



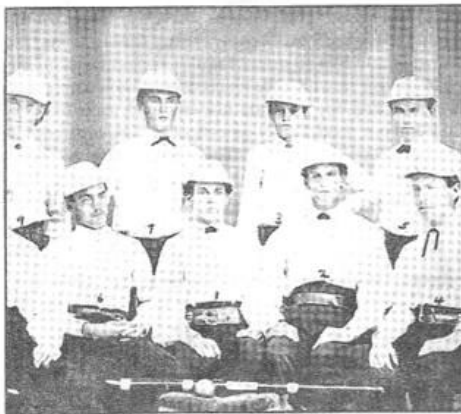
# Dan's North Fork Old School Baseball

## North Forkers Gather To Play Ball The Way They Did In 1864

By Jessica Gold

"Take me out to the ball game" will have a whole other meaning this weekend as you step back in time to watch the dynamic Atlantic Baseball Club take on the wondrous Oysterponds Baseball Club in a game of vintage style baseball. Forget about the Yankees, forget about the Mets and head on down to Poquatuck Park on Village Lane in Orient this Sunday, July 15th, 2007 at 12:00 p.m. Come see baseball as it was played in 1864.

The rules are quite different; for starters the players do not wear gloves. All I could think of was "ouch" when I heard that one. Yet, I was assured that there will be plenty of ice on hand. According to Linton Duell of the Oysterpond Historical Society and chairman of the event, "The ball is softer than the present day balls." The Atlantic Club will be bringing its own ball, "Handmade, stuffed and sewn." Linton said that this event is a great time for baseball fans. "You can truly see where some of the present day game has evolved from."



Linton said that the Atlantic team is "really good" and will be arriving wearing uniforms from the time period. They will be using a bat that is "slightly different in shaft circumference than the ones today." The following (courtesy of the Oysterponds Historical Society) is a summary of the many rules of playing a vintage game:

- 1) Bases are 90 feet apart from each other; home base being circular.
- 2) The pitching distance is 45 feet and the pitcher must deliver the ball underhand. He must remain between the pitching lines while throwing the ball. If he steps over the line he makes a "balk." Upon receiving a "balk" call, runners can advance one base.
- 3) Three strikes (like today) constitute a strike-out. But, "If a third strike, either swung on or called, is not caught by the catcher on the fly or on one bounce, it shall be considered fair and the striker must run to 1st base, regardless of the number of outs or where runners are situated."
- 4) Foul balls are not strikes. A foul ball caught on the fly or on one bounce is an out. A foul tip is a foul ball. Runners may not advance on a foul ball (cannot tag up). Runners must return to their bases on a foul as they can be put out in the same manner as a caught fly ball, however, the ball must first pass through the hands of the pitcher.
- 5) The striker is out if a batted fair ball is caught either on the fly or on one bounce. In the case of a fly, runners must return to their bases and may tag up and advance. In the case of a bounce catch, run-

ners can advance at their own risk.

6) There is no infield fly rule. If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, he is not awarded a base. Also, there are to be no coaches allowed on the base lines.

This event has been going on for over ten years according to Linton who reminisced about games played over the years. He said that it's a great time for families and diehard baseball fans. It's a history lesson worth seeing. Linton feels that, "It gives you a little throwback to another era and lets you really see how baseball used to be."

When asked if he'd like to go back to 1864, he responded laughing, "Maybe just for baseball pur-

poses." The event consists of two exciting games. The first one is competitive. The Oysterponds team is out to show the Atlantic team what they're made of or vice versa. The second game is played with a bit more humor; more of a carefree feeling and allows for some family involvement and fun. The event is free and open to the public. For more information; contact Linton Duell at (631) 323-2580 or the Oysterponds Historical Society at (631) 323-2480. It's sure to be a great game! Don't forget to bring the popcorn, peanuts, crackerjacks and sun block! Have the little ones bring their mitts, they may be able to catch a foul ball or two.

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