

A NEW AMATEUR BASEBALL LOOP IS ORGANIZED

At an interesting meeting held at Barium Springs recently, a fast new amateur baseball loop, to replace the Tri-County and Western North Carolina Textile Leagues, was tentatively organized for the coming baseball season. Another meeting of interested parties who wish to enter teams in the new baseball circuit is being held Tuesday night, April 20th, at 7:30 o'clock in the parlors of Jenny Gilmer Building at Barium Springs, at which time the permanent organization of the league will be perfected and at the same time plans will be made for the opening games of the newly formed baseball circuit.

Four of the strongest teams of last year's Tri-County Amateur Baseball League and an equal number of stronger teams from the last Western Carolina Textile League of last year have been selected as charter members of the new loop, these being the Statesville Chairs, Statesville Weavers, and Stimpson Hosiery of this city and a tentative combine of Troutman, East Monbo from the Tri-County wheel and Valdese Red Tops or the Full Fashion Hosiery Mill nine of Valdese, Hickory Spinners, Carolina Mills of Maiden, and the Boger-Crawford Mills of Lincolnton. The Valdese and Lincolnton teams were not represented at the meeting, but they are expected to enter teams in the fast new loop.

The Western Carolina Piedmont is the name tentatively selected for the new loop, but the writer, who has been asked to serve as secretary of the loop, suggests the names of the Mid-Piedmont Amateur League or the Catawba Valley Amateur League as suitable names of the newly formed baseball wheel, which takes in teams from four counties in the midsection of Piedmont Carolina.

After a trio of attempts to reorganize for the 1937 diamond season, the Tri-County Amateur Baseball League, that has functioned so smoothly during the past several years with teams in Iredell County as the hub of the loop, had failed, it was then decided to reach out and take in more territory to form a faster amateur league this season with the results of the tentative organization of a league with the four strongest teams out of two leagues making up the membership of the newly formed wheel, of eight teams, which should prove to be one of the fastest amateur leagues in this section of the state.

Among other things discussed and decided upon at the meeting were the adoption of an official baseball to be used during the season, and a well-known sphere was adopted after some discussion. The opening date of the loop was set for Saturday afternoon, April 24th. The same playoff plan used by the Tri-County League last year was decided upon, which is known as the Shaughnessy playoff plan used in a number of minor leagues for the past several seasons with much success.

Mr. Ervin "Buck" Jackins, president of the newly formed loop, presided with Manager Fred Cockerell and Ralph Cody representing the Statesville Weavers, Messrs. Ross Curley and Heffner representing Carolina Mills of Maiden, Manager Fred Dale, Ralph Dale, and Pitcher Duncan, the Hickory Spinners, Messrs. Zeb Speaks, Ralph Hoover and Sam Mabry, the Stimpson Hosiery, Manager Allen "Buck" Mills, Jr., the Statesville Chairs, and Messrs. Jack Loftin and Glenn Stewart, the East Monbo-Troutman Stars.

TRAILING THE SPORTS with Alwyn Morrison

PICKUPS AND PUTOUTS

This weekend finds King Baseball ascending his throne locally and, in this county and the neighboring county of Catawba, as the newly organized Western Piedmont amateur baseball league, formerly the Tri-County and Western Carolina Textile leagues, gets away for its initial season.

Three local teams are represented in the new league, while there is one other Iredell County community represented in the wheel. Catawba County is represented by two fast teams from the communities of Maiden and Hickory. The recently organized Iredell City-County amateur baseball league, with a membership of four county and four city teams, will not start for another week.

WESTERN PIEDMONT IN FINAL LOOP MEETING

Attended by some two dozen enthusiastic representatives of member teams, the final league meeting before the opening of the 1937 season was held Tuesday night at Barium Springs with Mr. Ervin "Buck" Jackins, president of the loop, presiding. Everything was put in ship-shape for the initial launching of the 1937 baseball season of the newly organized Western Piedmont amateur baseball league. All clubs of the newly formed loop were represented.

The schedule for the season, as drawn up by Mr. Jackins, was found to be most satisfactory by the majority of the clubs. Each club will play a straight-through schedule of 35 games, with loop games being played on Saturday and Wednesday afternoons. At the end of the regular 35-game schedule, the four teams having the highest percentage in the final standing of clubs will play a series of games for the league championship, with the first and fourth clubs meeting in a best two out of three series and the second and third club meeting in the best two out of three series. The winners of these two series will then meet in the best four out of seven series for the league championship for the 1937 season. This plan is known as the Shaughnessy playoff plan and is being used by a number of the larger minor leagues throughout the country and is proving highly successful.

