

SPORTS

BLUE JAYS

Chatter



It's as easy as one-two-three-four... at least it was Wednesday night, when the Blue Jays and Bulls locked horns in the finale of a four-game series. With two out and nobody on in the first inning, four successive batters, Otis Green, Kevin Sliwinski, Kash Beauchamp, and Rico Sutton hit homeruns. Back-to-back-to-back-to-back. A new Carolina League record. I'd love to report that the Jays went on to another 10-1 win over the Bulls but, the facts are, Durham chipped away and took a 5-4 decision to split series two games each. It's gonna be a great race in the second half!

Ralph Rivas is the strong silent type. He never complained when the outfield numbers game left manager Doug Ault without a spot for the outfielder-dh from the Dominican Republic. Instead he kept it all inside, and when Ault inserted Rivas in rightfield last Sunday night against Durham, he took his frustration out on the Bulls. In his first four at-bats, Rivas hit two towering homeruns and two scorching doubles. What a display but he wasn't through yet. In the tenth inning with a runner on first and the score tied, Rivas laid down a perfect sacrifice bunt to put the winning run in scoring position. Excellent! Jays win 8-6. Perry Lychak hung though on the mound for the win. The next night all Ralph did was hit one homerun and nearly decapitate one Durham pitcher with a line-drive single through the box. Great week for Rivas, and it couldn't come at a better time for the Jays.

Nice to have a night off on Tuesday so we could take in the all-star game. The front office, General Manager Valerie Arcuri, Broadcaster Dan Lovallo, and myself had a cookout at my place and watched the game together. Two observations: 1. I thought it was a crime that Phil Niekro didn't get the starting assignment for the American League. Dave Stieb is a great pitcher no doubt, but he'll get another chance which is more than can probably be said for Niekro. We're not talking about any charity case here, he got there on merit. His 1.84 earned run average is tops in the league, (Stieb-2.42) and an 11-and-4 record for a team as pitiful as the Yankees, (ten games under .500) is astounding. Joe Altobelli blew that one. The other thing that bothered me was the fact that Willie Mays wasn't there with another former Giant great, Willie McCovey. You see, the official posture that baseball, ie. the Commissioner, has taken with Mays is that because Willie works and does personal appearances for an Atlantic City casino, he is

banished from baseball. It's not alright for ex-player to work for casinos. What is alright is for George Steinbrenner and John Galbreath of the Pirates to own racetracks that have para-mutual betting. Talk about double standards! Let's compare what each has done for baseball: Willie Mays WAS the National League when he played. His statistical accomplishments, which are many, aside, he gave us the "Say hey kid," the basket catch and twenty years of non-stop excitement. Steinbrenner gave us the \$500,000 a year utility infielder while Galbreath's great organization has a team that has drawn some crowds smaller than some the Kinston Blue Jays have played in front of. If Bowie Kuhn were alive today, this wrong would be righted and Mays would be back where he belongs, as one of baseball's great ambassadors.

June was the best June, attendance wise, since baseball returned here in 1978. For 20-dates the Jays drew 16,102 fans for an average of 805 per night. The sixteen-thousand-plus fans was the biggest month since '78 also.

In the latest Carolina League stats, Luis Aquino is the top relief pitcher with four-wins and 11-saves. Kevin Sliwinski, the replacement for Cecil Fielder, is hitting around .350 and making some great defensive plays around first place. After getting off to a terrible start, the Jays have finally turned as many doubleplays as they've hit into. Chris Shaddy became the second Jay with double-figure homers, and Rico Sutton is hitting in the .290 range. Isn't first place beautiful.?

Vanceboro Senators Win New Bern Softball Invitational

The Senators of Vanceboro fought back from the losers bracket in New Bern Sunday to capture the New Bern Invitational played at Brinson Field. The Senators beat Harvey's of New Bern for the championship.

Leading hitters for the Senators were: Allen Warmack, Guy Warmack, Lorenzo Jones and Clay Jordan.

Defensive plays were made by Eddie Dawson, Bruce Whitford and Scott Wood.

Other Senators on the championship team were:

Gene Griffin, Terry Morris, Lee Johnson, Earl Wright, Jim Madures.

THE CLASSIFIEDS 244-0780

Vanceboro Softball Schedule

July 19:

7:30 p.m.

Senators vs K & J

8:45 p.m.

Rons vs Cougars

July 23:

7:30 p.m.

Senators vs Rons

8:45 p.m.

Cougars vs Garris II

July 25:

7:30 p.m.

Gators vs K & J

8:45 p.m.

Senators vs Garris II

July 26:

July 26:

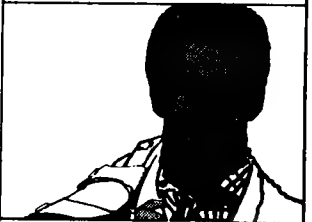
Gators vs Cougars

8:45 p.m.

Rons vs K & J

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Football Physicals

Physicals for West Craven Football players will be given at the Vanceboro Medical Center until August 1st. Players need to make appointments as soon as possible and carry physical forms with them. Charge for the physical will be \$16.

Practice will begin July 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Vanceboro Youth Football

Registration for the Vanceboro Youth Football will be held August 6, 6:00 p.m. at Life Elementary School. The ages are 8 through 10 and 11 through 12.

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(919-447-7088)

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28586
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