

Erie-Buffalo 2002

The squad is ready to begin a new year and they're feeling that this year could be special. Many things have changed since the beginning of last season. The team party was delayed 4 months due to the 7 feet of snow that was dumped on Buffalo in 5 days around Christmas time. Driving was either banned or restricted during this time and our year end/new season bash at Ralph's house was delayed until April 13. The party featured the typical razzing by the players to each other. Pep and T dominate everyone in foosball again and the team gathered upstairs in Ralph's viewing room to play the tape from AZ we got when we got beat by Long Island at the 2001 MSBL Worlds Series. It was exciting only to the guys that "played" that game and bored the crap out of everyone else. On film we look slow and play like bushers. It never feels that we look that bad when we are actually playing the game, though the camera doesn't lie. Lenny gave out shirts with our numbers and EB logo on them. He vows that this will be his last gift as he is out of ideas. Gelley blew us off. It was a great party. Changes for this year include Pete's official retirement, Pauly stays retired, B Ward will be cutting down his schedule to include only games that we need him for and Kirby does not look like he will be able to take a regular turn in the rotation. He will be available in an on call basis. T has told us that he will commit to league games only and will pick and choose the others but he said that last year and got caught up in the EB Barnstorming Tour and played more than we expected. K White may be able to make more games this year, which we hope will happen.

The squad gathered for spring training at Lancelotti's on March 18 and hit every Monday night for 4 weeks. Various players would make the Monday night get togethers and we ended up at Macaroon's after each session for a few pops. We finally were able to get outside at Delaware to practice on April 15 and we had a turnout of 12 people, a good start. It was wet and the spring has been shit so far with cold and rain but we got our work in. We got another practice in two days later and had to share the diamond with the Delaware Park baseball junkies that were at the same diamond. We played an exhibition game on April 21 Vs HRD at Vet's Park and the 37 degree game time temperatures reminded us of the games we play Vs these guys in October before we go to AZ! We didn't even have beers after the game so that shows you how cold it was. Let's bring on the season. As we break camp this year's roster looks like this:

C - Len Previte (Lenny)
1B - Michael Myers (Mikey)
2B - Ralph Proulx (Ralph, Skip)
SS - Tim Blarr (T)
3B/P - Brian Gelley (Gelley)
LF - Dan Ingersoll (Danny)
CF - Ed Warnke (Eddie)
OF/IF - Jimmy Galbo (G)
RF/P - Steve Pepi (Pep)
OF - Pat DiBartolomeo (DBart)
3B/P - Jim Proulx (Perx)
P/3B - Ernie Green (Ernie)
P - Jeff Ward (Nuke)
P - Donny Glover (Donny)
P - Bobby Kirbis (Kirby)

Game 1 - Sunday May 5 - EB Vs Brennan's Brewers at Clarence Town Park (AA) - EB wins 2-1. In a thrilling opener held on Cinco de Mayo we rally to tie the score at one in the top of the 7th and then hold on to win it in exciting fashion in the 9th. Our bats are held silent and we pass up a few early scoring chances but Danny ties the score in the seventh with a line drive down the right field line that lands on the chalk to score Eddie, who had worked a leadoff walk, with the game tying run that sends us into extra innings. The game remains tied through 8. In the 9th Eddie again leads off with a walk and then steals second. Mikey singles him to third and Danny walks to load the bases with nobody out. Two straight strikeouts leave it up to G who has had a tough 0 for 3 day so far. But after taking a first pitch strike he displays his veteran leadership by lining a single to score Eddie with the go ahead run. EB barely holds on to win as in the

bottom of the ninth Danny throws a runner out at the plate from left field with a perfect strike for the second out. After an intentional walk loads the bases G makes a twisting, diving basket grab in shallow right field for the 3rd out to end it! What the hell will we do for an encore? EB magic? Seems as if the Brewers management is still back at spring training when they must take their pitcher out of the game in the 5th after the manager visits the mound twice in the same inning. Amazingly, these guys are unaware of this most basic rule. We collect only six hits but work nine walks to go with our ring rust-like 12 K's including G joining the Klan. Ralph steals 2nd in the 4th as his head first slide comes up about 2 feet short in the damp spring infield dirt. Somehow he manages to inch worm himself and then somehow slip his hand around the tag and is called safe! Well done. In the 8th inning Ralph becomes the first EB player to reach 2,000 careers AB's! Today's weather was in the 60's. It's over to Danny's new house afterwards to suck beer, eat burnt hamburgers and laugh as Danny, one of our opening day heroes, gets bitched at. It's too much fun as we revel in our opening day victory. We now have to suffer with the early season schedule blues now, as we must wait 8 days until our next game.

Monday May 13 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Delaware Park (AA) – Rained out. Weather remains wet and fall like with temps in the low 40's. Isn't it spring already?

Friday May 17 – EB Vs Temple Club at Burgar Park (35) – EB “rained out”. These fucks do it to us again. They cancel another Friday night game in Welland like they did 3 times last year. Ralph gets an afternoon call...”It's a little wet on the diamond, ball off”. This is not coincidence this is bush. Ralph is livid and so is the rest of the squad as we've now been off for almost 2 weeks.

Game 2 - Sunday May 19 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Rojek Field (AA) – EB loses 3-0. We are no hit by the Doc. Can't get one gork, one seeing eye single, one dying quail, nothing for fucks sake. The closest we come is Len's hard ground ball through the Ardennes Forest of an infield in the first that slows to a dribbler by the time the shortstop fields it up the middle and throws him out. This was HRD's home diamond and when Len showed up this morning there was standing water at second, the hill and the RH batters box. Ralph finds out and lets them know that it's there home diamond and it is there responsibility to have it game ready. Worse yet was there first player didn't arrive until 9:45! The town is in the midst of redoing the diamond by putting in a new backstop and moving it closer to the plate and also installing 2 new dugouts. They are not done yet and the top of the backstop is missing a few panels here and there that Mikey needs rule clarification on during ground rules. Our dugout is just a bench out in the open on a new cement pad. We waste a fine pitching performance by Gelly over 5 2/3 and Ernie who comes in to record a base loaded K to end a sixth inning uprising. We do collect 5 walks but can not turn them into runs as we hit into double plays to end the first and 6th innings and also get thrown out attempting to steal third with one out in the fifth inning and down two to nothing. I hope we are not going to start this again in 2002 with the idiotic base running. When we finally do get a runner to third on Danny's daring base running in the 3rd inning Pep can not drive him in and grounds to second to end the inning. D Bart makes his first appearance of the year in RF when Eddie must leave after the 5th inning. D Bart is trying to bring some of the old Dark Knights karma back to the squad. DK was never no hit! Nuke and Danny trade heated words on the bench during warm-ups. The Bickering Herd? Not sure exactly what that was all about but it was un-EB like. We got our new brown game hats today before the game. The game is played in 42-degree weather and we set a record for this date at 6:30 this morning when the temp descends to 34 degrees. The Buffalo Indian portion of the team is again joking that we feel like we should be getting on the plane to AZ soon because it's only this fuckin' cold when we are balling in October preparing to go away to AZ. The weather has been 15 to 20 degrees below normal for the past 9 of 10 days. Just think about that for a second, 15 to 20 goddamned degrees below normal! In the bottom of the 6th while we man our positions in the field G, Danny and Pep swear that they were being pelted by snow or hail. What a joke. We freeze our asses off during post game beers. Snow has been recorded in Buffalo as late as June 10 so let's see if we can set that record now. Stay tuned.

Game 3 - Wednesday May 22 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 12-3. Kirby returns to throw tonight when Eddie cannot make the game and we need to shuffle our lineup. We don't support him very well as a two-out error along with 6 hits and 3 walks lead to 5 unearned runs and Eldredge storms to a 8-0 1st inning lead. We walk their leadoff hitter on 4 pitches to start the bottom of the 1st and it's all downhill from there. To compound that our feeble attack remains hitless for the first 3 1/3

innings until Ralph crashes a base hit to end our all-time hitless streak at 12 2/3 innings. Dubious. EB posts only 5 safeties on the evening as Ralph leads the way with 2 and Mikey drives in a pair. We score our 3 meaningless runs in the 6th to close the deficit to 9. Ralph gets drilled flush on the elbow in the 7th and is still without feeling in his arm for about a half hour after the game. Nuke makes his 1st game appearance of the year with 2 2/3 innings of solid relief garnering 4 K's in the process. For EB it's not a good performance tonight. Post game visit to Mr. Tony's for the first of many nights on the patio.

Game 4 - Saturday May 25 – EB Vs Barrie Red Sox at Meadowvale Park – Mississauga Tournament (35T) – EB wins 16-2. We get a pleasant surprise to start the day as Mikey decides he is going to be playing this weekend. He has shown up with the Previte's after toying with us all week and saying he couldn't make it. Lenny also has a pleasant surprise as he shows us his slashed left big toe where a piece of glass sliced a deep 2-inch cut. Seems that during the week he was barefoot in his backyard contemplating the state of the dandelions taking residence at his humble abode. His "brain" immediately conjured up thoughts of Fuad Reveiz and a game winning kick. Practicing his kicks on the yellow heads of the defenseless dandelions he swiped at one after another, splitting the imaginary uprights on every kick. That is until his final kick and a hidden piece of glass right next to a dandelion halts his murder spree. The cut is deep and nasty on his toe. First we had Shoeless Joe Jackson, then Legless Monty Stratton and more recently Footless Ron Santo. EB nearly chips in with Toeless Len Previte. Lew almost doesn't make it as he is detained at the border until he can explain himself and dispel the rumor of his roots to the Taliban. The rest of the traveling party, with Eddie of all people leading the way, gets split up and a few wrong turns later they finally make it to the diamond. Lenny, T and Mikey each have 2 hits as G drives in 3 and T 4. Pep and T hit home runs to support this laughter in the opener of the tournament. We play the minimum 4 innings as we mercy our first opponent and save our arms. In spite of our big lead and relaxed play Lew finds a way to stir Ralph's ire as he is put into the game at 3B and stupidly consults with G over whether he'd like to trade positions to allow himself to play 2B. How many times can we say it...don't think meat. He's sort of like Charlie Brown...will he ever learn? Weather is breezy and un-spring-like with temps in the low fifties.

Game 5 - Saturday May 25 – EB Vs Chippewa Indians at Meadowvale Park – Mississauga Tournament (35T) – EB wins 10-0. A cheesy, mercy ruled perfect game by the staff, Donny and Pep, as we blank a sad Chippewa team. We erupt for 6 runs in the 1st and the route is on. Lew, Lenny, AK and Mikey have 2 RBI each. We collect 10 hits overall in the 4 innings of play and Lew's double is the only one of the extra base variety. We look like we have a shot at a finals appearance if we can only not choke in the morning.

Game 6 - Sunday May 26 – EB Vs Dufferin-Simcoe at Meadowvale Park – Mississauga Tournament (35T) – EB wins 13-4. Another tournament disappointment as in order to make it to the finals we'll need to give up 2 runs or less AND win this morning's game. Pep promptly goes out and gives up 2 singles, K's a guy and then surrenders a 3 run homer and 10 minutes into the game EB is eliminated. It ends the suspense for St. Catharine's also as they all can leave the park, relax and have breakfast knowing they will play in this afternoon's final Vs the tournament hosts. Even after we score three in the 4th and 10 in the 5th, to mercy our third straight team we can have no joy today. Ralph lets the tourney organizers know what EB feels about this setup as we outscore our opponents 39-6 winning all 3 games. He should direct his venom at his Donnie Moore-like starter as after the 3 run homer we surrender only 1 run. Eddie has 4 hits and Lenny 3 as each member of our 11 man batting order scores at least 1 run. We need to get our tournament shit together, no matter what kind of fucked up rules they have because we're sick of losing in these things with the teams we assemble. We play like chokers sometimes and it's disturbing.

