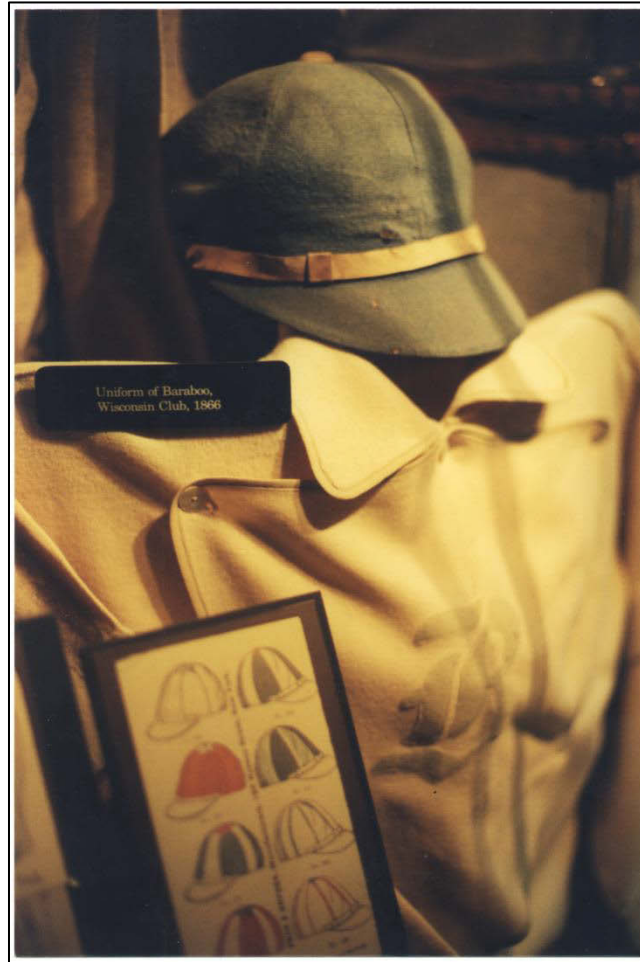


Mary R. Evans Memorial Athletic Field



Oldest Baseball Uniform displayed in Baseball Hall Of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.



Colored photo of Baraboo Wisconsin Club uniform of 1866, from Mick McIntyre & his wife Carol's trip to the Baseball Hall Of Fame in Cooperstown N.Y. in September of 2000.

About Baseball in Baraboo

An Illustrated History of Baseball

By [Scott Kendrick](#),

Baseball evolved from the British game of Rounders, and is a cousin to cricket in that it also involves two teams that alternate on defense and offense and involve throwing a ball to a batsman who attempts to "bat" it away and run safely to a base. The first documentation of base ball is in 1838, but there are references to a game of base ball going back to the late 1700s.

The story promoted as the "invention" of baseball by Abner Doubleday, a Civil War hero for the Union, has largely been discredited. The first published rules of baseball were written in 1845 for a New York base ball club called the Knickerbockers. The author, Alexander Joy Cartwright, is one person commonly known as "the father of baseball."

The first recorded baseball game was held in 1846 when Alexander Cartwright's Knickerbockers lost to the New York Baseball Club. The game was held at the Elysian Fields, in Hoboken, New Jersey.

In 1858, the National Association of Base Ball Players, the first organized baseball league was formed

Cartwright laid out rules for playing the game for the first time, and made one important change. No longer could an out be recorded by "plugging" a runner (hitting him with the ball). The rules required fielders to tag or force the runner, which is still the rule today.

The first professional team was formed in 1869 (the Cincinnati Red Stockings), and it gained in popularity to become United States' "national pastime" in the late 1800s. The two major leagues were formed in 1876 (National League) and 1903 (American League) and the first modern World Series, pitting the two champions of the leagues against each other at the end of the season.

Because of the equipment, baseball in the 19th century was very different than today. Balls were "dead" and didn't travel as far,

and players were looser with the rules involving spitballs and other tactics that are no longer legal.

With the birth of the World Series and the two major leagues, baseball embarked on a golden age in the early 20th century. From 1900-1919, the "dead ball" was still used, and was a game dominated by great pitchers such as Walter Johnson, Christy Mathewson and Cy Young.

With the Large stadiums were built for many of the larger clubs, such as Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, the Polo Grounds in Manhattan, Fenway Park in Boston and Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park in Chicago.

A rule change in 1920 prohibited doctoring of the ball by pitchers, and a new era began. One player, Babe Ruth, changed the game forever by introducing the power hitter to baseball. At first a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox, he was traded to the New York Yankees and hit 714 career home runs, almost 600 more than the previous career home run leader, Roger Connor.

With such stars as Ruth, Ty Cobb, Lou Gehrig and Joe Dimaggio, the hitters took center stage.

Meanwhile, black Americans had their own major leagues from 1885-1951, and over the years history has shown it was practically an equal of the major leagues, with its own history and such stars as Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson and "Cool Papa" Bell. Latin American players also played in the Negro Leagues, and the league played in many of the same stadiums as the majors and had a devoted following.

Finally, in 1946, Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey defied the unwritten rule barring blacks from the major leagues and signed Jackie Robinson to a contract. After a year in the minors, Robinson endured racial bigotry to become a star player for the Dodgers. Because of Robinson's success, other black players were signed throughout the major leagues, and Robinson became a pivotal figure in the civil rights movement in the United States.

The first formal baseball league outside of the United States and Canada was founded in 1878 in Cuba, which maintains a rich baseball tradition and whose national team has been one of the

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world's strongest. International tours seeded the game throughout the world in the 20th century. Professional baseball leagues formed over the years in the Netherlands (1922), Australia (1934), Japan (1936), Puerto Rico (1938), Venezuela (1945), Mexico (1945), Italy (1948) and the Dominican Republic (1951), Korea (1982), Taiwan (1990) and China (2003).

The first international tournament was held in 1938, called the Baseball World Cup, which is played to this day. Only amateur players played in the World Cup until 1996, when professionals were allowed to participate.

Baseball is one of the most popular sports in North America, and still growing. The 30 major league teams drew a total of 79.5 million people in 2007, up 4.5 percent from 76 million in 2006.

Baseball has other pockets throughout the world, but has not maintained enough of a hold on the world to continue to be played in the Olympics. The fact that the major-league players don't play in the Olympics is a major factor. Most competitive baseball is played in North America, the Caribbean and in the Far East. It lags elsewhere in the world.

Drawing the Color Line: 1860s - 1890s

Americans began playing baseball on informal teams, using local rules, in the early 1800s. By the 1860s, the sport, unrivaled in popularity, was being described as America's "national pastime." Baseball rules and teams were gradually formalized during the mid and late 1800s.

1845: Alexander Cartwright published a set of baseball rules for the Knickerbocker Club of New York, and his rules were widely adopted.

1869: The Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first openly-salaried team and are thus considered the first professional team.

1871: The first professional baseball league, the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, was established.

1876: The first major league, the National League, was formed.

1878: Frederick Winthrop Thayer of Massachusetts (captain of the Harvard University Baseball Club) received a patent for a baseball catcher's mask on February 12

African Americans played baseball throughout the 1800s. By the 1860s notable black amateur teams, such as the Colored Union Club in Brooklyn, New York, and the Pythian Club, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, had formed. All-black professional teams began in the 1880s, among them the St. Louis Black Stockings and the Cuban Giants (of New York). Reflecting American society in general, amateur and professional baseball remained largely segregated.

One of the few black players on an integrated professional league team was Moses Fleetwood "Fleet" Walker, a catcher for the minor league Toledo Blue Stockings. In 1883, the Chicago White Stockings, led by star player Adrian "Cap" Anson, refused to take the field against the Blue Stockings because of Walker's presence. The Blue Stockings manager insisted that the game be played, and Anson relented. When the Blue Stockings joined the American Association in 1884, Walker became the first African-American major leaguer. In July of 1887, the International League banned future contracts with black players, although it allowed black players already under contract to stay on its teams. These are but two of the events that shaped the unwritten "color line," which segregated professional baseball until the 1940s.

During the 1890s, most professional black players were limited to playing in exhibition games on "colored" teams on the barnstorming circuit. Players on major league teams also barnstormed in cities and towns after the regular season was over. In some places

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black teams and white teams played each other and some blacks played for all-black teams in otherwise all-white leagues. In amateur baseball, some athletes played on integrated teams such as the Navy baseball champions from the USS Maine.

Although original documents are scarce, several books listed in the bibliography describe [nineteenth century baseball](#), and [Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball](#) reproduces documents from black baseball's early days.

Early Days of Baseball In Baraboo--There Were Giant Players in Those Days

(As reported in the Baraboo Daily News dated June 25, 1925)

by Harry Slye

It was soon after the close of the Civil war that the era of baseball in Baraboo began to dawn; and by the summer of 1867, it was pretty well organized and going at full blast.

Much of the credit for this is due to **George Dodd**, for it was mainly through his efforts and enthusiasm that the game was established here, and the fact is, so to speak, that George was the father of it.

Mr. Dodd had learned to play the game in the east and had recently come to Baraboo with the other members of the Dodd family. He was a good and energetic player, but his outstanding qualification was as a manager---always keen to place the men to the best advantage and quick to see a weak spot and to remedy it. The foremost idea with George, first last and all the time was to win the game. His playing was not particularly intended for the benefit of the grandstand, and the applause apparently meant nothing to him. He always insisted on the boys getting what was right and there is no

doubt but what they usually got all that was coming to them, maybe just a little bit more. While he stayed in the game he always acted as captain and did the catching.

The men associated with him were also deserving of much credit for their cooperation, and the parts they played in the game. As I recall a few of their names, there were the **Blachly brothers**, Jim and Boyd, **James Cowles**, **Le Grand Lippitt**, **Jim Briscoe**, **Henry Mould**, the **Langdon boys**, Henry and Court, **Mair Pointon**, and a few others who took a hand occasionally. A few years later, others gradually came in. **Will Dodd** took his brother's place, and there was **Ira Harris**, the most effective pitcher of those days, Charlie Lott, Oscar Brandenburg, Rollie Noyes, Frank Cowles and many others.

In speaking of the grandstand, I, of course, use the term figuratively, as there was no such thing at that time, or for many years to come, mother earth serving that purpose just as well with the added advantage that there was no danger of it collapsing.

The main features of the game were the same then as now, the changes that have taken place being mostly in the minor details. There were the same nine positions and the nine players on each side, the same as now and the diamond was laid out the same, with bases ninety feet apart; but the pitcher's position, which was forty feet from the home plate, has gradually been extended to sixty feet. The pitcher at that time, in delivering the ball, was required to swing his arm in a perpendicular position at his side; consequently it was a physical impossibility to get any perceptible speed to the ball, but gradually the rules were changed in regard to this. The first change that was made allowed him to throw the ball provided his hand did not pass above the knee, and this was known as underhand throwing. Later on he was allowed the height of his hip, still later the height of his shoulder, and in later years he was allowed to throw as he saw fit, and each change kept increasing the speed. The curved ball did not appear until the early eighties. This was done by giving the ball a

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whirling motion when thrown and it was possible to cause the ball to curve in or out, up or down, just as the pitcher saw fit to do so, and by this time the pitching and catching had become almost a profession even among amateur clubs. The old time pitcher had the privilege of making a bluff at delivering the ball, but could fail to do so, in an attempt to catch a base runner; and often they could spend five or ten minutes in an effort of this kind, much to the displeasure of the spectators.

The Ball and Bat

The ball used at that time was highly elastic, being composed largely of rubber, and was known as a "live ball", consequently there were some marvelous exhibitions of batting, home-runs being more common than base hits of today. This situation put the three outfielders in the position of star actors in the game and they were depended on for at least three-fourths of the put-outs. The result was that a game consisted mostly of a display of heavy batting and base running, with the score usually going up to some forty or fifty runs. A game was not considered probably won at any stage, short of a lead of twenty runs. This of course grew tiresome and prolonged the game unnecessarily; and then went to the other extreme by making a ball with little or no "rubber", and this was known as a "dead-ball".

