

The short season

Baseball needs continuity, integrity to survive

By JOHN DRESCHER

It was the middle of the seventh inning and time for the Durham Bulls' self-appointed cheerleader to stumble over to the third base side of the grandstand and do his thing.

"Gimme a 'B,'" he said with a half-drunk, hoarse voice as his ample girth shook with each word.

To his obvious delight, a clear and voluminous "B" resounded from the bleachers. He continued his cheer, ending with a "What's dat spell?" and a "Who's gonna win dis game?" that pleased the fans as much as it did him.

For him and the 2,000 other fans attending this minor league game on a lazy Sunday night, the since-resolved major league baseball strike was the farthest thing from their collective minds. Baseball fans they were, but strike fans they weren't. And to the average baseball fan in the average minor league town — or, in other words, the working class man in the working class town — the major league baseball strike was another distant big-city occurrence that he really didn't care about.

In Durham, attendance neither increased nor decreased during the strike. "Our fans are Durham Bulls fans," said Ricky May, the Bulls' assistant general manager. "As long as our guys play good ball, we draw well."

May said across the country, minor league baseball was not affected much by the strike. Sure, in some towns near a major league city, notably Hagerstown, Md., and Pawtucket, R.I., the teams drew more fans, but generally minor league attendance was not affected.

"We hear a lot of comments by fans," May said, "but very little of it was about the strike at all."

Of course, it was a different story in major league cities, where fans were infuriated over the 50-day strike. It was impossible to tell if fans were mad at greedy players or greedy owners, but one thing is sure: the fans, the ones who put money in baseball's pocket, were taken for granted.

Not that that's anything new. In 1972, baseball author Roger Angell wrote in his highly acclaimed *Five Seasons*: "In this country's long love affair with professional sports, the athlete has more and more come to resemble the inamorata — an object of unceasing scrutiny, rapturous adoration and expensive adornment — while the suitor, or fan, remains forever loyal, shabby and unknown."

The question now is just how long will the fan remain loyal. Although major league attendance is not down, it's not up either. Not since the 1919 Black Sox scandal, in which members of the Chicago White Sox pennant-winning American League team lost series games intentionally, has baseball had such a credibility problem with its fans.

Back then a guy by the name of Babe Ruth came along and rescued the game from becoming an afternoon version of championship rasslin'. But relying on another Ruth to save the game is not a smart gamble and baseball people — both owners and players alike — know that the game simply cannot afford another blow to its integrity.

Yet, that's exactly what the owners and players set themselves up for when they agreed to a split-season format for this season. Incredibly, — indeed, almost defying logic in a move that would cheapen the game, — a system was set up where teams could actually be in a better position to make playoffs if they lost some late season games. It appears the Lords of Baseball will straighten the problem out (by the time this is read, they may already have), but it's almost inconceivable that a

system would be set up that would permit this possible scenario.

Speaking of the split-season arrangement, Paul Richards, a career baseball man, said, "If I didn't know better, I'd swear somebody was getting bribed."

They are. Not by gamblers like in 1919, but by a more modern form of temptation: television money. Baseball owners know an additional round of playoffs means additional television revenue and gate receipts. Again, baseball has said it will sell its soul for the right price and apparently the price was right.

Even without the split-season problem, the game has enough problems as it is. This season's strike destroyed the day-in, day-out continuity of a game that thrives on its unique daily schedule that helped make it the nation's pastime. "Baseball lost its unique sense of continuity, the element that breathes life into its statistics and its legends," said *Newsweek* columnist Pete Axthelm. "It lost its voice at the local softball diamond, its presence with the morning coffee, its hard-won place in the day-to-day routines of American life. Someday it will get all those things back."

But it will only get those things back if it is an honest, respectable game. Baseball simply cannot stand breaks in its daily schedule and it especially cannot stand attacks on its integrity — two qualities that make the game great. A breach of either could mean that fans not only in Durham and other minor league towns, but fans in major league cities too, would cease to care about the game once so close to the American way of life.

John Drescher, a senior journalism and history major from Raleigh, is an editorial writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.



Crowd looks on at minor league game ...in Durham, nobody cared

DTH/Scott Sharpe

North Carolina institutes program to help increase state's productivity level

By DEBORAH GOODSON

A suggestion by an employee in the N.C. Department of Transportation to use thinner concrete on interchange ramps that still met safety requirements saved the state thousands of dollars last year. It is just one example of efforts by Gov. Jim Hunt to reduce state government growth and increase worker productivity.

Under the budget enacted recently by the General Assembly, the number of state jobs also will be reduced this year, continuing a trend since 1977 to decrease the rate of government growth.

From 1970-1977, the number of state employees increased by an average of 3.8 percent each year. Since 1977, the growth rate has declined steadily, culminating in a less than one percent growth rate for 1980-1981.