Game 7 - Wednesday May 29 – EB Vs Warriors at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 3-2. Why can't we beat this team? They can throw their gloves on the field and the game is over it seems. Ryan Spink (Spink) makes his EB debut. Ralph has recruited the 22 yr old from his office. He's played formerly at Batavia HS and Geneseo Community College. He's actually a legitimate outfielder; one of our weak points as we are always thin out in the pasture and young legs won't hurt. We still just can't hit or put rallies together as we can only muster 4 hits, all singles and leave 9 men on base. We fall behind 2-0 in the bottom of the 4th but rally to tie it in the top of the 6th as Lenny and Mikey drive in runs. We feel we should have scored more as our first 4 hitters reached base in the inning. That was an opportunity to take charge of the game but we could only manage to tie the score. Pep starts on the hill and after being presented with a tie score

immediately gives up a hard line drive that takes a crazy Delaware Park detour past Eddie in center and rolls for an inside the park homerun to the first batter up in the bottom of the frame. EB has a chance in the 7th as G works a leadoff walk and our bench pays dividends when D Bart goes in to pinch run and promptly steals 2nd base. Our next 3 hitters then go out feebly to end the threat. We suck. We have a young umpire behind the plate who is a tool as all he can seem to talk about is the chicks running through the park. Skip takes exception to this and takes up matters with the crew chief on the bases. Then the plate ump is talking about how the bases are not the right distance. Ernie and Nuke measured them and put them out before the game so the distance must be right. Pep visits Mr. Tony's afterward for the first time this year and is so excited that he smashes the curb while parking his vehicle and must call AAA to come and fix his tire. Nice job doofus.

Game 8 - Thursday May 30 – EB Vs Welland Legends at Bugar Park (35) – EB wins 10-7. Ralph cannot make it tonight due to prior commitments and has handed the reigns over to Lenny in his EB managerial debut. He is given a roster of 9 players and told to make Skip proud. G has a great game in support of the interim regime as he first takes a perfect relay from D Bart in right on a ball hit off the mini-monster and guns a strike to Mikey at the plate to prevent a run to end the top of the 5th. Then in the bottom of the 6th with EB holding a slim 7-6 lead he crushes an opposite field 3-run homer to right center to give us a nice 4 run cushion. But G is not through as with nobody out in the bottom of the 7th and Welland rallying they have the bases loaded. A shot is hit to the gap in left center that G races towards and hauls down on the run for the first out. We get the final 2 outs for the victory and close the curtain for tonight on the G show. He also matches Mikey with a four RBI evening. Randy makes an appearance for EB and goes 4-4 while gaining a save over the final 2 precarious innings. He is wearing Pep's spare 37 top and obviously reaps the good karma that the uni exudes. B Ward makes his first appearance tonight and it's like old times. He plays infield and throws the 2 middle innings gaining the victory. Good to have him back tonight. Perx is playing tonight for the first time since the opener and moves his record to 2-0 when he appears. This seems to be karma because after our dismal loss to the Warriors last night Gelley was lamenting the absence of Perx and how the (AA) team hadn't played well since the opener when he was there. He may be on to something here. James "Victory" Perx? It serves him well as not only does he get to play first base but he also pounds out 2 doubles during the game to keep pace with Mikey and Lenny's own 2 double performances. Mikey dons the catching gear tonight. G has a white uni on when he arrives at the yard while the rest of us are wearing our grays. Welland comes out and tells us it's our home game so G is actually correct. This will be the only blotch on Lenny's perfect managerial record for the evening.

Game 9 - Sunday June 2 – EB Vs St. Catharine's Cardinals at McKenzie Park (35) – EB wins 7-4. A sluggish game by both teams as we muddle our way to victory. Danny has made the trip with us this morning when we come up short of players. Danny is always itching for a game and some more reps so he jumps on the opportunity. At the park he almost slices his eye open on the corner of the fence near the dugout as he walks by. Not a good start to his day. As EB always says, we love playing St. Kits because they play real ball. If we want our pitchers to throw more than 2 or 3 innings it's ok. Their pitchers can do the same and we always have good games. They ended up winning the Mississauga tournament last weekend defeating the host team. EB continues the extra base hitting that we displayed Thursday night in Welland as Mikey hits another double and Lenny has a double that hits high off the left center field fence in the 3rd. The wind is blowing pretty good directly into the batters faces today and the balls are getting knocked down and playing tricks on the fielders. K White has appeared with his baby sitter and kids and collects 3 hits, including a double while G adds a double of his own. We build a 7-2 lead after 3 innings of play. During our scoreless 4th, 5th and 6th innings we are retired on 14 pitches...total. This gets to the root of many of our problems when we don't hit as we are over anxious and hacking at the first remotely decent pitch we see instead of remaining stubborn to our hitting zones. By hacking that early we never give ourselves a chance to exploit a wild pitch or passed ball which happen quite often at our level besides the fact that this silly strategy causes us to hit the pitchers pitch more often than our own pitch. Perx is 0 fer 3 today but runs his winning streak to 3 games. During post game beers as we lounged on the grass in front of the dugout, Ralph finishes a beer and as he lies on his side he attempts to fling the bottle into the garbage can at the corner of the dugout. CRASH! It misses miserably and smashes into tiny pieces on the dugout floor. The sound resonates throughout the quiet Sunday afternoon ballpark. Incredibly the grounds keeper working at home plate does not even acknowledge the breaking glass and keeps on working. Ralph hustles and cleans everything up.

Game 10 - Monday June 3 – EB Vs Diamondbacks at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB wins 4-1. Gelley throws an absolute gem tonight as we face a new team that has had good reviews from other teams in our league. They cannot handle his changeup as he methodically mows them down scattering 5 hits and an unearned run over 6 2/3 innings. Nuke comes on to get the final out in the 7th as Ralph uses his bullpen perfectly and EB wins. Veteran leadership helps carry the day. With EB clinging to a 1-0 lead in the top of the 6th a Diamondbacks hitter sends a one out, one on drive to deep left field. In the evening dusk it appears to have gone over the fence for a 2 run homer but Danny holds his hand up indicating that it bounced over the fence. The rookie base ump confers with the plate ump and it's ruled a ground rule double. They end up scoring only one run in the inning to tie the score and set the stage for the bottom of the 6th. When Danny comes in at the end of the inning, he confirms that the ball was a good 10 feet over the fence! That's Nails, always thinking. In the bottom of the 6th Mikey leads off with a base hit and T follows with a double. Next, Eddie pounds a 2 run single to give us back the lead at 3-1. Eddie then scores himself on a passed ball during Danny's clutch walk two batters later. Tonight marks our first appearance at the newly renovated Sheridan Park. Good job with the sod but the mound is flat and the dirt seems to be all crushed brick in the infield and not any dirt to bind it. Running in it is like running on the beach. Spink joins the Klan tonight. Victory Perx' record now stands at 4 and 0. Over to St. James afterwards where we meet a new waitress who claims she was a 3-sport athlete in college and HS. She sits and has a beer with us and tells us she can throw BP. Ralph gets her phone number for Gelley so that he can set up BP with her next Monday night. We'll see how this works out.

Game 11 - Wednesday June 5 – EB Vs Welland Chiefs at Welland Stadium (NL) – EB wins 15-5. EB's first trip of the season to Welland Stadium to battle our long time combatants the Chiefs. In typical fashion the game will have it's bizarre game lines. Another generation of EB is present tonight as Tony Kirbis starts on the hill after finishing his junior year at Kenmore East HS. He starts and pitches the first 3 2/3 innings before departing with an 8-3 lead and the bases loaded. Ernie calmly comes in and induces an inning ending can of corn to center to put out the fire. T Kirbis looks pretty good during his stint and it is nice to see our minor league program starting to pay dividends. Ernie goes on to throw 2 more solid innings yielding only an unearned run as he gets the victory. Nuke comes in to pitch the 7th inning surrendering a run before ending the game in a flourish by K'g the last 2 men. Ralph crushes his 3rd double of the year tonight as he has 2 hits, scores twice, walks twice and also drives in a pair. Test him for steroids. Lenny is only 1 for 5 but puts his AB's to good use by driving in 5 runs. EB can only muster 7 hits but we manage to gather 10 walks and 4 HBP's. One of the odd lines in our game tonight is that we have only 29 official AB's, yet score 15 runs. We take BP for the first time before a game at the Stadium tonight. Groundskeeper Rocco instructs us to hit from the leftfield line towards center. Rocco also continues to bark out "Fort Erie Raceway". Danny is sporting wood because tonight he's playing SS for the first time in a long while and his night is flawless with the leather. The squad has a good laugh in the parking lot afterwards because one of the new Chief players bears a strong resemblance to Princess Leah.

Game 12 - Friday June 7 – EB Vs Thorold Phantom A's at MacMillan Park (NL) – EB wins 9-1. A nice victory against an overmatched and very young A's team. Did you ever think you'd hear us say that EB overmatched another team? The Perx factor comes into play again tonight as we remain undefeated when Perx shows up and the streak reaches 5 games. He contributes 2 hits including a baseloaded bullet into the gap in right center that breaks open a tight 3 to 1 ballgame in the top of the 6th. We end up scoring 6 in the frame to take a commanding 9 to 1 lead. Ralph has 2 hits and 2 RBI and Lenny drives in 3. Lenny's RBI in the 6th is his 500th EB RBI. EB bangs out 9 hits, all singles to go with 7 walks and another hit batter. The squad has now won it's last 5 overall. DBart and Lenny have 0 plays in the outfield the whole evening! We are playing at the newly remodeled MacMillan Park and it looks good. The backstop has been moved closer to the plate and the outfield fences are new and moved in about 20 feet. Lenny takes a pre-game stroll with DBart and points out to him where he's bombed many a homer. Each HR has become 600' titanic shots and longer because every year 25' gets added to the story. An odd G night as he plays SS and instead of ground balls, broken bats, baserunners and whatever and whomever inflicting damage on G he turns the table and inflicts some damage on them. During our 6th inning uprising, AK leads off with a single and G lays down a sac bunt. It rolls down the first base line where the pitcher and G intersect. The next thing we know, G is still running and the pitcher is on the ground looking like Lennox Lewis is going to look tomorrow night. Dazed. He is knocked silly and we must hold up play for a few minutes until he can

collect himself. G is safe on the play. Next, during his 7th inning at bat he hits a foul ball straight back and directly into the umps nuts. The noise umpy makes as the ball jars him backwards is sort of funny. Needless to say he needs a few minutes to collect himself before we can resume play. Keep clear of G. AK steals 3rd base in the top of the 7th with EB up 9-1. Why? Because he's a no mind Kuhn player without a clue how to play the game properly? We have no idea until after the game. He explains that he was trying to teach the pitcher that he should look back to second base more than once at the runner. When the pitcher didn't listen, AK decided to show him how easy it was for even him to steal. Bad judgment. Thankfully the kids seemed to be just going through the motions at that point. Ryan joins the Klan. We have a record crowd tonight as Mikey brings Marissa and 2 other spectators; Ernie's dad is there as is Trish, Kara and Ryan's "old lady". This is Ernie Sr.'s 3rd game this week! Sprckett and Jerry from the Welland Chief's also make an appearance. Southside Frankie's after the game for the wings, nacho and pizza special and to tip a few cold ones.

Saturday June 8 – Lewis Vs Tyson at The Pyramid (Title Fight) - Bully for Lewis: Tyson pummeled, former champion KO'd in 8th round. Not good, Tyson is befuddled and is a shell of his former self. Lewis' tactic of dodging him for 14 years paid off. Great strategy by the Jamaican Euro pussy. It's funny how he tells the story of Tyson dodging HIM all these years and that all the fools believe him.

Saturday June 8 – War Emblem Vs The World at Belmont Park (Triple Crown) - War Emblem fails in Triple Crown attempt. Bob Baffert can stick it up his Taliban loving, Sheik Abdul moneybags ass. Fuck him for having some al-Qaida under cover jerk off, Prince Salman, buy him a horse 3 weeks before the Derby and have it win the Triple Crown. He got his yuppie, trendy comeuppance. Him and his stupid cloned dick head sons who were all cocky in pre-race interviews. Ha...On July 22, the karma gods will strike again as al-Qaida operative Prince Ahmed bin Salman who was in bed with Baffert on this War Emblem purchase will die. It all comes full circle now. Hopefully Baffert will not live to see 2003 for his anti-US shenanigans and the ignorant American public will see him for what he really is.

Saturday June 8 – Pedro Vs Schilling at Fenway Park - Schilling gana contra Pedro. 10 K's and 2 walks over 6 innings? Come on and score some runs for Pedro!

Saturday June 8 – Predator 1 Vs Predator 2 at Roland Garros (French Open Finals) - Take that, Big Sis! Serena Williams beats Venus for French Open title. In the land of the biggest bunch of quitters and surrenderers in the world, two hot chocolate tennis machines battle for the title.

Saturday June 8 – Red Wings Vs Hurricanes (Stanley Cup Final Game # 3) - Red Wings 3, Hurricanes 2, In Triple OT. In the longest Stanley Cup Final game since the infamous foot in the crease goal by Brett Hull to win Dallas the Cup in 1999, the Wings prevail. Screw Hasek.