This was used tentatively for about one or two seasons, but it proved to be so dead that it was not often that it was batted out of the diamond.

Before a game started it was always mutually agreed and stipulated, as to whether the live or dead ball was to be used; and occasionally attempts were made at opportune times to smuggle the other ball into the game. This trick was usually soon discovered, and was generally smoothed over with an apology, accompanied with few remarks about a mistake.

Neither the live ball nor the dead ball seemed to be satisfactory, so they finally hit on a happy medium by making the ball with one-ounce of moulded rubber in the center. This seemed to have about the right amount of life to it, and may be what they are using today [1925].

The bats were all home made, and were mostly turned out at the upper Baraboo Mills, either at the Drown Factory on the island or at the Thomas & Claude mill just above the upper bridge at Lyons. Usually each individual had his own favorite bat, made according to his own specifications, and they all varied considerably in length, diameter, heft and material. The favorite material was willow or ash, but sometimes elm or oak, and various other timbers was used and tested. A collection of those old-time war clubs would no doubt be very interesting in these days.

The Grounds

Baraboo had the choice of at least two extra-good baseball parks in those days. One was on the block just west of the court house park and at that time the block was mostly vacant. The home plate was located up towards the north-west corner, opposite where the present library building is, and the field was laid out cornerwise across the block. These grounds had the advantage of being centrally located, and were equally accessible from any part of town. Owing to the nature of the soil, it would dry off rapidly after a rain, and this at times made it quite desirable. This field was the scene of many hot contests, but it gradually became occupied by buildings and they finally took full possession.

The other park was in the east part of town, and was located on the west end of block two in Litchfield, lying between what is now Mound and Second streets, and it also included the adjacent part of Elizabeth street. This was an ideal, as well as a natural made ball park, and was evidently the bed of an ancient pond which had

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gradually filled up until the ground was firm and smooth. No timber ever grew on it, but it was covered with a luxuriant growth of June grass which was always cropped short by the large herd of town cows that time enjoyed free range. It was almost entirely surrounded by a beautiful growth of oak trees, which furnished a very agreeable shade for the spectators and consequently there were no bleachers to mar the beauty of the scene. The land on both sides of the ground sloped gradually away, and this gave the spectators a view of the entire field from a slightly elevated position.

The home plate was located a few rods to the north of what is now the intersection of Mound and Elizabeth streets, not far from the present home of **George Howe**; and the field was laid out to northeast. This a favorite park during the hot, dry weather, but a few years later it was spoiled and the end came when Elizabeth Street was expanded through it. After that a vacant block out in Lyons was used for this purpose for a number of years.

Some Hot Disputes

One of the most interesting features of the old time games, were the disputes that arose from time to time over various issues that came up during the progress of the game. These disputes usually waxed hot and eloquent, and sometimes even looked serious. I have no recollections of an umpire being connected with the game in those days, but if there was he had little or no authority and was merely a figure-head, for his decisions were never final. These decisions were generally up to the two captains and approved by a majority of the players. The game was suspended for the time being and all hands took part in the debate; even the three out fielders coming in to have their say, as well as to add to the show of strength on their side. Even the spectators were at liberty to "butt in," and all this only added to the uproar and confusion.

On these occasions George Dodd usually occupied the center of the stage, and I can still see him energetically expounding his arguments, and lying down the rules, as he alternately tossed the a ball from one hand to the other. At the first start of these disputes, Le Grand Lippitt always made it a point to get hold of one of the bats. Just what his idea or intentions were, nobody ever knew; but it was probably just to keep it out of reach of the other fellow, or maybe just to add emphasis to his arguments, probably the latter for at any rate or at any rat I have seen him many times clinching his arguments by vigorously shaking his bat in the faces of his opponents; and this demonstration of course always met with approval of the Baraboo rooters. After the storm had spent its furry, an agreement was soon reached, all returned to their respective positions, and the play continued as though nothing had happened. It was merely a part of the game.

The First Fast Pitching

The first fast pitching that the people of Baraboo had an opportunity to witness came to them "like a bolt from the blue", for I don't believe that anyone in Baraboo knew what was going to happen, except for Mr. Dodd, and the man and the man who was going to do the pitching. This young man was **Moore Hudson**, son of the First Episcopal clergyman in Baraboo. He had been away to college, Racine if I remember rightly, and was home on a vacation. Like other young men he had picked up a few college tricks, and among others, he had learned how to shoot a ball with considerable force over the home plate, instead of merely tossing it, as had previously been the custom.

It just happened on this particular occasion that Lodi "was the goat", and what added considerably to their humiliation was the fact that they had appeared in gay new uniforms. I don't remember just what it was, but the predominating color was purple, and they

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made as fine an appearance as I have ever seen. Of course they were not long in catching the feminine eye of Baraboo, but their glory soon faded when they began to face Hudson's new fangled pitching. When the first ball was passed through, the crowd was almost dumfounded for they had never even heard of such a thing; and by the time the third ball had passed through, the result of the game was a foregone conclusion. As for George Dodd, he had taken up his position at a safe distance behind the home plate and, as though nothing unusual was going on, he was getting them on the first bound, which at that time counted the same as a fly catch of the third strike, a foul ball or a fair hit.

The Lodi boys were taken completely by surprise, and were utterly unable to connect the bat with the ball. What also added largely to their confusion was the fear of being hit by a wild throw, and as the pitcher at that time was only forty feet distant, it gave them little chance to avoid a ball that happened to be heading their way.

They were game, however, and played like tigers for the first few innings; but it was soon evident that the odds were too great against them and they began to protest against the pitching.

This soon developed into the usual free-for-all dispute, which was carried on with much vigor and enthusiasm than the game itself. But Baraboo had too good a thing to throw away and Dodd "stood pat" in his refusal to put Hudson out of the game. He also demonstrated that he was complying with the new rule of that season, which allowed the pitcher the height of the knee in delivering the ball. But the Lodi boys refused to go on with the game and were preparing to leave the grounds, when they agreed to some compromise and the game was continued. However it was too much one-sided to be of much interest; but it established the fact that that fast pitching had come to stay, and was a factor that would have to be reckoned with in the future. This game took place on the grounds in the east part of town, at Elizabeth Street, and as to Mr. Hudson, he

left here soon after, and I never knew what happened to him. It was sometime before the Lodi boys again ventured on this side of the big river with a baseball bat, but in later years they developed some fast players, and were able to make it interesting for any of the surrounding towns.

Baraboo's Strongest Competitor

Baraboo's strongest competitor for baseball honors in the early days, was no doubt Portage, and whenever it was noised around that the Portage boys were coming over, most everyone in the village began to make arrangements to be on hand, as they had good reason to believe there would be something doing. The Portage delegation was always headed by **J. H. Wells**; in fact he was to Portage, just what George Dodd was to Baraboo. At that time Mr. Wells was a full grown, curly haired boy, and possessed a good personal appearance. From all I could ever observe, he always played the game square--and also tried to make his men do likewise, although this was at time difficult to do. His great ambition seemed to be to win the game by good hard playing, and if he could not win it that way, he was perfectly willing to lose. Mr. Wells probably had the distinction of staying in the game for a longer period than anyone else in this vicinity, as he was still playing in the middle eighties. We understand that he is still a resident of Portage, and if so, it would be a safe bet that he would be found among the fans at most any game.

Probably the hardest fought battle for baseball honors in the early days, took place at the Portage fair grounds on the fourth of July, about the year 1876. This was in the nature of a tournament, and four teams from surrounding towns were entered.

The Baraboo club on this occasion was led by **Rollie Noyes**; as a matter of course J. H. Wells had his picked nine from Portage. Mauston was represented as fast a team as they ever possessed; and

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the invincible Asa McCall was also there with his "Scott Boys" of Cambria, every last one a full blooded "Mickie" Scotsman.

The grounds were amply large enough for two games to be played simultaneously, so in the forenoon, Baraboo played against Mauston, and Portage against Cambria. Baraboo and Portage won the morning games and in the afternoon these two teams played off the tie. This was a very close and hotly contested game, but the Baraboo boys finally won out by a very small margin.

Mr. Noyes pitched both games very effectively and the catching was done by a colored Pullman porter named Johnson, who was surely an artist behind the bat. The catcher in those days had no protection in the way of a mask, or chest protector, and to avoid being hit by foul tips, etc., they depended entirely on their ability to dodge. This he did with remarkable agility, often smoking a cigar at the same time. Among others in the game were Le Grand Lippitt, **Oscar Brandenburg, Dell Brower** and **Andrew Daubner**.

At the supper that evening, Mr. Wells, with a nicely worded speech, presented a silver cup as a trophy, to the Baraboo boys, and Mr. Noyes responded on behalf of the latter. I do not know what became of the cup, but it certainly would make a very interesting addition to the collection of the Sauk County Historical Society.

This tournament at Portage was no doubt the biggest event for Baraboo in its entire baseball history.

Three Famous Players

Baraboo could boast, and did boast, in the old days of three famous players. They probably were not above the average as all-around players, but each one had a specialty in which he excelled, and to the best of my knowledge they were never outclassed, in this vicinity at least. One was a remarkable batsman, another was a fast base runner and the other was a long distance thrower.

The batsman was **Henry Langdon** generally known as "Long Langdon". He had already established quite a reputation on the field west of the court house square, by driving a ball from home-plate over into the jail yard between First and Second streets, the old stone jail at that time faced on First Street, but the climax was still to come.

Up to this time they had never been able to make a bat that quite suited Langdon, but thinking that it would be worthwhile to do so, they finally, after much experimenting, produced a bat that Langdon declared to be just right. The material was native Willow, it was just the right length, just the right heft, and it had just the right spring to it, so at the next game Langdon proceeded to demonstrate. After a few ordinary wallops, just to limber up, he finally with a mighty swing, caught the ball just right, well out to the end of the bat, and away it flew.

The ball assumed a parabolic curve, and sailing high up over the cupola of the old courthouse, it disappeared in the distance. The ball was never seen or heard tell of again, and many believed that it just kept right on traveling through space.

For fear that this may be classed with some of the local fish stories; it may be well to offer some explanation. As previously stated, the ball used at that time was known as a "live ball". In its make-up, a large percentage of it was rubber and being somewhat heavy in proportion to its size, there was less resistance in passing through the air, and consequently the ball responded in a remarkable degree to a bat.

The champion fast base runner was Le Grand Lippitt. I believe he was the quickest and most supple man I have ever seen, in fact a cat was not in the same class with him, and where he won out in running the bases was his ability to turn the corners. There are many who came from miles around to contest this feat with him, but so far as I know he always won out. If I remember right Mr. Lippitt's

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best time in running the four bases was thirteen and a fraction seconds.

Mr. Lippitt's playing was always fast and highly spectacular, and was what has been generally known as "Grand Stand" plays. He was very expert at stealing a base, and was always ready to take a chance. Nothing seemed to suit him better than to be caught between bases, and his remarkable agility usually helped him to win out of the pinch. If he happened to lose, he was a good loser, and laughed with the others. He always played the left or long field, and at that time it was it was the most conspicuous and responsible position of the nine. He was the first man to attempt to catch those long drives on the fly, it being generally considered a safer play to wait and get them on the bound. For this feat he was always loudly applauded.

The long distance thrower was **O. D. (Ottie) Brandenburg**, now of Madison, and he surely could throw a ball a remarkable distance. The visiting teams from the neighboring towns usually brought along what they considered their best thrower, and at the conclusion of the game there would be a throwing contest; but none of them, so far as I ever knew, made good.

