

WAHCONAH PARK TIMES

Issue No. 2

September 4, 2004

5 Cents

TODAY'S GAME — VINTAGE BASE BALL

The Deciding Game Hillies vs. Senators At Wahconah Park

Back by popular demand, the Pittsfield Hillies square off today against the Hartford Senators in what has turned out to be the best of a three-game set. After losing the July 3rd game 14 to 12 — broadcast live from Wahconah Park by ESPN Classic — the Hillies traveled to Hartford on July 31 and beat their arch rivals 9 to 5, setting up today's contest.

Hillies employ home run

Whereas the Hillies featured bold base-running in their 14-12 opening game loss, they blasted three home runs in evening the series. All three

homers were solo markers, two by pitchers! While Terry Bishop was holding the Senators to three hits over the first five innings, the big "Lefty" also helped himself with a long home run that caused a Hartford fielder to run completely through the snow fence at Bushnell Park. Pitcher Shawn Sottile



Terry Bishop



Ben Tyer

and third baseman Shaun McMahon, who led the Hillies attack with three hits, had the other home runs.

Defense saves the day

With all their hitting and pitching, it was defense and stout play that won it for the local lads. Bishop stopped a line drive with his bare hand and was forced to leave the game, and third baseman Ron Piazza split his finger catching a difficult spinner. But the game-saver came in the 8th inning. With two Senators in scoring position, Ben "Wad" Tyer speared a sure extra base hit in deep left center, a hard line drive that was twisting away from him.

Hartford still the team to beat

With revenge on their minds and a 17 and 2 won loss record, the Hartford ballists remain the favorites against a Pittsfield team still learning the tricks and nuances of Vintage Base Ball.

Hillies Bench

Joe "Chief" DiCicco - P
 Kenny "The Kid" Ferris - IF
 Tim "Big Guy" Flaherty - OF
 Dave "Slush" Galvani - OF
 Darren "General" Jefferson - P / IFB.
 J. "Ace" Jefferson - P / 1B
 Brett "Babyface" Martin - 1B
 Mike "Mazz" Massery - IF
 Bob "Speedy" Moynihan - IF
 Ron "Doc" Piazza - IF
 Steve "Mittens" Pshenishny - OF
 John "Pasta" Sinopoli - IF
 Shawn "Noodles" Sottile - P
 Brian "Bull" Uliasz - IF

Coaches

Tony "End Zone" Ferdyn
 Ed "Itch" McMahon
 Paul "Road Runner" Procopio
 Joe "Zavie" Zavattaro
 Ray "Thunder" Woitkowski

Today's Lineups

Hillies

- Jamie "Cubby" DiMassimo - 2B
- Tom "Rizz" Rizzo - SS
- Shaun "Itch" McMahon - 3B
- Mike "Bizz" Bissailon - 1B
- Pat "The Gun" Ryan - CF
- Mike "Kodiak" McHugh - RF
- Ben "Wad" Tyer - LF
- Jeff "Backhoe" Reynolds - C
- Terry "Lefty" Bishop - P

Manager: "Choo Choo" Charlie Garivaltis

Senators

- Jeff "Bull" Durham - LF
- Cy "Gasoline" Hess - RF
- Matt "Crazy Legs" March - CF
- Steve "The Whammer" Soba - 1B
- Chris "Grit" Moran - C
- Craig "Rabbit" Pinney - SS
- Mike "Broadway" Hickey - 3B
- Brendon "Pony" Canny - 2B
- Steve "Big Train" Burke - P

Captain: Chris "Grit" Moran

Senators Bench

Dave "Fleetwood" Chambers - 1B
 Mike "Stick" Collins - IF
 Chris DeBrisco - P
 Dennis "Specs" Donovan - IF / OF
 Dave Erickson - C
 Ryan "Kid" Grew - P / OF
 Steve "Stretch" Kurmaski - 1B
 Greg "Moonlight" Martin - P / OF
 Rob "Hack" Miller - 1B / OF
 Brendon "Plywood" Moore - C
 John "Q" Quinn - P
 Mike "Licks" Velapoldi - IF
 Tommy "Bahama" Venezia - IF

