

The Neil Ess Memorial

TWIN CITIES APBA
BASEBALL
TOURNAMENT - III

Saturday, April 4th, 2015



The "reunion" ... this picture has a big story behind it.

This is Fred Johnson on the left, and Gregg Nelson on the right.

Fred Johnson's last APBA Baseball game he played until this tourney day, was in 1959.

Fred Johnson spent his career as a school teacher and local sports writer in Cottage Grove, MN, which is the same town Gregg Nelson grew up in, playing APBA Baseball with his brother, Jeff Nelson, who is now a Major League Baseball Umpire. Fred covered the high school basketball playing days of both Gregg and Jeff Nelson. Gregg recalls reading Fred's column each and every week in his community newspaper. The chance that this meeting would ever take place, some 30+ years since Gregg's high school days is truly amazing. I happened to stumble upon an APBA Craigslist ad several months ago. The seller was Fred Johnson, selling a '76 and '77 APBA set which he never used but had acquired from his friend who had kept up with APBA until he died. I mentioned our TCABT tournament to Fred, and he was interested in coming out and meeting the guys and playing, even though he had not rolled the dice since 1959. When Gregg saw Fred Johnson from Cottage Grove was coming to the tournament, it dawned on him that this had to be the same Fred Johnson that wrote the sports column each week in his old hometown community newspaper. Sure enough it was ... Gregg mentioned this to his brother Jeff, who asked for a picture of the 2 together at the tournament. The divisions were determined with rolls of the dice a few weeks in advance and another random occurrence, put these 2 in the same division, which meant they would be rolling the dice vs each other. Fred's '30 A's won both games over Gregg's '98 Braves, 2 1-run games. I think Gregg was just happy he got to roll a series vs his favorite sports columnist. Today, Fred Johnson is an author and a Minnesota Historian. He has written several books on specific events in Minnesota history, has published several articles and has appeared on local TV shows.

A quick summary of our Neil Ess Memorial TCABT-III (more story and pictures to come, as well as an update for Tom Nelshoppen to post on his "The APBA Blog" site):

Starting with 15 APBA devotees (from 4 different states, ranging in age from 19 to 70ish), 3 divisions, 8 division games and ending with the 3 division winners and 1 wild card entrant into the best-of-three Semi-final/Championship Bracket play.

60 Pool games were rolled, along with another 7 bracket games. With play starting a little before 9am, we crowned our TCABT-III champion shortly before 6pm.

The Standings:

TCABT-III

Saturday, April 4th, 2015

SAM MELE DIVISION	W	L	R	OR	RDIFF	
1902 PIRATES (Andy Bartel)	6	2	43	32	11	(#2 OVERALL SEED FOR SEMI-FINALS)
1975 REDS (Jeff Boeding)	5	3	41	35	6	(#4 OVERALL SEED AS WILD CARD FOR SEMI-FINALS)
1957 BRAVES (Bruce Tyler)	5	3	32	27	5	
1970 TWINS (Pat Martin)	3	5	29	38	-9	
1927 PIRATES (Curt Bartel)	1	7	23	36	-13	
TOTALS	20	20	168	168	0	

TOM KELLY DIVISION	W	L	R	OR	RDIFF	
1919 WHITE SOX (Eric Berg)	6	2	39	27	12	(#1 OVERALL SEED FOR SEMI-FINALS)
1989 GIANTS (Rob Skogen)	5	3	33	31	2	
1961 YANKEES (Kevin Cluff)	3	5	41	39	2	
2009 YANKEES (Scott Egge)	3	5	29	34	-5	
1968 TIGERS (Darrell Skogen)	3	5	24	35	-11	
TOTALS	20	20	166	166	0	

RON GARDENHIRE DIVISION	W	L	R	OR	RDIFF	
1982 BREWERS (Craig Christian)	6	2	37	27	10	(#3 OVERALL SEED FOR SEMI-FINALS)
1995 INDIANS (Leroy Arnoldi)	5	3	32	31	1	
1930 ATHLETICS (Fred Johnson)	4	4	37	37	0	
1930 CUBS (Jim Fraasch)	3	5	39	45	-6	
1998 BRAVES (Gregg Nelson)	2	6	24	29	-5	
TOTALS	20	20	169	169	0	

Amazing how each division had almost the identical number of total runs scored (169, 168, 166).