I don't remember just what Mr. Brandenburg's record throw was, but it was not far from four-hundred feet. If Oscar's modesty will allow him, I feel almost sure that he can tell us exactly in feet and inches, just what his best throw was, and when and where.

At this time the longest throw on record was 133 yards, 2 feet and some odd inches which was made by a professional player by the name of Hatfield. This was a trifle over 400 feet, so it is worthy of note that Mr. Brandenburg only lacked a very few feet of equaling the best record.

Those three men all left a record, and if any of the present generation of ball players think that they can outclass them, the field is open to them all. Even **Happy Felsch** will not be barred. The bases are, I think still ninety feet apart; the new courthouse is where the old

one stood, and no doubt Mr. Brandenburg can furnish the figures for a long distance throw.

Another Baraboo man who won considerable local fame as a batsman was **Reuben Baldwin**, and this article, I consider, would be quite incomplete without some mention of him.

He was not one of the original bunch of players, but had drifted into the game a little later on, along in the early seventies, and many of the older local fans will be able to recall the many times he turned the tide of battle and apparent defeat into victory by a vigorous and effective use of the "stick" at just the right moment.

Baldwin was what is generally termed a "long geared, rangy fellow" and this enabled him to swing a bat with unusual force, and incidentally his lanky appearance won for him the sobriquet of "Hungry Reube". Under ordinary conditions, Reube did not seem to care much whether he hit the ball or did not, in fact he appeared entirely indifferent and even sleepy; but when a critical situation happened to develop, like with two out, the bases full, and the Reube's turn to bat, his whole attitude changed and he suddenly was very much awake to the occasion, seemingly having reserved his energies for just such an emergency. There were always a few preliminaries to attend to before he was ready to do any "slugging," and Reube carefully looked over the collections of bats before he made a selection. The next move was a generous application of saliva to his hands, rubbed in with a handful of dust, and when with a determined look he grabbed up his bat, everybody had a hunch that something was going to happen. When finally he took his position and tapped the plate with the end of the bat, Baldwin was ready for action. Pulling his cap well down over his eyes and assuming a most ferocious expression, which was about equally mingled with contempt and determination, he centered his gaze on the unfortunate pitcher, and grimly awaited the ball.

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I always had much admiration and even sympathy for those pitchers who always stood their ground, under what seemed to be a most trying situation. Reube was never in a hurry to strike at the ball, but allowed as many to pass as he dared to, often allowing strikes to be called on him. This he probably did with the idea of wearing off the keen edge of the pitcher's speed and catching him off his guard. But everything comes to an end, and finally the tense suspense would be ended with a terrific crash, which always drove the ball to some remote and unexpected corner of the field. This frequently resulted in bringing in three runs at least, and as Baldwin was some runner himself, he sometimes followed in close behind with the fourth. Whenever this happened, the enthusiasm of the Baraboo rooters knew no bounds and it would be sometime before order could be restored, and the game continued.

Short Ceremony

There was a light touch of sentiment connected with the game in those days, by the introduction of a short ceremony at its conclusion that probably the young generation of the present have never heard of. Immediately at the close of the game, the opposing teams would line up facing each other, and when all were ready the captain of the home team would step out and request of his men, "Three cheers for the visiting nine." Those were given with a vigorous good will, then the compliment was returned by the visitors, and all wound up by the whole crowd joining in with a "tiger", much resembling an Indian "Pow-wow".

This had a tendency to "iron-out" some of the rough spots that may have developed during the progress of the game and all left the grounds with an apparent friendly feeling.

Origin of the Term "Fan"

Judging from the way that the word "fan" is used nowadays, it is evident that not many people have a vague idea as to the original

meaning of the term, or how it originated. It first came into use about the middle of the seventies, at the professional base ball games in the large cities. The patrons of the game who habitually occupied the bleachers, and took all the punishment connected with them, without a murmur, soon became known as "Fanatics". For the newspaper reports of the games, the fanatics always came in for a large share of notoriety, and they were the butt of many jokes, and much sport was made of them. In this way the name came to be commonly used, and like many other words in common use, it was soon abbreviated, and fanatic, became simply "fan". So, originally, a "fan" was strictly speaking, an enthusiastic bleacher, and no matter how enthusiastic a patron of the grand stand might be, he was not entitled to the distinction of being a "Fan". Nowadays the term seems to have been expanded, so as to include and apply to most anybody who has enthusiasm enough to attend a game or sport of most any kind.

Final

It is now in the neighborhood of some sixty years since the game originated, and it is still going as strong as ever. In fact it is the most popular game we have today, and will probably continue as such for many years to come. Its strongest competitor, and at the same time its ally in a way, is the automobile; but while this may be properly classified as a sport, it can hardly in any sense of the word be classed as a game.

Of the old original squad, only a few remain; but, George Dodd and Henry Mould are still with us, and **Jim Briscoe**, I understand, still resides in Denver.

There have been many slight changes in the game during these years, the main effect of which has been to cut down the score to almost the zero point, mainly by putting the batsman all but out of business.

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The tendency of amateur teams to employ professional or semi-professional players, is much to be regretted, as it removes much of the local interest and pride, and makes the winning, or even the playing, too much a matter of financial resources. However, the game has been improved in many respects. It is faster, consequently less tiresome, and everything, so to speak, goes more like clockwork. The players themselves have probably developed more speed and skill, but however, the most credit is always due to those who "blaze the trails" rather than to those who follow on later, and the men whom I have mentioned in these few lines, are the ones who blazed the baseball trails into Baraboo.

Editor's Note: O. D. Brandenburg says that Langdon could not knock a ball from home base at the library over the court house -- it was too far and besides the player was a left hand batter. He might have sent the ball over the building from another position.

Mr. Brandenburg, also says that Wells, was afterwards in the legislature, that **Del Brewer** was a good player, and that **Henry Hall** once brought a team from Kendall to defeat the home team but instead met defeat. Mr. Brandenburg threw a ball at Madison a distance of 384 feet.

Black Sox Scandal Brought Players to Baraboo

Stephen Rundio, a local Baraboo Historian and long time Baseball researcher and fan states that the Baseball Field at Mary Rountree Evans Memorial Athletic Field was dedicated on July 24, 1924. According to Rundio and reported in the Wisconsin State Journal of April 1994, a game was held that day between the "Twin City Red Sox," a semi-pro team from Sauk City led by a former "White Sox" player, centerfielder **Oscar Emil "Happy" Felsch** and

a Reedsburg team led by another former "White Sox" player, shortstop and third baseman, **George Daniel "Buck" Weaver**.

Felsch (August 22, 1891 – August 17, 1964) and Weaver (August 18, 1890 - January 31, 1956) were two of the eight players banned from the Major Leagues for their connection to the 1919 "Black Sox" Scandal. There was evidence that some of the Chicago White Sox players had taken bribes from gamblers to lose the 1919 World Series game against the Cincinnati Reds.

There appeared to be no evidence linking "Buck" Weaver or "Shoeless" Joe Jackson to the scheme but as baseball's first Commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis saw it, "Birds of a feather flock together". "Buck" Weaver filed a lawsuit against the White Sox owner, Charles Comiskey for his 1921 salary.

In any event, it was reported in the 1994 Wisconsin State Journal that "Buck" and "Happy" drew a lot of Wisconsin fans in 1924, considering the size of the towns where they played. Stephen Rundio said that more than 1,000 people came to many of their games in the Sauk--Prairie du Sac home field, the duo drew more than 2,000 in Reedsburg and Baraboo, and 5,000 turned out in Edgerton for one of their barnstorming games.

Buck did not sign up for the 1925 season with the "**Sorge's Ice Creams**" team as over the winter he had won his suit against Comiskey and was paid his 1921 salary. He then supposedly bought a little store in Chicago and spent many days at the race track. The team received its name from their sponsor, **Henry Sorge's Wisconsin Creamery Company** of Reedsburg who also owned **Sorge's Ice Cream Parlor and Candy Store** on Third Street in Baraboo early on and which his son **Albert Sorge** managed.

The Twin City Red Sox owners decided to fill their roster with local players in 1925, sending "Happy" back to his native Milwaukee where he bought a bar. He died in 1964.

About Baseball in Baraboo

Baseball Memories by William "Mick" McIntyre

After the 1946 season, the Baraboo Merchants baseball team left the Sauk County Baseball League and joined the Scenic Wisconsin League.

The Baraboo Blues, under the tutelage of manager Ted Thompson, then started play in the Sauk County League in 1947 and played most of their games at the Mary Rountree Evans Athletic Field. A few times, when the athletic field wasn't available for games or practices we used the field on the south shore of Devil's lake. The team photo was taken there. In 1948, much needed new uniforms were purchased but I don't have a photo of that team.

Also in 1948, **Ryne Duren** pitched for the league champion Cazenovia team. He was then signed by the St. Louis Browns (became the Baltimore Orioles). He eventually pitched for the New York Yankees against our Milwaukee Braves in the 1958 World Series.

Since I lived in North Freedom, and played for Baraboo, I received quite a bit of razzing and in 1949 joined the North Freedom team. After the 1950 season I enlisted in the USAF. At that time (Korean War) the Sauk County League allowed teams to keep players who were in the service on the rosters without taking up a roster-spot so I got to play in a couple of games while home on leave. In 1955 North Freedom played Cazanovia at a neutral field for the League Championship. Results---North Freedom...8, Cazanovia...5.

by William "Mick" McIntyre

Note: The black & white photo from **Mick McIntyre**, Baraboo Blues 1947, taken at Devil's Lake south shore. Front Row, L-R, **Bill McIntyre, John Troyer, Jim Keding, Bill Martin, Bud Gillem, Bob McGonigle, Jack Troyer, Lee Kinney, Ted Thompson**, Standing L-R, **Harlan Hornick, William "Mick" McIntyre, Walt Hewitt, Herb Lemoine, Jim Haight**.

Mary R. Evans Memorial Athletic Field

In 1923 the city of Baraboo was busy planning a recreational play ground and park. Grounds for it were purchased from V.V. Moore and consist of four and three-tenths acres between Second Avenue and the Baraboo River, just east of Park Street. The consideration was \$2,600.

Judge E.A. Evans proposed to donate \$1,000 towards the purchase and the playground would then be named in honor of the judge's wife, The Mary R. Evans Memorial Athletic Field. Miss Mary Mitchell Rountree was married on September 17, 1902 to Evan A. Evans of Baraboo. Miss Rountree was the granddaughter of Major Rountree, the founder of Plattville. Major Rountree constructed the house they were married in. Both bride and groom were university graduates.

The park board and the school board with the approval of the city council made the transaction jointly. (BDN, 7/28/1923)

Dedication

The dedication of the Mary Rountree Evans Memorial Athletic Field was held Friday, October 19, 1923. The exercise took place between the two [?] games. Many dignitaries graced the occasion with their presence. The mayors of Baraboo and Reedsburg as well as the superintendents of the Reedsburg and Baraboo schools were present. Also the Reedsburg and Baraboo high school bands participated to the enjoyment of all. The program began at 2:30 PM.

Speakers were Herman Grotophorst-Chairman of the park board of Baraboo, and for the Board of Education-President E.P. McFetridge, high school faculty-Herman Bogard, for the high school students-Robert Pease, Student athletic manager, Member of the Park Board-F.E. Morey and School Principle-Lewis, Mayor Adolph Andro of Baraboo and Mayor Quimby of Reedsburg. Superintendent Kingsford presided. (BDN 10/16/1923)

About Baseball in Baraboo

At the conclusion of the dedication exercises, Baraboo and Portage staged a “Snappy football contest.”