Food Court Menu

1. Barrington Brewery

Hillies Summer Brew \$4
 1791 Ale \$4

2. Bev's Ice Cream

Small cup or cone \$2
 Large cup or cone \$3

3. Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

Peace Pops \$3

4. Cheesecake Charlie's

Cheesecake \$1
 Cookies \$1
 Brownies \$1

5. Grape Finds

Red wine \$3 or \$4
 White wine \$3 or \$4
 Mike's Hard Lemonade \$3
 Mike's Hard Lime \$3
 Twisted Tea Half & Half \$3

6. Paul's Restaurant

Pizza slices \$2
 Hamburgers \$2
 Hot dogs \$2
 French fries \$2
 Chicken souvlaki \$2
 Large water & soda \$2

7. Snacks

Peanuts \$1
 Cracker Jack \$1

8. Tahiti Take-out

Pork fried rice \$2
 Chicken fingers \$2
 Bottled water \$1

9. UNICO

Sausage & peppers \$4
 Hamburgers \$2
 Hot dogs \$2
 Peanuts \$1
 Water & soda \$1

10. Zucchini's Restaurant

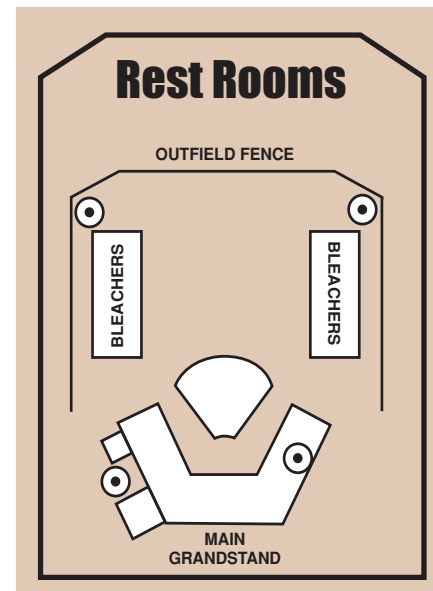
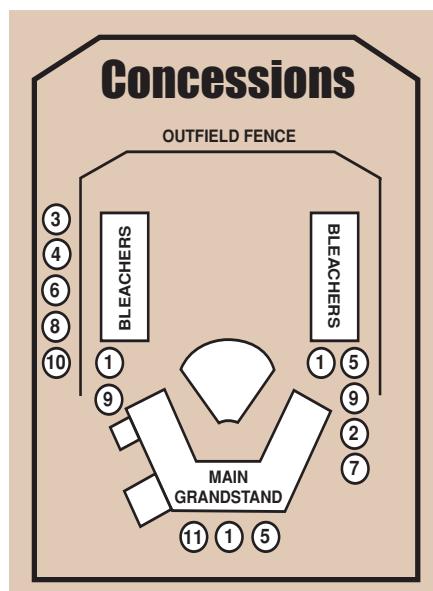
Chicken wings \$2
 Fruit cup \$1
 Bottled water \$1

11. Souvenirs

Hillies T-shirts \$12
 Hillies caps \$35
 Hillies tote bags \$2
 1791 documents \$5
 1860s Base Balls \$20
 1880s Gloves \$40

NOTE

By mutual agreement, today's game will be played under free substitution rules, which allow players to leave the game and re-enter one time only.



Vintage Base Ball — The Way The Game Was Meant To Be Played

VINTAGE BASE BALL IS A GROWING sport that features amateur clubs adhering to the rules, uniform styles, equipment and etiquette of baseball in the 19th century. Since the inception of the Vintage Base Ball Association* (VBBA) in 1995, the sport has grown from its 12 charter clubs to nearly 150 clubs in 25 states. Games are most often played by the rules of baseball

as they were in the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s and are a combination of living history, competitive play and theater. The majority of vintage baseball clubs have adopted the name and uniform style of an actual professional or amateur club that once existed in their locale.