At the meeting Tuesday night, a number of routine matters were discussed, among them being the starting time of mid-week and weekend games, with the mid-week games beginning promptly at 4:30 p.m. and the Saturday games starting at 3:30 p.m. The duties of the umpires were also discussed and decided upon. It being agreed that the visiting umpire shall call balls and strikes behind the plate, with the home umpire calling bases. All clubs are expected to turn into the president of the league before their first game is played, the eligible list of players, their forfeit, president's, and secretary's fees.

The writer has been selected as secretary of the loop, that is, to do the statistical and publicity work of the league for the coming season. The writer, as sports editor of The Statesville Record, plans to carry a full account of each game played in the league, provided he receives the full cooperation of each manager in the loop. He earnestly requests each manager to give his full cooperation in getting the accounts of the games in to him as soon as possible after the contests are played so that they can be written up.

Among those attending Tuesday night's meeting were Messrs. J.E. Ayers, Fred Cockerell, Alexander and Albright of the Statesville Weavers; Ralph Hoover, Zeb Speaks, Odell Hammer, J.E. Herrin, Howard Overcash, Charlie Adams, Red Vanetory, Wilford Young, and Glenn Shoemaker of Stimpson Hosiery; Fred

Dale, Ralph Dale, E.G. Duncan, and P.W. Chapman of the Hickory Spinners; Jack Loftin and Glenn Stewart of East Monbo; L.T. Heffner, Ron Curlee, Houston Caldwell, and Fred Cooke of Carolina Mills of Maiden; and Buck Mills and Kermit Alley of the Statesville Chairs; and your correspondent, and Mr. R.E. Jackins.

LOCAL CHAIRS WIN PRACTICE ENCOUNTER

With Ball, Doyl, and Holliday, the latter two newcomers to the hurling staff of the local Chairs, combining to let the local Hosiery mend down with a trio of widely scattered hits. Manager Buck Mills' 1937 edition of the Statesville Chairs had little trouble here Wednesday afternoon in running up an 11 to 2 score on the Hosiery nine in the two teams' final pre-season practice tilt. Manager Mills with a homer and single, Kanupp with a triple and single, Compton with a double, and Bumgarner with a triple, featured the local Chairs 10-hit offense, while Grady Stewart, Zeb Speaks, and Pressly Johnson secured the three hits allowed the Hosiery men by the trio of Chairs moundsmen. Both clubs fielded in early season form, with the two teams combining to run up a total of seven errors, which aided in the run-making.

The two teams' lineup was somewhat as follows for their practice tilt:

HOSIERY – G. Stewart, Overcash, Hammer, Speaks, Harris, Mabry, Johnson, Hoover, Vanstory, Lytton, Templeton.

STATESVILLE CHAIRS – Stewart, Mills, Weaver, McLaughlin, Compton, Kanupp, Foxx, Sherrill, Bumgarner, Ball, Doyl, and Holliday, pitchers. Umpires – Alley and Shoemaker. Scorer – Tom Barnett.

WESTERN PIEDMONT LOOP BEGINNING SATURDAY

Three clashes in the newly organized Western Piedmont Baseball League will pry off the 1937 lid Saturday afternoon, April 24th, weather permitting. The slate calls for tilts between teams representing the Carolina Mills of Maiden and the Statesville Weavers at the high school park in Maiden at 3:30 o'clock; Hickory Spinners will make its debut in the league with the Statesville Chairs as their hosts, with this game being played at the Chairs' park at 3:30 o'clock with possibly Mayor T.G. Shelton throwing up the first ball, to start the season for the two teams rolling. East Monbo is scheduled to entertain Manager Hamer's Hosiery nine of this city.

Amateur baseball players of the city, county, and Catawba County have been grooming for the opening of the baseball season for the past several weeks, and though the weather Wednesday was anything but hopeful looking, there was no talk of calling any games off.

The 1937 Western Piedmont amateur baseball league pennant race, with the Shaughnessy play-off plan being used at the end of the regular season of 35 games, promises to be tight as the teams composing the loop seem to be much faster and stronger than those in the Tri-County or Western Carolina Textile last season, and there is a general feeling that plenty of real diamond battles will be waged ere anybody sews up a gonfalon.