Stephen Rundio, a local Baraboo Historian and long time Baseball researcher and fan states that the Baseball Field at Mary Rountree Evans Memorial Athletic Field was dedicated on July 24, 1924. According to Rundio and reported in the Wisconsin State Journal of April 1994, a game was held that day between the "Twin City Red Sox," a semi-pro team from Sauk City led by a former "White Sox" player, centerfielder **Oscar Emil "Happy" Felsch** and a Reedsburg team led by another former "White Sox" player, shortstop and third baseman, **George Daniel "Buck" Weaver**.

Weaver (August 18, 1890 - January 31, 1956) and Felsch (August 22, 1891 – August 17, 1964) were two of the eight players banned from the Major Leagues for their connection to the 1919 Black Sox Scandal.

In 1938, Mr. & Mrs. F. E. Morey presented a deed to the city to a tract of land of approximately 3 acres adjoining the athletic field. The land was to be dedicated for park purposes.

The gate on second avenue entrance is a war memorial made possible through donations by the citizens of Baraboo. The structure is of Devil’s Lake stone capped with Bedford rock. The memorial cost about \$1500 and was dedicated to the boys from Baraboo who served during WWI.

Additional Bleachers

It was decided by the city council in August of 1946 to add additional bleacher seating at the athletic field to seat an additional 1650 people. This would bring the capacity to seat 2,000 fans. The new bleachers were installed in the summer of 1947. Also, in May of 1947 the city council voted to install floodlights at the field by using \$20,000 of the estate of Herman Grotophorst.

On July 1, 1948 the floodlight showered the first athletic event with light. The Baraboo Merchants played an Adams-Friendship team. On September 17, 1948 the first high school football game was played under the lights against the Madison West’s “B’s”. Baraboo won 24-0.

Add Tennis Courts

Two new tennis courts were constructed in 1958 at a cost of \$12,000, at the athletic field by the park’s department using funds from the Herman Grotophorst Estate.

Move Athletic Complex to High School Grounds

A motion to move Baraboo's high school athletic complex from the Mary Rountree Athletic Field to the field adjacent to the high School was approved by the Baraboo School Board in April of 1986. The new complex would cost an estimated \$175,000 to complete. The estimate was to include a scoreboard, stationary aluminum bleachers and lights. Funding would come from three sources: The first would be through community fund raisers. The second source would be two existing sinking funds which at that time was approaching \$32,000. The third source would be, according to the motion passed by the board "whatever else is necessary to make the move in the fall of 1986. The level of improvements to be made would be determined by the board on June 15, 1986.

The following updates by Craig Schlender

In the mid ‘80’s, the skinned infield was sodded with a good crown, and to this day drains very well because of it. The infield mix is made up of 75% pulverized limestone and 25% sand, blended into an original heavy clay silt content base. The four inches of mix was then blended with Turface and topped off with a ¼” of Turface for a clean neat drag surface. Each year, additional Turface is added. Because we do not have an infield cover, our infield mix has a lower content of clay so it plays well after a rain.

About Baseball in Baraboo

The base paths have higher clay content than the infield. The batter's boxes are crowned a bit to allow water to drain better. The boxes are composed of six inches of pure clay. The mound plateau and sloped landing area are also pure clay and are set to pro specifications, and are rebuilt three times per year. Additionally, there are double mound bullpens located in foul territory down each base line and concrete in ground dugouts.

Other features of Mary Rountree Field include timber landscaped seating and bleachers in front of a grassed terrace. Other maintained grassed areas are perfect for lawn chairs or blankets, and fan seating is almost unlimited. The majestic 75 year old pine trees along the outfield fence with the Baraboo River rolling behind makes for a spectacular backdrop for hitters and fans alike.

Field irrigation is done with portable sprinklers for the infield and hips, and the outfield is equipped for a water reel. We water the infield mix with a 1" hose and nozzle and found that the infield plays best with a higher water content.

We have been able to maintain our field due to the great working relationship between the Baraboo Parks Department and Baraboo American Legion Baseball team. The city provides equipment, a seasonal worker for the park, and seed, fertilizer, lights, and other operational costs. The Legion team has provided monies for "turface", fences, dugouts, batting cages, concession stand, a broadcast booth, bathrooms and other capital expenditures. The Legion baseball team also provides all diamond grooming and watering for on weekends and all tournaments.

Because Legion baseball is a volunteer group, we have the time to rebuild the mound, batter's boxes, bullpens, and do the striping for on the grass for a professional appearance. We have been fortunate to have volunteers provide colorful flowerbeds and pots to add to the appearance of the park.

For the past two seasons we have had an American Legion Baseball Team website that offers pictures of the field, directions to the park, and game schedules. Team stats are kept on a laptop computer and uploaded to our website immediately after every game. This service proved to be particularly effective for the 2001 AA State

tournament we hosted this summer. Teams, scouts, and the media could get complete statistics following the completion of their games.

Since 1991, the park has hosted 3 State tournaments, several regional tournaments, and three Brewer Little League clinics that featured Mark Loretta, Jeff Cirillo, Fernando Vina, Steve Sparks, Ron Vallone, and Pat Listach.

Over the years, Mary Rountree has received some special attention from some special people in professional baseball turf management. We were fortunate to have the late Harry Gill of the Brewers set up the maintenance plans for the park. Since then, Gary Vandenberg of the Brewers, Dave Mellor of the Red Sox, and Troy Smith of the Denver Broncos have all visited the Park. Baraboo baseball is very fortunate to have received quality advice from the pros on how to provide and maintain a quality playing surface.

We have tried to duplicate the former Milwaukee County Stadium field as close as possible, and we provide ourselves on having health, lush turf for a true grass playing surface. We are able to maintain our turf through good maintenance schedules and our relationships with quality vendors and their products.

Wisconsin's Little League Baseball

Excerpts from "*Wisconsin's First Little League Turns 60*" by Ken Leiviska, Capital Newspapers, photos by Bob Burmester

The first Little League Baseball games in the state of Wisconsin were played on May 29, 1951 at Webb Field at Reedsburg. Those games were the realization of Ted Merkel, Ed Quinlan and Jack Downing, all of whom have passed away as of this writing (2011).

"The idea to organize a league came over a cup of coffee," Ted Merkel said in a *Reedsburg Times-Press* interview in the 1970s. "We thought it would be a good thing for Reedsburg." He was right!

What started as a four-team league that fielded approximately 50 boys between ages 9 and 12 in 1951 has turned into

About Baseball in Baraboo

a league with 21 teams and 231 little sluggers that span three age groups. But that success was never guaranteed.

After contacting Carl Stotz, who founded Little League in 1939 in Williamsport, PA., the founders began soliciting donations and generating excitement in the community. Stotz would visit Reedsburg that October after the first season to watch movies of some of the games and to congratulate the city on a job well done.

But it wasn't easy, especially after Downing, the sports editor of the *Reedsburg Times-Press*, was called into military service before the season started. It created a hole in the leadership.

Merkel and Quinlan, two local businessmen, weren't deterred. They found seven sponsors who donated a combined total of \$1,000 to get the league started.

Four of those sponsors would have a team named after them—American Legion, Hanksraft, Kiwanis, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, while Appleton Woolen Mill, Bernien Co. and Dolly Madison Dairies were less visible.

Dick Quinlan helped round up two co-managers for each team. One of them was Ken Brenner, who shared some of those early Little League days in a later interview.

"Ed (Quinlan) is the one who prompted the whole thing," said Brenner, who managed the Hanksraft team with Jim Conlin. "He just thought this was something for the kids to do in the summertime."

The biggest reason it was a success when it started was the enthusiasm of the boys, Brenner said. "They were happy". The uniforms, which were made of wool, actually arrived late. Although the first games were played in late May, the uniforms did not arrive until early June, just in time for the big parade down Main Street and an official opening ceremony June 15th.

Mike Legge, the Central Region director of Little League in the U. S., said creating bonds is the program's main goal. "We believe

that the ideals of Little League are key ingredients in lengthy relationships".

One of Reedsburg's original Littler Leaguers had a baseball field at Oak Park dedicated to him on Friday, May 27, 1951. At 5:30pm, a dedication was held in honor of Dick Quinlan, whose father Ed was one of the three founders of Reedsburg Little League.

Babe Ruth League

The Babe Ruth League was organized under the name "Little Bigger League" in Hamilton, New Jersey in 1951 by businessman Marius D. Bonacci and nine others as a baseball program for boys aged 13 to 15. Claire Merritt Ruth, the widow of Babe Ruth, met with the league's organizers in 1954 and authorized them to rename the league the Babe Ruth League in Babe Ruth's honor. The **Babe Ruth League** is a youth baseball program. The organization's headquarters are in Lawrence Township, New Jersey.

This group of men eventually agreed to name Marius D. Bonacci as the "founder" of the program which was initially registered under the name Little Bigger League. The program was renamed in 1954 when Claire Ruth, Babe Ruth's widow, who had learned of the merits of the organization and its tremendous growth, met with the administrators. She subsequently gave the organization permission to change its name to Babe Ruth League. She has been quoted as saying, "Babe Ruth was a man who loved children and baseball; he could receive no greater tribute than to have a youth baseball program named after him."

Program spreads nationally

Babe Ruth League, Inc. caught on nationally, then internationally. It now ranks as one of the premier amateur baseball and softball programs in the world; *however it still greatly trails Little League Baseball in participation and volunteerism.*

About Baseball in Baraboo

Babe Ruth League, Inc. has increased steadily from its first 10-team league in Hamilton Township, Mercer County, New Jersey, to its present combined size of over 1,035,123 players on some 56,622 teams in more than 9,113 leagues.

The success of the Baseball and Softball program is due to the millions of volunteer hours spent every year. Every volunteer, from the local League Manager to the Chairman of the 17-member International Board, is dedicated to the betterment of youth, while at the same time producing better players.

Management of International Operation

A five-member Executive Staff, assisted by Regional Service Representatives, maintains Babe Ruth's International Headquarters at 1770 Brunswick Pike in the suburban Trenton community of Lawrence Township. Local leagues are independent within the guidelines provided by Babe Ruth League International Board.

The Babe Ruth International Board is the governing body while Babe Ruth Headquarters is the administrative and promotional center.

Age Divisions Established

It is the 13-15 Division, started in 1951, where the players get their baseball feet wet for the first time under regulations and rules on standard diamonds. Each chartered league is eligible to enter a team in tournament competition. District winners go into statewide competition with that successful club qualifying for one of eight regional tourneys. This division's first World Series was held in 1952.

The next stop in the baseball ladder for young players is the Babe Ruth 16-18 division, born in 1966 and showing remarkable growth and success. Teams follow a similar route as their 13-15 counterparts with the highlights of the campaign being the 16-18 World Series, which was first held in 1968. This series has gained the attention of Major League Scouts from all 30 clubs.

In 1974 the 13-year-Old Prep League was added with the first 13-year-Old World Series being held in 1980. In 1982, Babe Ruth Baseball added yet a third division to its program - the Bambino

Division. In 1982, the Bambino Division expanded to all existing areas of the Babe Ruth program. It was a huge success as the division tripled in size from the number of teams that participated in a test pilot program in 1981.

Starting in 1983, each of the eight Babe Ruth Baseball regions offered Bambino tournament competition up to the regional level of play, with the first World Series being held in 1984.

In 1989, Carl Yastrzemski was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame becoming the first Babe Ruth graduate to attain this honor.

In 1994, Babe Ruth Baseball organized its First World Series for 16-year-old players. Carmel, Indiana was the host of the first 16-Year-Old World Series.

Babe Ruth League added another dimension to its program in 1984 - a Softball Division designed for girls. The Softball Division is open to Babe Ruth League's current age groupings from 4 to 18.

The Softball Division was organized because Babe Ruth League recognized a need for softball on the girls' level and a desire for affiliation with an established national program.