* *Base Ball* (two words) was the original spelling.

1886 Rules

- There are seven balls and three strikes. The batter is awarded a base after seven balls.
- There is just one umpire, positioned 10-15 feet to the side of batter. The umpire is always addressed as “sir” by the players and may smoke a cigar throughout the game.
- Home plate is a 12"x 12" wood base that rests loose on ground. Bases are loose at each location and filled with sand, sawdust or hay.
- Batters request a “high” or “low” strike zone before their at-bat. “Low” zone is from the belt to the knee, the “high” zone is from the belt to shoulder. Pitcher must throw in area requested by batter to earn a strike.
- There is only one base coach, and he must be either the team

- captain or assistant captain.
- Foul balls are not counted as strikes.
- A hit batsman results in a dead ball, with no base awarded. The pitch is ruled a ball.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- The players’ gloves are not much larger than their hands.
- Any foul tip caught by catcher is an out, regardless of the count or number of outs.
- Foul balls into the stands must be put back into play. Baseballs are not replaced unless lost.
- There are no balks. Fake throws and “quick” pitches are legal. The pitcher, for example, can fake two throws to first base then quickly deliver the pitch to the batter.
- There is no pitcher’s mound or rubber. There is a pitcher’s

- box measuring four feet by six feet, outlined in chalk. The front of box is 50 feet from home plate. The pitcher must remain entirely in the box on each pitch.
- The Gentleman’s Ruling: In the event an umpire is not able

to have a clear view of a play, he can request a “Gentleman’s Ruling”. Players involved in the play tell what transpired and the call can be reversed. The umpire also has the option to ask for input from fans in the stands.

Era Base Ball Terms and Vernacular

Vintage ball players will oftentimes incorporate era jargon into their on-field chatter, including:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| “cranks” = fans | “ginger” = determination |
| “hands down” = out | “striker to the line” = batter up |
| “hurler” = pitcher | “ballist” = ballplayer |
| “striker” = batter | “whitewash” = shutout |
| “captain” = manager | “garden” = outfield |
| “ace” = run | “daisy cutter” = hit grounder |
| “leg it” = running hard | “behind” = catcher |
| “sky ball” = pop up | |
| “muff” = error | |



Two Storms Hit Wahconah Park: Tornado and Carpenters’ Union

One week after the Massachusetts Attorney General’s office appeared to rule in favor of a bid protest by the New England Council of Carpenters regarding competitive bidding for the proposed renovation and expansion of Wahconah Park, a small tornado ripped through that historic ballpark and its neighborhood.

Revised license agreement

On Friday, August 13th, the Attorney General’s office said it had “concerns about whether [the City of Pittsfield] is subject to the competitive bidding laws,” with respect to the plans of Wahconah Park, Inc. to renovate the ballpark. The ruling is not final, however, and the matter has been remanded to the City “for action consistent with this opinion.”

At this point, the City and the Company

would appear to have two options: either put the work out to bid, a costly and time-consuming process that would eliminate any chance of construction in time for the 2005 season, or revise the license agreement to eliminate features that troubled the Attorney General’s office.

Notwithstanding the fact that Wahconah Park, Inc. is a private entity that will not use any taxpayer dollars, the license agreement as it is currently written could be interpreted as a short term agreement with spending requirements set by the City, and therefore, that the renovation project is within the City’s direction and control and subject to public bidding. Ironically, the only way that the Company can proceed with its plan to spend over \$1.5 million on the ballpark before Opening Day 2005 may be for the City to eliminate the requirement that it do so!

Demolition begins early

Early Friday evening, August 20, as if guided by architectural drawings, a small tornado roared in from left field and lifted the roof off Wahconah Park’s home team clubhouse (then set it back down again), thereby rendering it unusable in its present condition. That structure, and the smaller visitors’ clubhouse next to it, had already been scheduled for demolition by Wahconah Park, Inc. as part of its plan to restore the grandstand to its original configuration.

