

## Erie-Buffalo 2000

Another season is upon us and EB is ready to get going. The hot stove league as usual is rife with rumored signings (T Blarr, N Wicker, Eddie Jr.) and comebacks (Glenno, Kirby) of various players and the anticipated addition of Gary Klumpp full time to our pitching staff. Ralph was the gracious host of the EB team party that again is a first class blow out as the guest list has grown and more people wake up the next day wondering what happened the night before. No MVP trophy was awarded this year as we sucked and in the old adage of Branch Rickey, "we can finish last with whoever we may want to name MVP, so what does it matter". Ralph is awarded signed balls for a victory in the Oakville Tournament and for scoring his 500<sup>th</sup> run. Again the players have their own ways of getting ready and Lenny's warehouse is again EB version of Spring Training as pitchers and catchers, B Ward, Pep and Lenny reported in January. Perx has also joined this bunch as he intends to toe the rubber a few more times this year. Pep is rumored to miss half the season due to work obligations but this is just Ralph fanning the rumor mills as it makes for good press. Perx and Klumpp'r have secured dates at two local golf domes for after midnight and before sunrise get together where we can hit, throw and take infield. This is something new for us this year. Our roster looks like this to start 2000:

C- Len Previte (Lenny)  
1B- Mike Myers (Mikey)  
2B- Ralph Proulx (Ralph)  
SS- Dan Ingersoll (Danny)  
3B- Jim Proulx (Perx)  
LF- Pete Englert (Pete)  
CF- Ed Warneke (Eddie)  
RF- Paul Englert (Pauly)  
OF/P- Steve Pepi (Pep)  
OF/IF- Jimmy Galbo (G)  
P/IF- Bob Ward (B Ward)  
P- Gary Klumpp (Klumpp'r)  
P- Jeff Ward (J Ward)  
OF- Nate Wicker (Nate)

Thursday April 5 - Cazenovia Park - Practice rained out. It was 70 degrees this past weekend an early spring everyone thinks but this is typical Buffalo and if you don't know this story by now, you are stupid. This time of year anything can happen. You can only keep trying. Received the tourney schedule today and we have added two new ones to the old standby's. One in Ottawa in June and another in Chippewa in July. The Ottawa tourney we are being "enticed" to attend by being paid \$400.00 C\$ (1.37 U\$) for traveling expenses because none of the other teams from the Southern Ontario Vintage

Loop want to attend and the region must be represented in Ottawa. Ralph is all over it and we will be there.

Friday April 7 - Delaware Park - 45 degrees but we are out there. We go right to BP but a lot of hand stingers and a lot of wild pitching by Eddie Jr. who may have to be left behind for extended spring training. He was a late spring pickup, another in a long line of players that used to play but... Our take is the kid was a degenerate, not a bad thing for EB, but the kid is young, stupid and from South Buffalo with a knocked up girl friend and a suitcase full of excuses. He hits B Ward twice and can not find the plate. Pitchers throw off the hill. A quick infield and we are done. Perx, Ralph, B Ward, G, Pauly, Pep and Eddie Jr. are there. All different EB hats for the second year in a row. We go get food at Danny's restaurant afterwards and as soon as we see him he shatters a glass by dropping it on the floor. E-6, bad omen. Danny has made it back from a March snowboarding trip. Only has one bruise and no broken bones. Not a brain surgeon here as he apparently never heard the story of Jim Lonborg following his Cy Young season when he was chasing Eva Marie Saint down a ski hill and... Good work Danny, you lived to tell about it. Perx informs us his body has only lived the equivalent of 48 years based on an Internet survey about his lifestyle. We also laugh about the fact that some time when we are old, gray and unable to play, we can pop in the 1997 video from the Coops and watch Perx start the game ending DP and Glenno (two 300 games and a 299 in the past three weeks!) finish it by spinning the runner off the plate. Life is great. Let the games begin. Spring training game vs. St. James this Sunday although the forecast calls for.....snow!

Sunday April 9 - Centennial Park - Game snowed out. OK, cut the bullshit. Mildest winter on record, over 100 years, and it's fucking snowing on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Even the rest of the week looks the same. Are you kidding?

Saturday April 15 - Delaware Park - 70 degrees and sunny. Finally. A good quick one-hour, forty-five minute workout. Pauly gets a little testy with Pep because he has been running his ass off shagging while Pep hangs out at first for the occasional infield play. Spring training game tomorrow at Centennial vs. St. James. Fundraiser for the Eldredge Club is tonight.

Sunday April 16 - Centennial Field Vs St. James (Spring Training) - EB loses 13-10. Temperature has dropped twenty degrees overnight. We give up back-to-back homers in the top of the first to start us off. We then battle back and make a game of it. Good opening work for the squad except for the loss but everyone including the rookies, Eddie Jr. and Nate, make a good showing. Eddie Sr. parks a homer and so does G. G's is the first EB blast of the year. He has been pumping iron all winter and it's paying early dividends. Tony from Mississauga has gotten a job working for Ralph and has pledged to be the official team scorekeeper for the eighty game schedule. He does a good job today and is still learning the fine art of baseball scorekeeping. He should

have a very interesting summer if he can keep pace with the squad. B Ward springs for the post game festivities after winning \$138.00 in the 50/50 raffle at the Eldredge Club fundraiser last night. A few beers later and Lenny is vehemently disputing his "loosey-goosey" comment that made its way into a Buffalo Magazine article about EB that M "Stumpy" Ward wrote.

Wednesday April 19 - Delaware Park - Practice rained out, 30-40 degrees, rainy.

Friday April 21 - Delaware Park - Carbon copy of Wednesday except that instead of rain it is snowing for Christ-sakes. This is such bullshit. They are calling for rain every day with temps in the 30's and 40's for the next week. Not much hope of playing our exhibition game tomorrow.

Saturday April 22 - Centennial Field - Spring training game postponed due to snow, cold, etc..

Monday April 24 - Caz Park - We practice! Low 50's and sun if you can believe that. Caz 1 is re-sodded and has installed a clay infield. Looks real good if they could only do something with Mr. Sun. Batting practice is pretty tough as one might expect. Good to get out.

Wednesday April 26 - Centennial Field - We practice again. Better to practice here so we can try and hit the long ball and learn that skill. We go once through the order in BP and then decide to go around again as each of us jump in for five swings to try and hit a homer. The first round results in ZERO homers. B Ward, Lenny, Nate and Mikey hit the fence. We are weak. We try a second round and Lenny wins it by banging one. 3:00 game this Sunday against the new and improved Vinny's, now called the Warriors.

Sunday April 30 - Centennial Field - Vs Warriors (Spring Training) - EB wins 13-7. A rare 3:00 PM game and the Warriors look the same as last year except that they have played once this morning already and we are told have a few of their better guys missing because of it. We'll give them the benefit of the doubt. We jump up early and coast to victory. We do however throw to the wrong base allowing a base runner to move up, forget how many outs in an inning twice, one of those gets Pauly doubled off third base when he gets so excited about Pete hitting a ball that looks like it will go yard. The leftfielder catches it up against the fence while Pauly has crossed the plate and is watching the catch. He even admits that both third base coaches told him only one was out. I won't get into it here, you need only reference the 1998 and 1999 versions of this publication, but are we going to start this shit again? For the second game in a row the squad is treated to free beer, this time by Danny who has brought a half keg which is left over from his dad's retirement/birthday party. Mikey misses the game due to bowling commitments.

Wednesday May 3 - Caz Park - Practice at Caz Two. This session is intended to be at Centennial so that we can have round two of home-run derby but we get there and a high school game is on so we race over to Caz. We smarten up and take diamond two so we don't have to deal with the sun on diamond one. A good turn out by the squad as opening day looms this Sunday. However, it quickly turns into disaster. On the first fly ball hit in fielding practice, Klumpp'r is sent headlong into a tree that has occupied right field at Caz for over 100 years. Full tilt into the 100 year-old tree that is. Down he goes in a heap as EB looks on in disbelief. When we lined up and took our positions in the outfield just seconds before he and Pep discussed letting each other know if either of them were getting close to the tree. At least three players were yelling "Tree! Tree!" Klumpp'r is sent reeling, his kid has witnessed it from ten feet away and Klumpp'r is not getting up. An ambulance is called, practice is halted and the squad looks on. Mikey puts his life saving training to work and calms the fallen player. He will be all right but must spend the night at the hospital with a concussion. Practice is delayed forty-five minutes while they tend to Klumpp'r and EB takes a quick BP before it gets dark as soon as he is carted away. Over to the Black Thorn afterwards where Perx regales us in the jumping he has received in the hockey tourney he was just in this past weekend. Seems four or five guys from the other team decided to rough him up while the rest of his teammates were in the locker room sucking down beer. Perx has a way of making these stories sound very funny and it was.

Sunday May 7 - Centennial Field - Vs Kuhn (AA) - EB loses 9-2.

Kuhn 001 611 0-9 8 1

EB 002 000 0-2 12 2 (0-1 AA) (0-1)

For the second year in a row, Pep gets the opening day start by default. Last year B Ward went away and this year... well you know the Klumpp'r story. Pep actually has a two to one lead through three but inexplicably loses his control in the fourth, walks three men and allows six runs. EB collects twelve hits and three walks but can only muster two runs as we hit into double plays in the first, second and sixth to end those three innings. Danny collects three hits and Klumpp'r throws a scoreless seventh. Today marks the debut of the first products of the EB farm system as Tony Fox (K) and Nate Wicker (single) make pinch hitting debuts. Pep bolts the scene in our first game of the year.

Wednesday May 10 - Houghton Park - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - Rained out.

Friday May 12 - St. Catharine's Park - Vs St. Catharine's (35) - Rained out. This is disappointing as we were to play in the Blue Jays former NY-Penn League park that they vacated when the team was purchased by the NY Met's and moved to Staten Island in hopes of putting a professional team in

Brooklyn. The ugly weather that ruined this game included a tornado that ripped through Niagara-on-the-Lake and Youngstown. Very ugly.

Sunday May 14 - Centennial Field - Vs Molly's Pub (AA) - Rained out. This is frickin' ridiculous. Three straight games now. Left over effects of Friday's storm. We'll try again Monday night. The squad is getting a little antsy.

Monday May 15 - Sheridan Park - Vs Warriors (AA) - EB loses 4-2.

EB	000	101	0-2	8	1	(0-2 AA)	(0-2)
Warriors	002	200	x-4	10	0		

This is last years Vinny's team with a few pickups. A much better ball club with a 6'10" pitcher. Nothing special but special enough to limit the squad to two runs for the second straight game. Pep starts and falls to oh and two as EB is stumbling out of the gate. B Ward and Klumpp'r also pitch as with all the rain we are trying to get all the pitchers some work. Last year we started four and one and fell apart down the stretch so maybe this year we'll get hot at the end. Mikey and Lenny drive in runs while Pep hits two doubles and scores twice. Sheridan-stick is true to its windy nickname as gusts reach forty miles an hour. Klumpp'r and Pep wear the wrong socks, as they show up in the traditional brown when the rest of the squad is sporting the new Texas orange. Now that's two lefties for you. The team is trying to stay upbeat, as the schedule does not get any easier.

