

# LINEDRIVE!

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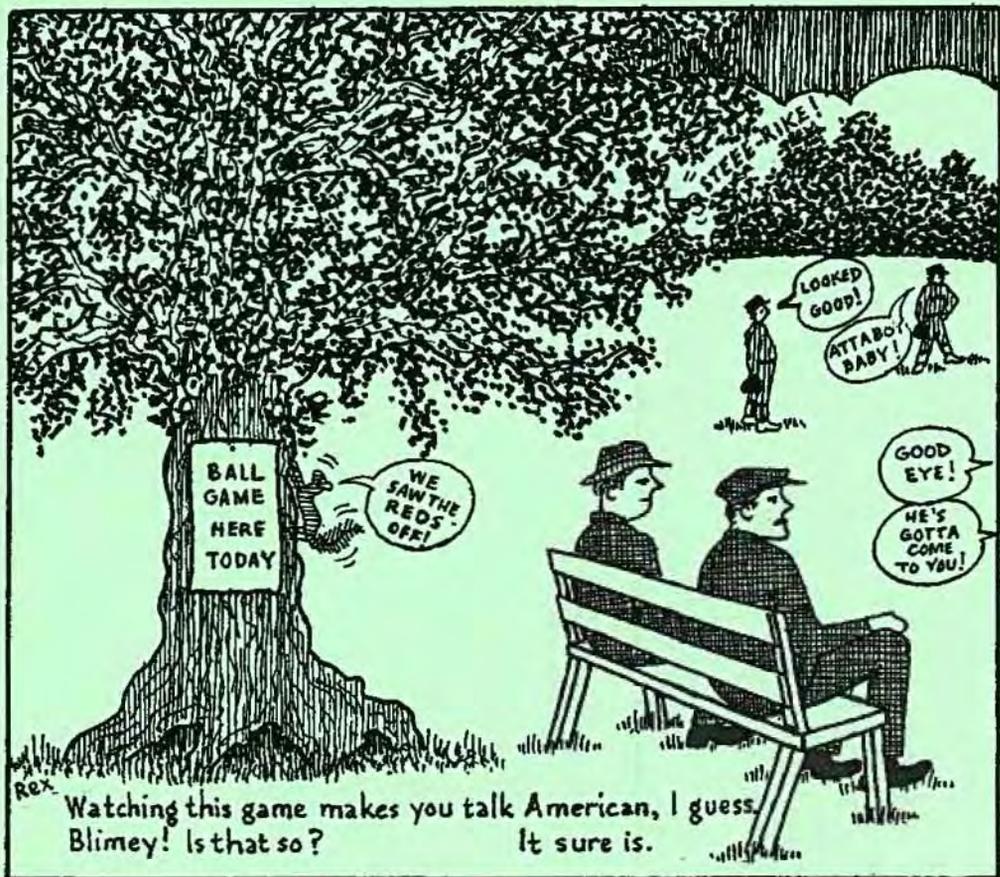
BASEBALL

Vol. II

1993

IN BRITAIN

No. 8



LONDON WARRIORS  
NATIONAL LEAGUE  
TEAM ROSTER 1993

| <u>Name</u>       | <u>Usual Fielding Position</u> | <u>Uniform Number</u> |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Rupert Armitage   | Rightfield                     | 20                    |
| Harry Atwood      | Second Base/Shortstop          | 12                    |
| Alan Bloomfield   | Catcher/Second Base            | 4                     |
| Justin Brown      | Shortstop/Pitcher              | 20                    |
| Cody Cain         | Leftfield/Pitcher              | 19                    |
| Julian Dodwell    | Centrefield                    | 17                    |
| Oliver Heidecker  | Third Base/Second Base         | 14                    |
| Vincente Martinez | Pitcher                        | 16                    |
| Steve Marzo       | Rightfield                     | 13                    |
| Kevin Murphy      | Rightfield/Centrefield         | 18                    |
| Carlos Rodriguez  | Centrefield                    | 19                    |
| Alan Smith        | Pitcher/Rightfield             | 8                     |
| Stanley Smulders  | Rightfield/Leftfield           | 15                    |
| Brad Thompson     | Catcher                        | 6                     |
| Darrin Ward       | First Base                     | 7                     |
| Dean Ward         | Third Base                     | 5                     |

SUMMERTIME BLUES

For that rare, but nonetheless impassioned, breed, the supporter of baseball in Britain, recent weeks have proved to be just a little frustrating. Okay, so by and large, the fans have it fairly cushy. No practice, no kit to buy or clean, no diamond to set up, boundary fence to peg or backstop to erect, and no league subscriptions to pay. However, we do have one thing in common with the players. A love of the game.

We trudge through our daily lives waiting for our next baseball Sunday. We buy notebooks and pencils to record the games, after all there are no souvenirs on sale, and we kit ourselves out with the usual spectator regalia of chairs, food, drinks, caps, jackets, and on some occasions pullovers, all building up in preparation for our weekly fix.

