

THE COMMONWEALTH BULL SHEET

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SWEET HOUSE SOFTBALLERS BEST O'DONNELL TEN, WALLOP SENATE DEMOCRATS AND TAKE UNDEFEATED RECORD INTO MONDAY RUBBER GAME.

CAMP HILL--Senate Democrats were still reeling today from the effects of a 17-7 shellacking handed to them by a team of House Democrats headed by Dave Sweet who shuffled players in and out of positions almost as swiftly as the executive branch shifts "spokesmen for the governor, who said."

Legislators, sans paychecks due to the ongoing budget impasse, resorted to relatively inexpensive entertainment while the governor waited for General Services to deliver the supply of blue pencils he ordered on the way back from Washington last week. Until they arrive, he is unable to blue line the budget, according to a spokesman who referred newsmen to another spokesman when he was asked what was going to be blue lined. That spokesman said the budget was being "reviewed," and that any further questions should be sent to the "shortfall" spokesman in the Deficit Denial office.

The round robin tournament saw aging softballer Ron Gamble suffer two injuries that caused Manager Sweet to put him on the temporarily disabled list for the upcoming series scheduled for next week. Besides being struck by a ground ball from the erratic natural turf, Gamble pulled a back muscle while reaching for a bad pitch.

Brian Clark combined with several others on the mound to assure that the Democratic Senators were given enough runs to keep them within striking distance at all times, but observers said that the Sweet team was never in danger of losing its comfortable lead.

Ex-marine Bill DeWeese (scratch the ex--once a marine always a marine) hit two homers--no tripolis--in the rout and excelled with his scintillating play at shortstop a la Dickie Thon.

Bob Belfanti came out of the fray batting 1.000 and is not sure whether he clubbed six or seven hits although the stats show that he was responsible for four RBI's against the Senate. In a later clash with the O'Donnell team, however, Bob played sieve and permitted four runs to cross the plate when he discovered that he is no longer able to bend. Four RBI's and a four run error have now put him even in the run category.

Sweet, in a master stroke of strategy, placed Gerry Kosinski between first and second base, thus effectively nullifying any possible offensive action by the Senate on that side of the diamond.

After running out a ground ball from home to first, Kosinski asked for and received permission to use a personal runner when he came to bat. It was learned that the 90-foot jaunt to first base had caused the rotund Kosinski to shed more poundage than he had anticipated and any further weight loss would have retired him to the bench, thus opening up a wide gap between first and second.

Democratic Senators were demoralized by the appearance of I-like-girls-but-I'll-never-get-married Steve Seventy, the accordion-playing bachelor whose diet of nut bread and kielbasa gives him the extra strength he requires to travel between the casinos at Atlantic City, Penn National and Meadowlands Race Tracks, Saturday night appearances with his orchestra in Pittsburgh and the House floor in Harrisburg.

Seventy, who learned baseball fundamentals on the sandlots of Pittsburgh, using baseballs wrapped with layers of black friction tape and discarded bats that were kept whole with nails and more friction tape, played as though his Sony Walkman kept repeating the popular Vince Lombardi tune, "Winning is the only thing...winning is the only thing..."

The seventeen runs scored by the Sweetmen is four more than that compiled by the American League All Stars in their first win in 12 years over the National League.

"I've been trying to settle my guys down," Dave Sweet told a reporter, "and I don't want them to get overconfident. Of course, with no voting this past week while we wait for somebody to make up the gov's mind, my men won't have sore arms from pulling their voting switches and the extra rest might be just what we need."

Sweet said that he has not decided whether to take the team on the road if the budget doesn't pass next week, but that he is being pressed by some members to arrange a tentative schedule with independent teams, passing the hat between innings to pick up money to defray expenses and pay salaries commensurate with the players' abilities.

It was difficult to single out a state senator as an individual standout, since several Democratic senators did not show and let their proxies bat. Instead of aluminum bats, however, many of them preferred to use a special gold-plated model, befitting their positions as the self-styled elite of the General Assembly.