Game 13 - Monday June 10 – EB Vs Warriors at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB wins 13-0. What's up with EB? A shutout AND a game in double digits for runs scored AND a win against the Warriors no less? Gelley goes 5 shutout innings, giving up only 3 hits and is followed by Ernie and then Nuke, each with hitless frames, as EB wins it's 6th in a row. We finally defeat our nemesis after 4 losses in the last 5 games Vs them dating back to last year. We also extract some revenge for the 3-2 loss at Delaware Park 10 days ago. It must be Perx as his streak reaches 6. During BP, Spink hits a foul ball that one hops into a garbage can for 2 points. Never could do that again in 1,000 years. Spink also patrols CF tonight with Eddie not there and makes a couple diving catches. Youthful legs. He joins the Klan but that is about our only bad hitting line of the night as we parlay 7 hits, 7 walks and an HBP into 13 runs. Mikey drives in 4 and Lenny 3 while DBart and Perx collect 2 hits each. The St. James chick that is supposed to come by and throw BP never shows up. No surprise there. We go over to St. James afterwards and spend over \$120.00 but can't even get one free pitcher out of the deal. Nuke, who got a job with Lenny's company, is crashing at the table while the squad laughs and jokes about tonight's romp.

Game 14 - Wednesday June 12 – EB Vs Brennan’s Brewers at Delaware Park (AA) – EB wins 12-3. The teams 6th straight victory as the Herd rolls on. The game is actually scoreless through 3 innings but in the 4th Mikey leads off with a single. Two walks and a popup later Gelley comes to the plate with the bases loaded and crashes a triple and the floodgates open. We score 2 more in the 4th, 3 in the 5th and 4 in the 6th to win going away. Gelley will end up with 2 hits and 5 RBI on the evening. Danny drives in 3 and Mikey has a couple hits and 3 runs scored. EB has 10 hits and 10 walks to go along with 6 stolen bases, Spink stealing 2 of the 6. Comic events occur in the 5th inning as Brennan’s brings in a pitcher who is wearing sweat pants and he is instructed that he must change into baseball pants before he’ll be allowed to make his first pitch. After much grumbling, he does as he is told. Why does Brennan’s management push the rules? In the first game of the year they had to take a pitcher out after visiting him twice at the mound in the same inning and they grumbled about that. Rules are rules god damn it. G takes a hard groundball at third off the side of his head in the 1st inning but remains in the game. It's only a flesh wound to G.

Game 15 - Saturday June 15 – EB Vs Oakville A’s at Lampmann Park (35 Barrie Tourney) – EB wins 8-7. In a nail biter of an opener as the squad bids to repeat as champs of this tournament we eek out a victory. The staff of Mack, Pep and Gelley cannot stand prosperity as each time we take a lead we give it right back. We never thought we’d play today as the team has come up Friday night and it pisses rain all night. We are talking hard sideways rain. We think there is no way we can play but the Canadian diamonds can take the abuse as the gravel just lets the water pass through and the field is actually pretty solid. The game starts off dry and then it drizzles from the 4th inning on. By games end it appears like it is going to be sunny for our next game in about half an hour! Bizarre weather. Pete Englert has made the trip with the team and like last year in Barrie we’ll do battle with 9 guys. We fall behind 2-0 after one, tie it in the top of the 2nd but then give it back in the bottom and trail 3-2 after two. We tie it in the 3rd and take the lead in the 4th as Lew keys a 3 run inning with a 2 run homer to left and Gelley follows that up with an HR of his own to complete the back-to-back jack. Lew hit 3 HR’s here last year in the tourney. He loves Lampmann. Now with a 6-3 lead in the bottom of the 4th Pep goes out and gives up 4 runs and we are down again by a run. Mack ties it with an HR in the 5th and AK follows with a double and ends up scoring on an error to give us a 1 run lead. Gelley comes on and throws 2 shutout innings to get the win, retiring the last 6 hitters in a row after giving up a leadoff single.

Game 16 - Saturday June 15 – EB Vs Mississauga Gators at Lampmann Park (35 Barrie Tourney) – EB wins 6-2. This game is not really close as we defeat the Gators who were our opponent in the finals here last year in the infamous No Mas game. Worse yet for them, they played the game before our Oakville game and then had to watch our game. As is there way, they pound beers leading up to our game and then come out and play like shit. What a bunch of jokers. Some of them reek like they have been sleeping under overpasses for weeks like J.R. Richard does. We jump out front with 3 runs in the bottom of the 1st and coast to victory. G is 3 fer 3, Lenny adds 2 hits and Mack drives in a pair. Gelley starts and gets the win with Mack picking up the save. The staff allows only 5 hits. EB has now won 9 games in a row overall and 12 of it’s last 13. The team has an odd evening of revelry as small groups of players, wives and girlfriends scatter to strip clubs, casinos, restaurants or just there hotel rooms. EB is all spread out instead of congregating all as one like we typically do. AK is loud and trying to make sure everyone stays up tonight as he’s last seen overturning beds to get players up. We end up hanging out in the parking lot next to his RV.

Game 17 - Sunday June 16 – EB Vs Stony Creek Thunderbirds at Lampmann Park (35 Barrie Tourney) – EB loses 6-5. We blow a 2 run lead in the bottom of the 6th and get bounced from the tournament. We pass up opportunities to score and play poor fundamental ball as we miss cut offs, issue too many walks and leave men in scoring position throughout the game. Trailing 3-2 after 4 innings, EB rallies for 2 in the 5th on AK’s booming two-run double to take the lead. In the 6th Ralph cashes in an insurance run, his second RBI of the game, with a clutch 2 out single and we head to the bottom of the frame with what we think is a safe 2 run lead. A leadoff walk in the bottom of the inning sets an ominous tone for what’s in front of us. The next 2 hitters line singles but Len throws out a wandering base runner from his centerfield position at second base for an out. However, the next hitter doubles in 2 runs to tie the score and after an intentional walk we give up the game winning single. Stony Creek is vastly improved over previous years and they win despite some very poor base running throughout the game as they have 3 men picked off base and

another 2 thrown out on the bases. In the 2nd inning today G tries to run the catcher on a play at the plate and bounces off of him to end the frame. That was a comical sight in an otherwise disappointing game. This ends the tourney for EB.

Monday June 17 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA) – Rained out. Late rains this afternoon that roll into town around 4:30 to wash us out. By game time it is sunny and the rain has passed. Who can predict this weather that we've had especially after what we witnessed this weekend up in Barrie?

Tuesday June 18 – St. Louis Cardinal Hall of Fame announcer for 48 years Jack Buck dies from cancer at age 77. Jack Buck, beloved KMOX Cardinals radio broadcaster passed away this evening (6/18 at 10:58 pm). "Jack Buck was truly a great man. His love for his family, his extraordinary broadcasting talents, his role as an ambassador for charities and his winning quick wit will live on in our hearts. Jack coined the phrase, 'Go Crazy Folks, Go Crazy,' and we did ... for Jack Buck. Our prayers are with Carol and his family," commented Karen Carroll, Vice President and General Manager KMOX Radio. In his nearly 50 years with KMOX, Jack Buck became known as the legendary voice of the St. Louis Cardinals and of the community. Buck's broadcasting talents extended far beyond the sports arena. He was the original host of "At Your Service," pioneering radio listener participation programming in the 1960's, leading to what we know as modern talk radio. Jack's first guest on the original program in 1960 was Eleanor Roosevelt.

Over the years, Jack worked with Joe Garagiola, Harry Caray, Dan Kelly, Mike Shannon and many others in the broadcast booth. His relationships with Mike Roarty, Mark Lamping, Bill De Witt, Dan Dierdorf, Governor Bob Holden, President George W. Bush, George H. Bush, Jonathan Winters and many others were a great influence on Jack. In 1995, he was the 11th broadcaster to be inducted in to the Baseball Hall of Fame. He was well known for his outstanding play-by-play commentary of Cardinal baseball, his work with CBS Television Network and has widespread acclaim for his years as the voice of the NFL on CBS Radio.

Tuesday June 18 – Today marks the 87th anniversary of the death of Charles "Victory" Faust who died while confined to the Western hospital for the Insane in Washington State.

Game 18 - Wednesday June 19 – EB Vs Mullen Roofing at Delaware Park (AA) – EB wins 4-0. This could possibly be the most well played game ever in the annals of EB ball. Our opponents are a new team in the league and they currently occupy 2nd place with a 6 win, 3 loss record. After Pep gets out of the 1st inning, EB scores a run on Mikey's hard hit bobbled grounder to short to make it 1-0. Eddie comes up next with 2 aboard and hits possibly the longest homerun in EB history, a 3 run homer into the soccer game in deep, deep right field. It comes on a 2 and 0 pitch and we could all almost hear Eddie saying, "Don't you ever..." With a 4-0 lead the team can settle down and concentrate on making plays. Pep walks the leadoff hitter to start the 2nd but Lenny proceeds to throw him out attempting to steal which virtually ends Mullen's running game for the night. Mikey makes two diving plays down the 1st base line to snuff out Mullen uprisings and Danny and T make nice running catches on plays in the middle frames. Lenny calls a perfect game and the squad now sports a gaudy 5 win, 3 loss record as we occupy second place. Ralph, Eddie, T and Danny each collect 1 hit for us tonight as we parlay that and 6 walks into a win. EB is all fired up with this victory and we head over to Mr. Tony's afterward where Spink and his chick do karaoke to a Grease tune while Ernie and Nuke display their wigger-ness and croon to "Ice Ice Baby". Gelley does a pretty funny imitation of this, licking his finger and touching it to his butt. Nuke seems less than amused about this.

Game 19 - Thursday June 20 – EB Vs Welland Legends at Burgar Park (35) – EB wins 9-6. B Wards 2nd appearance of the year and he bangs out 2 more hits like his 1st appearance, steals a base and gives the staff 3 innings of work. We trail the game 3-1 entering the top of the 6th as both teams' hitters are losing a battle to the setting sun in left center field. However, EB explodes for 7 runs in the top of the 6th and holds on to win. Ralph starts the winning rally with a base hit, Lenny follows with a line drive single, Mikey and AK also single as each of our first 4 hitters in the inning single, steal a base and come around to score. The Legends have changed catchers to start the 6th inning removing Thrower from behind the plate. EB begins

to run wild prompting lame comments from the Welland bench about the game not being played for \$160,000 and a world's championship. Pretty weak. Where did they get \$160,000? Perx seals the 7 run uprising by lining a double to the left center field gap driving in the final 2 runs of the frame. G gets hit by a pitch in the head with 1 out in the 5th but brushes it off and remains in the game. It's a day in the life of G. Pep gives up 6 hits and 3 runs over the final 2 innings to register the "save" with Perx getting the win after 2 shutout innings. Perx streak is at 7 games.

Saturday June 22 – 33 yr-old St. Louis Cardinal pitcher Daryl Kile dies in his hotel

room. Game Vs Cubs is cancelled. No great loss as Kile had a brain, which rivaled that of Nolan Ryan's. At contract time during the 1997 off season, Kile decided to settle for the most \$jack\$ even though it meant taking his curve to the thin Denver air and leaving his buds Biggio and Bagwell with Houston when they thought they were building a dynasty together. Curve don't break in Colorado stupid but he has his \$\$\$\$. After 2 years in that environment, a 21-30 record including leading the league in losses in 1998 with 17 and an overall ERA of 5.84 he high tailed it to St. Louis where the baseball gods get even. It seems that while all that money tripled his salary it doubled his ERA the 1st year and almost tripled it the second year. Even a genius like Kile figured out he should get out of town. Ha, ha..... Ann Landers also dies today at age 83. We'll miss her daily advice.

Game 20 - Sunday June 23 – EB Vs St. Catharine's Cardinals at McKenzie Park (35) – EB wins 5-2. A sweltering day in St. Catharine's as EB rolls on to another victory. Even after Pep gives up 2 runs in the 5th, one on a HR to Skeeter that puts EB down 2-1, the squad immediately answers. In the top of the 6th, Lew scores Danny with a double to tie the game and after a K White walk, G rips a run scoring single to give us the lead. And then for insurance in the 7th, after the first 2 hitters go out, Mikey doubles off the fence in left field, narrowly missing an HR. AK follows with a two-run homer over the same fence. This however posted a huge problem. Danny was on deck watching all of this and after witnessing Mikey almost going yard and Al going yard, he muscles his way up to the plate and the whole bench knows what will happen, we can see it a mile away. Danny comes out of his shoes with an immoral cut at the ball and hits a little pop up to end the inning. All the popgun hitters want to go yard. Ralph, Mikey and Lew each collect 2 hits while Ralph also adds 2 stolen bases.