The Babe Ruth Baseball/Softball program, above all, is of, by and for youth. It especially tries to make better citizens through proper supervision of regulation competitive baseball/softball in addition to promoting mental and physical development. In adopting rules, in establishing standards and in all planning, the primary consideration is the welfare of the participants.

In 2000 the 5 to 12-year-old divisions previously known as the Bambino Division was renamed Cal Ripken Baseball, a Division of Babe Ruth League, Inc.

Unlike other leagues, Babe Ruth allows you to put together your own all-star teams to enter in the world series. All you need to do is pay the charter fee and then you are free to put together any type of team you see fit as long as they meet the age requirements. Teams like the "Raw Dawgs" from Alabama have been doing this for years with a great deal of success. One notable exception is the 2007 14U Babe Ruth World Series champions, the Hamilton Huskies team from Chandler, AZ.

About Baseball in Baraboo

The Hamilton team won their state championship, regional championship and then the world series championship with the same roster that they had during their regular season, all boys that had committed to go to Hamilton High School.

Baraboo's First Babe Ruth Team...1958

John Eckhardt allowed only one hit as Baraboo defeated DePere Preble 1-0 for the state Babe Ruth baseball championship. The title game was played Saturday, July 26, 1958 at Portage. The Baraboo team made headlines all over southern Wisconsin by winning the title with a group that consisted of five 13-year olds, five 14-year olds and five 15-year olds, all from the Baraboo community. The rest of the teams in the state had rosters that mostly consisted of 15-year olds and were all-star teams from their area."

"For the life of me, with kids of that age, I just could not say to one of them that we were to leave them behind to pick up someone else from Reedsburg," said coach Sa Loutos. "I felt the team grew together and learned together and there was no way I was going to break them up just before we qualified for the state tournament, no way. They earned it and they deserve it."

Baraboo would then compete in the regional tournament at Middleboro, KY., on August 7, 8 and 9. The local nine drew a bye in the first round and on August 8 would meet the winner of the Ohio-Indiana representatives. Coaches were Harry Sa Loutos, Gail Butt and Harold Rodrique. Baraboo was ousted from the Babe Ruth regional baseball tournament Friday night as the Tri-City Ohio entry scored a 5-1 semi-final victory behind Tom Gorman's four-hit pitching.

The members of the team later went on to win the South Central Conference Championship in 1961 while earning a berth in the WIAA state tournament. It lost to the eventual state champion Eau Claire 12-8 in its first game and was eliminated. Several players

went on to play college baseball, including Darrel Potter (four years at Wisconsin), Gene Higgins (Wisconsin), Jim Fitzgerald (Stevens Point), Dan Weigel (Ripon), Bob Church (River Falls) and John Eckhardt (Whitewater and Southern Illinois).

Baraboo School Baseball

Trivia:

In June of 1912 the **Baraboo Sluggers** received their new uniforms. The uniforms were white and across the breast appeared the name "**Curry's**". From this point on the team would be known as "**Curry's Sluggers**". This may have been a school team or a city team??

Annex Baseball

Issue No. 3 of the May, 1922 *Annex Booster* told of the Annex baseball team (7th. & 8th. Grades) being organized and practicing every evening on the Second Ward ball diamond and planning on their upcoming trip to Kilbourn for their first game. Howard Jones...T.B. was the captain of the team; other members were Kenneth Weber, Ned Dibble...catcher, Fred Heath...R.F., Glen Dibble, James Huston, Harry Haycock...S.B., Tom Mould...S.S., Willis Schenck...C.F., John Bonine...L.F., Wayne Stillson and Virgil Caflisch...F.B.. Albert Potter was the mascot.

Issue No. 4 of the 1922 *Annex Booster* indicated that on May 4, the Baraboo boys went on to win over Kilbourn by a score of 12 to 4. On May 11, the team motored to Portage where they were defeated by a score of 10 to 5. On May 18th, the visiting team was from Kilbourn and the game was played at the Sauk County Fair Grounds, Baraboo winning again by a score of 14 to 2.

Next North Freedom appeared on the schedule and the game was played again at the Fair Grounds with Baraboo posting another win by a score of 13 to 3. On June 1st. Portage appeared for the

return game and again proved too much for Baraboo as they won the game by a score of 11 to 6. This was the last game of the season. It was written that the Annex boy's team is the high school team of tomorrow and perhaps the city team of the future.

Baraboo Wins from Mazomanie in the ninth

In May of 1927, it was noted in the *Boo Hi News* that the High School team had defeated Mazomanie, on our home field, by a score of 6 to 5. "Ike" Terry worked well on the mound, holding the opposition to 3 hits. It was written that "Coach Murphy should be given considerable credit as his team looks well now and by the end of the season we prophesize that they will look like Big Leaguers".

Baseball Returns to Baraboo High School

After more than 20 years, baseball returned to the Baraboo High School in 1954 with Coach Harry Sa Loutos' Thunderbird Baseball team. They concluded the season with a 1-3 record.

On May 26, 1961, the Thunderbirds won the South Central Conference Championship, two days later, Baraboo vaulted into the next week's state tournament by beating Soldiers Grove 2-0 and Tomah 14-3 in a WIAA Sectional meet. Coach SaLoutos would then take his 12-3 Thunder Birds to Eau Claire where they would play the eight-team state meet opener Thursday afternoon.

The new Thunderbird Field was dedicated on May 12, 1967.

In 1969 the Baraboo T-Birds won the regional tournament. The championship game was played against Tomah at Baraboo and the Thunderbirds won 4-2 but had to forfeit due to the use of hometown umpires.

It is thought that Steve Proctor became the Thunderbird's Coach about 1971. In 1976, the Thunderbirds lost the championship to Tomah 7-6. The following is an article by Steve Proctor in the

BNR in March of 1979 "*Thanks to our summer program (Little League, Babe Ruth and American Legion) and to recreation director Tim O-Keefe along with the coaches Jack Halbach, Dick Clary and Kim Stevens, we have one of the best group of players I've seen in the last 10 years*".

On June 6, 1979 the BNR reported that the High School Baseball team won the WIAA Regional Championship over Reedsburg by a 6-4 score. Baraboo's season ended with a loss at the sectionals by the undefeated Middleton Cardinals.

In 1981, Steve Proctor was honored as conference coach of the year. T-Birds won the South Central Conference Championship in 1982 but, lost the Regional Championship Final to Sauk Prairie 4-5 in 10 Innings. It was reported in the BNR issue 6.17.1982, that Steve Proctor had resigned as T-Bird's baseball coach after 11 seasons. Proctor had coached the American Legion Team for 3 years and the Babe Ruth team for 2 years. This was the first SCC Championship since 1968 when Sa Loutos was coaching.

It is not clear whether or not Proctor left coaching as we find that in 1986 Steve Proctor Coached the T-Birds to a Regional Championship over Reedsburg 4-1. They lost to La Crosse Central in sectionals 22-0.

On May 25, 1988 Eric Lewis stroked a two-out, single to left field in the top of the seventh inning to lead Reedsburg to an 11-8 win over Baraboo in a WIAA Regional Championship game played at Mary Rountree Field.

The BNR reported on May 26, 1989 "'With the help of an 11 run sixth inning, Coach Proctor's team crushed Tomah 19-6 yesterday to win a regional title and improve its overall record to 14-4. The T-Birds lost the first game in the sectionals against Middleton 3-1 at Sauk City.

It is not clear whether or not Proctor left coaching as we find that in 1986 Steve Proctor Coached the T-birds to a regional Championship over Reedsburg. They lost to LaCrosse Central in the sectionals 22-0.

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On June 7, 1988, the Baraboo News reported that Juniors Dan Lewison and Derek Smith were named to the All-SCC first team.

Baraboo Baseball Hall of Fame

Baraboo News Republic...June 19, 2013

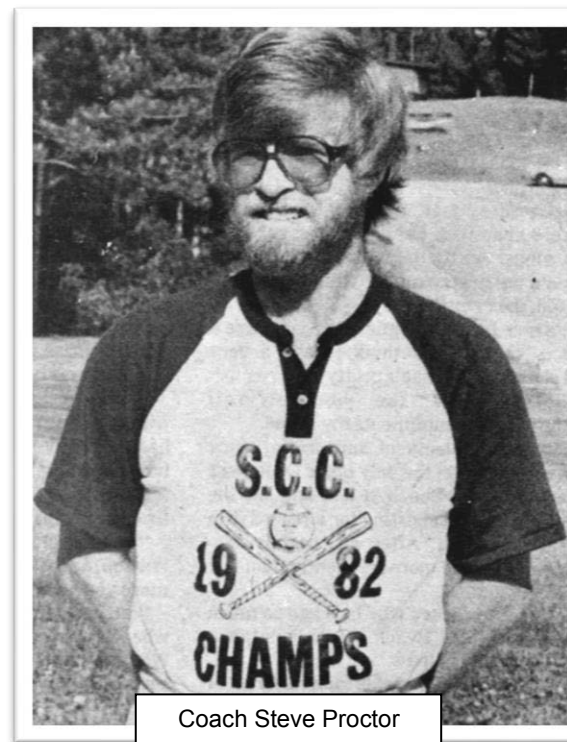
In June of 2013 it was announced that the inaugural class of the Baraboo Baseball Hall of Fame, was recently selected by a committee of local baseball historians.

Among the inductees are five men who have contributed mightily to Baraboo baseball over the years.

They are Harry SaLoutos, Craig Schlender, Steve Proctor, Gene Higgins and John Dombroski. They were recognized prior to an alumni game at the Mary Rountree Field during Baraboo's Baseball Day on June 22, 2013.

SaLoutos, the longtime head coach of the Baraboo High School baseball team, organized and served as head coach of Baraboo's first Babe Ruth team in 1958, leading them to a state championship.

As player and a coach, Schlender has been a fixture in the Baraboo baseball community for more than 50 years, having coached at nearly every level. He helped organize the push for a revival of Mary Rountree Evans Field that led to it being named Sports Turf Magazine National Field of the Year.



Proctor began coaching locally in 1968, leading the Junior High program before taking over as head coach of the High School team in the early 70's. He is credited with helping restart the Baraboo Legion program in 1974, a year after Baraboo failed to field a team.

Higgins, an avid supporter of Baraboo baseball, was a key contributor on the 1958 Babe Ruth state championship team and a star player for Baraboo High School from 1958-1961.

Serving as a player, coach and supporter of Baraboo Baseball in the '40s and '50s, Dombroski is widely considered as the driving force behind the start of summer baseball in Baraboo and helped start the local Little League program, which led to the babe Ruth, American Legion and Baraboo Merchants programs.

Baraboo River Dogs

Peter Lindblad, Regional Sports Reporter, wrote about the "LOST TREASURE" in the July 5, 2013 Baraboo News Republic sport's page.

Jim Horman pointed out, in an interview, that "as a coach he was finding it really hard to show up for ball games as he did not know if enough players were going to be there to make up the "*Baraboo River Dogs Home Talent League*" team". That was in the mid-2,000's. It was not long after that that the Baraboo River Dog's had disbanded.

Lindblad reported that in 1999 enthusiasm was at an all time high for fielding a team...the first time being in the 1970's.

In 2006, the Home Talent League agreed to suspend the River Dogs for the season. Eventually the River Dogs, who played in the Northern Section disbanded. Even though, at this writing Baraboo is fielding 7 players on teams from other towns, finding management and coaches to put a team together in Baraboo seems overwhelming.