Thursday May 18 - Burgar Park - Vs Welland Lesion's (35) - Rained out.

Sunday May 21 - Delaware Park - Vs Wiechec's (AA) - Rained out. This is getting reminiscent of the summer of 1992, which was the most miserable rainy summer in my lifetime. It just keeps drizzling and drizzling. We moved today's game from Centennial to Delaware where Ralph, Pep and Perx raked and pushed water off the diamond on Saturday. The diamond looked good yesterday after that if it would only quit drizzling today. The irritating thing is, if it's gonna rain, then rain. This drizzle thing is frustrating and bullshit!

Monday May 22 - Delaware Park - Vs Kuhn Construction (AA) - EB loses 6-5.

Kuhn	012	002	1-6	7	1		
EB	032	000	0-5	9	5	(0-3 AA)	(0-3)

Klumpp'r throws a gem in his first start of the year but EB squanders 3-0, 5-1 and 5-3 leads and loses the game when Pep, in relief in the bottom of the seventh, tries to get cute when intentionally walking a hitter

and attempts a pickoff at first base on a full count pitch. He throws the ball away and in comes the game-winning run. Just get the goddamned hitter! The loss is a bitter one as five of the six runs are unearned. An error in the second and three more in the third cause Klumpp'r to not have enough gas left to complete seven and Pep garners his third loss of the young season. EB is now oh and three and the squad is speechless. G has a two-run single in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Pep contributes a two-run sacrifice fly as Ralph scores from second after the left fielder falls down making the catch. Mikey booms a double to right center in the second to get the scoring started as we jump up three to nothing. Pauly hoses Mikey Lew at first on a line drive to right field but does not get the call. He has him by a good step. Other than the five errors and Pep's ill-advised throw, the squad plays solid fundamental ball. Perx lays down two sacrifice bunts and the team steals four bases. Pauly gets hooded. Pep bolts...again.

Wednesday May 24 - Delaware Park - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - EB loses 7-5.

EB 004 000 1-5 5 0 (0-4 AA) (0-4)  
HRD 102 301 x-7 8 4

The skid continues and has now reached four games. This time we squander a four to one lead, rally in the 7<sup>th</sup> and fall short. The game is delayed for ten minutes due to a driving rainstorm in the bottom of the 5th. The game continues but the infield is littered with puddles although the footing is solid because of the red clay that is laid down there. Our team hitting is the story of haves and have-nots. Four guys are hitting .364 and above and five guys are hitting .182 and below. Once we all get in the groove together, hopefully that will translate into wins. Our pitching and defense have been pretty good but our sticks have struggled as we collect only five hits today. Danny makes a spectacular diving play at short and Mikey picks him up with a scoop at the other end. We also make a nice relay play from Pauly to Ralph to G at third but the ump misses G's tag and the guy gets a triple and eventually scores. Lenny also gets hosed at first on an infield single that he legged out. He was already by the bag when the ump thumbed him. Mikey has the new all white uniform covered in red clay from his usual pigpen routine. We play in the Mississauga Tournament this weekend and we wear that uniform in the first game so it will be interesting to see how white he can get that uni by game time Saturday. South Park Eddie bolts during the rainstorm telling the guys that it's too cold and we'll catch him later. Can you say Schnellman?

Saturday May 27 - Quinnipac Park - Vs Tillsonburg Old Sox (35T-Mississauga) - EB loses 2-0.

EB 000 000-0 3 1 (0-5)  
Tillsonburg 100 01x-2 5 0

Our bats are totally shut down as we drop the opener to the tournament, collecting only three hits. Pitching and defense is solid but we can never get the big hit. Bob Corn K's with the two on and two out in the top of the fifth and Pep K's twice looking, once with a runner at third and one out in the third, which represents the squads best chance to score. Pep also must resort to pretending to be hit by a pitch leading off the last inning to save himself the embarrassment of being hooded. Pete, Pauly and G collect the only EB hits. Tillsonburg has a number of very good pitchers but this is nothing we have not seen. Not a good start. The team is desperate for a win, any win against anybody. Nobody had a clean uniform today after Wednesday nights muddy display at Delaware Park. Lenny, Pete and Mikey each washed theirs six times but it still is spotted with red clay.

Saturday May 27 - Meadowvale Park - Vs Chippewa Chief's (35T Mississauga) - EB wins 14-3.

EB	761	000-14	19	1	(1-5)
Chippewa	002	001-	3	7	1

About the only team we can beat right now. EB jumps out with seven in the top of the first and six in the second as we thump a lame squad to keep our slim championship game hopes alive. Bob Corn is the only guy without a hit, further proof that EB is dragging everyone down! Pep and Ralph use wood, Mikey crashes a three run homer and EB has its first victory of the year. We'll take it. We'd take it against a little league team. Klumpp'r is hitting in this tournament and takes a tumble crossing first base after legging out a base hit. Mikey and G collect three RBI while Lenny, B Ward and Pauly chip in two apiece. G has three hits.

Sunday May 28 - Meadowvale Park - Vs West Mountain (35T Mississauga) - EB loses 5-3.

EB	010	110-3	8	2	(1-6)
W. Mtn.	102	02x-5	9	0	

Gee where do we start? 9:00 AM game, we are at the park at 8:15, West Mountain is showing up around game time. Who should be more prepared? We give them all their runs on various fielding miscues and absolutely kill ourselves with three horrendous base running gaffes. This includes being picked off second in the second to kill an uprising. If that isn't bad enough, in the fifth we rally to tie the score at three on a base hit that scores the tying run and gives us the bases loaded and no one out. On the play though our hitter inexplicably makes a dash for second when the base is already occupied. This causes our runner at third to venture off the base anticipating what our runner at second might do now that the batter is bearing down on him. When he ventures too far he now gets nailed and instead of the bases loaded and no one

out we have guys on first and second and one out. Two fuckin' mistakes on the same play! Needless to say, the next two hitters make out and all we get is the one run. All we ask for is a little, just a little, concentration. After the second miscue, Ralph is beside himself and let's the squad know about it with a verbal assault that shatters the quiet, churchlike Sunday morning atmosphere at the park. The team deserves every word of it and much, much more. How can this happen to us? Sixty-five games per year, over 400 innings of actual game experience every year for the past seven years. Does anything ever sink in? We promptly go out and surrender two runs in the bottom of the frame to fall behind before being retired quietly in the top of sixth to lose the game.

Tuesday May 30 - Delaware Park - Vs St. James Zeniths (AA) - EB loses 9-6.

STJ 400 010 4-9 8 4  
EB 002 040 0-6 6 7 (0-5 AA) (1-7)

A heartbreaking defeat, our fifth in a row in the league as we are now oh and five. It's heartbreaking not only in the way that we lose it but also due to the fact that we played a very good game for six innings and the way plays happened during the game seemed like we were destined to win it. One of those games where you just have a feeling that all is going right for the team, the planets are all lined up and all that bullshit. Pep starts and surrenders four in the top of the first before settling down and giving up only one more run the rest of the way. We battle back, getting two in the third and four in the fifth to take a six to five lead going into the top of the seventh. Pep is lifted in favor of Klumpp'r. First batter up is a left-hander and Klumpp'r induces a tough ground ball to Mikey at first. Mikey comes in and makes a hell of a play fielding the ball on an in between hop for the first out. We then proceed to boot three ground balls that lead to four unearned runs and we don't respond in the bottom of the seventh and we lose. The game ends on a force at second in which Pep slides hard and gets a piece of the second baseman who is taking the game ending force out like a first baseman. Get your force and get the fuck out of there because the bag belongs to the runner. St. James players are too stupid to understand that most fundamental rule because they are morons. If you want to hang around the base then you might get hit. Some post game shoving ensues but that is the extent of it. We make seven errors in the contest and have no one to blame but ourselves.

Wednesday May 31 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (AA) - EB wins 14-6.

EB 180 102 2-14 16 2 (1-5 AA) (2-7)  
Chief's 101 111 1- 6 10 4

Wards to the rescue! B Ward gives us five solid innings, scattering eight hits and J Ward finishes it up by hurling the final two as we get our first league victory of the year! EB scores one in the first and follows that up by posting an eight-spot in a second inning that begins with two walks followed by five consecutive hits. Lenny and T Fox, our 16 year-old rookie, both go four for four as Lenny adds a double, a stolen base and four RBI to the ledger. Perx has three hits and Ralph score three runs in a good solid all around victory. The squad collects sixteen hits and four stolen bases. All is finally right in the EB world. We can get on to concentrating on playing ball now that we have that big weight off our shoulders. Thank god that May is over, the worst month of ball playing ever for an EB squad.

Friday June 2 - Delaware Park - Vs Eldridge Club (AA) - EB loses 10-9.

EB 050 000 4- 9 13 4 (1-6 AA) (2-8)  
EC 501 400 x-10 12 3

One word, ugly. Tempers are short in this one as we play like shit, make idiotic errors and make a last inning comeback that falls one run short. The game ends with Ralph resigning as manager of EB. The dismal start to the season coupled with trying to work rookies into the lineup and the pressure from other players that comes with that has reached a boiling point and we as players have not made his job any easier. Players are pointing fingers and not sticking up for one another, as a team should. Eldredge is the defending league champs but has shown up with a weak squad that is begging to get beat. EB collects thirteen hits; six walks and a hit by pitch against twelve hits and one walk for our opponent but our defense just kills us. T Fox gathers three more hits while Pete, Pauly and Mikey chip in with two apiece. We come out in the first inning with Klumpp'r on the hill and proceed to give up five unearned runs after two were out and nobody was on. We field ground balls and just carelessly throw them away. It has been happening all year and it continues. Klumpp'r keeps hitters off balance and induces weak ground balls yet we can't make the easiest of plays to help him out. We make four errors overall (and that is generous score keeping) that result in seven unearned runs. Can we get any lower than this? The resignation of Ralph as our manager seems to divide the team and his tirade that follows the fourth inning takes the teams focus off the game before we miraculously pull it together and rally for four runs in the top of the seventh, leaving runners at first and third when the game ends. We'll have to see how this ugliest of chapters in EB history plays out. Pete is now managing the team.

Sunday June 4 - Centennial Park - Vs St. James Zeniths (AA) - EB wins 13-8.