Game 21 - Monday June 24 – EB Vs Diamondbacks at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB wins 11-8. EB's 4th win in a row overall and 5th in a row in league play keeps us in 2nd place, one game behind the perennial leaders Kuhn Contracting and Eldridge Club. Tonight's victory tests the team as we jump up fast with a 7 run top of the 1st inning. Our first 7 hitters reach base on 4 hits and 3 walks and each score a run in the inning. EB's long at bat forces Gelly to try and find the rhythm he had in the bullpen and it takes an inning for him to get warmed back up again. A nice 1st inning is always good but too long a wait disrupts a pitcher's routine but a hurler will never turn down 7 runs before he toes the slab, that's for sure. EB has its running shoes on tonight as we steal 11 bases on the evening. Eddie and Danny each swipe 3 bags and T adds 2. We add 3 more runs in the middle innings and the games stands at 10-8 entering the 7th. With a runner at 3rd and 2 out G again comes through with a clutch single to give us a 3 run lead. From there Donny closes out the game in relief of Gelly with a one, two, three 7th as we hold on to victory. G and Danny drive in a pair of runs and Eddie scores 3 times to spark the team as Gelly gets the win. 8 different EB hitters drive in runs. Danny is 2 for 2 with 2 walks, 2 runs scored and 2 RBI and Eddie scores 3 runs and is on base 3 times. Our number 8 hitters are a combined 0 for 4 with 4 K's. Perx victory karma now stands at 8 games. Overall EB has now won 16 of it's last 18 games losing only to the Warriors on May 29 and Stony Creek June 16.

Game 22 - Wednesday June 26 – EB Vs Welland Chiefs at Welland Stadium (NL) – EB loses 9-4. Ernie's first start of the year and for some reason the team plays possibly its worst game of 2002. We can't get a clutch hit, botch a few routine plays in the field and get a few bad hops and end up losing for the 1st time in 5 games. The game starts ominously as Chris Patterson returns from retirement to catch for the Chief's. He's the same catcher that EB stole 45 bases against in the 2000 Peace Bridge Series. Ironically EB got crushed by Welland 5 games to 2 that year. Pep promptly leads off the game with a single and get's hosed at 2nd attempting to steal. Ralph follows with a single and also gets hosed attempting to steal. Potential big 1st inning goes right down the tubes. We seem to play like shit right from there. When Ernie

goes out to warm up to begin his 1st inning of work he finds a hot dog in a bun waiting for him on the hill. Gelley thinks he resembles Babe Ruth in his uniform and the baseball gods have beamed down one of the Bambino's favorite pre-game meals for a little karma. Ernie kicks it behind the mound until the end of the inning when Mikey picks it up and brings it to the dugout. Chris Patterson gets his customary HBP drilling in the 2nd inning this time by Ernie! It doesn't matter whom EB pitches, Patterson will get drilled. That's got to be some kind of record. Nuke is a little distant tonight, which we think is a hangover from the Mr. Tony's karaoke incident last week. The Perx karma ends tonight after rattling off 8 straight wins when he shows. He and Pep ceremoniously chuck their lucky quarters away, which had become their symbol of the karma. Nuke hits the bull tonight and also loses his composure a few times when he pitches the final 2 2/3 innings, as the squad is relentless in the ribbing we are giving him for his karaoke song choices and everything else we could think of. He must step off the mound twice to regain his thoughts at which point Mikey comments that only EB can rip on their own players the way we do. Spink collects 2 hits, including a double, in his first Welland Stadium appearance. Other than that, it's a pretty shitty evening.

Friday June 28 – EB Vs Thorold Phantom A's at McMillan Field (NL) – Game cancelled. This is mainly a young team consisting of players 24 years of age and under. 8 of these queers have tickets tonight to see the hair band, Poison, in Toronto. They could not field a team so we could not play. Ralph at least gets to salvage the evening/weekend as he is playing with St. Catharine's in a 45+ tourney being held at Bugar Park. The rest of us are stuck pulling our pork until Monday.

Game 23 - Monday July 1 – EB Vs Kuhn Contracting at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB loses 3-2. Our first AA loss since the 3-2 defeat to the Warriors over a month ago on May 29. We had won 5 straight in the league. Pep gets the start and gives up a 2 run homer in the third. EB claws back into the game with one of their own in the 3rd and ties the score in the bottom of the 6th when Lenny drives in Ralph with a single after Ralph reached base and stole second. However, in the top of the 7th Pep surrenders the go ahead run on a hard hit bad hop single followed by an Ed Armbrister type play on a bunt attempt. This is followed by a bloop single to right that scores the go ahead run. Eddie, who has been on another of his famous tears batting .625 over the past 5 games, leads off the bottom of the 7th with a double but we strand him there as we go out one, two, three. An odd game tonight as only one ump has shown up and it's Fox. He has his typical game featuring a couple of his obligatory shouting matches and a few I'm sorry's after some of his curious calls. The worst one is when Lenny clearly steals 3rd base in the 6th and although Fox has perfect position because he's had to ump behind the mound he blows the call when Lenny perfectly hook slides around the tag. Ralph and Eddie steal 2 bases each tonight. Eddie adds a couple hits and Danny joins the Klan. Lenny nearly kills a few girls' softball players during BP tonight by pulling a few rockets over towards where they are practicing. One of the shots topples a garbage can with a loud boom that scatters the little chicks everywhere.

Game 24 - Tuesday July 2 – EB Vs Thorold Phantom A's at MacMillan Park (NL) – EB loses 11-10. We have now lost a season high 3 straight games on an oppressively hot evening in Thorold. Tonight could have been a great night for the team, one in which you ride high on for days afterward but instead we waste a solid comeback performance, overcoming adversity and lose in the bottom of the 7th. This one really hurts. Another thing you can count on in games Vs Thorold is that EB will always be shorthanded as tonight we patch together 10 players including Nuke who is really just a pitcher. Nuke is supposed to start on the hill tonight but his arm problems from last year flair up during warm ups and Gelley must come in from taking infield at 3B and hurriedly warm up to start the game. After EB goes scoreless in the top of the 1st Thorold puts together some seeing eye hits, a walk, a critical error and before we know it the squad is down 4-0 and Thorold has the bases loaded and nobody is out! Gelley somehow wiggles out without giving up any more runs, which seems to provide us with a lift. We continue however to play one of our worst games of the year. We can't pick the ball up. Danny plays an outstanding game after a tough night last night. He is on base all 4 times with a double, triple and 2 walks and is covered in dirt from head to toe, Mikey Jr.?, as he scores on a passed ball from 3rd and also legs out the triple sliding safely into 3rd! His inspiring play helps set the tone for the EB comeback. Lenny loves hitting in this park and shows why with a two-run bomb to bring us within 9 to 7 in the top of the 6th. It would have brought them to within 1 run but Pep foolishly gets hosed at 3rd on Ralph's bloop single to center just before Len's AB. You cannot create outs like this! We hold them in their half of the 6th and in the 7th we stage a roaring comeback. Danny

leads off with a double and after the next 2 hitters make out G and DBart work a pair of walks. Danny scores on a wild pitch and Pep hits a double to give EB the lead. However in the bottom of the frame the first 3 Thorold hitters reach base and after the tying run scores on a fielders choice, the winning run scores on a two-out single. Unbelievable. Pep chucks both his bats in disgust. Skip is in rare form after the game with a rant for the ages. Not including our past 3 games but a sure sign that EB has been playing solid ball this year is the fact the Gelley came to the park tonight wondering if Mikey leaving after the game last night was considered a bolt. It's July 2nd and we are debating over our first bolt? It was ruled to be not officially a bolt as Mikey did say goodbye to the players but Gelley just did not hear him. So far this year we have not had a bolting incident. We learn from Mikey that T fell 3 stories off a ladder at work today and the early prognosis is 1 to 3 weeks on the DL. We'll have to see what the doctor says and then evaluate his status from there. This is not a good thing.

Game 25 - Friday July 5 – EB Vs Niagara Falls at Lyon's Park - (35 Chipawa Tourney) – EB wins 6-5. Tonight we jump out to a 6 run lead and hold on by the skin of our teeth with Kirby striking out the final hitter with the tying run at 2nd and the winning run at 1st. An interesting switch to the tourney sked for EB as we play our opener tonight followed by a single game Saturday and a game on Sunday leading hopefully to a second game Sunday for all the marbles. G gets us started with a grunting double to the gap in left center that plates Lew with our first run in the 3rd. DBart cashes in G with a sac fly and we lead 2-0 after 3 innings of play. DBart picks up another RBI in our 4 run 4th as we cruise to a 6-0 lead. We give up an unearned run in the bottom of the 5th and then 4 runs in the bottom of the 6th before Kirby puts out the fire as we win game 1 of the tourney. Lenny has 3 hits while Lew and DBart drive in 2 each to lead the way. EB collects 12 hits, 11 singles and G's grunt double. A very reserved EB tonight as each player heads there own way afterwards. Probably saving it all for Saturday night or are we a businesslike contingent this weekend? We thought the Sheridan Park infield was a beach, holy shit! This diamond gives it a good run for its money. It's so bad that the usually pristine at any ballpark left handed batters box is a mountain of sand and when kicked away you stand in a big hole. It appears your knees are actually at plate level by the time you are dug in. Bad umping will be the tone of this weekend as it always is at this tourney as the host team has their players handle the umpiring. Swing the bat early in the count is what we keep telling each other. That and no close plays on the bases.

Game 26 - Saturday July 6 – EB Vs Tecumseh at Lion's Park (35 Chipawa Tourney) – EB wins 11-6. We are now the only undefeated team in the tourney as we hit the ball hard and play solid defense. We pound out 18 hits and collect an orgy of batting numbers. What's happened to Tecumseh? Gelley has a pair of doubles, Lenny drives in 4 runs, Lew drives in 3 and G is 3 for 3 just to name a few of the hitting stars. Some poor calls on pitches especially to Mikey with the bases loaded in the last inning that provides him with the collar and the only hitless EB member. This is the weekend that has the softball tourney happening on the other diamond and the beer at the fire hall afterwards. This year they have a band and during our game we must compete with loud music as the band warms up. Things look good for the squad because we are the only undefeated team. This means all we have to do is beat archrival St. Catharine's at 1:00 tomorrow and we'll reach the finals. We are hoping for a rematch with Stony Creek to avenge our Barrie tournament loss to them in the semi-finals last month.

Game 27 - Sunday July 7 – EB Vs St. Catharine's Cardinals at Lyon's Park (35 Chipawa Tourney) – EB wins 12-9. A typical EB/St. Kit's barn burner as we rally from a 6-2 deficit by throwing up 10 runs in the 4th and then hold on as Kirby again puts out a late rally to gain the save in relief of Lew who grabs the win. Down 6-2 AK starts the 10 run 4th with a double and then finishes the rally with a grand slam. Those will be our only extra base hits on the day as we tally 11 singles. With Gelley pitching in the 3rd inning Pep serenades the park with his Iron Man rendition from his post in right field. He's just trying to fit in with the band that is still making a ruckus over at the fire hall. Gelley must step off the mound to compose himself. That marks twice in the past 10 days an EB pitcher has had to compose themselves. It's the Nuke and Gelley connection.

Game 28 - Sunday July 7 – EB Vs Niagara Falls at Lion's Park (35 Chipawa Tourney Championship Game) – EB wins 13-10. We win a tournament as we continue to wear our hitting shoes bashing out 18 hits and scoring 5 runs over the final 2 frames to pull out the victory. Lew gets the win with a stellar 2 inning, 9

hit, 9 run performance. Kirby gets the save stranding 2 runners in the last inning again. G has 4 hits and 3 RBI while Mack and Lenny both line 3 hits of their own. This game is actually 2-1 N. Falls heading into the 4th but then all hell breaks loose. EB scores 6 in the 4th and N. Falls answers with 7 of it's own to take a 9-7 lead. We answer back with 3 in the 5th and another 3 in the 6th before Kirby sets them down in the final inning to give EB the tourney. After having a number of beers and some grub at the fire hall afterwards we each head back to the States and must endure traffic lines of immense proportion at each border crossing. Lenny somehow skated over the Whirlpool Bridge before it got too crazy while the rest of the team has stories to tell about the 5-hour journey to travel 20 miles back to the homeland. Ralph is swearing off any future tourney's involving holiday weekends.