One thing seemed clear during the tournament--the House Democrats, despite the awesome responsibility of settling the state's fiscal problems, were able to relax and turn in some of the most sparkling performances of this session.

Nick Colafella, Beaver County's stellar keystone sacker, showed flashes of brilliance afield and drove in Bob O'Donnell every time the Philadelphian reached second.

O'Donnell, on the other hand, showed his prowess with the stick when he hit at least five pitches into the gap between center and left, stretching several of them into home runs that will go unrecorded for posterity.

Allen Kukovich, whom many claim could have become a major league ballplayer had he so desired, demonstrated his natural ability both at bat and in the field and turned difficult chances into routine outs.

Tom Michlovic ranged far and wide, using his dancing agility to turn in some dazzling plays in the outfield.

And Tom Murphy, a latecomer, laced his sneakers, donned his glove and made a sensational circus outfield catch moments after entering the fray.

Jerry McMonagle, obviously inspired by his Phillies' tremendous pre-All Star surge, showed his cool in the clutch and was a steadying influence to his teammates.

Bill Wachob, imported from the wild country of Elk County, demonstrated that there are indeed baseball diamonds in that section of Pennsylvania, clubbing 14 hits in 15 plate appearances in two games.

There were others whose contributions to the tournament were every bit as important as those whose names appear prominently in the stats and O'Donnell and Wachob along with Sweet who shared managerial duties for the House teams, said that each of them will have an opportunity to show their mettle in future contests.

Plans now call for a House challenge to the Senate with the winner meeting a team from the Capitol pressroom. Should this materialize, one House Democrat wonderered aloud how the wordsmiths will succeed in slanting the box score.

THE MORNING NEWS

HARRISBURG DEMOCRATIC SENATORS GAIN SPLIT IN TWINBILL

KELLEY FAILS AGAIN TO NOTCH FIRST WIN EARLY IMPRESSIVE IN NIGHTCAP

CAMP HILL--The Senate Dems combined weak hitting with sloppy fielding to boot away the opener here in last night's double-header with the House Democrats but won the nightcap on stingy defense and better hitting.

The House Dems, who fielded a constitutional majority for the second time this year, provided the between game entertainment by passing a \$1 Billion tax package and posing for a group photo in the left field bleachers.

Senate manager Joe Rocks blamed the loss in the first game on logistics. "Look , we just couldn't get our bleep together in the first game. I know the scheduled starting time was 6 o'clock but we're the Senators, you know, and we're used to Senate time.

"Anyway, the House was just trying to intimidate us by bringing everybody out like that. Itold O'donnell (House manager) next time they have to have their travelling squad down to forty-five players, no more," Rocks told writers.

O'Donnell, asked for a reply , said, "Nyah, Nyah, Nyah! We won."

Actually, O'Donnell's team split a doubleheader with the two House teams, losing to the team Captained by Dave Sweet which also won the opener against the Senators.

The senate Dems opened the first game by taking the lead, faltered, played catch-up and then collapsed against a fifth inning onslaught fueled by poor fielding, poor throwing and bad luck.

Typical was a play which second sacker Jim Lloyd claimed set a record--most infielders falling down on a routine ground ball. "Man, I thought there was a sniper out there the way the bodies were dropping," Lloyd told writers. "They looked the Mets out there--the 1962 Mets," coach Gene Scanlon said. "I told Mike McLaughlin to hit the ball on the ground down third base three times and what does he do? He flies out to center. I told Joe Rocks to fine him for missing the sign but Rocks says to me, "What sign? Do we have signs?" I tell you that first game was embarrassing," Scanlon said. "I felt like Casey Stengel when he looked around his lockerroom after another loss and said, 'Can anyone here play this game?'"