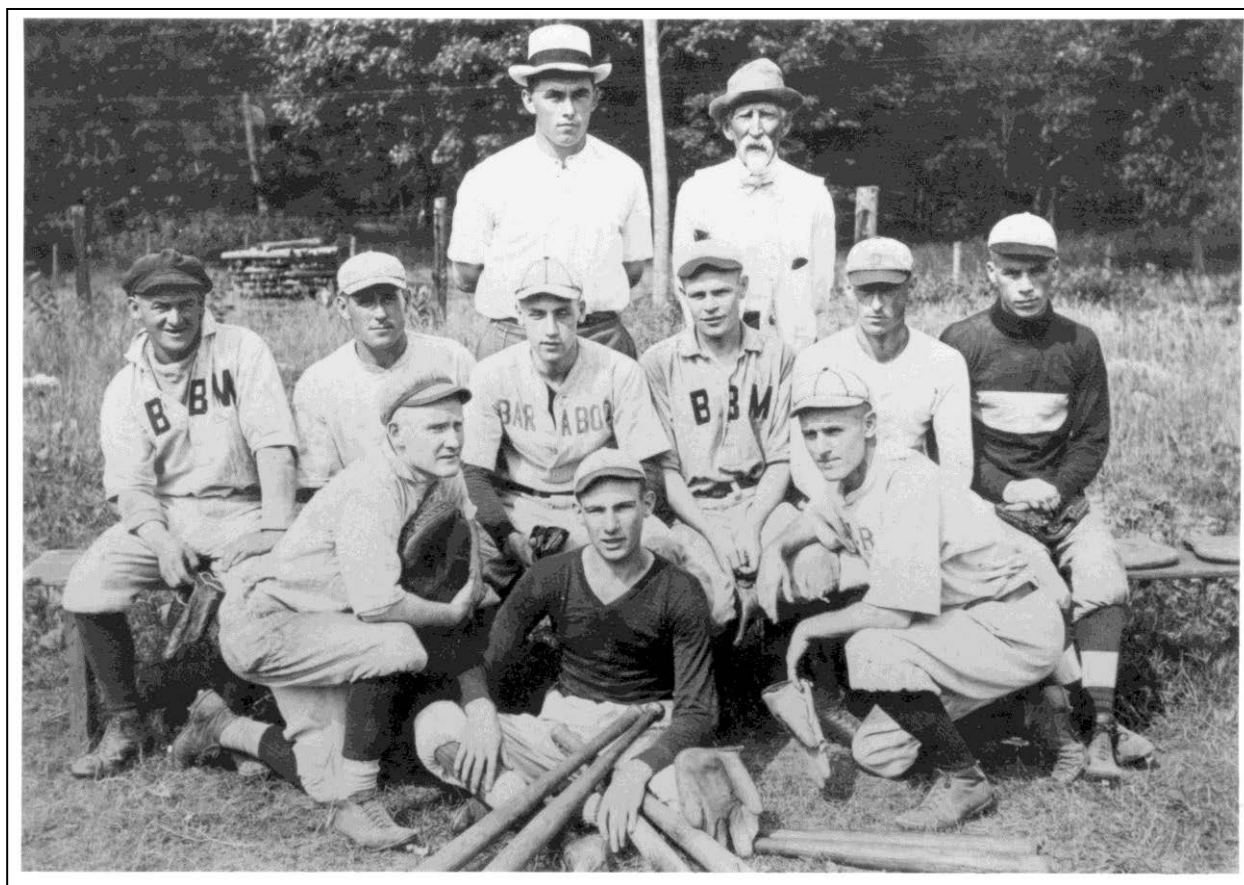
So....as for now, a home team is only a wish.

An early Baraboo Baseball Team...c1874



*M. E. Spring, Rube Baldwin, Sam Briscoe, Ira Harris,
Grant Lippitt, Will Dodd*

1915 Baraboo Baseball Team



Back Row: Manager-Jim Fleming, Bradley Robinson
Center Row: Jerry Frenz, John Ryan, Kendall Layden, Ernie Isenberg, Jim Ryan, Max Hill
Front Row: Ray "Rusty" Cooper, Earl "Ziggy" Veerhusen, Tim Mould
Circa 1915 Taken at Devil's Lake where North Shore parking lot is in 2011

Original Baraboo Blues 1947



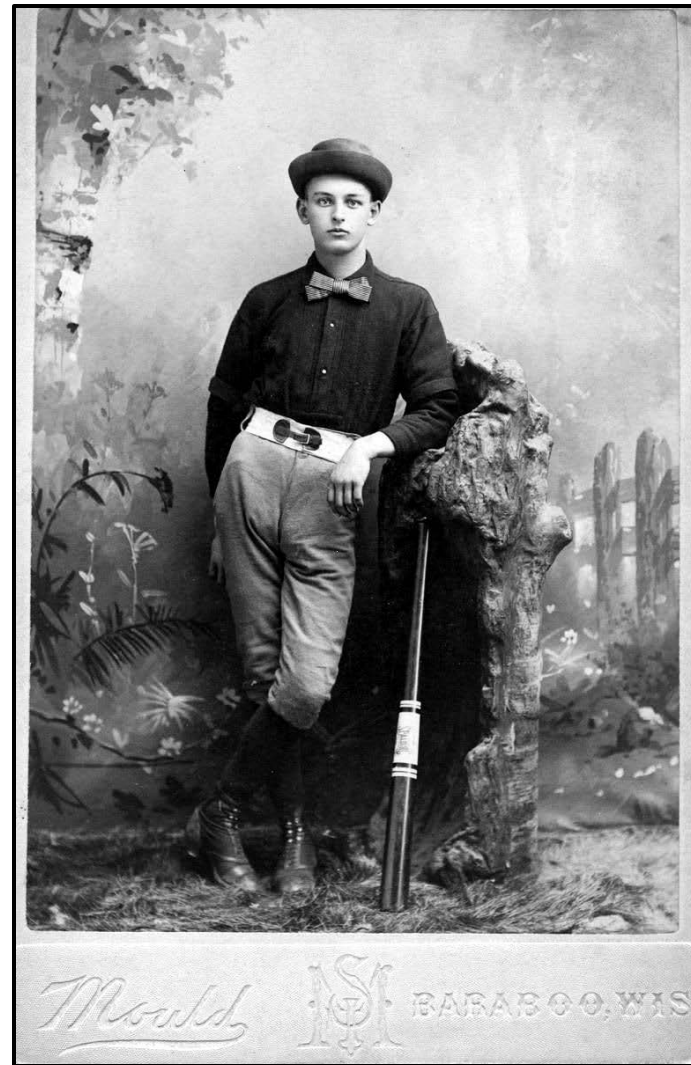
Front Row L-R...Bill McIntyre, John Troyer, Jim Keding, Bill Martin, Bud Gillem, Bob McGonigle,
Jack Troyer, Lee Kinney, Ted Thompson
Standing L-R...Harlan Hornick, Mick McIntyre, Walt Hewitt, Herb Lemoine, Jim Haight

Effinger Brewery Team



Identification and Date Needed

Unidentified Baseball Player by Mould Photography



Identification and Date Needed

Camp Devil's lake



Identification & Date Needed

Island Woolen Mill Company Team

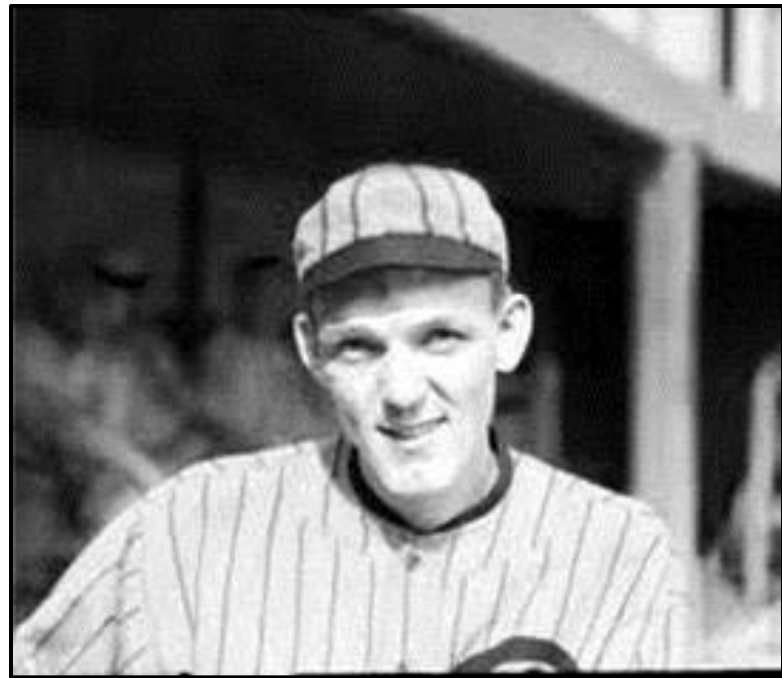


Identification and Date Needed

"Happy" & "Buck"