EB 000 157 0-13 15 2 (2-6 AA) (3-8)  
STJ 011 050 1- 8 13 2

In Pete's first game back at the helm of EB, we get him a victory. Down two to one entering the fifth, we explode for five to take a six to two lead. G starts the rally by slamming a homer deep over the trees in left center to lead off the inning and Mikey caps it by crashing a two run triple to right to score Len and Pep. Pep promptly goes out and surrenders five runs in the bottom of the frame before he is lifted which puts us behind seven to six but EB answers right back with seven of their own in the top of the sixth highlighted by Danny and Pep both going yard in the frame. J Ward shuts them down with two goose eggs over the final three frames to get the win. Ralph has two hits and two stolen bases, Lenny collects three hits, Mikey four RBI and Danny three as every starter has at least one hit except Eddie who is walked three times out of respect. We collect fifteen hits, eight walks and hit three homers, four doubles and a triple! What is up with that?

Wednesday June 7 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL)  
- EB loses 8-6.

EB	200	102	1-6	12	2	(3-9)
Chief's	401	300	x-8	11	3	

We jump up with two in the top of the first on Danny's leadoff base-hit followed by consecutive two out singles by Len, Mikey and G but proceed to give up four in the bottom of the frame which forces us into a catch-up mode for the rest of the game, a role that EB and it's pop gun attack is not very good at. Nine straight hitters are retired from the first to the fourth and we have three runners thrown out on the bases, two at the plate, the final one coming as Danny crushes the catcher on a play at the plate for the final out. The catcher remains down for ten minutes although he's twice Danny's size. Danny walks away from it. The catcher is Batman'd, and the Chief's are pissed. They have a must slide rule but we do not feel it applies when the catcher is up the line five feet and the runner has no hope of sliding and reaching the plate. If you are going to come up the line as a catcher or any other position player guarding a bag or dish, you should expect to be run. If you don't you are idiots. Beers in the parking lot following the game bring up this issue with the Chief's but they somehow can't understand it. Even when we are explained to that they have played football and loved laying out receivers with hits. Whatever, but Danny is roundly applauded by his teammates for playing BASEBALL. We collect twelve hits including two each by Danny, Len, Mikey and Nate but it is not enough.

Thursday June 8 - Houghton Park - Vs Warriors (AA) - EB wins 12-9.

Warriors	142	020	0-	9	13	3
EB	610	122	x-12	10	4	(3-6 AA) (4-9)

In a wild contest spirited by a few bean balls, J Ward again comes on in relief of Pep to post two shutout innings to save the victory. EB

answers Vinny's single run to start the game by scoring six in the bottom of the first but Pep is getting hit hard although four of the first six outs he records are by strikeout, everything else is a laser beam as he surrenders four in the second and two more in the third. Trailing nine to eight entering the bottom of the fifth, Mikey and Eddie lead off with walks and G follows with a grunting double to the gap in left center to score them both and put EB back on top. J Ward comes in and does his thing over the final two and we've got a win. Eddie has a homer and four RBI, Lenny collects three RBI of his own while Pep scores three runs. Their pitcher is young and cocky which prompts Pep to drill him with a pitch in the top of the fifth. He responds, as he should, by drilling Pep with a three-oh pitch in the bottom of the sixth. It's about time someone in this league played the game properly.

Sunday June 11 - Centennial Park - Vs Eldridge Club (AA) - EB loses 11-2.

EC 003 304 1-11 13 1  
EB 110 000 0- 2 7 4 (3-7 AA) (4-10)

As with our June 2 contest vs this team, they show up injured and missing a few of their players and looking to get beat but EB can not sniff opportunity as we commit four errors that account for eight unearned runs and lose a laugh. Take those away and we are in the game. Instead we take ourselves out of it and give ourselves the feeling of getting our asses kicked. For example, we score one in the first and one in the second and lead two zip after two. Top of the third, J Ward in command, his chick at the game and inspiring him, he has two outs and a man on first. We boot a ground ball, give up a double, drop a fly ball and suddenly we find ourselves down three to two. Next inning, same score, no errors this time but we have retired the first two hitters on K's, the only sure way to get some outs it seems. When we don't get a third strike call on an oh two pitch on the next hitter, we fall apart and give up four consecutive hits for three runs. Now we are down six to two. Our anemic offense has runners on each inning but we cannot cash them in, including the first two batters in the fourth followed by three straight outs! Forward to the top of the sixth, still six to two. The first two hitters are retired and we then proceed to drop a fly ball and give up four straight hits for four more runs and it's now ten to two. And then just for icing on the cake in the seventh we get the first two hitters out, boot a ground ball, give up another hit for another run. Eleven god damned runs and only three earned and seven of the eleven runs scoring after two were out and nobody was on. This has nothing to do with age it has to do with god damned concentration. We are so worried about the cliques of players on this team and finger pointing that who knows what the fuck is running through each of our heads when we should be thinking about the game situation. This used to be a fun bunch but with all the crap that has been going on and back biting, it is continuing to effect our play on the field and threatening to destroy a very good thing,

something that each of us, I don't feel, is ready to give up anytime soon. EB has a real crisis on its hands.

Monday June 12 - Sheridan Park - Vs St. James Place (AA) - Rained out.

Wednesday June 14 - Cazenovia Park - Vs Molly's Pub (AA) - EB loses 10-6.

Molly's	203	320	0-10	12	3		
EB	004	010	1-	6	10	6	(3-8 AA) (4-11)

Internal strife continues to contribute to our poor play. This game is marked by a post game "team" meeting at the park in which Ralph is re-installed as our manager. Hopefully this marks the end of all this bullshit and closes one of the saddest chapters in our team history and we can somehow look back and laugh at it. It damn near has torn the squad apart for good, as everyone seems uneasy around everyone else. Like in a poor game of bowling, June 14 will be the frame that we take our pencils and box it off and say from here on in, EB will focus on the game at hand, one for all and all for one. To many good guys on this team that have to much fun together to let this bring us down and rip us apart. Oh yeah...the game. We get down five zip, rally with four in the bottom of the third to make it five to four, give up three more in the fourth and two in the fifth and get beat by the lowly Molly's squad. We are so fractured and are such a joke that even an attempted a pitching change does not happen as the inmates are running the asylum. The 100 year-old tree in right field is still there, an eerie reminder to Klumpp'r to stay on the hill and out of the outfield. Like the Wizard of Oz, just stay on the yellow brick road where you belong and don't be tempted to pick the apples. It's been a sad day so I'm trying to close it with some humor.

Friday June 16 - MacMillan Field - Vs Thorold Jr's (AA) - EB wins 10-7.

EB	021	060	1-10	17	5	(4-8 AA)	(5-11)
Thorold	000	060	1-	7	8	0	

The new chapter of EB is off to a good start. Typical of every time we play here, it's a Friday night and EB is shorthanded, playing guys out of position and scouring the bushes to get players. Our farm system has produced though as we recruit Kevin Wicker (K-Man) for his first EB appearance as he comes up and plays third base for us. That gives us three rookies (Nate, T Fox, K Man) in the lineup. We have ten players and sport an order of N Wicker-LF, R Proulx-1B, Pep-P, L Previte-CF, M Myers-C, T Fox-RF, J Galbo-SS, B Ward-2B, K Wicker-3B. We have J Ward in the bullpen but don't allow him to stick, a rarity for an EB extra, but a quick look at his stats will reveal the reason. Besides he's our ace closer tonight and we'll need him in a big way. Our

makeshift order battles to give us a three nothing lead at the end of four innings, hi-lighted by Lenny's bomb into the Parc Jarry swimming pool in left field. He loves this park and pulls that stunt every year! In the top of the fifth EB erupts for six runs as the first six men get on base in the inning and each of them score! However, one of the hits is Pep's sure triple but he pulls up lame between first and second with a leg problem and turns it into a double and his return to the hill is uncertain. Mikey has kept the kids off balance with his pitch selection so far but Pep is now missing with his pitches in the bottom of the fifth. With two out, a man on first and no runs in an error prolongs the inning and the hits start booming around the park. Everything is getting hit hard and before you know it six runs have scored and Pep still can't get the third out. J Ward springs from the pen to get the last out but it's a game again. EB adds a run in the top of the seventh and J Ward holds them down in the bottom of the frame to gain a much-needed EB victory. Stats tonight are plentiful as everyone chips in. Fox and Pep each have three hits, Nate Ralph, Len, Mikey and B Ward chip in two each G adds a double and K Wick adds solid defense and two clutch walks in our two biggest innings. N Wick also drives in four runs and J Ward comes out of the pen to throw two and a third solid innings to get the win. What a crazy game. DBR from Pep's work is our lone fan and awards K Wick the MVP for his solid fundamental play. Beers taste great after the game as N Wick predicts the nipple size on our waitress at the bar. He says they are dark brown and quarter size. Not sure if we'll ever be able to settle this bet.

Sunday June 18 - Delaware Park - Vs Partner's (AA) - Doubleheader rained out...this sucks.

Monday June 19 - Sheridan Park - Vs Molly's Pub (AA) - EB wins 12-6.

EB	100	506-12	10	4	(5-8 AA)	(6-11)
Molly's	001	302-	6	8	3	

EB cruises to victory behind B Ward and Klumpp'r in charge as they hold our opponent to only eight hits. Mikey has three hits and Lenny two as each of them drive in three runs. Ralph and G each drive in two runs and score two runs. Eddie walks three times as Molly's pitches around him all night and the squad victimizes their weak catching by stealing eight bases. We ice the game with a five run fourth and a six run sixth with big RBI hits by Lenny and Mikey in each of the innings. That's two straight wins now and the team at least appears to be playing better ball.

Wednesday June 21 - Delaware Park - Vs Partner's (AA) - EB loses 9-2.

Partner's	500	100	3-9	7	1	
EB	100	001	0-2	7	6	(5-9 AA) (6-12)

B Ward is forced to start his second game in two days as Nuke shows up fifteen minutes before game time. Probably enough time to get ready but the way the state of EB has been this year, it is not going to cut it. The team, with all the turmoil this season has brought upon us, is let down before the first pitch of the game as you can collectively feel us all sick of the infighting we have had. Instead of concentrating on the game players are discussing the merits of the move and we come out in the top of the first inning and surrender five unearned runs, aided by three brutal errors to put us into an immediate hole. Players seem to be playing for themselves instead of each other. We answer with one in the bottom of the first but cannot put anything together after that as we score one more in the sixth and lose meekly. Six errors do not help our cause as EB remains a team divided.

Thursday June 22 - Burgar Park - Vs Welland Lesion's (35) - EB wins 4-2.