The tornado also flattened a section of fence that was earmarked for removal to make room for new permanent bleachers, with a new home team clubhouse and public restrooms underneath, along the third base line.



PITTSFIELD 547 North St	LEE 57 Park St
GT. BARRINGTON 256 Main St	N. ADAMS 192 State St

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True Value®
Hardware Stores

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W. Stockbridge



Tyler Home Supply
711 Tyler St Pittsfield



Lee HARDWARE
69 Main St Lee

Wahconah Park Update

Wahconah Park, Inc., which was formed in March of this year to refurbish Wahconah Park and bring professional baseball back to Pittsfield, has spent most of the past six months working with local engineers, architects, and contractors on planning and costing the project, and obtaining necessary approvals, permits, and waivers, a process that is now substantially complete. At this time, the Company is focused on negotiating an agreement with an independent league for inclusion in its 2005 schedule, completing the sale of shares to the public, and beginning construction.

Meet the Directors

Since the Hillies' first game on July 3, the Board of Directors of Wahconah Park, Inc. has doubled in size.

The Company's founding directors are:

Jim Bouton, President, former Yankee pitcher and author of *Ball Four*, first published in 1970, and *Foul Ball*, published in 2003. Jim is a motivational speaker and entrepreneur, now working full-time (without pay) for the Company.

Chip Elitzer, Vice President, former Peace Corps Volunteer and investment banker. Chip specializes in mergers & acquisitions and corporate finance, but he is now working full-time (without pay) for the Company.

Eric Margenau, Director, former sports psychologist and professional minor league sports entrepreneur since 1986.

The Company's new directors are:

Bill Liederman, founder of the New York Restaurant School, founder and owner of

Mickey Mantle's Restaurant in New York City, host of a sports radio show, and co-author of a new book, *Our Mickey: Cherished Memories of an American Icon*.

Jack Fitzpatrick, a former Massachusetts state senator and co-founder of Country Curtains, a national mail order window treatment and home furnishings company with 24 retail stores. The Fitzpatrick family has restored, owns and operates two historic hotels in Berkshire County: the Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge and Blantyre in Lenox.



Gene Trainor, chief operating officer of New Enterprise Associates, a national venture capital firm with \$6 billion under management. Gene has recently built a home in Pittsfield.

Within the next few months, the Company expects to add at least one more director.

Raising \$2.8 million

The Company has filed a preliminary offering circular with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to sell a majority of its stock to the public. Most of the proceeds of this offering is earmarked for renovating and expanding Wahconah Park. Residents of New

York or Massachusetts may find a copy of the preliminary offering circular on the Company's website, www.wahconahpark.com.

Construction Plans

In the face of rising construction costs, a list of priorities has been set: (1) new third base-line seating with rest-rooms and home team clubhouse underneath, and Wall of Fame along its back, (2) expanded plaza with new concession stands, (3) main grandstand restored to its original design, with additional restrooms (particularly for the ladies!), and a remodeled visitors' clubhouse. Other proposed improvements may be completed at a later date.

Professional Team Status

The Company is discussing with the presidents of two independent leagues the formation of a Pittsfield team to play during the 2005 season. The Atlantic League plans to form its own short-season division (playing about 90 games), and the Company has a verbal agreement to play in such a division if it is formed in time to fix a schedule for 2005. If such a division is not formed within the next several weeks, the Company will endeavor to have its professional team be part of the Northeast League schedule for 2005, with its ultimate home to be determined through discussions with both leagues near the end of the 2005 baseball season.

Timetable

September: Get a team.

October: Close the financing.

November: Break ground.

June, 2005: Play ball!

2005 Vintage Base Ball League

There is an outside possibility that the Pittsfield Hillies will become a charter member of a new 6 to 8 team vintage base ball league beginning in 2005.