There were bright spots, though. Third baseman Craig Lewis hit the ball hard and pitcher Jim Kelley lined a shot to deep left center that was a certain home run but Kelley was hobbled by a leg injury and was out at the plate on a throw that trailed sparks all the way from the outfield. Pitcher Brian Clark told writers afterward that his hand still hurt. "No way I'll be able to vote for taxes now," Clark told reporters, "This is the hand I use to pull my voting switch."

Catcher Ed Zemprelli arrived late having been called up from the Pittsburgh franchise Tuesday. Although he went hitless he lined a couple of shots that were right at people or they would have been solid singles.

Most impressive, though, was Zemprelli's defense. The veteran punched out several House Dems on pop flies and nearly had manager Sweet out a home but mishandled a bad hop throw from the outfield.

Zemprelli also provided off the field leadership by chanting "No on taxes! No on spending! NO, No, NO!" He was joined immediately by the entire Senate Dems team.

Centerfielder Bill Lincoln fielded brilliantly and recorded several hits while avoiding base running miscues which marred earlier games

"Hey, the key is having Gene Scanlon at third. When he says stop, you stop. I don't know how that dummy McLaughlin missed the signs," Lincoln said.

Another bright spot came in the second game when shortstop Mark Singel combined with Jim Lloyd to turn a near miss double-play. "Look, on a regular field that's a sure DP, but they had first base too close to home," Singel complained. "they were beating out routine grounders all night." Singel was asked by one writer if the House Dems were moving the bases back when the Senate came to the plate. "That's not the point," he replied angrily, "you guys just want to write the bad stuff, you never write about my hitting." One writer suggested that was proof his claim wasn't true causing Singel to stalk off saying, "I'm taking my wife and kid and going home."

Ringer Rick Welsh played left field like he was born there robbing one House Dem of a sure home run when he galloped far to his left to corral a sinking line drive with his outstretched glove at his knees. Others ringers included Jim Tanase, Jack Freed Bruce Bikin and Joe Powers (who registered a DNP causing many to wonder if he was setting himself up to say, "I didn't have anything to do with it" when the House Dems won. There are survivors and then there are SURVIVORS.).

Bonita Gingrich subbed for an injured Bill Lincoln and was robbed of extra bases when a House Dem leaped high and snared her rope to center. Bob Quigley vacuumed up everything hit his way and provided the only offensive power from the ringers along with Bikin. Ed Early's victory in the second game improved his record to 3 and 1 on the season. Early protested reporters listing his loss in the second game to the Rotundists in the season open. "I only pitched three innings. There's no way you should give me a loss on that." As Jack Kennedy said, "Life is unfair."

The injury list reads like a page from the Tet offensive. Ron Gamble--hit in the eye by a ground ball (no he wasn't lying down, it took a bad hop.)

Gerard A. Kosinski--exhaustion running to first base.

Ed Zemprelli--cut on left leg suffered running into a tree?

Ron Gamble--pulled back muscles while batting (yes, it's the same guy.)

Bill Lincoln--pulled hamstring

Dwight Evans--pulled hamstring

Jim Kelley--pulled hamstring (this is beginning to sound like the
menu at a Pennsylvania Dutch restaurant.)

and a cast of thousands seen limping around the South side of
the capital this morning.

Demographs----- Manager Rocks has challenged the O'Donnell team,
which the Senate Dems didn't play last night. A victory here
would give the Senate the right to a rematch against the
powerful Dave Sweet team. No word on time and place. THE
game against the staff will be recheduled. It was called last
week due to budget deliberations (a likely excuse). Rocks
will face some tricky lineup problems with injuries plaguing
the Senators. "We only fielded eight guys last night. Williams
was supposed to come off the disabled list and so was Pat Stapleton
but neither guy was ready to play. Fumo's still limping so I
don't know just what we'll do but we'll figure it out over the
weekend. By now you've noticed this story didn't say what the
scores were. Well, that's the way it's going to stay.