EB	000	111	1-4	7	1	(7-12)
Lesion's	010	001	0-2	3	3	

A tune up for this weekends Ottawa Tournament, we scrape together a victory as we have nine players, have to enlist K-Man to play third and have Perx finish the last two innings on the hill. K-Man is still looking for his first EB hit but plays flawless third while drawing a walk, stealing a base and scoring a run. Perx hurls a brilliant final two frames giving up only an unearned run. Mikey is catching again and Ralph is at first in our makeshift lineup. B Ward works a perfect two innings to get the victory. We all have the day off tomorrow and will assemble at 9:00 AM to caravan our way to Ottawa. Everyone is looking forward to facing some new tournament teams and hitting the road for uncharted ball fields. This probably comes at a good time for EB as much like when Dean Wormer was coming down on Animal House back in '62, the boys had to rectify their situation and re-bond with a road trip.

Saturday June 24 - Kinsman Field (Upper) - Vs Petawawa (35T) - EB wins 6-3.

Petawawa	210	000-3	8	2	
EB	201	03x-6	10	2	(8-12)

EB has arrived at the park after the seven-hour journey on Friday. No hiccups as our caravan moved along in very businesslike fashion. After getting down by two early Ralph singles and with two out Lenny bombs a home run to tie the score in the first. We give back a run in the second but B Ward and Pep post zero's from there and we have captured game one. G, Lenny and Eddie each have two hits, Lenny drives in three and both Eddies hits are doubles while Ralph pilfers a couple bases and B Ward has a perfect day with a hit, RBI, walk and SB. Checking out the competition so far anyway looks like we should be in good shape. Mississauga is here and is always a good test but

we can only meet them in the finals. The park has an upper and lower diamond and they have intermittent music and announcing throughout the game. Maybe it is because we won this game but the park has a good feel to it.

Saturday June 24 - Kinsman Field (Lower) - Vs Kanata Braumeister's (35T) - EB wins 7-1.

EB 202 021-7 9 0 (9-12)  
Kanata 000 100-1 6 4

A fairly easy game as the sun is out and the park is hot. We score two in the first and do not surrender our first hit until the fourth inning. Klumpp'r has two hitless innings to get us started as he gets the win. Ralph scores three runs on two hits and two stolen bases while Lenny is two for two with a walk a double and three RBI. G is perfect going one for one with a sac fly and a HBP. We are in great shape now as we should be able to handle whichever team we face in the morning on our way to the finals. That's a little cocky but we are full of confidence. Rain is forecast but blue sky's today make us feel like it will somehow miss us. It's off to Ottawa City tonight to eat with the \$400.00 we got to make the trip and then back to the hotel for some fun before tomorrows games.

Sunday June 25 - Ottawa Tournament - Rained out. It's been raining since around 2:00 AM and I mean a serious rain, non-stop, sideways. What a bummer as there is no hope whatsoever of playing the games. We have kicked around for the morning somehow not wanting to give in to the inevitable before conceding fate, eating our breakfasts and slowly making our trek back home. Was a disappointing end to a great weekend. This year sucks!

Thursday June 29 - Schiller Park - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - Game suspended, 10-10 after seven innings.

HRD 221 400 1-10 18 2  
EB 131 004 1-10 11 1

Forced to play at Schiller, AKA "Watt's East" due to the numerous rainouts in this summer from hell the squad rallies from a nine to four deficit to tie it up in the bottom of the seventh and actually have a chance to win it with the bases loaded and two outs before the final out is recorded. We sit out a fifteen minute hail storm between the second and third innings in which the sun comes out, double rainbows appear in center field yet it continues to pound hail on us. What the hell! Ralph has eased the umpires minds by letting them know the field is fine and we can get the game in because "it's the longest day of the year baby"! The umps think that we are fruitcakes. We return to the field, which is sloppy, Pep gets raked for nine runs before B Ward comes in to save the day. He holds HRD down over the final three frames, which gives EB a chance to rally back. Eddie collects three

hits, makes two sparkling catches in center and throws out a runner at the plate in the fifth to give us a chance while Mikey is a perfect two for two with two SF's, two RBI a two-base hit and a stolen base. Pete has three RBI and two hits, none bigger than the two run single in the pitch dark bottom of the seventh to get us within a run just before Eddie ties it with a single. G is hurt during the sixth inning rally as the catcher lands on his leg after trying to apply a tag on him. G must leave the game. The game ends at 9:10 and the last two innings at the plate are an adventure in the late evening gloaming. Nate loses his bat somehow as rain continues to fall and the team is huddled under a tree for their post game beer. What a shit night weather wise. We head over to Rafferty's for post game beers.

Friday June 30 - Delaware Park - Vs Molly's (AA) - EB wins 9-0.

EB	124	020	0-9	12	3	(6-9 AA)	(10-12)
Molly's	000	000	0-0	2	3		

J Ward carries a no-hitter into the seventh but loses it on a bloop single to left. He ends up settling for a masterful two hitter with eleven K's. This game is a cakewalk and that is not something EB can say often. B Ward continues his torrid hitting going three for four while Lenny hovers near the .500 mark at the third waypoint of the season. Perx has two hits and a RBI and Nate drives in two. Eight different EB players have a RBI. Landmark event here tonight though is that G comes to the game in street clothes, a victim of a severe charley horse after getting stepped on at the plate while scoring on a passed ball last night. For this to happen G has got to be near death. He certainly will die someday on the diamond if he has his way and seeing him at the game without a uni is a shocking sight. Tonight it's all J Ward though as he is in total command from the first pitch. Lenny calls a masterful game and J executes it perfectly. Now comes the holiday weekend and EB is off until Wednesday night!!! How can this happen as we continue to feed off our Ottawa weekend and play our best ball of the year.

Wednesday July 5 - Welland Sport's Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - EB loses 17-5. We've been off since Friday night and that is a joke for EB squad. No games for the long Fourth of July weekend. This game is a typical bizarre effort on the part of these two evenly matches teams. It creates an interesting line score:

EB	212	0	00	0-5	7	1	(10-13)
Chief's	000	(17)	00	X-17	17	1	

What the hell is that? We are doing so well through three and a half innings and then the nightmare fourth begins. No errors are made to prolong the inning but every single ball that's hit finds a hole or is just out of reach of a fielder. The inning is full of bleeders and Texas leaguers. Sprackett alone has three hits IN THE INNING. We do have some humor though as

Welland's catcher who was properly hammered in a collision at the plate in the June 7<sup>th</sup> game by Danny get's roughed up some more. First inning steal attempt and Ralph takes a high throw and brings the tag down right across the kid's face. The guy goes back to the dugout and is heard bitching about the play and proceeds to slam the bathroom door in the dugout. EB can only hide it's laughter by holding our gloves up to out faces. It gets better. Bottom of the sixth and we are getting drilled. Same guys trying to tag at second on a fly ball to Lenny who is now in center field. The kid's been hosed by Lenny many times attempting to steal, just as he was in the first inning tonight, so this time he'll see if he can make it on Lenny's outfield arm. It's not going to work as Len has him out by twenty feet. Perx is holding the ball waiting for him and the guy get's tagged in the face again. He goes berserk and fires his helmet at Perx, just barely missing him. Perx is surprisingly cool about it all but lets him know that if the helmet so much as grazed him, he would have gone to the dugout, got a bat and done a Rodney King on him. We at least get to take this humor away from the dismal game.

Friday July 7 - West Seneca West HS - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - EB wins 11-10.

HRD 221 400 100-10 19 3  
EB 131 004 101-11 12 1 (7-9 AA) (11-13)

In the completion of the June 29 game that was suspended at nine to nine due to darkness, EB scores quickly to get the win. After both teams go out one, two, three in the eighth, J Ward holds HRD in the top of the ninth and Len leads off for EB in the bottom of the frame with a single. Mikey's bunt to advance him to scoring position is perfect and the catcher fires it down the right field line and Len scores all the way from first. J Ward looks sharp and gets the win. We wait ten minutes and get on to our regularly scheduled game.

Friday July 7 - West Seneca West HS - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - EB loses 7-6.

HRD 500 200 0-7 9 1  
EB 201 010 2-6 8 3 (7-10 AA) (11-14)

We give up five runs in the first inning that spells doom for the club. The maddening part about the five runs are that with no runs in, two outs and two on we surrender four straight hits to plate the five. If we could only get that third out. We chip away and have the tying run on base in the last of the seventh but Ralph's hard shot down the first base line is somehow gloved by HRD's stone fingered first baseman for the final out. We threaten throughout the game but are unable to muster a big inning. We were set for a sweep after our first game heroics but we somehow let down in the first inning

and it cost us. Eddie has three hits, two doubles and a triple as he scores twice and drives in a run. Chippewa tournament starts tomorrow.

Saturday July 8 - Lion's Park - Vs St. Catharine's (35T) - EB wins 11-4.

EB 300 71-11 13 0 (12-14)  
St. Kitt's 003 01- 4 6 2

The opening game of the Chippewa Tournament and EB is off to a flying start. St. Kit's has a new pitcher starting off who appears to have good stuff. The top of the order roughs him up a bit to start and he becomes a mere mortal and we pound on their second and third pitchers to win going away. This is a good start as we beat one of the tougher teams at the tourney. G makes his first appearance as he plays shortstop but he is still hampered by his leg problems but he is gutting it out. Kuhn rips a homer to drive in three runs, Lenny is three for three with four RBI, Pauly and K-Man each have two hits, K-Man getting his first EB hits and Ralph drives in two and scores two. It's always good to kick some St. Kitt's ass.

Saturday July 8 - Lion's Park - Vs Mississauga (35T) - EB wins 10-3.

EB 012 412-10 13 0 (13-14)  
Mississauga 110 010- 3 7 4

Almost a carbon copy of today's first game. EB is playing solid ball and has been since the Ottawa Tournament. We do not make an error for the second straight game. Mississauga is always one of the younger teams at the tournaments, which fits better into EB's style. We face harder throwing pitchers with curve balls, which is stuff we are used to seeing. The game is close for the first two innings before the squad blows the game open highlighted by B Ward's monster HR to left field in the fifth inning to go along with his two hitless innings pitched. Lenny collects three more hits and four RBI, Kuhn drives in two more, Pete, B Ward and Ralph have two hits each and Mikey scores twice. We are now sitting pretty and only a complete collapse tomorrow will keep EB from the finals. It is smoking hot out today and finally feeling like summer as we head over to have some beers and watch the big softball tournament going on outside the beer tent.

Sunday July 9 - Lion's Park - All games rained out! For the second time this year our championship dreams are dashed as rain again wrecks havoc with our destiny. This summer has been a joke and I'm sick of saying it. Alternative plans will be made to complete this tourney over the next week or so. We were hurting for players and Glenno actually had made the trip just in case we needed him but the weather got us again.

Monday July 10 - Sheridan Park - Vs St. James Zeniths (AA) - EB wins 12-4.