Game 29 - Monday July 8 – EB Vs Warrior's at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB loses 12-10. After coming back all weekend and battling adversity, we come out tonight and play like horseshit. What the fuck is our problem? Len is in charge of the squad over the first few innings until Ralph arrives but 5 errors and overall sloppy play results in an embarrassing and costly loss. We score 4 runs in the bottom of the 1st and actually lead 5-4 heading into the 5th inning when we proceed to give up 6 runs. All 6 runs are scored after we had 2 outs and a man on first. From there we surrender 6 straight hits, twice in a row on oh-2 counts. Our 3 run rally in the 7th falls short as we leave men on at second and third when the third out is made. Perx joins the Klan and disappears after the game. That is a bolting. Ralph inserts himself as a pinch hitter in Perx spot to save him from having a chance to set an EB record in futility. How do we continue to lose to the fuckin' Warriors? We've lost 2 straight in league play now with a big rematch against Kuhn on Wednesday.

Game 30 - Tuesday July 9 – EB Vs Chipawa Indians at Lion's Park (35) – EB wins 21-6. Our yearly game against these guys, always on the night of the All-Star game and fitting it is as both games result in laughers. The major leaguers tie and call it quits after 11 while the amateurs get in some glorified BP. 23 hits and zero K's as we pound the crap out of the Indians. Ralph, AK, Mikey and Gelley bang out 3 hits while Lew and K White drive in 4 runs each. B Ward and Pete make appearances and each score 3 times. B Ward grabs the victory with relief help from Ralph as they each twirl 3 innings. This is the game that needed Bud Selig to call it quits.

Game 31 - Wednesday July 10 – EB Vs Kuhn Contracting at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 14-4. A dismal performance as we look every bit as tired from playing 7 games in the past 6 days and not having a day off since last Thursday. We are short handed tonight in a big way as Eddie is out of town and T is still listed as day to day although tonight he shows up to take BP and coach 3B. Our lineup features Spink in CF, Gelley at 1B, Lenny at SS and Mikey doing the catching for the 2nd straight night. Pep is on the hill and tonight he just cannot keep his team in the game and is yanked after 3 innings of work. We make a few mistakes in the field behind him but then he just can't come up with the big pitch to get us out of jams and leaves the game with the squad trailing 10-0. The only bright spot on the night is that Ernie comes in and shuts down Kuhn over the last 3 frames giving up only 2 runs and throwing his knuckleball with good results. Probably one of our weakest turnouts ever for a Wednesday night at Mr. Tony's afterwards due to our schedule of play, beer, sleep, play, beer, sleep, etc...for the past 6 days. Shit, life is good! Rumors are swirling that Perx has quit playing, that is not good. He can't just quit on the team like that.

Game 32 - Monday July 15 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA) Game # 1 (DH) – EB loses 3-0. A double header tonight and in this game our offense is completely shutdown as Gelley again is the hard luck pitcher. Our losing skein hits 4 in a row in AA league play. When we start slow tonight and Gelley manages to get out of the 1st inning with only 2 runs after the bases are loaded and nobody was out we feel like we've dodged a bullet. However that fails to inspire our bats and we meekly get shutout on 3 singles. Lenny has 2 of them. Gelley goes 7 strong giving up only 5 hits. T comes off the DL today and plays short.

Game 33 - Monday July 15 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA) Game # 2 (DH) – EB wins 5-4. We come up with a ballsy performance tonight in the 2nd game as Donnie and Pep combine to enable EB to eke out a victory as Pep picks off a sleeping base runner at 1st base to end the game. Donnie starts and after giving up 2 runs in the top of the 1st EB finally shows a little sack and responds with 3 in their half of the inning to grab the lead. Donnie displays his veteran leadership from there by shutting down Eldridge over the next 3 frames before tiring in the 5th and giving way to Pep who glides over the final 2 2/3 innings.

Trailing 4-3 heading into the bottom of the 6th Lenny starts the inning with a walk. Eddie follows with a wicked ground ball that the second baseman wants no part of and runners now are at first and second. T promptly pounds a double scoring both runners to give EB the lead which we hold on to and end our losing streak. This was a good victory for the club and we'll need to build on it.

Game 34 - Wednesday July 17 – EB Vs Mullen Roofing at Delaware Park (AA) – EB wins 15-1. We use the same script from the 1st game that we played these guys as we parlay a big 1st inning, get good pitching and solid defense to win surprisingly quite easily. In that game back on June 19 we scored 4 in the 1st but then were shut down from there winning 4-0. Tonight we score 5 in the 1st and then don't stop. Eddie continues to be out of his mind at the plate as he again scalds the ball hard collecting 3 hits, a walk and 4 RBI. Not to be outdone, Lenny has 4 hits while Gelley, Danny, Mikey and G drive in a pair of runs each. We have 16 hits, 14 singles, a double and a triple as we win a laugher. Tonight Eddie is so jovial about the ass kicking EB is inflicting that he allows Danny to stray into his centerfield air space and take a fly ball from him. You probably will never see that again. Pep picks off 2 more runners.

Game 35 - Thursday July 18 – EB Vs Welland Legends at Burgar Park (35) – EB loses 15-8. Not a good performance tonight especially on the heels of last night's big victory. Tonight marks the 1st appearance of Scott McLean who has been recruited from the Warriors to play in this game. We also could use him in future 35+ games and tourneys if his debut is acceptable. He gets indoctrinated to EB butchery as we make 4 errors behind him in his 2 innings of work and cost him 7 unearned runs as he pitches the 4th and 5th innings. Our slim pitching staff though is actually the culprit in tonight's defeat as the rotation of Pep/McLean/Downey/Myers are all equally rank. Lenny, AK and Mikey drive in a pair of runs each and Ralph scores twice and swipes a couple bases.

Friday July 19 – EB Vs St. Catharine's Cardinals at Merriton Park (35) – Rained out. Another Friday night boning as the rains have stopped by 11:00AM yet the field still cannot be made ready. This blows, as we want our usual knockdown drag out Friday night nine-inning contest Vs St. Kits. Missing games Vs these guys hurts especially the Friday night ones as playing Friday night start the weekend off on the right foot. Same thing happened last year under similar circumstances. This must be the only park in Canada like this where it rains and the grounds crew cannot get the field ready. We'd expect it from a Buffalo diamond but not up here.

Game 36 - Monday July 22 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB wins 2-0. A classic pitching duel between Pep and Minarcin that remains scoreless until the bottom of the 6th. Then Danny comes through with a clutch 2 out, 2 strike RBI single that has everyone thinking of Luis Gonzales in last years Worlds Series. After a strikeout for the 2nd out G follows with a veteran at bat to work a bases loaded walk after being down 1-2 in the count and that gives us a 2 run cushion. Pep and Lenny finish the job from there as two banks of lights do not turn on near home plate and Lenny takes advantage to fastball Pep's way through the 7th inning to victory. This win is huge as it ties us with HRD and Mullen in the loss column as we battle for 3rd place and possibly higher in the playoff race. HRD can manage only 2 hits on the evening and all 8 times that they strikeout occur over the last 4 innings of the game including the last 4 hitters.

Game 37 - Wednesday July 24 – EB Vs Brennan's Brewers at Delaware Park (AA) – EB wins 8-7. Not our most efficient night of the year but we find a way to win as Lenny drives in the go ahead run in the bottom of the 6th and Ernie comes on and gets the save in relief of Gelley who battles 6 innings to get the victory. Eddie continues to lead the way, as he is 2 fer 2 with a pair of RBI before having to leave the game to attend to business. That does not matter as DBart enters the lineup in his spot in the 5th inning and crushes a triple to score his pizzano Lenny and then scores himself on a 2 out single by Mikey. This gives EB a 7-4 lead before the Warriors tie it up in the 6th setting the stage for Lenny's heroics in the bottom of the 6th. Ralph, as he has all season, uses the bench perfectly in the 6th, inserting Nuke into the game as a pinch runner after G leads of the bottom of the 6th with a single. He'll end up scoring the eventual winning run on Lenny's two-out hit. We could have put this game away early but miss out on a few opportunities and play down to the Brewers level. Mikey has a pair of hits including a double and collects 2 RBI and Ralph bangs out a couple hits and steals a base.

Game 38 - Friday July 26 – EB Vs Temple Club at Burgar Park (35) – EB wins 12-0. The score indicates the type of game it was. Boring. The game is only 3-0 through 3 innings but EB is riding the confidence of it's manager as Ralph keeps laughing and telling us it's only a matter of time before we rally up and blow them away. We then proceed to do just that. We'd prefer to have the game be a close affair which would allow Daryl (AZ) to throw as many innings as he'd like against us because we don't want to face their scrubby lob ballers. We figure we'd start and do the same thing with Kirby. Kirby has them so befuddled that they ask us to change pitchers and they take Daryl out also. It doesn't matter who EB throws though as Pep and Lew finish the shutout. Tim Malaney makes his first EB appearance going 1 for 3 with a walk and collects his first 3 RBI. Pep and Ralph are the only two in the lineup without a hit. We have only 1 extra base hit when DBart doubles to drive in a run in the 2nd.

Sunday July 28 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Rojek Field (AA) – Rained out. First significant rainfall in about six weeks starts around 4:00AM. The diamond can hold the water and players work on the field and it's playable. However the rains and lightning come again and the game is called off. By the time we get home, the skies are blue and the sun is out. The sky was completely black when we left the park!!! How does that happen? Bummer.

Game 39 - Monday July 29 – EB Vs Diamondbacks at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB wins 3-2. EB gets a victory where again our bench is used perfectly by Ralph and we rally to get a win. It's an odd evening that sees 16 DBack hitters go down on strikes including 12 of the first 13 outs but still finds EB trailing 2-0 entering the bottom of the 7th. This is when EB notices that the Diamondbacks have removed their pitcher who up to this point has shut us out on 3 singles. Are they fucking stupid? Eddie and Gelley work the new pitcher for walks to start the 7th. Nuke is inserted as a pinch runner for Gelley and Mikey drops a perfect sac to move both runners into scoring position. T cashes one with a single and then Danny smartly notices the pitchers wildness and takes a few pitches. This pays off as the 2nd pitch bounces to the screen scoring Nuke with the tying run. Danny then works a walk and they intentionally walk G to load the bases setting up a force at every base. This sets the stage for DBart as he comes off the bench to hit for Spink and with 1 out fights off a tough pitch, puts it in play to the first basemen who comes up with it but can not make a play anywhere as T crosses the plate with the winning run. We mob DBart, as the squad is jubilant after pulling the game out. Pep records the complete game victory.

Game 40 - Wednesday July 31 – EB Vs Welland Chiefs at Burgar Park (NL) – EB loses 12-9. A rare EB/Chiefs tilt at venerable Burgar Park that sees us fall behind 12-4 before rallying for 5 runs in the 7th and having runners at the corners when the final out is made. Ernie gets a start at 3B and responds with a pair of hits and a walk while fielding flawlessly. However, 5 other errors, a couple of the hideous variety on routine plays doom the squad. Ralph has the only extra base hit on the night as he hits a double. 11 singles and a double will not work tonight. Lenny drives in 3 runs and Spink gets a pair of hits as he along with Danny and Ernie score twice.

Game 41 - Monday August 5 – EB Vs Mullen Roofing at Sheridan Park (AA) – EB loses 1-0. We manage only two singles in dropping a tight game as Mullen makes an unearned run in the 3rd inning stand up. EB manages to work 5 walks but we leave 6 runners on base, have a runner thrown out at the plate and another picked off 1st base. We had jumped out to big 1st inning leads against these guys the first two times we played but tonight we just can't get going. Eddie and Gelley have our only hits. Gelley bolts afterwards for reasons that we'll have to figure out.

Game 42 - Wednesday August 7 – EB Vs Kuhn Contracting at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 10-7. A see saw game as we give up 3 in the 1st, tie it in the 2nd, give up 6 more (1 earned) in the 3rd on 3 errors before rallying back in the 4th, 5th and 7th innings to make a game of it. We hurt ourselves in the last inning when we are thrown out at the plate for the 2nd out when we are down by 3 runs. That run didn't matter but the out sure was a killer. Nuke and Donny throw 3 1/3 innings of 1run ball in relief of Gelley who was the victim of 4 of the teams 5 errors tonight, as we didn't support his mound work. Ralph is on base 3 times scoring twice, Ernie plays another solid game at 3B and has 2 hits including a triple, Lenny drive in 3 runs and has a triple and T has 3 hits including a double. Gelley bolts for the 2nd straight game, a sort of reverse Joe D streak he has begun.