SEMI-FINAL MATCHES (BEST-OF-THREE) :

#1 1919 WHITE SOX (ERIC BERG) VS #4 1975 REDS (JEFF BOEDING)

#2 1902 PIRATES (ANDY BARTEL) VS #3 1982 BREWERS (CRAIG CHRISTIAN)

Bracket Play results to come.



Pictured is Eric Berg's custom made, for lack of a better term, "dice wall" ... note the RF wall is interchangeable, depending on where Eric is rolling a home game. He showed me the walls he has made for Metropolitan Stadium, the Metrodome, Target Field, etc.

TCABT-III

The Semi-Finals:

G1

1919 WHITE SOX 7, 1975 REDS 1

G2

1919 WHITE SOX 5, 1975 REDS 1 (Claude Williams had perfect game into 8th, before he walked Driessen. A no-hitter into the 9th, with 1 out, Rose doubled.)

**The 1919 White Sox (Eric Berg) win series, 2 games to 0 over the 1975 Reds (Jeff Boeding).



Jeff Boeding pictured left, Eric Berg pictured right.

The Semi-Finals (continued):

G1

1902 PIRATES 3, 1982 BREWERS 0

G2

1982 BREWERS 6, 1902 PIRATES 3 (11 innings)

G3

1902 PIRATES 5, 1982 BREWERS 2

** The 1902 Pirates (Andy Bartel) win series, 2 games to 1 over the 1982 Brewers (Craig Christian).



One happy dad, Curt Bartel, watches as his son Andy (pictured right) faces off vs Craig Christian (pictured left in Braun t-shirt). The 3 guys make up the contingent who made the trip from Wisconsin. Curt and Craig have been friends since at least high school.

TCABT-III

The Championship:

1919 WHITE SOX (ERIC BERG) vs 1902 PIRATES (ANDY BARTEL)



G1

1902 PIRATES 1, 1919 WHITE SOX 0

G2

1902 PIRATES 4, 1919 WHITE SOX 3 (12 innings)

** Andy Bartel and the 1902 Pirates capture the TCABT-III Championship, 2 games to 0 over Eric Berg's 1919 White Sox!!!



Andy (right) is son of Curt Bartel (left). Andy becomes our youngest champ at 19 years old.

It was worth the trip from Wisconsin for the Bartels, as Andy brings home a championship. It was great meeting the Bartels. Could not have been a nicer father/son combo (no offense Greg and Brian Wells ... maybe you 2 should make a trek to our October tourney and prove me wrong!!!)

Curt and Andy plan to make a return trip to the Twin Cities next October for TCABT-IV.

Please plan ahead, the date is Saturday, October 3rd, 2015.



Pictured around the championship table from L to R:

Curt Bartel, Andy Bartel, Kevin Cluff, Bruce Tyler, Eric Berg, and Craig Christian standing.