EB 323 004 0-12 18 1 (8-10 AA) (14-14)  
STJ 001 021 0- 4 6 1

The beat goes on. This is by far our most well played game of the year and possibly the last two years. J Ward has turned into the staff ace and the squad jumps up immediately to a three to nothing lead, which is all J needs to see when he takes the hill. The defense and Lenny's pitch calling take us the rest of the way. This game has contributions by all the squad as everyone but T Fox has a hit. Lenny, Perx and Mikey each have three hits and the top four in the order are a combined ten for twenty with six RBI, eight runs scored and four doubles. We have steadily climbed back to .500 overall and to within two games of .500 in the league.

Tuesday July 11 - Lion's Park - Vs Chippewa Indians (35) - Game cancelled so that St. Kits and West Mountain can use the diamond in the continuation of the Chippewa tournament from this past weekend. St. Kits wins and has the honor of playing EB for the championship on Friday July 21. We get boned out of a game. Typical for the season.

Friday July 14 - Delaware Park - Vs Temple Club (35) - Game cancelled because TC is in a tournament starting tomorrow and they don't want to wear out their already thin pitching staff. Then why schedule the game in the first place? These guys have screwed us out of a game for the third time this year. What's their problem?

Sunday July 16 - Centennial Park - Vs Molly's Pub (AA) - Game rained out. A bittersweet cancellation for the squad. Continued freakin' rain day after day, week after week is sickening. After our game last Monday night we experienced our first glimpse of summer, as it was sunny and warm all the way up to Friday afternoon before the rain began again. And of course while we had this nice weather we were getting screwed out of two games while we sat at home playing with ourselves. I can see why people in Seattle kill themselves and have stupid movies about e-mail set in that city. Pete is out at the diamond at 7:00AM sweeping the water off the bad spots. Then Ralph, B Ward and Pep show up to do some raking and shop vac-ing. Danny and Mikey show to give support while Lenny, as usual, supervises. We spend \$50.00 on 120 pounds of cat litter and have the diamond looking good. The sun comes out in the top of the first that has Eddie and Pep talking/whining about the steam bath this day is going to become. But again this is Buffalo in the miserable "summer" of 2000 and true to form it begins misting. Thank god because we give up eleven runs in the top of the first with only one ball hit hard as three hideous errors pave the way. After scoring four in the bottom of the second the game is halted due to the persistent mist and sloppy conditions and then the contest is called.

Monday July 17 - Sheridan Park - Vs Warriors (AA) - EB wins 13-3.

Warriors 010 200 0- 3 4 0  
EB 315 400 x-13 14 3 (9-10 AA) (15-14)

We've been playing good ball lately so I can say that this was a routine victory. J Ward is in total command and Klumpp'r comes in to close out the victory with a scoreless final two innings as we cruise to the W. Mikey hits a three-run bomb in the first on his way to a three for three with three RBI and three RS evening. Inspired Nate follows suit with his own three-run job in the fourth on his way to a five RBI evening. Pauly has two hits, Pete drives in two and Lenny scores three times. G has been out of the lineup for the past three games as we try to give him as much rest as possible so we can have him at crunch time. We play good defense again with Perx ranging far and wide for balls in the vicinity of third base and Mikey continues to scoop everything in sight at first.

Friday July 21 - Stomper's Stadium - Vs St. Catharine's (35T) - EB loses 9-6.

St. Kitt's 021 400 2-9 15 0  
EB 110 031 0-6 13 2 (15-15)

In the belated completion of last months Chippewa tournament we drop a close contest. Our undoing is a four run fourth inning in which we give up two homeruns. Klumpp'r humors us in preparation for the Sydney Olympics with his two tumbling routines. First at the plate with two strikes, a curve ball sends him to the dirt where he is humbly thumbed by the ump. The second is when he slips on the wet grass while rounding third and is not so funny. He is able to get up and make it home although we thought he might be seriously hurt but after the game is walking fairly well. He's listed as day to day. We strand nine runners and do not recover from the three homeruns we give up in the third and fourth innings. Perx shows his usual Canadian angst by smashing his helmet against the wall after a diving catch of his line drive in centerfield in the seventh. Maybe we shouldn't shake hands with St. Kit's after the game because of this catch. Very un-vintage like behavior to make a great play.

Sunday July 23 - Centennial Park - Vs Wiechec's (AA) - EB loses 9-7.

Wiechec's 003 411 0-9 14 0  
EB 000 403 0-7 10 2 (9-11 AA) (15-16)

Another comeback falls short as we fall behind 7-0 and scrap back to get into the game. Two bad innings as we give up three in the third and

four in the fourth. It's not the big guns on their team that hurt us but their fill in player/manager who nets a three-run homer and a run scoring ground out to go with his double and single. G is still out of the lineup as a result of being stepped on back on June 29. He says that he is halfway back. That's not good for EB as G is invaluable in his ability to play many positions while we lose one of our legitimate homerun threats. This game could have gotten us to the .500 mark but now drops us to nine and eleven with a big week of games tomorrow, Thursday and Friday. We are in fourth place and only a total collapse by the squad will keep us from clinching a playoff spot.

Monday July 24 - Sheridan Park - Vs Home Run Derby (AA) - Game suspended, scored tied 9-9.

EB	203	100	3-9	8	4
HRD	140	004	0-9	13	5

A furious three run EB comeback ties the score at nine in the top of the seventh and Nuke holds them down in the bottom of the inning before the game is called. Two times tonight, once in the first and again in the seventh, Lenny takes advantage of HRD's first baseman playing miles off the bag, gets another two steps and beats routine force plays to second. Both times the inning is prolonged and results in five runs, two in the first and three in the seventh. These are the little things that are available every single game if you simply pay attention and are aware. Moving up ninety feet by being alert is so key and we must always be aware of these opportunities, as they are the difference between winning and losing. Eddie continues his torrid hitting with a couple more hits and plays outstanding centerfield defense. Mikey continues to scoop everything in sight to pickup the infields wayward throws and Ralph continues to resemble Bobby Doerr at second base with his glove. The right side of our infield has been a wall all season long. EB employs it's deep staff tonight as B Ward is the emergency starter in place of the late arriving Klumpp'r and keeps EB in the game against a solid hitting HRD squad. Klumpp'r comes on and is victimized by five seeing eye singles that bounce just out of reach of our infielders and through the cement like infield dirt. Nuke then is summoned and keeps us close before we tie it up in the seventh. We cost ourselves the chance to win it in regulation with shoddy infield throws in the first five innings that lead to four unearned runs. Tonight is the final night of Lenny's foray into bachelorhood as Trish comes home tomorrow. He celebrates with his first trip over to St. James for post game festivities. There he sees what he has been missing all these times as Perx humors us with his story about buying four brown undershirts for our cutoff uniforms. Seems he wasn't sure if the shirts were brown so he used the stores color chart, the black guy who was ringing him out at the cash register, and asked him if the shirts were as brown as him! Way to go Perx and a nice try of going to the colorblind card. He just set race relations back fifty years with that move much like Leon Lett did in the 1993 Super Bowl with

his stunt when 150 million people worldwide got up and shouted "What a .....". This diary writes itself and Perx is a human quote machine.

Thursday July 27 - Delaware Park - Vs Molly's Pub (AA) - EB loses 9-2.

Molly's 000 006 3-9 4 2  
EB 001 100 0-2 4 3 (9-12 AA) (15-17)

What a joke this game is. We are without Mikey tonight as he has made a road trip to Erie, Pa to pickup his ex and Marissa at the airport. We lose our leader and our team conscious and give away a game we have got to win. We are actually winning 2-0 after five and Nuke carries a no-hitter into the sixth but a bloop single to right followed by three walks and two batters hit by pitches and the game turns around. We set ourselves up for failure in the first when with the bases loaded and one out and Molly's pitcher struggling to throw strikes Pep tries to score from third on a passed ball and gets tagged out. We don't score any runs in the frame and for some reason EB lets this affect them and we play tense the rest of the way. It is the first god damned inning so why should we let that bother us. We have the bases loaded again in the third and fail to score, eek across single runs in the third and fourth, one on Pauly's triple but that is it for the bats. Each team collects only four hits. Klumpp'r comes on in relief in the sixth but true to our nature when he is on the hill we just cannot seem to make any plays for him. A misplayed line drive to left clears the bases when it should have been the third out and three-botched infield plays hi-light the abysmal three run seventh. Nate gets hooded. This is a game that we should have won and we have no reason to play like we did or to be as tight as we were. The loss drops us to nine and twelve and keeps us two and a half games out of fourth place behind HRD. Further we have a tough schedule of games starting with Thorold tomorrow night followed by the Eldredge Club Sunday and Kuhn on Monday. The squad better get its shit together and soon! Ralph has a little fun with one of the faggot fans of Molly's who has a pretty big mouth yet when Ralph goes to their side of the diamond to coach third base, the pussy all of a sudden clams up because he has no balls. These guys continue to be dickheads.

Friday July 28 - MacMillan Park - Vs Thorold Jr's (AA) - EB wins 9-8.

EB 504 000 0-9 14 6 (10-12 AA) (16-17)  
Thorold 003 230 0-8 9 3

A nail biter but EB prevails in a must win game. Ralph is not here tonight and has left the squad to be run by Pep. What is he...crazy? We have ten men so we must be on our best behavior but a bad omen appears in the form of ump, the fag umpire that seems to follow us throughout Ontario making shittier and shittier calls almost as if he has a death wish. He will not fail

us in this game either. It has poured rain with nasty lighting storms throughout Niagara County and the city of Buffalo but appears this has been contained to below the lake. The diamond in Thorold represents a beach as the dirt is loose and in piles and you cannot run worth a shit through it. The weather is very hot and muggy and most players' sport full brimmers by the time the first pitch is thrown. The dirt situation and the slow track that it produces should be to our advantage as it will slow down the youthful Jr's and shit, how much slower can EB be? We get five runs in the first when with two outs and the bases loaded Pete hits a ground ball to first, a routine first base unassisted play. The jamoke at first base grabs at the ball and starts for first but has left the ball on the "beach" and is carrying a glove full of dirt. Pete hustling all the way beats it out and one run scores on the play. We proceed to score four more as Nate singles in a run and Perx follows with a three run double. That is how you hustle and capitalize! We have a five-nothing lead going into the bottom of the first. Klumpp'r is going for us but he threw two last night and is on a very short leash. Lenny is in charge of the staff tonight and will keep his eye out. We cash four more in the third, three on Nate's bases clearing triple. With a nine to nothing lead we proceed to play horrible defense as we always do for Klumpp'r and let the Jr's back into the game. Plus we continue our trend of scoring big and then trying to hold on as our bats go silent. Klumpp'r tires after gutting out five solid innings and Pep comes in. He escapes a bases loaded jam in the bottom of the sixth and we head to the seventh clinging to a nine to eight lead. Umpy has been relatively quiet tonight although he does punch B Ward out on an extremely questionable check swing which draws abuse from the EB dugout. Perx leads off the top of the seventh and crushes his second shot of the night to the gap in left center. The ball rolls to the fence and Perx slides into third with a triple. Thorold appeals that Perx missed first base and Umpy rings him up! Well you can only imagine what happens next. Perx in Canada. Perx playing with umpy umping. Perx getting screwed out of a hit on one of his hardest and longest hit balls of the year. F bombs start flying as Perx crosses the diamond to confront the faggot. Klumpp'r who is coaching first is already laying into umpy as is the rest of the bench and Pep smartly intercepts Perx on his way to killing umpy. Perx keeps the abuse up and the squad tries to calm him as we now only have nine players with Klumpp'r out of the game. Perx is beside himself smashing his helmet against the dugout beam and grabbing a bat to do damage to the bench but we have him corralled and hopefully refrained from getting tossed. That run would have been huge as it would have given us a two-run cushion as Pep followed Perx' triple with one of his own but it is not to be. Perx is seething but under control as we go out to start the bottom of the seventh. Pep induces a pop up followed by back-to-back strikeouts as Lenny calls the pitches to perfection and the Thorold hitters are not sure what is coming. That put an end to this draining game and gives EB a much-needed win. Our six (Pete), seven (Nate) and eight (Perx) hitters in the lineup drive in all nine runs and Mikey and B Ward add a couple hits each for good measure.

