

## Whopped! Eagle Merchants 9, C.T. All-Stars 2

On the same field where the *All-Stars* humbled the *Merchants* last year 4-0 in one of the finest defensive performances ever in this Territory, the *Merchants* turned the tables this season and stifled the Denver men 9 to 2. It was never really that close.

Embarrassment is a strong motivator, and it was evident that the *Merchants* still felt the sting from last year's "Chicago". During the pre-match parade (which was attended by *Fast Eddie* Phelan, *Cannibal* Tinney, *Suds* Knezevich, myself, and the swami himself, the prognosticator supreme, that gold-encrusted palm-reading cone head -- *Red Dog* Wickett), the announcer called on a large crowd to support the home boys and made the prediction that they would do better than last year. One of the several marching *Merchants* retorted, "Yeah, this year we are going to score!"

Perhaps it was ill-advised that Capt. *Old Hoss* Foster and Umpire *Deacon* Massengill thought it clever to remind the Eagle captain of a ground rule they might have forgotten from last year -- that IF any of them scored they were to ring the bell. As it turns out, the *Merchants* had little problem in that regard.

From the very beginning it was evident that this match would mimic last year's due to its wide-open, flat, and manicured field. *Daisy-cutters* and *Sky-scrappers* alike were easy victims, with the first three innings passing in less than ten minutes. However, while the *All-Stars* only sent ten men to the plate, the *Merchants* faired a little better -- finally tallying their first ace in 11 innings in the second and another in the third. Two more came in the fifth and last year's performance was completely exorcised in the sixth when the first five strikers came around to ring the bell.

Meanwhile, the *Eclectics* did their best imitation of last year's *Merchants* -- hitting the ball smartly, but usually right at defenders who rarely flinched. Through the eighth inning only 28 *All-Stars* took an at-bat, stranding a lone duck on the pond four times. In the top of the ninth, with the match well in hand, it appeared the home club may have allowed a couple of mercy runs as their heretofore nearly flawless performance suddenly deteriorated. Regardless, the visitors pushed across two aces to end the 72-minute match -- a bit longer than last year's mercurial 65 -- completing the enjoyment of the 100 or so crank who got what they came for.

For the *Merchants*, *Wee Todd* carried the heaviest load, himself outscoring the *All-Stars* 3 to 2. *Chops* added two, including a 4-bagger, while *Speedy*, *Ed Norton*, *Neckbeard*, and the *Spaniard* all added one to support the *Skipper's* hurling.

For our *All-Stars* there weren't many offensive highlights -- *Crazy Legs* Brighton and *Red Dog* tallied the aces. It was good to see *Baldy* Baldwin after some absence and *Bugler* Christiansen made his second match in a row. Others making it across the divide were *Hands* Phelan, *Rattler* Gallegos, and *Dutch* Morris, whose lovely wife Rachel kept the meager tally-count and daughters kept the cranks supplied with flyers.

Considering the last two match results, next summer's rubber match should be interesting.