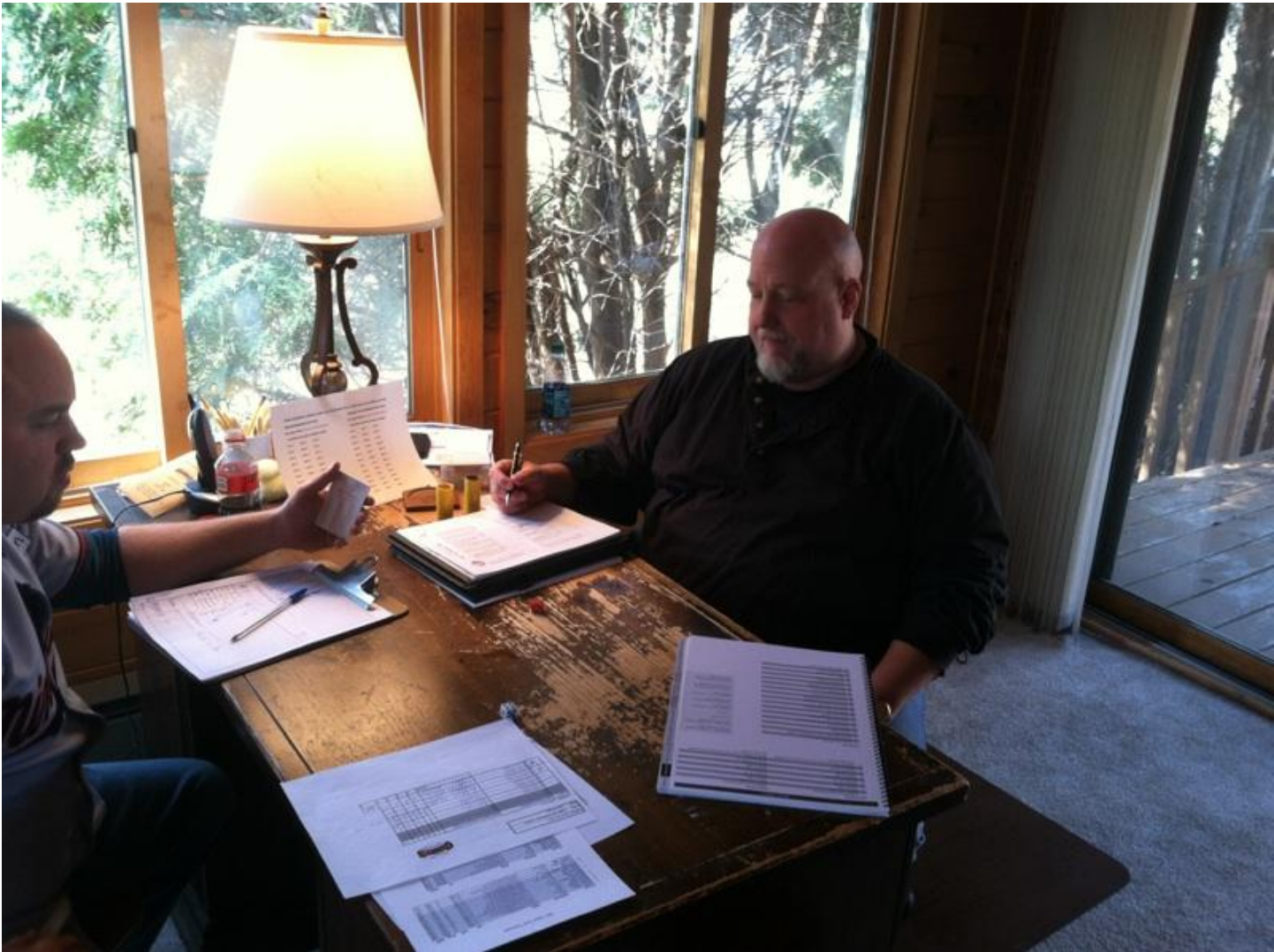
Eric Berg getting his championship 1919 Chisox lineup ready ... and giving the "Eight Men Out" another chance.



Host Darrell Skogen on left, Eric Berg middle and Scott Egge on right.



Rob Skogen's '89 Giants must be having a good game vs Kevin Cluff's '61 Bronx Bombers.



Kevin Cluff sighing, "I wish I had another BZ starter ..."



Andy Bartel and his 1902 Pirates causing another Honus of a headache for Jeff Boeding and his 1975 Reds ...



Bruce Tyler talking about the sandwich that got away, pictured with Curt Bartel, Andy Bartel, Kevin Cluff, and Craig Christian.



Leroy Arnoldi's '95 Tribe vs Jim Fraasch and the '30 Cubbies.



Pat Martin and his hometown '70 Twins vs Curt Bartel and the '27 Pirates.



Rob Skogen's '89 Giants battle Scott Egge's 2009 Damn Yankees.



Kevin Cluff's '61 Bronx Bombers vs Eric Berg's 1919 White Sox.



Andy Bartel and his 1902 Pirates vs Bruce Tyler and his '57 Braves.



Craig Christian's '82 Brew Crew vs Gregg Nelson and his '98 Braves.



Jeff Boeding's '75 Reds made the trip to the Twin Cities from Kansas City, MO.



Scott Egge (very Casey Stengel like) with Rob and Kevin in background.

SAVE THE DATE FOR TCABT-IV
Saturday, October 3rd, 2015