Sunday July 30 - Centennial Park - Vs Eldredge Club (AA) - Rained out.

Monday July 31 - Sheridan Park - Vs Kuhn Construction (AA) - Rained out but not after getting teased as we play the first inning and start the top of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Pep makes one pitch in the second before a lighting bolt appears off in the distance and off the field we come. Then it begins raining and the shit begins again. EB does not play. Pep actually had a one, two, three inning in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> and in the bottom Eddie led off with a double, Pep singled him in and after two outs were made Nate hit a two-run bomb to straight away center. All is for naught though as the summer from hell continues. Pep was skipping again tonight in Ralph's absence and had to scramble as Klumpp'r and J Ward both show up late and can not start and we have to get G out of his street clothes and into a uniform although he is still on the DL and can hardly run.

Wednesday August 2 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Rained out. The game is pushed from 7:30 to 8:30 earlier in the day to accommodate a kid's game before ours. They play their game and we begin warming up for ours. During infield practice the freakin' rain begins and before you know it we are having beers in the dugout. This was to be the third game in a row Pep was to start but obviously he has the squad hexed. Sunday, Monday and Wednesday rain outs. B Ward misses the game due to a persistent cough he has had since the Ottawa trip.

Thursday August 3 - Delaware Park - Vs St. James Place (AA) - Rained out.

Sunday August 6 - Centennial Park - Vs Warriors (AA) - EB wins 7-0. We win a game by forfeit. Trailing 7-3, the bottom of the fourth ends as B Ward K's their catcher looking. The guy promptly starts bitching and fires his bat, which flies over the fence by the dugout, into the stands and nails his own girlfriend. He is immediately banished from the contest and without enough players, his team must forfeit. Another victory for W Ford as he remains undefeated as an EB pitcher. I guess we'll take them any way we can get them.

Monday August 7 - Sheridan Park - Vs Eldredge Club (AA) - Rained out.

Wednesday August 9 - Delaware Park - Vs Kuhn Construction (AA) - Game rained out. Blessing in disguise. After EB is set down in order in the top of the first, Pep goes out and proceeds to give up hits to the first six hitters including a double, triple and homer to complete the reverse cycle. Trailing five zip, the rains begin in the top of the second and the game is washed out. Nightmarish season of rain continues.

Friday August 11 - Delaware Park - Vs Partner's (AA) - EB loses 11-0.

EB 000 000 0- 0 5 1 (11-13 AA) (17-18)  
Partner's 201 242 x-11 14 2

Shut out on five hits. Not much to say about this game. Eddie has two hits, Lenny, Mikey and Ralph have the others. Pep starts and loses again, Klumpp'r throws the sixth and in typical fashion, gets the first two guys out, then loads the bases but appears to get out of it until an error prolongs the inning and costs us two runs. He has got the B Ward disease as we just refuse to pickup the ball for him.

Sunday August 13 - Centennial Park (Doubleheader) - Vs Eldredge Club (AA) - Game # 1 EB loses 13-7.

EB 031 000 3- 7 9 1 (11-14 AA) (17-19)  
EC 401 062 x-13 10 1

A great day to play two unless you are on the wrong end, which we were. First of all we can't believe it stayed dry enough to fit in two full games! Game one we only trail five to four heading into the bottom of the fifth. Lenny has launched a monster homer in the third to bring us within a run. However the first seven men reach base in the bottom of the fifth and six of them score to blow the game open. Pep comes on in relief in the bottom of the sixth and K's their cleanup hitter with a Leephus pitch. Maybe the injection of humor here will loosen us up. Lenny launches his second homer of the game in the seventh as we rally for three runs and gets us hopefully in the right frame of mind for game two. Lenny ends up three for four with two homers, a double, two runs scored and two RBI. Pauly also chips in two hits and is hit by a pitch in the second inning. That HBP is historic as Pete also is hit by a pitch in the same inning two batters earlier to become the first brothers ever HBP in the same inning in baseball history! Congratulations.

Sunday August 13 - Centennial Park (Doubleheader)- Vs Eldredge Club (AA) - Game # 2 EB loses 22-1.

EB 000 0 00 1- 1 6 2 (11-15 AA) (17-20)  
EC 411(11)05 x-22 25 0

Dismal as we score our only run in the top of the seventh on a double play. Klumpp'r and Pep surrender five homers in the blow out and EB is pounded on. The game goes on forever as we are never even in the game. We collect only six hits in the game and fifteen overall for the day. Lenny has two more in the second game so by him having five of our fifteen overall, there was not much hitting by the rest of the squad. Science can now clone sheep maybe we can clone Lenny. This really sucked today.

Monday August 14 - Sheridan Park - Vs Kuhn Construction (AA) - EB loses 5-1.

Kuhn 000 005 0-5 6 0  
EB 100 000 0-1 5 2 (11-16 AA) (17-21)

Coming off of yesterday's debacle, we pull ourselves together to play a solid game. B Ward pitches beautifully and makes a first inning run hold up all the way to the sixth. We give up a three-run homer and a two-run homer in that sixth inning and that is all she wrote. We again cannot support ourselves with the stick. Only five hits on the night and nine strikeouts will not get you to many W's. T Fox joins the klan. Ralph has an interesting line as he grounds out three times to the first baseman. Eddie continues to pound the ball collecting two more hits. If we only could get him in the lineup more...

Tuesday August 15 - Delaware Park - Vs St. James Zeniths (AA) - EB wins 13-12.

EB 300 181-13 13 2 (12-16 AA) (18-21)  
STJ 003 315-12 12 2

What's going on here? We've actually had a game everyday (except Saturday) since Friday as we scramble to make up the rainouts before the playoffs. This is our type of schedule as we have a playoff game Thursday, a vintage game Friday and this weekends Hamilton Tournament. We can't possibly fit all these in can we? Tonight is a roller coaster ride of a game that Pep almost blows in the end as he barely holds the thirteen to seven lead in the sixth and final inning as he comes on in relief of Klumpp'r. We jump up three nothing on consecutive hits to open the game by Pep, Ladori and Lenny. Mikey and Danny drive us in. St. James ties it in the third and EB scores in the top of the fourth to reclaim the lead. We then surrender three in the bottom of the frame and trail six to four going into the fifth. We start the fifth quietly and with two out and nobody on base EB rallies up. The next nine hitters reach base with Pep cashing a three run triple as the final hit as EB posts eight two out runs. Mikey prolonged the inning when Lenny doubled and he draws a catcher's interference call to keep things alive. The lead barely holds as EB gets the final out with the tying run standing on second. Every position in our order produces a run scored. B Ward drives in three, Lenny has three hits and with the win we play Home Run Derby in the first round single elimination on Thursday night.

Thursday August 17 - Sheridan Park - Vs Home Run Derby (AA Playoffs) - EB loses 15-8.

EB 000 210 5- 8 13 4 (12-17 AA) (18-22)  
HRD 213 351 x-15 20 1

Gone again in the first round. We go out in order in the top of the first, surrender a two-run homer in the bottom of the frame and by the time we finally plate two runs in the fourth we are already down six zip. We give up twenty hits in the loss including three homers, five doubles and three triples. EB collects thirteen hits with Danny accounting for three of them and he has our only extra base tallies, a one out triple in the second where he is stranded and a two run double in the seventh. With G on the DL the rest of the year we also are missing Eddie (out of town), Nate (out of town) and T Fox (playing elsewhere). We are forced to bat Klumpp'r in the nine hole and he produces a hit and a run scored and we have called up Freddie Lugo from the farm club. Typical of the season. The players missing tonight were guys that we had all year and helped us. It's irritating to battle all year long and come playoff time people are on vacation or doing whatever type of bullshit it is they are doing. It's like a slap in the face as EB is a skeleton of itself. This is a weak end to our tumultuous season. EB stayed together battling to the end although the early strife clearly took its toll, as teamwork seemed to go by the wayside. Losing our first five league games of the year did not help but after that we played decent ball though we could play much better and much smarter. The Eldredge Club goes on to defeat Kuhn Construction for the second year in a row to capture the league title.

Friday August 18 - Burgar Park - Vs Welland Temple Club (35) - EB loses 10-4.

EB 101 000 2- 4 7 1 (18-23)  
TC 240 022 x-10 16 2

A tune-up game for this weekends Hamilton Tournament and also the debut of Ken White who was scouted by Ralph at a banking appreciation party to it's high rollers at Pilot Field. Ralph witnesses Ken going yard with wood and recruits him. He doesn't disappoint with a booming double and a quick bat. He has not played baseball in fifteen years but sure looks good. Pep starts the game due to the late arrival of a teammate but must leave the game due to a swollen knee from last night's game. He's hospital bound to see if any draining can be done so he can play this weekend. EB collects only seven hits, Lenny has three of them including two doubles of his own as the squad is humbled. Hopefully no hangover from tonight will carry into this weekend.

Saturday August 19 - Bernie Arbour Stadium - Vs Detroit Hardboys (35T) - EB wins 2-2. Due to injuries and Klumpp'r's late defection, we have had to recruit a few players. Tony O'Grady and Bernie Arbour join the squad for the weekend. Pep is still semi-disabled and we must shuffle the lineup with Lenny batting leadoff and Ralph back in his two hole spot. Mikey is now batting third. We collect only four hits but masterful pitching by B Ward, O'Grady and Arbour keep the Detroit bats at bay. The only two runs we surrender are the result of a horrific collision in right center between Pauly and Lenny. Neither man calls for the ball and they run into each other full

tilt. They remain prone on the field for ten minutes. Both get up and remain in the game, how we will never know, but Lenny has a broken bone in his hand and Pauly is sporting a nasty headache. Detroit's only two runs are a result of this play but EB battles back in the sixth to tie the score as Ralph scores his second run of the game when driven in by Arbour. Better than an L but still a game we could have won.