Then comes the blow. We arrive and find either just the home team, disgruntled, but at least able to make the best of it with a practice session, or worse still, no-one at all.

Yes, it is understood that it is an amateur sport, and that like anyone else, its participants are entitled to holidays, or to attend weddings, or even to pursue their business if required, but such postponements or forfeits do take meaning away from the regular season standings. It is like two teams, in mid game, deciding between themselves what the score will be for the next inning, disappearing off the diamond rather than playing it, and then returning to resume the game. It kills the tension that has been slowly mounting since the start.

The solution ? Bigger playing squads, more baseball in the UK so that both reserve and youth teams can be supported. But that would need the sport to be more popular. How do we achieve that ? By providing a regular spectacle that the core of supporters can be sure of seeing, so that they can encourage friends and colleagues to attend, either to watch, play or just talk about. Sadly, a chicken and egg situation, for which I see no real solution. All I can do is stress the importance to fans of every single game.

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REPORTS & SCORES

National League Senior Division

Sunday 1st August

|                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | R |   |                    |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------|
| <u>Bury Saints</u>       | 1 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 | WP John Nevelle    |
| <u>Croydon Blue Jays</u> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | LP Keith Wilesmith |

The *Linedrive !* team of myself and Rex Phillips had, more by chance than design, got into a pattern of going to baseball following one railway route, and returning from the game by another. On this particular Sunday, we excelled ourselves, going to Barnes, for the scheduled match between Warriors and Knights, and returning home from Saints @ Blue Jays !

With Knights offering Warriors a 9-0 forfeit, we returned hot foot to Roundshaw, arriving, to our delight at just gone three. Both teams were there, but the game was not under way, and did not start until four, when the umpires, delayed in cross London traffic, finally reached Roundshaw.

Saints soon grabbed our attention, Tony Anstatt thumping in a three run homer to open the score for Bury. The game then settled into a tight pitching duel between Croydon's Keith Wilesmith, and Bury's John Nevelle. Sadly, Wilesmith was not as well supported by his field, Bury's runs in the third coming from fielding overthrows.

Blue Jays were unlucky not to score in the fourth, heads up defence from Bury tagging Harrington at home and Ratcliffe on third for a double play.

With Ken Ward adding two RBI's in the ninth, followed by Tony Anstatt stealing home, Blue Jays looked to be on the receiving end of shut out. However, encouraged by Blue Jay manager, Norman Laing, Keith Wilesmith decided he could ruin John Nevelle's day, a towering solo homer finishing the game much as it had begun.

For the more established fans, it was nice to see Phil Laing and Mike Smith back out of retirement, all be it just for the day.

National League Senior Division

Sunday 8th August

|                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | R | H  | E  |    |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| London Warriors       | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 12 | 31 |
| Waltham Forest Angels | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7  | 13 | 7  |

WP Alan Smith

LP Noel Amechi

A rare sight indeed, London Warriors turning up to a game with just the bare nine, with an outfield featuring two players making their Warrior debuts, Rupert Armitage and Carlos Rodriguez.

Waltham Forest, although able to call upon several substitutes, also have one critical problem. Their first choice pitcher, Tony Dyett, is out injured for the rest of the season. Taka Inamura, their second choice, is also unavailable, and whilst Noel Amechi and Dave Singer tried their best, the very fact that the entire Warrior rotation got three plate appearances in the first three innings says it all.

Ground rule doubles for Alan Bloomfield and Darrin Ward opened the Warrior scoring, Alan Smiths grounder to short, to score the third run, also highlighted the tricky bounces on the dirt paths, which had been gouged out of the field, to form semi-circular shallow trenches.

It was this notorious hazard that brought about an unconventional, and rather painful, assist for Harry Atwood in the bottom of the first. The batted ball, a grounder to short, took an odd bounce, struck Atwood on the knee, and arched through the air to second. The alert Darrin Ward snatched the ball, firing to Martinez at first for the out.

The second saw RBI's for Alan Bloomfield and Darrin Ward again, Darrins brother Dean adding 2 RBI's and a steal home. The Ward brothers struck again, scoring an RBI each, and a run each, and to show the cyclical nature of the game, the last two scorers were Alan Bloomfield and Darrin Ward with RBI doubles !

Full credit to Angels for a good humoured and sporting attitude throughout, typified by Noel Amechi's attempt to notify us of

fielding changes. Despite pulling a player out of the game, he was certain that nobody needed to come on in his place. When convinced of the error of his ways, he referred to the incoming player, who just happened to be the assistant manager, as 'whatsisname'.

CROSSWORD CHAMPIONS !

On the reverse of *Linedrive !* 5, the ingenious Rex Phillips devised a cunning crossword. Full marks to Ethel Smith of Harlow, Essex, and Emanuel Disdet of Nantes, France for batting 1.000, getting all the right answers. Admittedly, Monsieur Disdet had to telephone his aunt to find out who or what OGPU was, but as the crossword wasn't in French, that's pretty good going.