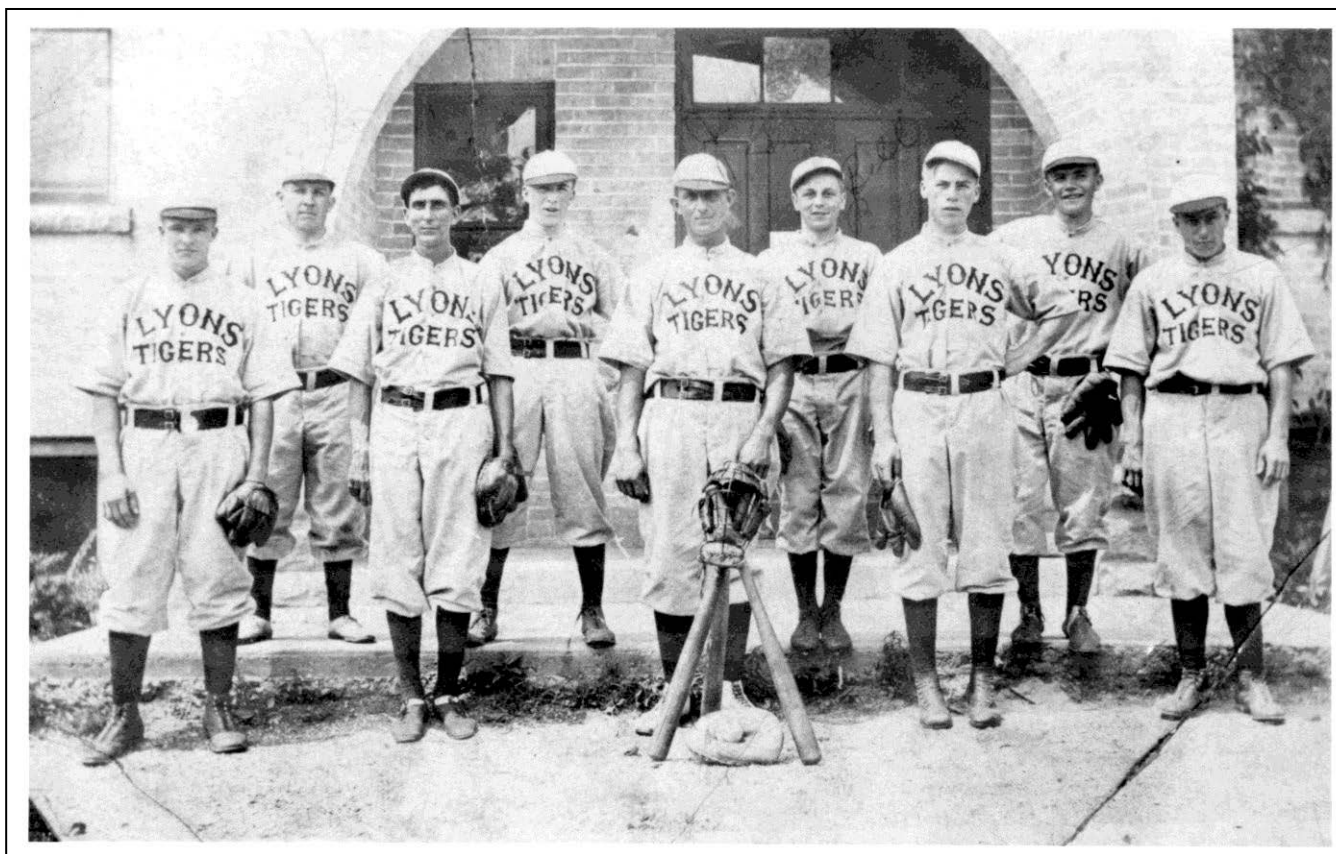


Oscar Emil "Happy" Felsch



George Daniel "Buck" Weaver

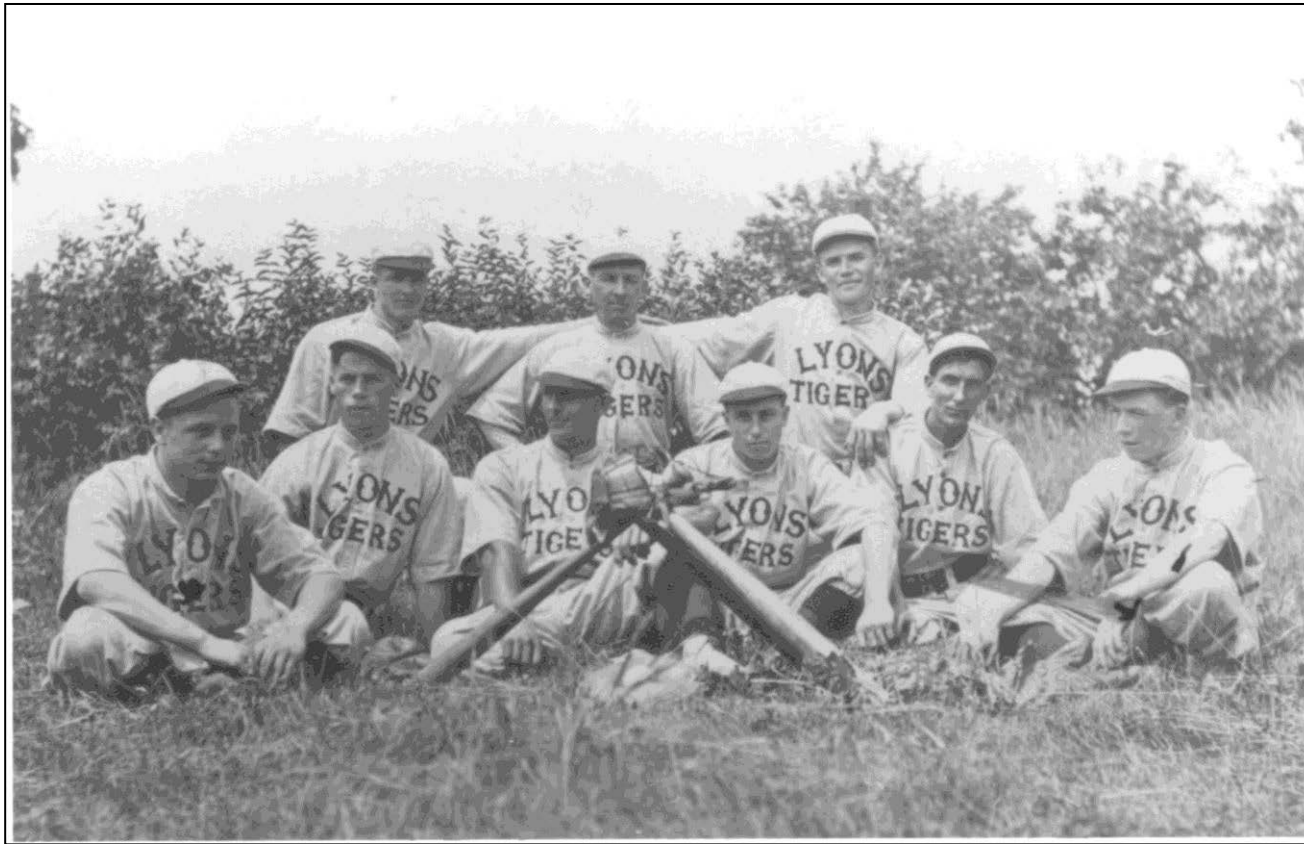
Lyon's Tigers



Lyons' Tigers

L-R: Hank Smith, (Robert Hansch or Pat Newsom) Newt Moorehead, Eddie Fitzgerald, (Jay or Guy) Ferrell or Farwell, Bill Berkley, Max Hill Sr., Bill Hattle, John Howard

Lyon's Tigers



Lyons' Tigers

c1915

Back Row: Hank Smith, Pat Hewson, Bill Hattle

Front Row: Bill Berkeley, Max Hill, Jay Farwell, John Howard, Newt Moorehead, Eddie Fitzgerald

**Early 1900's Baseball Field east of and across the river from the Island Woolen Mill
and below Ochsner Park**



Baseball, Illustration #10.01, About Section W

Baraboo Midget Team 1948

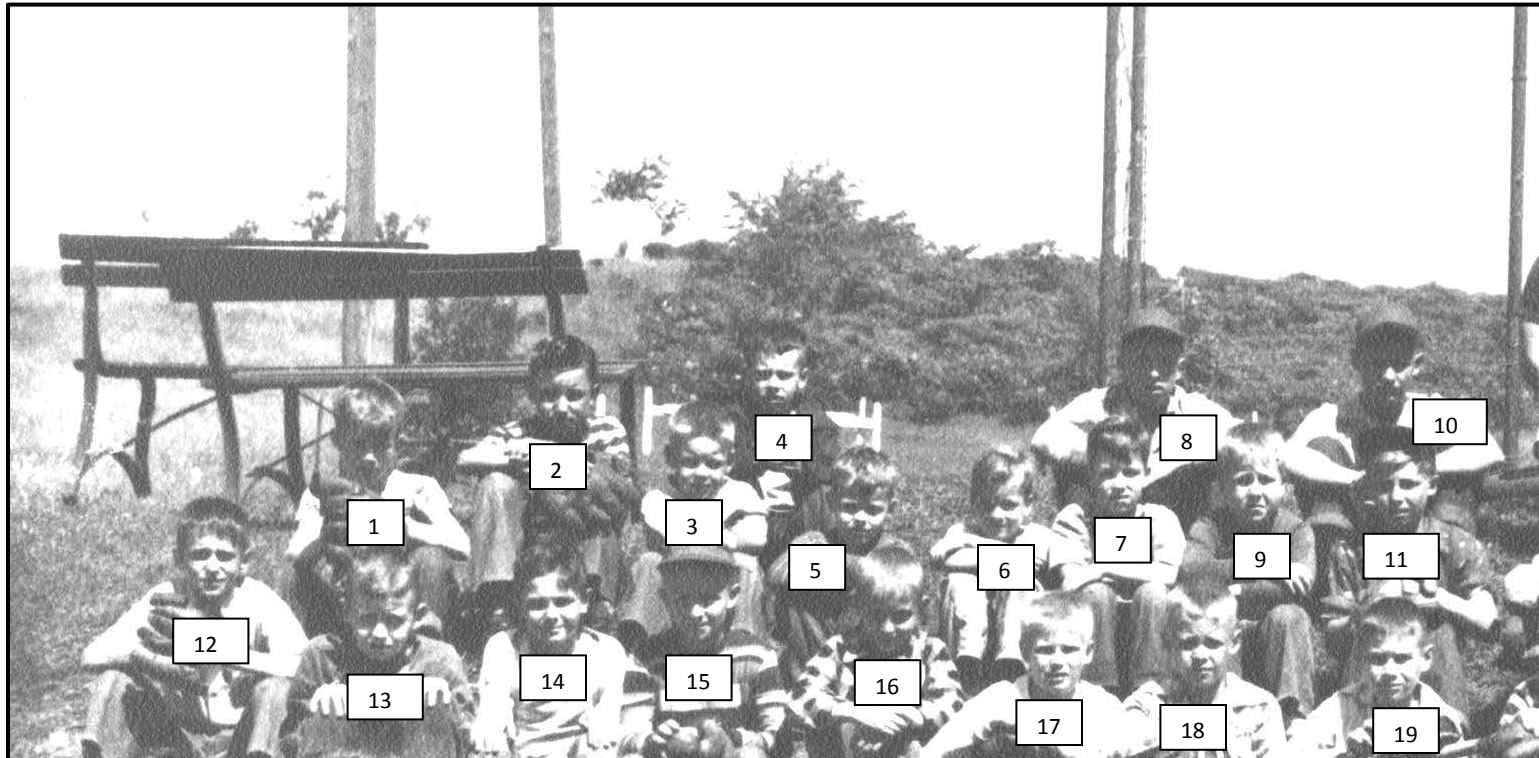


Top Row	Dick Ritzenthaler, John Jessop, <i>Unknown</i> , Garth Walling, Dave Ritzenthaler, Roger Reithmeier, Jerry Kinnamon, Jim Hauge, Jerry Marking, Andy Hauge, Jack Marking, Carlton Caflich, Arlie Holloway
2nd. Row From Top	Chuck Elickson, <i>Unknown</i> , Larry Bell, Chuck Huebbe, John Lambert, <i>Unknown</i> , Coach John Dombroski, Jerry Stevens, Fred Mould, Gary Smith, Charles Zuehlke, Bud Ware
2nd. Row From Bottom:	<i>Unknown</i> , Richard Sorg, <i>Unknown</i> , Russ Sorg, Dave Crane, Don Cottrill, Ron Burtch, John Richardson, <i>Unknown</i> , Ed Waddell, Mike Whitley, Scott Pearson, Dick Darrow, Jim Nietz
Bottom Row:	Gene Rau, <i>Unknown</i> , <i>Unknown</i> , Dean Schultz, <i>Unknown</i> , Joel Hammermeister, Joel Anstett, Richard Smith, Gene Larson, <i>Unknown</i> , Butch Rau, Keith Hackett, Jim Thayer, <i>Unknown</i> , Gene Putz