Discussions are underway between Jim Bouton and Chip Elitzer, principals of Wahconah Park, Inc., owner of the resurrected Pittsfield Hillies, and Greg Martin, owner of the Hartford Senators. The new league would play by 1886 rules which allow overhand pitching.

In addition to the Hillies and Senators, other teams in the proposed league might include the Providence Grays, Simsbury Taverneers, New York Mutuals, and New Jersey Resolutes. With the exception of the Hillies, all are well established vintage teams.

The proposed new vintage league would play a 12 to 16 game schedule, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, with a championship series on Labor Day weekend. Most of the games would be played on weekends to accommodate the lifestyles of amateur

players. In addition to league games, the vintage teams would be free to play their customary "challenge matches" against non-league opponents.

The Hillies would play their vintage games when Pittsfield's professional team (to be announced) is on the road. And when the Hillies are not playing league games, they will take on all comers.

"We've already been challenged by the Cincinnati Red Stockings," said Bouton, referring to a famous vintage team from Ohio. "They want to come all this way just to play in Wahconah Park. And that was before they saw the July 3rd game on ESPN Classic."

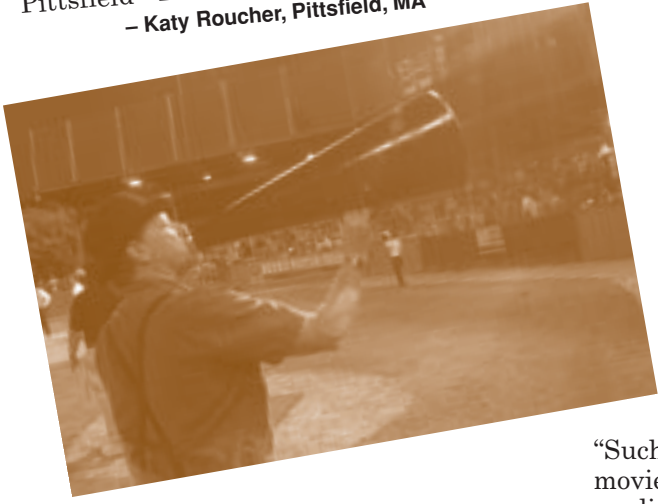
With historic Wahconah Park as the destination of

choice for vintage teams, the Hillies can look forward to playing most of its games at home. In a 16-game league, each team would play 8 at home and 8 away. And by adding 7 challenge matches, the Hillies could end up playing 15 games in their own backyard.



July 3rd Game Memories

All I've been hearing is that this was one of the greatest events in Pittsfield - EVER!!
 - Katy Roucher, Pittsfield, MA



"What a huge, happy crowd! I sat next to a very enthusiastic reporter for a Montreal newspaper."
 - Marj Wexler, Egremont, MA

"Such an unbelievable event it seems more from a movie than reality. It was the most magical night of my life. With memories I'll cherish for a lifetime."

- Gary Goldberg-O'Maxfield, Hartford, CT

"I think a lot of people who saw the game are going to be adding Wahconah Park to their Berkshire trips next summer."
 - Howard Cronson, Framingham, MA



"Loved the Hillies on TV. Great day for Pittsfield. Will be there next summer."
 - Dick Silc, Tucson, AZ

"This really is like an old-time game. The food is cheap, the tickets were \$3, and I even got my program from a kid wearing a paperboy cap."
 - Don Tambasco, Albany, NY

"As I sat in the outfield, all I could think about was Field of Dreams, 'Build it and they will come.'"

- Beth Wallace, Pittsfield, MA

Vintage game is one for the ages

Excerpted from the Waterbury, CT, Republican-American
 Story by Joe Palladino

PITTSFIELD - It was a picture postcard come to life, a jittery old black and white newsreel that burst into living color, and a stroll through a museum where you were permitted to reach out and touch the history.

They recreated history Saturday evening in Pittsfield, Mass., and they made history as well. They played a vintage baseball game at Wahconah Park, where baseball has been played on the banks of the Housatonic River in the city's north end since 1892. The Pittsfield Hillies met the Hartford Senators on a baseball field for the first time in 74 years.

