sunday May 1st. Those pesky clouds began to open as rain dampened the ball fields. That did not deter these die hard ball players. It is "game on" for day two at this festival.

Playing base ball in the rain presents many challenges like slick bats, slippery base balls, wet grass and mud; not to mention water in your eyes. Vintage players sure do have heart! Their love for this game is unshakable. Equal to the task was our Iron Leaf Press Team, as we braved the rain with photography equipment.

Field 1

Game one were the (NY) Brooklyn Atlantic vs (ME) Dirigo BBC - Atlantics win 13 to 6

Game two were the (ME) Dirigo BBC vs (DE) Diamond State BBC - Dirigo BBC forge ahead 15 to 13

Game three (NY) Mutuals vs the (RI) Providence Grays - This was a nail biting high scoring game that tallied the Mutual way 19 to 16

Game four (NY) Mutuals vs (CT) Newtown Sandy Hooks of Connecticut - 14 to 11 Mutuals win

Field 2

Game one the (RI) Providence Grays vs (NJ) Elizabeth Resolutes - Elizabeth wins 14 to 10

Game two the (NY) Eckford of Brooklyn BBC vs (NJ) Elizabeth Resolutes - What a colorful game this was. Ekford wins 12 to 2

Game three (CT) Newtown Sandy Hooks vs (NY) Brooklyn Atlantic - Newtown wins 9 to 6

Game four the (NY) Eckford of Brooklyn BBC vs (DE) Diamond State BBC - Eckford wins 11 to 1

Come experience the victories of Vintage Base Ball for yourself at the next game played near you.

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