And for fiscal year 1981-1982, there will even be an actual reduction in the state's work force of about 1.1 percent.

But while North Carolina has enacted a reduction in the number of state jobs, the new federal budget will actually increase the number of federal government employees.

North Carolina is taking a responsible approach to managing the state's largest business — government — providing better services with the resources it already has. This approach adds up to good news for taxpayers.

Hunt attributes this concern for good management and controlled spending to the fact that double-digit inflation has taken its toll over the past few years, forcing citizens to make sacrifices in all areas of their lives. Likewise, citizens have also demanded government to make sacrifices.

One problem associated with managing more effectively, slowing government growth and cutting waste is keeping productivity high — looking for better, more efficient ways to meet the challenges facing government, while giving taxpayers their money's worth.

Carpooling has been encouraged by the current administration along with sup-

porting a search for alternate sources of energy and trying to implement new technological advancements.

The administration is also bringing more state employees into the decision-making process. An employee suggestion system saved the state \$298,000 last year. One Department of Transportation employee suggested changing the way stripes are painted along highway medians. This plan, which reduced the amount of paint used, saved taxpayers thousands of dollars.

A pay incentive plan provides cash awards or time off to those employees who come up with good ideas for increasing efficiency and saving money.

The Government Executive Institute and Public Managers' Program, patterned after the UNC School of Business, has increased training programs for state officials, and the Senior Executives Program has mobilized retired executives who can provide state government with advice on how to become more efficient.

Another program enacted is Work Planning Performance Review, in which every employee meets with his or her supervisor to plan his work schedule for a six-month period. At the end of the six months, the supervisor and employee review the work, and the results are recorded on the employee's permanent record.

North Carolina's programs are also serving as an example to other states, eager to curb government growth. This past spring, Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander invited Hunt to speak at a productivity conference, and other Southeastern states have expressed similar interest in such a conference.

North Carolinians have voiced their feelings and the Hunt administration has responded. Because of the governor's continuing efforts, qualified state employees will retain their jobs and waste will be eliminated, resulting in a higher quality of government for all.

Deborah Goodson, a senior journalism and history major from Jacksonville, is a staff writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

The Bottom Line takes a lighter look at the news. Look for it every Tuesday and Thursday on the editorial page of *The Daily Tar Heel*.

FLYNT'S FLORIST

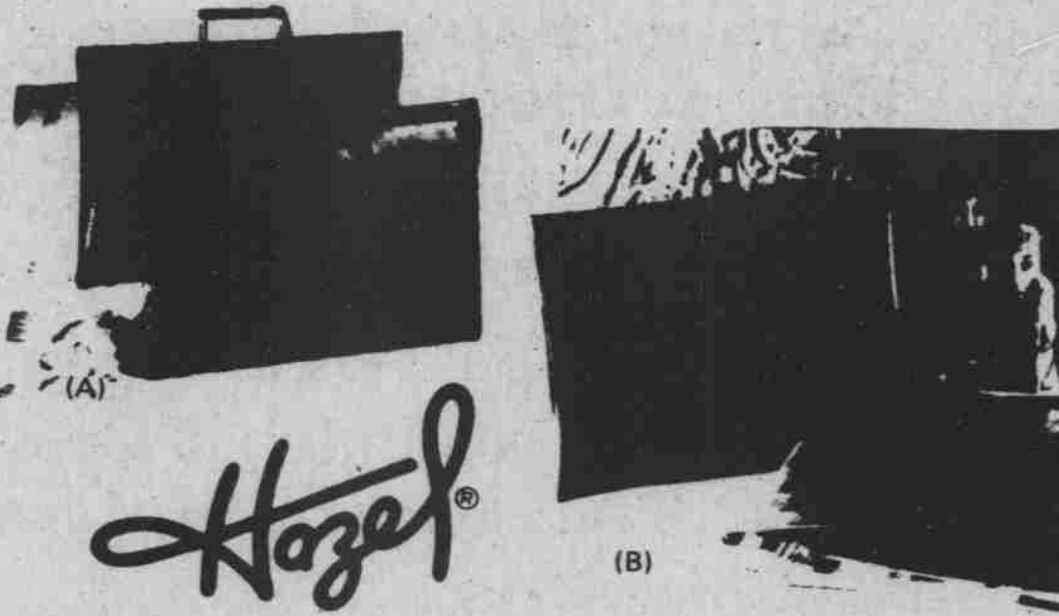
FOR ALL YOUR FLOWER NEEDS

967-9394
310 W. Franklin

Back to school smartly

HAZEL portfolios... for years the No. 1 choice of smart students for their busy school days. In a wide selection of materials. Each opens wide, closes securely, holds countless papers and other classroom necessities.