STANDINGS

|                    | Wn | Lt | Pcnt | GB |
|--------------------|----|----|------|----|
| London Warriors    | 11 | 2  | .846 |    |
| Enfield Spartans   | 9  | 5  | .643 | 2½ |
| Bury Saints        | 6  | 5  | .545 | 4  |
| Essex Eagles       | 7  | 6  | .538 | 4  |
| Birmingham Brewers | 6  | 6  | .500 | 4½ |
| Cambridge Knights  | 5  | 9  | .357 | 6½ |
| Croydon Blue Jays  | 4  | 9  | .308 | 7  |
| Waltham Fst Angels | 2  | 11 | .182 | 9  |

Please note that the above table is subject to two conflicting rumours, either a)Waltham Forest have yielded a 9-0 defeat to Bury Saints, or b)this will be played as a double-header on August 29th. The standings above apply to option b).

NEXT WEEK :- Birmingham Brewers @ London Warriors (single game).  
 Croydon Blue Jays @ Enfield Spartans, Cambridge Knights @ Essex Eagles, Bury Saints @ Waltham Forest Angels (all double headers).

*LINEDRIVE !* edited by Phil Ross, Flat 2 Thanescroft, Selborne Road, Croydon, CR0 5JQ. Tel 081 681 2222 ex 25829 or 081 688 2966. Cover designed and drawn by Rex Phillips, 081 654 6605.

LONDON WARRIORS NATIONAL LEAGUE SCHEDULE 1993

|                    |  |        |
|--------------------|--|--------|
| Sun 25th April     | HOME TO CAMBRIDGE KNIGHTS                    | W 7-0  |
| Sun 2nd May        | away to Waltham Forest Angels                | W 13-1 |
| Sun 9th May        | HOME TO BURY SAINTS                          | W 8-1  |
| Sun 16th May       | HOME TO ESSEX EAGLES                         | W 6-0  |
| Sun 23rd May       | away to Birmingham Brewers                   | W 12-6 |
| Sun 30th May       | away to Croydon Blue Jays                    | W 13-3 |
| Sun 6th June       | HOME TO WALTHAM FOREST ANGELS                | W 17-2 |
| Sun 13th June      | away to Cambridge Knights                    | L 3-5  |
| Sun 20th June      | away to Enfield Spartans                     | W 4-3  |
| Sun 18th July      | away to Enfield Spartans                     | W 9-2  |
| Sun 25th July      | away to Birmingham Brewers                   | L 4-5  |
| Sun 1st August     | HOME to CAMBRIDGE KNIGHTS ( <i>forfeit</i> ) | W 9-0  |
| Sun 8th August     | away to Waltham Forest Angels                | W 19-7 |
| Sun 15th August    | HOME TO CROYDON BLUE JAYS (DH)               |        |
| Sun 22nd August    | HOME TO BIRMINGHAM BREWERS                   |        |
| Sun 29th August    | HOME TO ENFIELD SPARTANS                     |        |
| Sun 5th September  | away to Bury Saints (DH)                     |        |
| Sun 12th September | HOME TO ESSEX EAGLES                         |        |
| Sun 19th September | away to Essex Eagles                         |        |
| Sat 25th September | Championship Playoff Game 1                  |        |
| Sun 26th September | Championship Playoff Games 2 & 3             |        |

DH = Double header - start times to be arranged, but likely to be 1:00 pm. All other games nine innings, start 3:00 pm.

## IS IT ONLY A GAME?

What is the spell of baseball? Its fascination is clear, its power to absorb, its irresistible challenge—but is that all? Is there not a pervading spell, woven by time and events, a spell under whose influence anyone may come at any time? Thirty years ago, from his Washington apartment, an Englishman could see the lights of D.C. Stadium. He would, out of curiosity (?), listen to the game on the radio, and once or twice he even went to the Stadium. Was he fascinated? Slightly. Was he absorbed? Not really. Did he feel challenged? No. He didn't remember the scores, the opponents, or the players' names. He came back to England, and to cricket, with the mere knowledge of having seen and heard a little baseball. So what of the spell of baseball? Years passed, but in those years of cricket, whenever there was incidental mention of baseball, our Englishman found pleasure in discussing the basics, which was all he remembered—three strikes, four balls, not much scope for discussion! Then, many years later, he saw the report of a baseball game in his local paper! So, out of curiosity (?), he went to see baseball in Britain. Was he fascinated? Yes. Was he absorbed? Completely. Was he challenged? Yes, and still is. D.C. Stadium failed, then, where the green fields and parks of England have succeeded? The Washington Senators failed, the Chicago White Sox failed, as did any other Major League team that came to our Englishman's attention, while the London Warriors, the Enfield Spartans, the Croydon Blue Jays have succeeded? No, says our Englishman. He knows now where the spell of baseball took effect, thirty years ago.