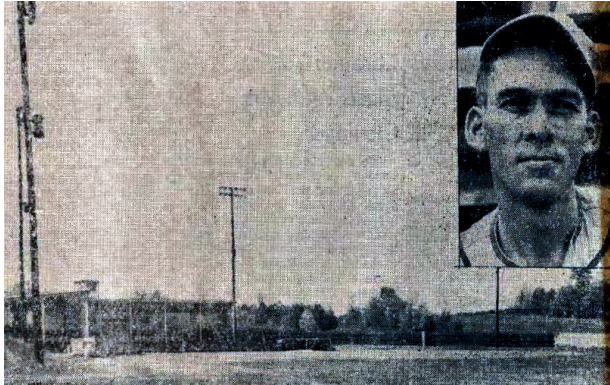
Several teams loom up as strong contenders in the league to dispute with last year's champion of the Tri-County and Western Carolina Textile loops.

As the six teams go to the post, the wish of your correspondent and the followers of all teams is may the best team win. The fans and followers of the six members of the newly organized loop are indeed in for a

fine season of the fastest of amateur baseball, and no doubt large crowds will fill the parks as the teams leave the barrier on their race for the 1937 Western Piedmont baseball league flag.

Hickory Daily Record, Monday, May 7, 1951

Carolina Mills To Dedicate Baseball Park To Late Frank Sigmon



The Carolina Mills baseball park in Maiden will be dedicated to Franklin Roosevelt Sigmon Saturday night, and after the ceremonies to be held during a Piedmont Textile League game, will be known as Sigmon Field.

The dedication is a memorial to the man who was an employee of Carolina Mills for nineteen years, who was instrumental in the organization of a mill baseball team and served as playing manager from its organization until his death on March 28 this year.

The dedication ceremonies will be held after the seventh inning, and those participating will be Leonard Moretz, secretary-treasurer of Carolina Mills Inc.; Russell Murphy, personnel manager of the mill; Mrs. Frank Sigmon, widow of the man whose memory is honored; members of the Carolina Mills baseball team, and Sinclair Bolick.

Preliminary to the game, the Newton-Conover High School band will play in the afternoon in Maiden, under the direction of Joshua Tyler.

The movement to dedicate the field to the man who was primarily responsible for the Carolina Mills baseball team sprung spontaneously from Carolina Mills officials and members of the Maiden Citizens baseball committee, it was said.

Mr. Sigmon was born in 1914, a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Sigmon of Catawba County. In 1931, he was married to Margaret Hatchett, and the following year, he started work with the Carolina Mills at Maiden as a doffer in the spinning company until his death and was, before his death, an Abbott winder-fixer.

When the Carolina Mills baseball team was organized, with Sigmon as the guiding force, he became playing manager, and so conscientious was he in his position that he removed himself from the lineup when a heart condition limited his activities.

He was an active and devoted member of Memorial Evangelic and Reformed church in Maiden.

Austin Williams, a lifelong friend of Sigmon, recalled today that in addition to his work and baseball interests, Sigmon had other interests, such as raising bantam chickens, bird hunting, and he was a motorcycle "addict." He was an all-round "good fellow," and held in the highest esteem by his fellow workers and fellow citizens.

The family is well known in Catawba County, two of the brothers, Robert and Paul Sigmon, being residents of Newton, and James and Glenn Sigmon, Miss Wilma Sigmon, and Mrs. Lurie Crouse living in Maiden.

Mr. Sigmon is succeeded by Hasting Laney as manager of the Carolina Mills baseball team. The game Saturday night will be with the Superior Yarn Mills of Mt. Holly.

Genuine Tribute

As the result of what has been aptly described as a unanimous spontaneous movement of citizens of Maiden and the Carolina Mills, Inc., tribute will be paid on Saturday night of this week to Frank Sigmon, when the baseball park will be dedicated to his memory and re-named Sigmon Field.

While the ceremonies are tangible evidence of the honor being paid, the spirit shown by the people of Maiden, including the mill personnel and officials, is the highest tribute that could be paid a fellow citizen and fellow worker.

Claimed by death prematurely, Frank Sigmon had devoted his entire adult life to his job with the mill, and, at the same time, had served as the inspiration for the baseball team and baseball spirit of the people of the mill and of the community. While we were not privileged to know him personally, he must have had a rare personality and quality of leadership to have awakened such sincere and devoted respect and admiration from his fellow townsmen, which is immediately apparent when his name is mentioned to them. It is one of the finest examples we have ever seen of the influence a man can wield as he goes about his daily tasks without thought of personal gain or benefit. His influence is a monument within itself to his memory.