Saturday August 19 - Bernie Arbour Stadium - Vs St. Catharine's  
(35T) - EB loses 11-5.

St. Kitt's 421 202-11 16 2  
EB 030 020- 5 7 0 (18-24-1)

A serious blow to our title chances as we get down early and cannot battle back. Both still hurting badly from the first game collision Lenny somehow goes two for two and drives in three of our runs and Pauly drives in our other two as we now need big time help in the other games. Pep throws the last inning testing his whacked leg. The tournament format actually could allow us to reach the finals even though we are 0-1-1. St. Catharine's lost to Stoney Creek this morning and must play Detroit tomorrow. We can bounce Stoney Creek in our morning game Sunday and will need help from Detroit. If that goes as planned we will rematch with the Hardboys in the finals. Not a big stretch to have this happen.

Sunday August 20 - Mohawk Diamond # 2 - Vs Stoney Creek Animals  
(35T) - EB wins 5-4.

EB 003 002-5 8 1 (19-24-1)  
SC 300 001-4 9 1

A wild game that EB miraculously pulls out to keep their hopes alive. We must win to have a chance but get down early by surrendering three first inning runs. Lenny and Pauly are still feeling the effects of yesterdays collision yet Pauly starts the game with a spectacular running catch on a bullet to right field. Lenny is reduced to leaving his glove on in between innings as his hand is so swollen it is almost impossible to get it off. Lenny starts his game by being hit in the foot with a pitch as he fires his bat away in disgust. EB ties the score at three in the third as Ralph, Mikey and Kuhn drive in runs. The score remains tied heading into the sixth. A tie game will knock EB out so we must win. With two outs and Ralph on first he steals second and O'Grady drives him in with the go ahead run. B Ward then cashes O'Grady in for a two run cushion. We will need it. In the bottom of the sixth Pep gives up three singles and a walk sandwiched around a K. This leaves the bases loaded, one out and one run in. We pull the infield in and we get a K looking on a three two pitch. Two out. The final hitter K's to end the game and leave the runners stranded. This is as jacked as EB has been all year. A huge

victory by a team that is seriously hurting and playing with a patchwork lineup. Everyone contributes as Perx, O'Grady, Mikey, Ralph and Lenny score runs and Ralph, Mikey, Kuhn, O'Grady and B Ward drive in the runs. Ralph steals a couple bases, none more important than the one to put himself in scoring position in the sixth with two out. We now watch as Detroit beats St. Catharine's to set up a rematch in the finals that will begin around 2:00.

Sunday August 20 - Mohawk Diamond # 4 - Vs Detroit Hardboys (35T) - EB wins 22-12.

EB	141	50(11)	-	22	20	5	(20-24-1)
Hardboys	075	000	-	12	13	1	

We take the crown in one of the most satisfying victories by the team in some time. We pound out twenty hits, nineteen of them singles but also collect twelve walks as a resilient EB squad battles back from adversity to take the title. Everyone in the lineup has at least one hit, one RBI and one run scored. A total team effort. With as large a crowd as you will ever have for one of our games, topping out at around twenty fans, the game has it ups and downs and all the drama you could ask for. EB is the crowd favorite as believe it or not, the Hardboys are more of an obnoxious bunch of a-holes than we are. Pep's leg somehow has loosened up to allow him to play in the field and also bat. Lenny still must leave his glove on in between innings as his hand is grotesquely swollen almost as if he has elephantitis. We jump up with a run in the first and four in the second. We surrender the lead by giving up seven in the second. We get a run back in the third but kick the ball around in the bottom of the frame and give up five. Trailing twelve to six and listening to the Hardboys mouths seems to inspire the squad. We answer back in the fourth with five of our own and shut them down in the fourth and fifth. Trailing by a run entering the last inning EB puts on a rally for the ages. We've had to hear from their bigmouth first baseman how they have us where they want us, as we will start the inning with our bottom three in the order. That is all we need to hear from these blowhards. B Ward draws a walk to get us started and Pete follows with a base hit. Perx goes up to bunt them over yet Detroit breaks the cardinal rule by trying for the force at third. B Ward beats the throw and we now have the bases loaded and nobody out. The floodgates open as base hits and walks just keep coming. We turn the order over and B Ward comes back up and clears the bases with a booming double. Pete drives him in with a single and both of them end up scoring two runs in the inning. When it is finally over EB has posted eleven runs on five hits and seven walks as Detroit is out of arms and the arms they have can not find the plate as bench jockeying has gotten into their heads. Arbour shuts then down in the bottom of the frame after seeing the "doctor" about his elbow and finishes with a flurry as Perx snares a pop up at third to end the game. What a victory, easily the highpoint of the season. We rallied together and seemed to recapture the fun that had been missing all season long. Those post game beers taste the best as we hang and bask in our victory! Well-done EB.

Wednesday August 30 - Burgar Park - Vs Welland Lesions (35) - EB wins 21-5.

EB 571 043 1-21 20 0 (21-24-1)  
Lesions 300 101 0- 5 9 2

A laugher as we cake walk our way to victory. K White is making another appearance and does not disappoint as he hits two homers, a triple and drives in seven runs! Eddie adds a double and a triple to go along with his four hits, Pete scores four times as he goes three for three, Klumpp'r scores three runs and the team never trails in the game. Lenny's hand is still messed up but he somehow remains a hit machine and collects three hits but as our EH tonight. Mikey is catching and Ralph is at first base. This was the Lesions "A" team tonight also which made the pounding all the more satisfying. Ralph is in his heavy recruiting mode as we sit outside Burgar Park pounding beers and working on Ken. He has given Ken one of his "A" cigars, this let's us know he is serious!

Thursday August 31 - Sheridan Park - Vs New York Knights (NL AA) - EB loses 18-13.

NYK 610 353 0-18 18 1  
EB 022 304 2-13 13 4 (21-25-1)

By virtue of a sweep in the finals of our league playoffs we get the use of Sheridan for one more night. Rumor has it they will tear up the infield, re-sod, put in a clay infield and also build a pitchers mound before next year. This could be a real sweet park with just a little baseball specific work and upkeep. After all there is more to working on diamonds than sweeping the water off and cutting the grass. It would nice to throw off of a hill that is above sea level. First inning blues again tonight as we are down six nothing before we even get a chance to hit. We scratch back to make it ten to seven after four but just cannot hold down their lineup as we surrender eighteen hits and seven walks. Mikey drives in four and scores three times for our only bright spot. Pep fires a pitch behind the head of their catcher in the top of the seventh after a base is stolen on him. He's trying to teach baseball etiquette again. Temple Club tournament this weekend.

Saturday September 2 - Burgar Park - Vs St. Catharine's (35T) - EB wins 4-3.

EB 022 000-4 4 1 (22-25-1)  
St. Kitt's 020 010-3 5 3

A 9:30 AM start to the weekend begins great for EB as we vanquish what should be our toughest opponent. The squad only collects four hits but

three of them are doubles, we steal four bases and gather three walks to maximize our opportunities. Klumpp'r, B Ward and Pep combine to give up only five hits and no walks as we take the opener. B Ward and Lenny each have a double, a RBI and a run scored to pace the offense. Our next game Vs Barrie is not until 3:30 so we are now off to the Blue Star for some eats, as we get ready for the next tilt.

Saturday September 2 - Burgar Park - Vs Barrie (35T) - EB loses 11-0.

EB 000 00- 0 0 2 (22-26-1)  
Barrie 013 7x-11 11 0

Such bullshit. For the second year in a row we defeat our toughest opponent in the opener and then proceed to lay an egg in the second game. Last year we got beat by the Temple Club after knocking off the Detroit Schaeffer's. This year we not only get beat by an inferior team but we get no hit and mercy ruled. We have almost no hope of reaching the finals with the format of this tournament and EB is a very dejected bunch.

Sunday September 3 - Memorial Park - Vs Dufferin-Simcoe (35T) - EB wins 11-10.

EB 400 025-11 15 5 (23-26-1)  
DS 001 054-10 13 2

Playing for pride only we survive a four run bottom of the sixth and hold on to win. Lenny is still playing with the broken bone in his hand and Pep has shown up today unable to run or throw with various ailments. He bats last in the order and must hit one handed and then playing first base takes a ground ball off his knee and now can barely walk. This leads to some costly misplays that almost doom the squad. Our staff today is Ralph (two shutout innings), followed by B Ward, Klumpp'r, Pete and Pauly. Pete gets the win and Pauly the save. Perx, Lenny and Mikey crash doubles, Pete drives in three, Pauly two and Lenny two while Kuhn scores three times.

Saturday September 9 - Greendale Elementary School - Vs Petawawa (35T) - EB wins 6-3.

Petawawa 300 000-3 6 1  
EB 004 02x-6 9 3 (24-26-1)

The opening game of the Niagara Falls tourney is mired by confusion as continued rain throughout the week has forced the movement of games to any playable diamond they can find. We are playing at an extremely weak, even by Buffalo standards, diamond at a school. It has a very short right field porch, which has caused an early 1900's type ground rule to be put in place that

calls for a double on any ball hit over the fence in that part of the field. Pep proceeds to actually pull a ball in the air to deep right field, a certain home run in almost any park, but a ground rule double here. We give up three runs in the top of the first but then Klumpp'r, B Ward and Eddie shut down Petawawa the rest of the way. EB scores four in the third and two in the fifth to win it going away. Eddie, Pep, Mikey and Ralph each pound out two hits and each of them collect a double. Kuhn and Mikey each are on base all three times by hits and walks as we are off to a good start.

Saturday September 9 - Greendale Elementary School - Vs Dufferin-Simcoe (35T) - EB wins 10-2.

EB 340 12-10 13 2 (25-26-1)  
DS 000 11- 2 5 1

We score three in the first and four in the second and don't look back as solid pitching by Klumpp'r, Eddie and Pep help EB to victory. Kuhn is on base every time again in this game with a walk, a double and a homerun as he drives in four runs. His homerun is to the deepest fenced part of the park that does not have a ground rule associated with it in center field. Lenny is three for three with three RBI of his own while Pete, Pauly and B Ward each collect two safeties. Pauly's two base hits drive in a pair of runs. So far, so good and now we match up in the morning with St. Catharine's as they again stand in our way of getting to the finals.

Sunday September 10 - Oakes Park - Vs St. Catharine's (35T) - EB loses 8-4.