Normally, a dozen fans, most of them kin folk, attend a vintage baseball game, which is a game played in uniforms authentic to the late 1800s. They play with period equipment and they play by rules that are more than a century old, rules that changed from year to year, but rules that still look remarkably similar to the game we call the American pastime.

But Saturday night in the Berkshires, 5,000 fans showed up. They stood outside Wahconah's main gate at 3:30 p.m., which was 30 minutes before the park opened and 3-1/2 hours before game time. Portions of the outfield were fenced off so that fans could open a folding chair and watch from the playing field, just like they did at turn-of-the-century World Series games.

The event attracted the attention of ESPN, which broadcast the game live on ESPN Classic.

You had to stretch your imagination a bit if you wanted to get a true 19th century feel. It's doubtful that you could have bought gazpacho, or souvlaki on a stick, at a food tent during a game in the 1880s. Players and coaches in vintage uniforms, and actors roving the grounds dressed as Mark Twain and Babe Ruth, some wearing authentic articles of clothing, some

wearing fake mustaches, would duck behind a dugout to take an important call on a cell phone.

The gilded age and the space age met head on. Judging by the reaction of the fans, the gilded age won.

Noted baseball author and historian, John Thorn, called the evening "a miracle." Baseball fans who have grown weary of a game dominated by lawyers and agents and millionaires reconnected with a sport that is as old as the nation itself, "And to have the game played in a vintage park, just doubles our pleasure," said Thorn.

Thorn had a good deal to do with creating the hoopla that surrounded the event. It was Thorn, who lives in Kingston, N.Y., which he said is equidistant from the three most important places on earth, "New York City, Cooperstown and Pittsfield," who unearthed a 1791 Pittsfield document that banned the playing of baseball within 80 yards of the new town hall, or as the document calls itself, a "byelaw for the Preservation of the Windows in the New Meeting House."

Thorn made his discovery two years ago, but the document wasn't resurrected and verified until April of this year. Once it became clear that the game of baseball was played in Pittsfield nearly a half-century before the Abner Doubleday "creation" in Cooperstown, western Massachusetts has gone baseball crazy.

With the discovery of a document that puts the first recorded mention of a game called "Base Ball" in Pittsfield, with Mayor James Ruberto calling Pittsfield baseball's "Garden of Eden," the push to restore a stadium that dates to the earliest days of the professional game has gained considerable momentum.

"I love this place," said Thorn as he sat in the small wooden grandstand that is sided and topped with sheet metal and supported by steel

beams, both visible signs of restoration projects from 1920 and 1950. "It is wrinkled and it is scarred, but they are marks of honor that come with age."

Saturday night the fans embraced it. They walked around in "Pittsfield of Dreams" T-shirts as the Eagles Marching Band entertained with the greatest hits of the 1880s. Boys and girls in period clothing skipped around the park, and fans stood and clapped. The Berkshire Highlanders, with their bagpipes blaring, led the Hillies onto the field, and fans stood and clapped. The players rode in on dozens of vintage automobiles, and the fans stood and clapped again. The singing of "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" broke out spontaneously in the stands. Even Oscar-winning actress Susan Sarandon showed up to watch a vintage baseball game won by the Senators, whose forefathers were once part of the original National League, 14-12.

There was no better place to be this weekend than in Pittsfield, in a ballpark teetering on the edge of oblivion, where fans were eager to connect with a past that they perceive as simpler and saner. We probably wouldn't last long without electricity and television and the Internet, but sometimes we yearn to try. We can read about history in books, but there is also one connection with our American heritage that is very much alive, and that is baseball.

"Evidence indicates they may have played baseball at Valley Forge," noted Thorn appropriately enough during the July 4th weekend.

Baseball has flourished on these shores almost since the first day we called this place America. For one night in Pittsfield, they put aside political differences and discovered that a game, an old game even, can entertain, and it can heal.

(c) 2004 Republican-American