

Colorado Territorial *All-Stars* 24, Tri-Lakes *Swans* 4 August 8, at Palmer Lake

On one of our more rustic and authentic ballfields of the season, the *Swans* of the Tri-Lakes Region were rudely, but gentlemanly, indoctrinated into the National Game.

Match organizer *Digger* Haddix had done a wonderful job. The home club had a full compliment despite two ballists on the DL, including one who broke an ankle during pre-game shagging and had to be transported to the local hospital. While a tad smallish, the field had some interesting terrain, including a right-field train track (and a couple of "Iron Horses" added to the ambience). There were perhaps 200 cranks cheering on their charges and on at least three occasions the festivities were interrupted by a boisterous throng of lady suffragists. And lastly, I heard from a confidential source, *Digger's* performance in the previous night's local talent show "brought down the house". We'll need to get him to repeat it at the year-end dinner!

Despite the lack of experience, the local lads had high hopes of pulling off an upset, as a private (but intercepted) telegram was full of bluster and vinegar. They had evidently caught wind of the *All-Stars'* visit to the west-slope hamlet of Silt, where the visitors had been roughly handled just a week before. However, this batch of *All-Stars* showed little resemblance to that previous incarnation.

The more experienced and rejuvenated *Territorials* jumped all over the home boys, tallying five, three, and nine aces in the first three frames, respectively, while "Chicagoing" the *Swans*. By the time the rookies tallied their first aces in the fifth, it was already all but over at 19 to 2. In an effort not to dampen the enthusiastic cranks, Umpire *Deacon* Massengill announced the score as "*All-Stars* 19, *Swans*, less than that" -- which seemed to be appreciated. From that point on it was a much more respectable 5 to 2 visitor advantage, as more than a few "close" calls seemed to favor the *Swans*.

It wasn't that the *Swans* were without talent -- every striker reached base at least once -- it is just that more often than not they either hit the sphere right at a defender, close enough that it could be flagged down on the bound, or on defense, they had their fair share of rookie muffs. They were game and chipper throughout the mismatch, and took their lumps like true gentlemen. Despite the outcome, the home supporters almost universally stayed to the end and seemed to enjoy the spectacle.

As indicated by the final tally, there were few offensive stars for the *Swans*. With last names withheld to hide their true identities, "Big Wave" led with two aces and "Killer" and Captain "Bruhoo" had one each. And not only did everyone else -- "Wreckless", "Not slow -- just careful", "Chief", "Ox", the "Polish Hammer", "Carnivore", and "Dragonfly" -- reach base at least once, but in two frames they almost scored big innings but left the bases loaded.

For the *Eclectics*, *Crazy Legs* Brighton led all scorers with three tallies. Ringing the bell twice were *Dutch* Morris, *Wheels* Harris, *Rattler* Gallegos, *Baldy* Baldwin, *Irish* Tom Valaika, *Yo-yo* Reedy (is his mother Yoyo Ma?), *Justin case* Breese, and rookie *Pony Express* Walter. Adding one were *Hustler* Nunez, *Crush* Sumner, *Tiny* Heine, *Red Dog* Wickett, and *Digger*. Only Captain *Bike Mike* Roberts (who only struck in relief once) and *Cannibal* Tinney (who reached base on all five strike attempts) failed to tally. *Baldy*, *Crush*, and *Cannibal* shared hurling duties. On the sidelines, *Fast Eddie* Phelan kept a fast tally, while Rachel Morris and Ann Massengill cheered on the troops. Also lending their voices were former *Rough & Readies Freight Train* Williamson and *Swede* Peterson (and wife) who just happened to be passing through the area.

As *Digger* had gotten the home club so psyched up that they had commissioned their own caps, hopefully the shellacking won't damper their enthusiasm for a rematch (or maybe more?).