Game 43 - Thursday August 8 – EB Vs Welland Legends at Burgar Park (35) – Tie game 6-6. We play 7 innings and can't play a few more to settle the score? It never fails that something will come up every year to piss us off about the way the Canadians play ball. If it isn't a 6 run rule it will be 6 o'clock games at Burgar with the blinding sun in your eyes or the umps not showing up or the game being rained out, etc. I wonder what it will be next year. What a joke. Another impressive power display by the squad as we bang out 14 singles and a double. Both teams leave the bases loaded in the final frame. Mikey is 4 fer 4 and drives in a pair of runs while Lew and Ralph each lace a pair of hits. Donny gets the start tonight on the hill and proceeds to warm up before the 1st inning with his pager still attached to his belt. Mikey runs in from his 1B position to get Donny to come correct. This will go down in EB busher annals along with K White playing with his watch on when he first joined the team and Pep meeting EB the first 2 times with his uniform zipper down. Lame.

Game 44 - Friday August 9 – EB Vs Chippewa at Lyons Park (35) – EB wins 17-0. Lew, Mikey and Ralph shut down Chippewa on 4 hits and a single walk. EB pounds out 20 hits including 4 doubles and an AK HR. This game also provided us with a few statistical oddities. After striking out to start the game as the first hitter, Ralph reaches base 5 consecutive times on 4 hits and a walk. G scores 4 times. Everyone in the lineup has at least 1 hit and 1 run scored. Oddly enough everyone also has at least 1 RBI except for Lenny although he himself had 3 hits including a double and he was hitting third behind Mikey and Ralph who were on base 7 of 11 times!

Game 45 - Sunday August 11 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 6-4. In our final game of the 2002 AA regular season we lose to the team we'll face tomorrow night in the playoffs. We give up 5 runs in the first 2 innings but our sticks never get going after getting into an early hole. We actually led 2-1 before giving up 4 runs in the 2nd. However, our offense is blanked for the next 5 innings before staging a 2 run rally in the top of the 7th that sees us leave runners at the corners. T has 3 hits and Ralph 2 but we hurt ourselves by twice getting thrown out stealing once when we are down by 3 runs and another when we are down by 4! It's hard enough to get to reach 1st base, why do we feel so casual about giving back the base runner and letting the other team collect a precious out on us? Scoring runs is all about getting base runners and NOT CREATING OUTS. Just the hitter creates enough outs. Don't give up any more with stupid base running. We'll forget about this one quickly as it doesn't matter now. The new season begins tomorrow night.

Game 46 - Monday August 12 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Sheridan Park (AA Playoffs-Wild Card Round – Game # 1) – EB loses 10-4. Pep comes out in the playoff opener and gets rocked, blowing a 4-2 4th inning lead to put EB in a huge hole in the best of 3 series. He also “contributes” with the bat going 0 fer 4 and K'g twice as the first 4 EB hitters are a combined 2 for 16 with 6 strikeouts. The only bright spots came from Mikey who has 3 hits including a double and scores twice, Gelley who has 2 hits and T who reaches base 3 of 4 times and also scores twice. We'll need to regroup and come out Wednesday and even the series.

Game 47 - Wednesday August 14 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Pepsi Center (AA Playoffs-Wild Card Round – Game # 2) – EB wins 7-2. Gelley comes through tonight with one of the more sack job type of performances in EB history as he rescues the squad from the brink of elimination by twirling a masterpiece in the rain. He walks only 1 batter although the balls are wet and the game is played through steady and often times heavy rainfall. It's one of those games where the rain is just not heavy enough to delay the game as this diamond soaks up the water but is enough to distract a pitcher or hitter or fielder if you let it. But when the going got tough Gelley responded to knot the series at a game apiece as he is in control from the 1st pitch of the game on. We play incredible defense to support his inspired pitching as T, Ernie and Mikey combine to make play after play. None are more important than the inning ending double play T makes to end the top of the 4th with the bases load and EB holding a 2-0 lead. In EB's next at bat, inspired by T's defense, we score 3 runs as our first 3 hitters reach base on errors. HRD is complaining about the rain and the conditions and this works to our advantage as we are making every play, even the impossible ones. At this point we know we've got them and we roll to victory behind Gelley's complete game effort. Danny and Ralph each drive in a pair of runs, T is on base 3 times and Eddie has a pair of hits. Sunday is the rubber game, winner take all.

Game 48 - Sunday August 18 – EB Vs Home Run Derby at Rojek Field (AA Playoffs-Wild Card Round – Game # 3) – EB wins 5-0. We will not be denied as again we play a perfect defensive game to back Pep on the hill and clinch the series. The clincher is a rematch of game 1 starters Minarcin and Pep and the game is another pitchers duel as we score a pair of unearned runs to lead 2-0 going into the bottom of the 5th. With 2 out Pep surrenders a triple and then Gelley calls for a pickoff throw to 3rd when the runner sprints down the line. Pep twirls and throws and the runner is out by a mile to end the inning. The game is more or less over from this point before Mikey drives in an insurance run in the 7th followed by Gelley's 2 run double to put the game out of reach. This game was actually won on Wednesday night when Gelley demoralized HRD in the rain with his outstanding pitching performance. EB could have thrown their gloves out there and won this game as by today we had them convinced that we would not be denied. Pep is amused in the 1st inning by the lady HRD fan who is yelling at him to quit throwing over to first base to hold a runner close and throw the ball to the plate. Pep steps off the mound and smiles to honor her annoying cackling. T drives in a run; Mikey and Eddie have 2 hits each and Pep 3 as EB wins the series. Next up is the Eldredge Club tomorrow night in game # 1 of the semi-finals as Ralph again correctly predicts the outcome of the other playoff series as the Diamondbacks prevail 2 games to 1 over Mullen Roofing. Over to Ernie's house afterwards for a pool party as Gelley, Pep and Shannon Previte are blinded by the chlorine mine that has disguised itself as a pool. Hopefully they'll be able to see by game time tomorrow night. Pep's 100th career EB victory.

Monday August 19 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA Playoffs-Semi Finals -Game # 1) – Game rained out.

Game 49 - Wednesday August 21 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA Playoffs-Semi Finals – Game # 1) – EB wins 5-2. Brian hurls an impressive game tonight to give EB a 1-0 lead in this best of 3 series by shutting down the leagues 2nd place team. As we have done all year we play outstanding defense and get some clutch hits to get the win. The squad parlays 11 hits including 3 doubles and 3 walks while making only 1 error into a victory. Danny and Pep are missing tonight and Mike Barreca has come to the game to help as we display our roster depth. Eddie hits 2 doubles while Mikey drives in a pair with 2 hits of his own. Gelley helps his own 6 hit CG effort by collecting 2 hits including a double, as EB is a game away from the final round.

Game 50 - Friday August 23 – EB Vs Welland Temple Club at Burgar Park (35) – EB wins 14-3. Virtual BP as we rough up another sad club. These guys are beginning to resemble Chippewa. It's travel day in the AA playoffs and that means the EB traveling baseball show can squeeze in a game as we head home to play Game 2. The squad races to a 14-0 lead before giving up 3 meaningless runs in the bottom of the 6th. Donny, Kirby and Lew handle the pitching duties as Lenny drives in 4, G 3 and Malaney and Donny 2 apiece in the route. AK, G and Lenny also score 3 times each. Kirby is the only hitless player wearing an 0 fer 4 collar but redeems himself with a pair of scoreless innings including 4 strikeouts. Lew and AK show up fuckin' late for the game in true Kuhn Contracting style and we must borrow Randy to field a team before they come running into the park like a couple fairies. This is embarrassing to the club.

Game 51 - Sunday August 25 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Rojek Field (AA Playoffs-Semi Finals – Game # 2) – EB loses 1-0. We pass up an opportunity to close out the Bicyclemen and move onto the finals as our bats fall silent. The lone run is manufactured as a bloop single turns into a hustling double when we are slow getting the ball back into the infield and is followed by a pair of ground balls. We make 2 outs at the plate ending the 1st and 4th innings. First Eldridge makes a perfect throw on a passed ball in the 1st inning to the pitcher covering the plate, a play we'd score on 99% of the time. Next we run ourselves out of the 4th inning trying to score from 2nd base on a ground ball second to first putout. Pep goes the distance in the loss and also "contributes" at the plate with an 0 fer 3 day, as he joins the Klan, killing 3 separate rallies. Now we'll just have to wait until tomorrow to close them out, prolonging the inevitable. Kuhn Contracting has the right idea as they bounce the Diamondbacks today to win their series in 2 straight games.

Game 52 - Monday August 26 – EB Vs Eldredge Club at Sheridan Park (AA Playoffs-Semi Finals – Game # 3) – EB loses 5-2. A depressing end to a great year by EB as again we are knocked out of the playoffs in the semi's. For the 2nd straight day our bats can not come up with a timely hit as we leave the

bases loaded twice while leaving 10 men on base. Ralph has injured his back sliding during yesterday's game and he can't go tonight and his presence at the top of the lineup is missed. Danny takes his spot and collects 2 hits but Pep continues his woeful hitting in this series in the 2 hole going 0 for 4. The game is 1-1 heading into the bottom of the 5th as Gelley is twirling well. But with 2 outs in the 5th and a runner on, back to back errors open the floodgates as 4 runs score before we can't record the 3rd out. We mount a rally in the 7th inning scoring our 2nd run as Eddie drives in Danny. We have runners at 1st and 3rd with 1 down before the final 2 hitters make out and our season comes to a sobering end. An empty feeling is felt by all EB as we think back to the last 2 days and realize how close we were to making the finals and the feeling that we let the series get away after a stellar game 1 performance.

We found out a few things about ourselves this year that we can carry into next. The squad finished the AA season with an overall record of 14-12. It was EB's best league record since the 1997 team that went 19-17. A big part of our success was the fact that we had a solid bench consisting of unselfish players who showed up game in and game out. They were willing to do whatever it took to get EB a victory. Ralph managed these players expertly throughout the year always keeping the team in reach of victory. Whether it was solid relief pitching from Ernie, Nuke or Donny or the speed and outfield defense provided by D Bart and Spink this facet of EB time and time again allowed us to adapt to any game situation keeping us within striking distance of a win. We also learned that Ernie's glove at 3B and his quick bat would be something we can use in 2003 and he is going on a strict exercise and strength program designed to reach a spring training weight of 200 lbs. Having Gelley for an entire season provided EB with another solid starting pitcher as he came in and filled the big shoes left by the semi-retirement of B Ward. The team also learned how to win games and not fall apart when adversity struck. We didn't get to where we wanted to be but we made it another step further than last year. If free agency does not tear the team apart in the off-season, EB fans will have high hopes for the 2003 campaign.

Game 53 - Friday August 30 – EB Vs Kuhn Contracting at Delaware Park (AA) – EB loses 3-0. After being off since Monday we agree to play a game Vs Kuhn as they tune up for the AA league finals, which begin on Sunday. We never want to pass up a game but tonight might have been a good time to do it as our lineup features Pep at 1st, Mikey catching, Lenny at short, DBart in left, Malaney in right, Spink in center, Kirby on the hill and Nuke at 2nd. EB K's 11 times and we are shut out 1 hit. The ruling of the hit was even highly questionable, a total homer call by our scorekeeper, Malaney's father in law who is keeping book. Kirby throws a nice game but we never really mount a rally until the 7th when we load the bases with 2 out before K'g, for the 4th time in the inning, to end the game. Malaney and Spink join the Klan. Kuhn Contracting will go on to win the AA league title defeating the Eldredge Club 3 games to 1.