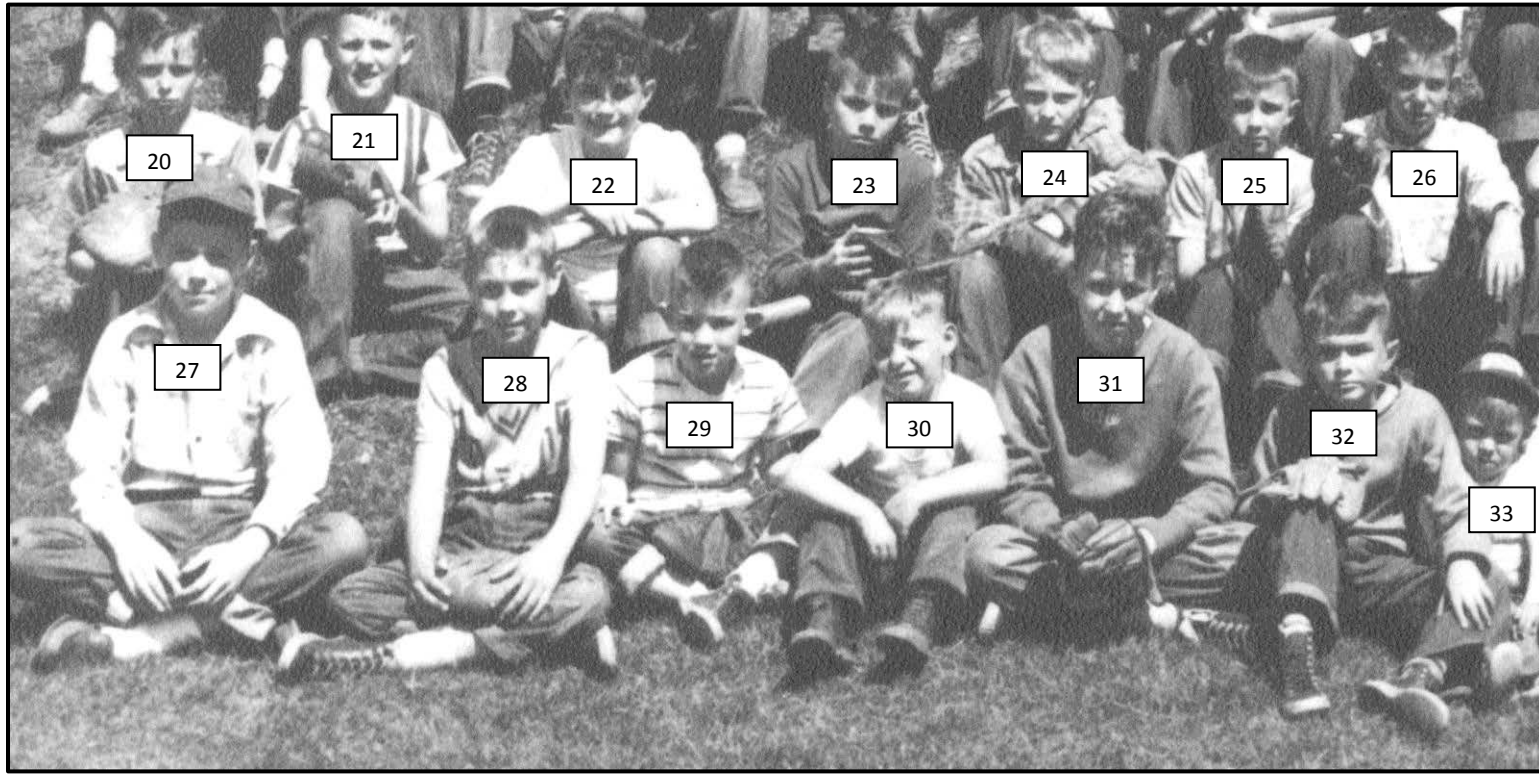


Baraboo Midget League 1950

Upper Left Quadrant

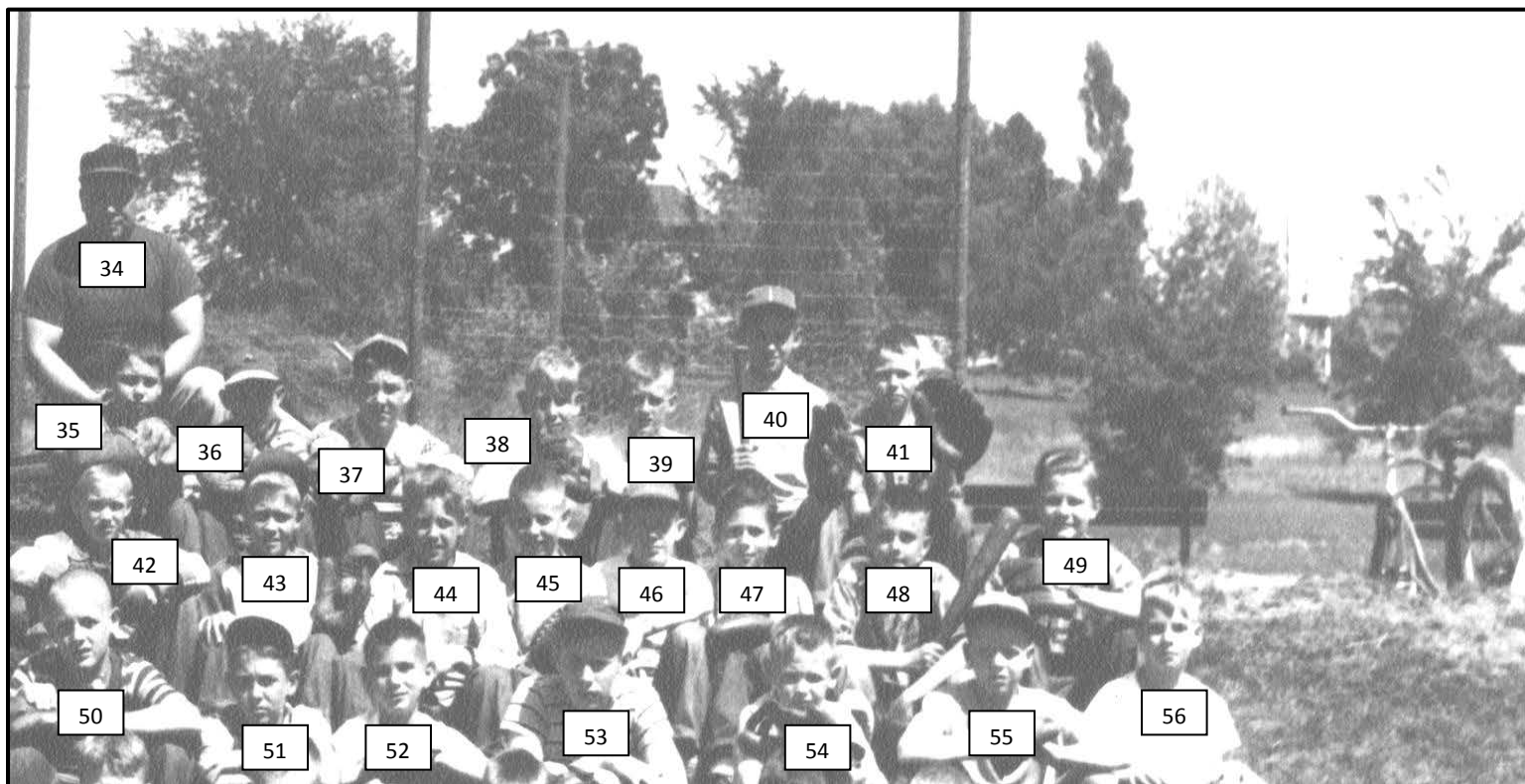


- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1..Unknown | 11..Tom Repka |
| 2..Ed Waddell | 12..Unknown |
| 3..Unknown | 13..Unknown |
| 4..Unknown | 14..Unknown |
| 5..Unknown | 15..Denny Chase |
| 6..Unknown | 16..Jerome Theisen |
| 7..Unknown | 17..Joel Hammermeister |
| 8..John Richardson | 18..Carl Smith |
| 9..Bud ware | 19..Unknown |
| 10..Unknown | |



20..Unknown
21..Richard Sorg
22..Chuck Ellickson
23..David Deppe
24..Jim Cleveland
25..Unknown
26..Roger Reithmeier

27..Gary Smith
28..Andy Hauge
29..Ron Burtch
30..Vic Dombroski
31..Pete Mickelson
32..Butch Rau
33..____ Dombroski



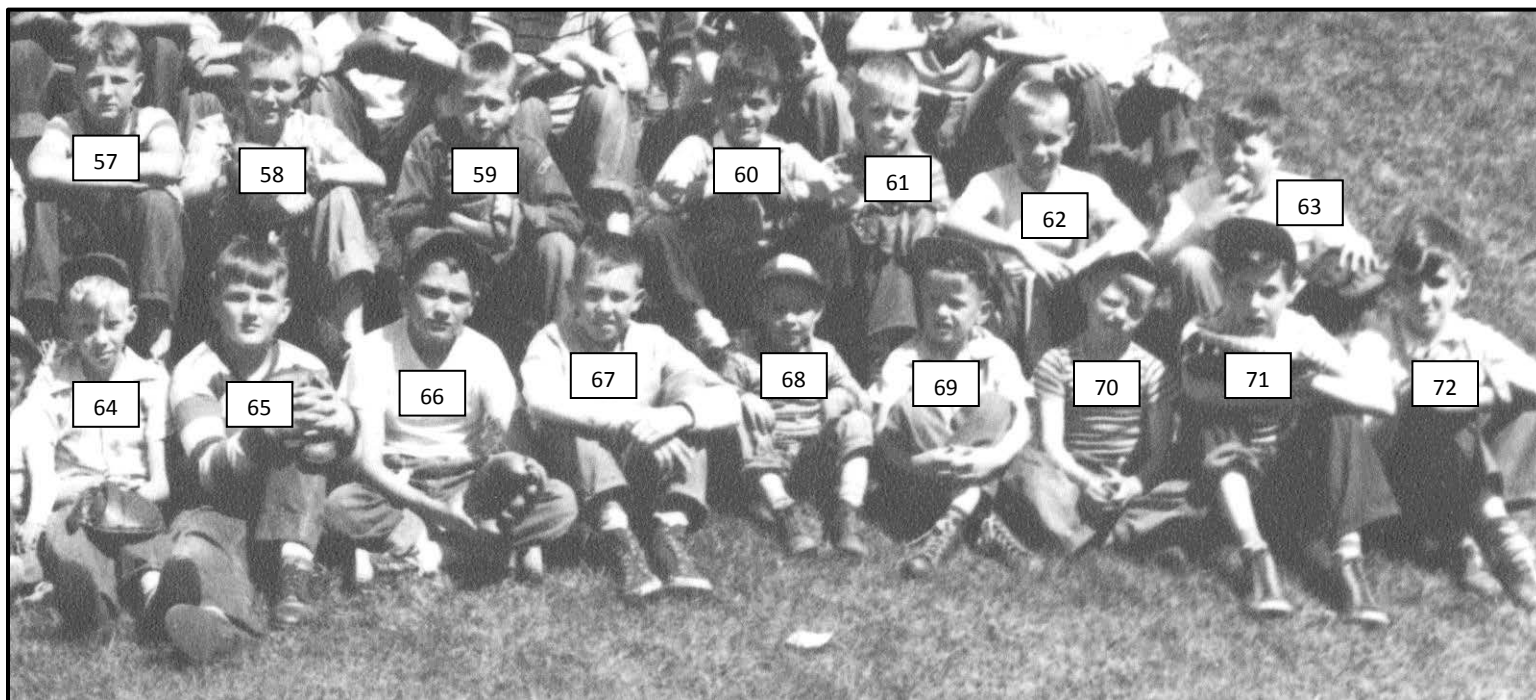
34..Coach John Dombroski
35..Unknown
36..Unknown
37..Unknown
38..Charles Zuehlke
39..Richard Smith
40..Jerry Marking
41..Unknown

42..Unknown
43..Dean Schulz
44..Unknown
45..Harvey Weigert
46..Warren Harding
47..Russ Sorg
48..Don Cottrill

49..Morrie Kent
50..Dick Ritzenthaler
51..Unknown
52..Unknown
53..Carlton Caflisch
54..Unknown
55..Unknown
56..Jim Haskins

Baraboo Midget League 1950

Lower Right Quadrant



57..Dave Ritzenhaler
58..John Jessop
59..Keith Hackett
60..Chris Appostle
61..Greg Hickatheir
62..Jim Hauge
63..Unknown
64..Wayne Shields

65..Unknown
66..Dick Darrow
67..Jim Clement
68..Unknown
69..Unknown
70..Jack Dombroski
71..Gary Schultz
72..Jack Marking

1949 Third Ward (Sluggers) Little League



Top Row: Richard Smith, Jerry Marking, Gene Putz, Mike Brei, Joel Anstett, Bobby Hall
Bottom Row: Gene Rau, Dean Schults, Jack Marking, Carl Caflich, Arlie Holloway, Bill Zuelke

Wisconsin's First Little League



THE OLD BALL GAME

The first Little League Baseball games in the state of Wisconsin were played on May 29, 1951 at Webb Field in Reedsburg. The first boys ever to play Little League baseball in Reedsburg walked through the streets and strolled by the city park in a parade to Webb Park to advertise the "Official Grand Opening."