EB 102 100-4 6 4 (25-27-1)  
St. Kitt's 501 20x-8 8 2

For the umpteenth time we are knocked out of a tournament by St. Kit's. We jump up with a run in the top of the first inning but have a nightmarish bottom of the first as we commit three errors that lead to five unearned runs and Klumpp'r loses the strike zone as he hits a batter and walks four consecutive men before being relieved by Pep. We again do not pick up the ball for him as we do not surrender a hit in the first inning but it ends with EB in a five to one hole. Worse is the fact that B Ward chases a pop up by the EB third base dugout and slips on the concrete and damages his shoulder. He needs to be removed from the game and the lineup and his bat, glove and arm will be missed. We rally in the fourth to make the score six to four but a base running blunder prevents us from mounting a bigger inning as we are thrown out at second base after rounding the bag to far and the throw in from the outfield catches us off base. An absolute killer out as we have the middle of our order coming up and St. Kit's on the ropes. We can't do anything the rest of the way and we again are bounced. This shit is sickening. Why do we play like this over and over and over?

Wednesday September 13 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game# 1 Peace Bridge Series (Opener) - EB loses 13-11.

Chief's 621 100 012-13 21 4  
EB 030 105 011-11 20 3 (25-28-1)

Pep starts and after getting the first batter out, surrenders six runs to put EB in a hole right away that we never recover from. We battle back and actually only trail eleven to ten heading into the ninth. Pep goes the distance fashioning a neat twenty-one hitter. Three errors cost us seven runs. Eddie has four hits including a triple while Pep, Lenny, Danny and Pete each slam three. However, the first inning set the tone for the game and seems to have deflated the squad as we leave eleven runners on base.

Monday September 18 - Burgar Park - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game# 2 Peace Bridge Series (EB down 1-0) - EB wins 12-8.

Chief's 120 100 103- 8 9 3  
EB 203 322 00x-12 15 7 (26-28-1)

We square the series on J Ward's masterful route going performance. He gives up four unearned runs early and six overall but Lenny guides him through some bumps in the road to coax a complete game out of him. He surrenders nine hits and gathers seven strikeouts. EB plays well at Burgar and the Chief's have some sort of negative karma at this park. Eddie leads off the game with a homer and continues to be out of his mind at the plate collecting four more hits, boosting his average to an ungodly .567 and driving in three! He has another homer in the fourth, "only" his second and third of the year, as line drives continually ring off of his bat. Kenny chips in with another homer and a three-run double to straight away centerfield as he drives in five and supplies EB with instant offense that we are just not accustomed to. It sure is nice! We somehow overcome seven errors as we collect six extra base hits and five stolen bases. We are scrambling for players again tonight and this means J Ward takes his potent stick to the place with him and collects his usual oh for four. We steal five more bases tonight and coupled with the four in game one have been successful on nine straight steals. Welland has not attempted one yet.

Wednesday September 20 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game# 3 Peace Bridge Series (Series tied 1-1) - EB loses 18-5.

EB 100 001 300- 5 12 6 (26-29-1)  
Chief's 355 500 00x-18 23 1

Forced to shuffle the roster again due to late player arrivals, injuries and personal issues, we get down early and lose Mikey, who was forced

to start on the mound, when he is removed from the hill and Welland let's the ump dictate the rules of the Series to us. As a pitcher/DH Mikey is forced out of the game in the second inning as Klumpp'r and then J Ward are inserted in the four hole. EB is pissed but cannot channel our anger into a solid performance. Instead we play one of our worst games of the year and get drubbed. Our defense is abysmal and after an inning our team just forgets what it's supposed to do and loses focus. Errors, both mental and physical, punish our pitching. We commit six errors that result in twelve unearned runs with Klumpp'r, in typical fashion, bearing the brunt of our horrible play. He gives up eleven runs, ten of which are unearned in three innings of work. Typical is the bottom of the third in which we trail eight to one. The first three hitters reach base on errors en route to a five unearned run inning and this game is history. The nine-inning format should give us hope no matter what happens early, as witnessed in Game 1's comeback, but it is not to be tonight. After Mikey's banishment tensions between the squads mount and even mild mannered Nino from the Chief's shoots his mouth off, incorrectly of course, when Perx lays down a perfect bunt to lead off the ninth inning for EB. I guess we were supposed to roll over and die. Pep collects three hits, Lenny, K White and Perx two each although none of the twelve hits EB garners goes for extra bases, stark contrast to the other night. Ralph collects three stolen bases and J Ward gets hooded.

Saturday September 23-24 - Oakville Tournament (35T) - Rained out. The beat goes on. Saturday morning call from Ralph tells us that the entire tourney has been scratched. We were going to this tourney as the Buffalo Indians to repeat from last year. We had a tough schedule that included Tillsonburg and white Detroit on Saturday but we were loaded with AK, Lew, Randy, Blarr and Hetrick in addition to Mikey, Ralph, Len, Eddie, Klumpp'r and Pep. Another four games wiped from the sked, which brings the season total to a staggering twelve games, lost to rain.

Monday September 25 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game # 4 Peace Bridge Series (EB down 2-1) - EB loses 6-4.

EB	111	100	000-4	7	0	(26-30-1)
Chief's	010	010	04x-6	15	5	

A must win game for EB. Pep carries a four to one lead into the top of the fifth when for the, who knows how many-ith time, we run their catcher on a play at the plate, this time with K-Man doing the honors. He is out but a shoving match/mini brawl ensues and Pep gets involved in it and is thrown from the game along with Nino from Welland. Lenny had crushed a two-out double that K-Man tried to score on as he was waved in all the way from first base. The catcher again had to come up the line to get the throw and blocked the path to the plate, which resulted in him getting rightfully crushed. Pep acts like a child and gets tossed from the stadium. EB now shuffles its lineup with Eddie coming in to pitch and Klumpp'r assuming Peps spot in the order. EB cannot

muster any more offense and holds a four to two lead in the bottom of the eighth. However, four straight hits to start the inning plates four runs and after a leadoff walk to Danny to start the ninth we go down meekly in order and now are in a huge three to one hole. The squad plays errorless ball, Lenny and Danny have two hits each and we steal five more bases without being thrown out but we K nine times in the losing effort. Sprackett for Welland injures his knee while batting and must be carried from the field. His services for Coop's this weekend and for Arizona in November are seriously in doubt.

Wednesday September 27 - Welland Sports Complex - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game # 5 Peace Bridge Series (EB down 3-1) - EB loses 9-7.

Chief's	310	140	000-9	12	2
EB	100	212	010-7	10	4 (26-31-1)

We lose the series for the second year in a row before we even get to the Coop's. Pep starts and immediately digs EB a hole as he gives up three runs on four hits and a walk in the top of the first. We get a run back in the bottom of the inning but Pep walks the leadoff hitter to open the second who ends up scoring and we are down four to one. We settle down but the fourth and fifth inning are our downfall as we commit three of our four errors on the night and it costs us five runs. Pep throws away a two out come backer for a run in the fourth and we drop a one out can of corn in the outfield that costs us four more in the fifth. We steal TEN more bases on the evening without getting thrown out which brings our series total to a staggering twenty-seven in five games with none thrown out. This has managed to get us nowhere unbelievably. Welland has not attempted to steal a base yet on Lenny's rocket. D Ladori and Pete each have two hits while Mikey collects three but again all ten of our hits are singles and we leave eleven men on base. EB's only hope now is to keep Welland winless in Cooperstown as that sadly is our weak mantra for the weekend.

Saturday September 30 - Doubleday Field, Cooperstown, NY - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game # 6 Peace Bridge Series (EB down 4-1) - EB wins 12-9.

EB	201	000	402	3-12	15	11	(27-31-1)
Chief's	001	003	302	0-	9	12	4

A typical EB/Welland barnburner as the 112 fans in attendance (Eddie counted) is treated to a sloppy ten-inning thriller. Nine more EB thefts on the bases pave the way to victory as Ralph and Lenny grab two and Eddie three as the pseudo EB track meet continues. Lenny slams four hits, Eddie three, Mikey and Pep two each as EB bangs out fifteen hits with Pep's double the only one for extra bases. Mikey and Len each drive in a pair of runs. We kick the ball around to the horrendous tune of eleven errors as Pep goes the distance giving up twelve hits and offering 156 pitches. In typical

fashion he cannot hold a two run lead in the bottom of the ninth but is able to wiggle out of a two out bases loaded jam when Eddie robs the third out on a catch of a vicious line drive that ends the ninth with the score tied. In the tenth, Danny leads off with a single, steals second and when Ralph lays down a perfect sacrifice bunt, Ralph beats it out. Pete drives Danny in with a sac fly, Perx then lines a single to cash his brother and Eddie cashes Perx with a base hit. Pep walks the leadoff hitter to start the tenth but Danny saves him with a double play that he takes himself to end the game. Back to the cottages, but not before we almost lose our dinners staring at the hirsute waitress at Mickey's restaurant across the street from the park during our post game meal. Ralph entertains us back at the Bayside with his take on EB players missing signs on purpose during the game. The ruckus he causes, throwing pillows and carry on, brings Kathy Proulx up to the party cottage thinking a brawl is taking place. Very funny evening is just beginning although this year we have decided not to cook up a feast and decide just to hang out. Funny but subdued evening.

Sunday October 1 - Doubleday Field, Cooperstown, NY - Vs Welland Chief's (NL) - Game # 7 Peace Bridge Series (EB down 4-2) - EB loses 12-10.

Chief's 272 010 000-12 18 7  
EB 202 201 210-10 20 2 (27-32-1)

A fitting end to a totally shit year in EB terms and in baseball terms as we lose for the first time to the Chief's at Doubleday. We give up two in the first and seven in the second to dig an early hole but collect twenty hits, only one for extra bases though in the loss. Everyone in the lineup has at least one hit but we kill ourselves with sixteen men left on base and twice are thrown out on the bases by Welland's right fielder that leaves us scoreless in the second and fifth frames. Lenny completes an amazing year with three more hits and four RBI and Mikey drives in three with two hits. Eddie has four hits and Ralph three as the squad picks up five more steals. For the seven game series EB steals forty one bases and is not thrown out once and Welland does not attempt even one. Only EB can turn that advantage into a five game to two series defeat.

The season is over and what a season it was. Everything is forgotten as the crazy summer of 2000 is over. We suffered twenty three rainouts twelve of which could not be made up and for EB that is very traumatic as we each remember Ralph handing out our schedules way back in the spring and seeing that we would be playing in excess of seventy games which had us all drooling. We should have known it was too good to be true. Regardless, we played a lot of ball, more than most people, managed to have some fun amidst all the crazy fighting we had and are committed to come back in 2001 and do it again. After all, can it be any worse, weather wise or turmoil wise, than it was this year? Don't answer that.