Game 54 - Saturday August 31 - EB Vs Niagara Falls at Burgar Park (35) – EB loses 10-9. The once venerable Temple Club Tourney has been reduced to a "let's have fun" weekend. Balling today consists of 3 local teams playing a round robin for no glory. The Temple Club squad is losing interest in baseball and no one wants to run the tourney anymore. Hopefully we can hook something up for next year because it's un-American not to be playing ball on Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend. It's so lame that Ralph has made other plans. Lenny is back in charge for our 2 games today. EB is brewing up something bad lately as we have now seemingly forgot how to win again. We had a similar stretch like this back in July after playing 7 straight days. We ended up getting our shit back together but now we are back in one of those ruts. Today we twice have innings where we have Niagara Falls batting with 2 outs and no one on base and then proceed to give up a rally. It happens in the 4th inning as we surrender 3 runs to tie the game with the rally started by the bottom 2 hitters in the order. Then Pep performs the coup de grace by allowing it to happen again in the bottom of the 6th, surrendering 4 runs to lose the game. Perx is playing with us this weekend for the 1st time since quitting on July 8. He is at his incredulous best after the game doubting Pep's strategy of allowing a sizzling NF hitter to hit a 2 run homer off him in the fatal 6th that brings NF back to within 1 run. Of course his strategy is incorrect but we have missed Perx and the passion of his conviction to that strategy today is funny. This is an embarrassing loss. G is supposed to be here today but is mysteriously missing. We surmise that he could be dead as we can think of no other reason why he would be missing a game without us knowing it. Donny somehow hurts his shoulder sliding feet first into 2nd and taking out Temple Club Tommy to prevent a double play. The slide does not go over well with NF and on the play we get a run taken away when Malaney scores but is ruled back to 3rd because time got

called when Donny slid into Tommy. It's another in a long line of stupid umpire Laveque calls that we've come to expect when he works a game. Malaney ends up scoring 1 batter later but it was an odd call and a totally incorrect one. Lenny and AK have 3 hits each, 2 of Lenny's go for 2 bases.

Game 55 - Saturday August 31 – EB Vs Chippewa Indians at Burgar Park (35) – EB wins 11-1. Big fuckin deal. We “avenge” our loss in the previous game but this does not mean that we have discovered how to win again. AK and Lenny hit homers and DBart somehow finds the only hole in the leftfield fence as he hits a sure triple into the gap in left center and it rolls under for a ground rule double. He also gets hosed out of an RBI when Gelley is ordered backed to 3rd base on the play. Lenny's HR, a line drive 15 feet off the ground and inside the left field foul pole dents the roof of a red car in the parking lot. Donny's shoulder is bothering him from the takeout slide against NF and he cannot go in this game. He does return to the bench though all dapper from the shower he took. We thought he had been the 4th EB bolt of the year. Mikey, Perx, Malaney, Lenny and AK each drive in a pair of runs.

Game 56 - Wednesday September 4 – EB Vs Welland Legends at Burgar Park (35) – EB wins 7-2. Kirby goes the first 4 innings tonight to get the victory and Ralph comes on to record the final out for the save as this game is not as close as the score might indicate. We play well tonight led by Ralph's 3 hit, 1 walk, 2 run scored, 2 RBI performance. Lenny benefits from Ralph's being on base all night as he cashes 3 RBI. Kirby and Malaney each score twice. Donny could not make the game tonight but oddly makes an appearance as we are having post game beers beyond the LF fence. He's so completely EB that he drove to Welland to hang at the post-game festivities?

Game 57 - Saturday September 7 – EB Vs Oakville A's at Lyon's Park (Game # 1 – Niagara Falls Tourney) – EB ties 13-13. Each team performs the 6 run rule on each other as EB scores 6 in the 1st inning and Oakville returns the favor on EB in the 4th. Our pitching today is absolutely horrendous as we blow 6-2 and 13-7 leads to dig ourselves a deep hole in the opener. We again have our dream team lineup for this tourney with Eddie driving in 4 runs and Gelley 3 while Mack scores 3 times but our pitching can not get anyone out. We give up 15 hits through the first 3 1/3 innings. Everyone in the lineup has at least 1 hit except for Lew who joins the Klan.

Game 58 - Saturday September 7 – EB Vs Carlton Place at Lyon's Park (Game # 2 – Niagara Falls Tourney) – EB wins 12-1. The EB dream team destroys an overmatched opponent as we score at least once in every inning. Sure, our pitching staff can shut down this team as we surrender only 2 hits. Lenny has 3 hits including a pair of doubles and Ralph drives in 2 runs while AK is on base all 3 times by way of walks. Eddie is the only player without a hit, other than AK who does not have an official at bat. Eddie does make each of his 3 AB's count gathering 3 RBI. It's probably going to be pretty tough to reach the finals with our game 1 blundering but we'll know more when we arrive to play tomorrow morning.

Game 59 - Sunday September 8 – EB Vs Dufferin-Simcoe at Oakes Park (Game # 3 – Niagara Falls Tourney) – EB loses 3-1. Say it loud...”WE SUCK!!!” For the millionth time we find out we need only a win to get us into this afternoons finals. In typical fashion EB comes out, blows some early opportunities to score, runs itself out of another chance in the 5th and gives up 3 unearned runs to give us an early tournament exit. Pep starts on the hill and retires the 1st two hitters before giving up back-to-back hits to put EB in an early 1-0 hole. We surrender another run in the 4th but rally with 1 of our own in the 5th. The rally stops when we are caught napping at 2nd base for the 3rd out after a routine third to first put out. Down 3-1 in the final inning we put runners at 1st and 3rd with 1 out but cannot get a big hit off of Big Paul and his puss. It is simply mind boggling that with the team we field how we can come out flat and lose games especially these must win games. We now have had the same opportunity 3 separate times at tourneys this year only to lose the Sunday morning game to spoil things. Absolute dismal day. At least we can get home and watch the Bills opening game Vs the Jet's, very lame indeed. The bad karma EB displayed will eventually find it's way to Ralph Wilson Stadium as the Bill's lose in equally frustrating fashion on the kickoff in OT which is run back all the way.

Game 60 - Sunday September 15 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Welland Stadium (Game # 1 – Peace Bridge Series) – EB wins 11-1. We get off on the right foot to take the opener of the series as Pep, Donny

and Ernie combine to allow only a single run and scatter 8 hits. EB gets hits from the top to the bottom of the order, 19 in all, 18 singles and a double. We also benefit from 4 Welland errors as they have been off the past 3 weeks and it shows. Wellands 1st 2 errors are especially critical as they come with 2 out and nobody on base in the top of the 1st inning and it paves the way for a 3 run rally to get EB off and running. It's a bittersweet victory though as Len hurts his back in the 3rd inning, guts it out for 2 more and must come out of the game in the 5th. This is a reoccurrence of his back problems from 4 years ago and it could sideline him for a week or maybe longer. He is listed as day to day. Ralph, T, AK and Gelley each have 3 hits, Eddie and T scores 3 times and AK adds 4 RBI. DBart is the only player without a hit as he grounds out 4 straight times. Game 2 goes Wednesday night at Sheridan Park as the Peace Bridge Series shifts to U.S. soil for the first time in its 5-year history. Gelley will toe the slab for the Herd.

Game 61 - Wednesday September 18 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Sheridan Park (Game # 2 – Peace Bridge Series)– EB loses 10-4. In a complete reversal of fortune, tonight its our turn to play like shit as we let 5 pop ups to the infield drop in safely. I'm talking about pop ups that do not even make it out of the infield grass. What the fuck are we doing and does anyone on EB even want this game? We give up a run in the top of the 1st but Eddie ties it with a single in the bottom of the frame and that's as close as we'll get. An extremely sad performance as we blow an opportunity to get a stranglehold on the series and are now back to square one with the series tied at a game apiece. EB makes 6 errors on the evening after making only 1 in the 1st game. Gelley hits a 2 run homer in the 7th for our hitting hi-lite but by then the score was 10-2. Eddie has 3 hits including a pair of doubles and Danny reaches base all 3 times with a couple hits and a walk. Donny shutouts the Chief's over the final 3 innings. Sparky beats us tonight. Lenny somehow gets his body in shape to play tonight and catch all 9 innings even with the back problems he has begun to experience. That's one tough hombre.

Game 62 - Saturday September 21 – Buffalo Indians Vs St. Catharine's Cardinals at Oakville Park (Game # 1 - Oakville Tounrey) – Indians tie 3-3. Great start for the AZ team that we have assembled to come to Oakville to play in this weekend's tournament. Instead of using this to spring board ourselves into cohesive play and winning baseball, we drag the rest of our players into our losing ways as we bungle our way to a tie against a short manned and injured Cardinal team. Pep comes out and starts by putting the team down 3-0 before we even get a chance to bat. St. Kit's will only get 2 more hits after the 1st inning. When Thrower leads off the Indian half of the 1st with an HR, we sense that it's only a matter of time. However we can't get our bats going and after tying the game in the 3rd we have a chance in the bottom of the 6th to win it. With runners at the corners and 1 out Sprckett lifts a shallow fly to center field that is snared and we are doubled off 1st to end the game. Not a good start. Throwers HR to start the game is our only extra base hit as the team has 8 safeties led by AK and Mack with 2 apiece.

Game 63 - Saturday September 21 – Buffalo Indians Vs Detroit Hardboys at Oakville Park (Game # 2 - Oakville Tournrey) – Indians win 14-3. We hate this team and we bludgeon them taking out our 1st game frustrations out on them. We could have used a few of these in the game before. We have 16 hits in the game, 3 each by Thrower and Lenny, Thrower also knocking in 4 runs and T driving in 3. 2 of our 16 hits go for extra bases. Everyone in the lineup has at least 1 hit except for T. Ralph provides some humor as he verbally assaults Lenny in the bottom of the 1st inning for not scoring on his short fly ball that was caught by the centerfielder. We think he was kidding. Lenny would have been hosed. Humorously he then must run for Lenny immediately after this as it is mandatory in this tourney that the last out run for the catcher with 2 outs. He takes his time and draws abuse from the Hardboys. It's comical but soothing as we respond by tacking on 6 runs in each of the 2nd and 3rd innings to blow the game open. Ralph has set us up with great accommodations tonight at the Holiday Inn as we are staying on the executive floor. It's a perfect setup as the balcony connects each pair of rooms, which makes for a more open area for that evenings gathering as 2 for 1 Pizza provides the post game sustenance. A victory tomorrow could possibly produce a showdown in the finals Vs Oakville who is already at 3 and 0 and whose team is made up mainly of the old Colts 45's, which won the Canadian Nationals this summer. Nothing would be better than beating Will-eye, Lou-guy and the rest of the old Colt-guys.

Game 64 - Sunday September 22 – Buffalo Indians Vs Barrie Red Sox at River Oaks Park (Game # 3 - Oakville Tournrey) Indians tie 5-5. Well where do we start on this one? Dismal? Incredible? Barrie shows

up 20 minutes before the game, Pep promptly goes out and retires the first 2 hitters and then seemingly cannot find the 3rd out as he surrenders 4 runs before we get a chance to hit. Ironic in fact because during pre-game warm-ups with Lenny (only because AK and Lew were late to the park) Pep was telling him that in order to win we had to get back to the old days when B Ward would consistently pitch a scoreless 1st and 2nd innings to give us a chance to get going. It wasn't even a prediction and Pep got hexed. We then proceed to produce 3 stupid base running gaffes to seal another poor tournament's fate. Down 5-2 in the 4th with runners at 1st and 2nd we are picked off 2nd base for the 3rd out on the oldest fake in the book. You know the one; where on a 3 and 2 count the pitcher wheels to throw to 2nd base during his delivery. Well, we got caught on it to end the inning. We continue to blunder in the bottom of the 5th with runners at 2nd and 3rd and 1 out we try to tag and score on a fly ball to left. Playing LF was Barrie's starting pitcher who has gone to LF after his 2 inning stint on the hill was over. He threw well when he pitched and was not your typical puss baller. To add further insult, Thrower and his .625 batting average for the weekend to that point was due up. We are thrown out by a mile to end the inning. Finally in the bottom of the 6th with the winning run at 2nd and 1 out a shallow fly to center is caught just off the top of the turf and our runner slips going back to 2nd and is doubled off to end the game in a tie. We do these things game after game after game, giving up precious outs for nothing. We'll never, ever learn which is why we'll always have disappointment. Even with the lame tie we think we still have a playoff finals chance so we head back over to the other park only to find out that St. Kits had beat Detroit and we didn't have a chance anyway. Another suck tournament weekend. Next year we need to start winning these things more regularly or at least play better ball. It's embarrassing.

