

Westerners Would Like Tides to Sing the Blues

By STURGIS HEDRICK

AND THE last shall be first.

George Tootle is busy this week trying to instill that hope in his Western Blues after they hit bottom last Sunday. George is a soft-spoken proud man who's going all out to make believers of his battlers from Bogue.

"LOOK, BOYS, we've got nowhere to go but up," says George and he's a desperate leader. His problem is getting that conviction through to his team.

"We've got 11 men hitting .300 or better. How about getting just nine of you guys together to play ball? There's no better pitcher in this league than Delbert Sutton. You know what they say, 'A winner never quits and a quitter never wins.' Are we going to quit?"

THIS SUNDAY will tell the tale when Tootle's Western Blues meet the invasion of the Carteret Tides. The Blues, even though they've fallen to last place with 1 win in 10 starts, have a couple of big factors going for them.

They know every rock and grain of sand on their Bogue home playground. And the Tides, resting in second place in Seashore League baseball with an 8-2 record, just might take the cellar-dwellers too lightly.

That could be fatal.

This is a tough Sunday for the discriminating fan who wants to see the county's best in baseball. They're all good games that could produce some shattering surprises.

THE BEAUFORT Sea Dogs are loaded for bear as they travel to Newport to challenge the Red Sox. Joey Lawrence has gone on a recruiting spree that makes his salty Dogs a team of all-stars.

He has signed two fire-balling pitchers to back up his ace, Steve Piner. The best all-around athlete to watch Sunday is Charley Hardesty, a truly brilliant left-hand hurler and all-conference football quarterback at Elizabeth City State University. Then there's strong-armed Danny Brooks, who can play a ton of infield when he's not pitching.

FAIRLY bursting with enthusiasm for Beaufort's New Look, Lawrence beams when he assays the power potential of his two new siege guns, Monroe Johnson and Willie Ray Johnson. Both have two doubles and visions of some awesome blasts in their future. Willie Ray is hitting .308 and Monroe .300, but the latter led the league in home runs last year and is still gunning for his first of 1975.

SHOCKING, YOU say. Look at that key base-on-balls differential in favor of The Catfish. But then James Augustus Hunter, the pride of Hertford, N. C., has 11 full seasons of professional baseball and 10 full years of major league ball under his belt. Dallas Wayne has yet to sign a pro contract.

Well-nigh sacrilegious, you say, this nincompoopish comparison of The \$3,500,000 Price of The Yankees with another country boy, The Pride of The Eastern Blues. Look at those American League sluggers The Catfish faces every fourth or fifth day.

SEASHORE BASEBALL STANDINGS

	W	L		W	L
Eastern Blues	10	0	Salter Path Braves	4	6
Carteret Tides	8	2	Beaufort Sea Dogs	2	8
Newport Red Sox	5	5	Western Blues	1	9

GAMES SUNDAY AT 2 P.M.

Carteret Tides at Western Blues
Newport Red Sox at Beaufort Sea Dogs
Eastern Blues at Salter Path Braves

Then, of course, the Eastern Blues will probably, as usual, draw the biggest crowd of the week when they travel to Salter Path to battle the Braves.

DON'T TAKE this one for granted as victory No. 11 for the undefeated Downeasters. The Blues are hurting for pitching — support, that is, for Dallas Wayne Arthur. It will likely be a duel of southpaws, with George Viereck going for the Braves.

When you get right down to the nub of this title chase, pitching means winning. And Dallas Wayne is synonymous with winning pitching. Every team in the league packs an impressive batting punch. But only the Eastern Blues have a bread-and-butter kingpin named Lefty Arthur.

DALLAS WON 10 and lost 0 last year and averaged 13 strikeouts per game. But baseball followers throughout the county probably don't savor the full statistical significance of the 22-year-old Bettie Boy Wonder. It's exactly the half-way mark in the 20-game pre-playoff schedule. Now hear this:

G	CG	IP	SG	W	L	Pct.	H	R	E.R.	SO	BB	E.R.A.
10	5	62	1	6	0	1.000	33	16	9	98	23	1.32

Are there any major league scouts out there? Dallas Wayne Arthur stands 6-1, weighs 180, has clean-living habits, pitching savvy, courage, desire and is unattached.

LET'S LOOK at James (Catfish) Hunter's Cy Young Award-winning year of 1974:

IP	W	L	Pct.	H	R	E.R.	SO	BB	E.R.A.
318	25	12	.676	268	97	88	143	46	2.49

Now, let's have some statistical fun and project Dallas Arthur's record in his 10 games this year over the 162-game American League season:

IP	W	L	Pct.	H	R	E.R.	SO	BB	E.R.A.
310	30	0	1.000	165	80	45	490	115	1.32

MIGHT WE humbly suggest, however, that James Hunter also has Yankee fielding and batting power behind him and those major league diamonds are carpets of clover compared to the average Seashore sandlot.

Anyway, we're just playing games. And some people still think of baseball as a game.

What do you think?