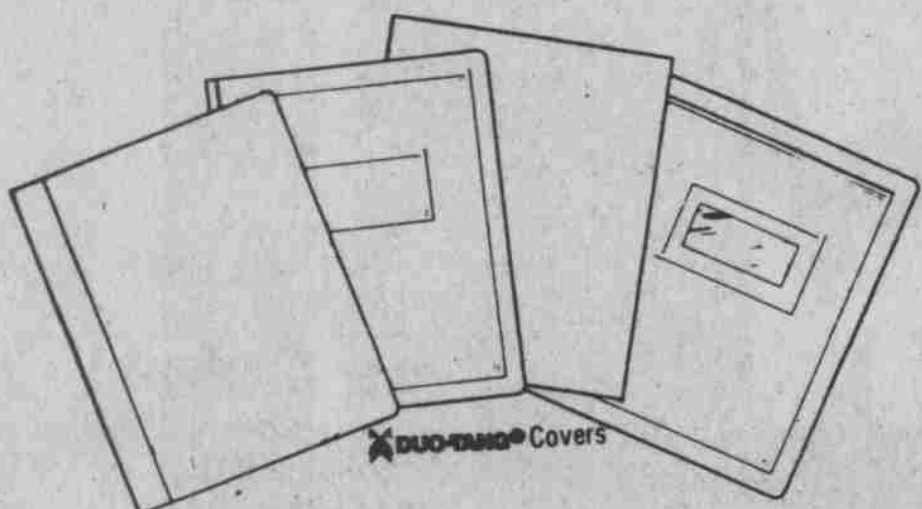
- (A) BARRISTER Portfolio
Tan or Brown Suede ...\$17.75
Brown or Black ...\$14.75
- (B) EASY OPEN Portfolio
Tan or Brown Suede ...\$9.50
Tan, Brown or Black ...\$11.50
Brown or Black ...\$12.00



Your Report Is Worth A DUO-TANG Cover

Students... here's a great way to present your school reports. Duo-Tang Covers are impressive, professional-looking, and economical. In your choice of styles... clear front, window and solid front. Several attractive colors.

- Pocket ...29¢
- Clip35¢



20 Different Varieties of SPIRALS

NOTE BOOK BINDERS

From 1/2" to 5"

INDEX CARDS every size, color

PROTECT YOUR BIKE!



a Name That Means SECURITY & PROTECTION

TOP SECURITY DIE CAST COMBINATION LOCK Rustless die cast, non-rusting extruding brass locking bolt ...\$3.25

LAMINATED STEEL OR DIE CAST PADLOCK Disc Tumbler padlock with laminated steel case, Hardened shackle ...\$3.00

TOP SECURITY DIE CAST COMBINATION LOCK with detached 4-ft. STEEL CABLE, Vinyl Coated, to 5/16" diameter ...\$8.75

PROTECTED PIN TUMBLER LOCK with detached 3-FT. CHAIN, Vinyl coated to 5/16" diameter, Highest versatility a security. Reg. \$9.50 ...\$3.80

Remembers for you! EATON™ AT-A-GLANCE Appointment Books



\$3.25

Week-At-A-Glance Appointment Book Shows a full week's schedule at a glance and two-months' calendars for handy reference. Lies flat for easy writing. Indexed telephone and address section. Its elegant simulated leather cover in a choice of rich colors makes it an attractive addition to your home or office.



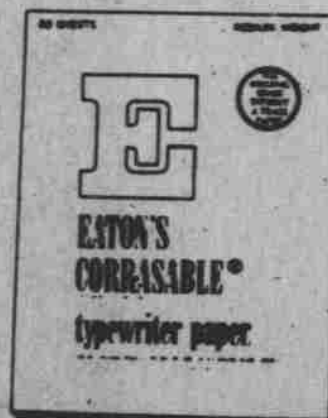
\$3.75

Month-At-A-Glance Appointment Book You'll like the convenience of planning and scanning a month at a time. Spreads out for easy viewing and writing. Handsome simulated leather cover in lovely colors.

EATON™ Corrasable® Paper

EATON Corrasable Paper Erase-Without-A-Trace

Use Corrasable® Typewriter Paper once and you'll never be without it. Imagine... one swipe with a soft pencil eraser on your typed work and errors disappear without smudges, smears, or scars. Saves time, effort and money. It's the greatest.



16-lb. 80-sheets Available in reams, packets or tablets.

\$2.50

NOTEBOOK PAPER

- 150 count filler 99¢
- 500 count filler \$3.95
- 50 count spiral 55¢

LUXO

TURN ON

\$22.95 reg. \$28.95

Lumaglio adds a bright spot to your home

LUXO

TURN ON

\$19.95 reg. \$25.95

a Crownlite the lamp that has it all

THERE'S MORE AT YOUR

STUDENT STORES



ON CAMPUS