Game 65 - Wednesday September 25 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Sheridan Park (Game # 3 – Peace Bridge Series) EB wins 6-2. Tonight we score early and play airtight defense to take a 2-1 series lead as we head off to Welland for games 4 and 5. After the Chief's goes down quietly in the first EB looks like it will do the same before Lenny legs out a 2 out infield single that ignites our first outburst. Eddie and T follow with walks to load the bases and AK drives in a pair with a single. 4 straight hits open the EB 2nd inning as we score twice more to build a 4-0 lead. With the score still 4-0 in the top of the 5th and the bases filled with Chief's Lenny makes a huge play. He chases down Pep's wild pitch and flips it to him to tag the runner out trying to advance from 3rd to retire the side. Lenny leads off the bottom of the 5th with his first of 2 doubles on the night, as he'll end up 3 for 3 with a walk and 3 runs scored. Danny has 2 hits and also chips in a 2 bagger. Our deplorable base running a thorn in the side all the time, especially this past weekend, continues as we are picked off at 2nd base in the 8th inning when Mikey pulls his bat back on a bunt attempt. It seems our runners think that when the bunt sign is given, they just take off on the pitch regardless of whether we offer at it or not. If we did nothing else to improve in 2003 other than cutting out 75% of the base runner errors and making 50% of the routine fielding plays that we make errors on, it would be scary to see our record. These are so fundamental and so correctable with just a tiny, tiny portion of thinking; we should be able to do that right? The Chief's make a curious choice for starting pitcher tonight when they start a wild lefty rather than going back to McQueen, their game 1 starter. He'll walk 6 men and give up 6 hits over 2 plus innings of work and leave trailing 4-0. McQueen will come on to throw 2 run ball over the final 7 innings, keeping the Chief's in the game.

Game 66 - Sunday September 29 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Welland Stadium (Game # 4 – Peace Bridge Series) EB wins 15-8. The squad gains a stranglehold on the Series as today's victory puts us in the proverbial 3 games to 1 drivers seat. With a depleted lineup that is without Danny, Eddie, Ernie and Perx we again show our deep bench and hit the shit out of the ball. EB hammers 16 singles and 2 doubles in a game that's not as close as the score indicates. Welland continues to have us scratching our heads over their choice of starting pitchers as they start a young kid that we saw early in the season who has no clue how to pitch. They have a rested Sparky who beat us 11 days ago but choose not to use him in this pivotal game. EB capitalizes as we work 5 walks, 6 hits and a hit batter over the first 3 innings building a 7-2 lead. Gelley starts and although sick provides 7 innings of solid work surrendering only 4 runs before Donny comes on with his fabled shu-toe pitch to close out the last 2 innings. Ralph leads the way by getting on base 5 times and driving in 3 runs. Mikey and G match Ralph with 3 hits and 3 RBI each. T scores 3 times. In the 4th inning G laces a 2 run single that marks his 500th career EB hit! Today's lineup has Mikey at 3B, Pep at 1B, DBart, Lenny and Spink in the OF and AK behind the plate to go along with old stalwarts Ralph

and T to complete the infield. We always seem to play better when we are at our minimum player limits. Maybe we should go to AZ with 10 players?

Game 67 - Monday September 30 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Welland Stadium (Game # 5 – Peace Bridge Series) EB loses 4-2. With everyone fearful of the rain that's in the forecast for this weekend at the Coops due to Hurricane Lilly, we want to close the Series out tonight. However, Sparky again shuts down our bats, scattering 9 hits, 3 walks and 3 hit batters to beat us for the 2nd time in the Series in a complete game effort. EB leaves 10 men on base and again suffers with its obligatory couple of base runners doubled off bases to end innings. For the first time since the inception of the Peace Bridge Series we head off to the Coops with the Series still up for grabs. We play well defensively and Pep manages to wiggle out of enough jams to keep the game close. He and Lenny provide a humorous, if not a little scary, attempt to catch a foul ball in the 6th. A little pop up halfway between 3rd and home goes up and they both race to get to the ball. Both dive at the last minute each knocking into each other just enough to make each miss the ball as it falls foul. This is just what Lenny needs as he continues to battle through his back injury. At the end of the inning they both look at each other pissed off saying that they would have made the play if the other had stayed out of the way. Maybe they should try COMMUNICATING. AK plays 3B tonight like he was born to play there. He makes a couple instinctive plays along with a crowd and EB pleasing dive to snare a hard shot down the 3rd base line that is destined for a double. This eventually ends up saving a run and you would think inspire the squad but today just will not be our day. We leave the bases loaded in the 8th and waste a leadoff double in the 9th as the Series stands at 3 games to 2 for EB. Now it's off to the Coop's.

Game 68 - Saturday October 5 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Doubleday Field (Game # 6 – Peace Bridge Series) EB wins 15-6. We finally get our name on the trophy as we pummel the Chief's to clinch the Series. Lenny crushes a pair of HR's and adds a double as he leads the way with 3 hits and 3 RBI to backup Gelley's 8 solid innings of work on the hill. AK, T and DBart drive in a pair of runs each while Danny and Pep score 3 times in the pasting. We lead 3-2 after 1 inning and increase that lead to 8-2 after 5 as we score in every inning except for the 4th and the 7th, pounding out 17 hits along the way. It's our 2nd year staying at the farmhouse and almost everyone made it down on Friday evening. The wildcard round of the MLB playoffs are on so the atmosphere is superb. Ernie has brought John Madden football with him and that is causing some problems as we have twice missed the fuckin' 1st innings of a REAL game while these dopes are finishing up their games. Tonight Danny and Gelley cook up a feast and it tastes superb, especially after clinching the Series. Danny knows exactly what he is doing as he brings his own special grill and we have food for dinner, food for snacks and food for breakfast. He's in the wrong line of business. This is his best meal yet! We hold our ceremonial broken bat burning as we offer our mangled sticks from the season to the baseball gods. The Chief's show their class by making the trek to the farmhouse to offer congratulations and partake in the festivities. Their first baseman, Jerry, who is a man of color pulls into the wrong driveway and just avoids some roughing up by the backwoods country inbreeds that inhabit that house. Spink and Ernie can't handle hanging with their old fart teammates and head into Oneonta to hang with people their own age. They return telling some crazy story about, a weirdo black chick and a green cucumber. We're afraid to ask what that's all about. Pep, of all people, is reminding the team that we have another game to play in the morning.

Game 69 - Sunday October 6 – EB Vs Welland Chief's at Doubleday Field (Game # 7 – Peace Bridge Series) EB loses 10-4. Sparky beats us for the 3rd time in the Series as we make 7 errors and fumble our way through the game. Perx has announced his official retirement from EB and wants to go out with flair. He is playing every position, one each inning as he pitches a scoreless 9th and goes 2 for 4 on his final day. Gelley collects 3 hits and drives in 2 and Lenny has a pair of hits. In the 6th inning T launches a home run to join the EB list of homerers at the Coop. EB has 13 hits, 3 walks and 0 strikeouts on the day but can manage only 4 runs as we leave at least 1 runner on base each inning and 13 overall. It's an embarrassing way to end the season, as we seemed content with our victory yesterday instead of trying to send Welland home winless. It's Sprackett's first win at the Coops as EB holds a 10 games to 2 advantage in Cooperstown. He had missed their 1st victory in 2000 when he was on the DL and couldn't make the trip.

The Erie -Buffalo season has now officially ended. Although our AA team did not make the finals and we played inconsistently in the vintage tournaments the team experienced it's best season overall in 4 years. Our overall record was 45-24, the first time we had reached 40 victories since the 1998 squad (40-34) and our winning percentage of .652 was our best showing since 1996 (.695) when we were considered A ball and the league had separate Sunday and weekday schedules. There is still lots of room for improvement but at times this year we regained that old EB swagger where we expected to win when we went out to play. That is a first big step towards becoming champions. First things first. See you next year.

Sunday November 24 –Lenny opens up his Sunday paper glancing at the Lifestyles section and is struck by the color picture of a guy hitting a ball with an EB hat on. He looks closely wondering who the hell is wearing EB colors and sees G, front and center. G is grabbing a portion of his 15 minutes of fame, eschewing the EB no press policy, by appearing in a Sunday Buffalo News article titled:

THE BOYS of SUMMER (and fall, and winter and spring)

It's a dedicated group that braves the elements to play America's game year round in Delaware Park

By **PAULA VOELL**
News Staff Reporter
11/24/2002

With the temperature in the low 30s and the sun coming through the clouds, it's a questionable morning for baseball by most standards. But not for the Old Tymers. For them, it's always a perfect day to play their favorite sport. In one of those curious Buffalo traditions, a group of ball players who show up at Delaware Park around 9 a.m. each Saturday, Sunday and holiday - it's been going on for 75 years, they say - to play ball. In the summer, they play on a diamond. At this time of year, look for them near the Juicery, hitting balls to each other. They range in age from 6 to 77 and include men who have played all their lives, a few women, some children, even a rare walk-on who has never played before and becomes a likely candidate for the "Most Improved" or "Rookie of the Year" title. There are somewhere between 30 and 50 active players, including a fire captain, an attorney, a retired IRS agent. In the cold weather a batter hits fungoes (high pop flies) and the rest, scattered wherever they want to stand, shag them. The fielders toss the balls they've caught into a plastic milk crate and when the outfield box is full and the batter's box is empty, the next batter steps up. It's not competitive in any way; in fact it's extremely cooperative. "We throw them in on a silver platter," said 58-year-old retired IRS agent Mike McMahon, of the Town of Tonawanda, referring to the pitching. They've played in the worst weather that Buffalo could throw at them: snow, wind, blizzards, rain. They were out in well-below-zero temperatures on what they say was the third coldest day in Buffalo history. They've played when they had to shovel out a spot where they could stand. They play when others are cooking turkeys and opening presents on Thanksgiving and Christmas. And they never complain. In fact, they cheer that they can still be out, playing ball. "If you don't show up, you're a wuss," said Jim Galbo of Cheektowaga, who still plays in a MUNY league at 52. "We've played when it was snowing so hard you couldn't even see the ball." Though they will admit to missing a time or two when snow made the streets impassable, it's become a point of pride that they play every weekend. How? They simply bundle up and switch to boots. "We make it a point to never miss a day," said Galbo, who is as proud of the long-standing tradition as the rest of them. They play the way they did when they were boys and gathered up their neighborhood gangs, grabbed a balogna sandwich on the run and stayed out until dark. "I think I'm 14 when I'm out here," said Jimmy Dys on, whose birth certificate would put him at 77, making him the senior member. It's a welcoming group. In fact, if you linger around the edges, you're likely to be recruited. And if you walk up and express any interest, you're in. The Rev. Richard J. Zanoni, pastor of St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, got involved when he walked over after he had been watching a Canisius High School game at the park. "You're away from your troubles for a couple hours and you get a little exercise," said Zanoni. Dr. Joseph S. Testa, 50, has played with the group for 21 years, after encountering them the same way. "I went to unwind in Delaware Park after a night of training in the nursery at Children's Hospital," he said. But he's given up playing in the winter. "It's just too cold out there," said Testa, who practices family medicine in Tonawanda. Rules are kept to a minimum: there's the no-bad language rule and the one that says that the first one there hits first. And there's the unspoken understanding that everyone encourages each other and leaves feeling better than when they arrived. For many years, the group was held together

by Bernie Sicherman, a well-known attorney who died in 1994. (There's a bench near Diamond 3 that the Old Tymers put up to honor him). "Bernie always insisted on this being a class operation," said Zaroni, 55. Sicherman and the Old Tymers have been a constant for Zaroni, he said, because they've always been there even after absences when he lived out of town. He recalls coming back to Delaware Park after being away for seven years, "and there was Bernie, still hurling them in," said Zaroni. Zaroni said Sicherman "wouldn't let you go home on an error. In a blinding snowstorm he'd hit fungoes for 20 minutes because he said, "You never know, you might not get up tomorrow and you don't want to go out on an error.'" Zaroni can only recall one day, bitterly cold and overcast, when Sicherman caved in to the weather. "After we'd gone through a box of balls, he said, "Let's get out of here,'" Zaroni recalls. On the worst days, a core group of five or six show up. And on a recent crisp November morning they fielded about a dozen, including Bart Zymka, 11, who is from Poland and had never played the game before moving to Buffalo. Though they can seldom find a team to play against, Joseph Norwin, 69, of Williamsville said they've played eight actual games, the last against Buffalo State College a few years ago. "We won all of them including one when we were down 7-0 and came back to win 8-7," said Dyson, relishing the memory. Jamie Baco, 44, a photography lab technician, often brings his daughter, Madelaine, 6, with him, no matter the weather. Madelaine said "the funniest thing" she's seen on the field is her dad diving into the snow after a ball. "The fact that you can be here - on a day you really shouldn't - is the most fun," said Baco, who is a baseball historian. Beyond the diamond, they've coalesced into a social group: they celebrate Sicherman's birthday each year with a dinner; they took a field trip to Cooperstown; and this fall they went to Chestnut Ridge Park where McMahon stood on the top of a hill and hit balls to the rest of the group. "I can't get enough," said Galbo, who admits that he also has a somewhat strange reason for playing ball year-round, through all conditions: "After you've played all winter," he said, "you'd be surprised how great a cruddy day in March can look."