

Thursday, August 7, 1975

# Hurrah, Ho-Hum, Oh Boy: Sox Not Afraid of Blues

By STURGIS HEDRICK

"I WANT TO win this game more than any game I ever pitched."

So said Bruce Maness last week in a frank discussion with Newport Manager Donnie Aycock about the chances of their Red Sox this Sunday at 2 p.m. against the Eastern Blues in Smyrna.

THUS, the Big Boy, Bruce, will toe the mound Sunday and fire his best right-hand slants against the defending champion Blues, who now have won 32 games without a loss in the 2-year history of Seashore League baseball.

Maness adds tremendous all-around strength to the Sox. This 25-year-old newlywed hit .413 and won 6 pitching decisions against 2 defeats in 1973. That stamped him as one of the most valuable players in the Coastal Carolina League, the predecessor to the Seashore.

THE 6-FOOT-2 195-pound Maness did not play Seashore ball in 1974. But now he's back in his hometown Newport uniform and batting .457 with a slugging percentage of .714 on 3 doubles and 2 home runs. He's second top hitter among the league regulars.

But pitching is what Bruce does best on the diamond and he feels right and ready and almost fanatic in his desire to beat the Blues Sunday. He has the smoke and the control and the varied mound repertoire to do the job.

THEY SAY you measure a team's defensive strength by its talent "down the middle." That means a straight line from catcher to pitcher to second base to center field.

Here, the Red Sox loom mighty impressive for Sunday's all-out effort. No less a catcher than Manager Aycock himself will start behind the plate. Donnie has a tendency to underrate his own ability. At age 30, he considers that he has a "weak arm for a catcher."

Just how many receivers in this league own a rifle equal

	W	L		W	L
Eastern Blues	18	0	Salter Path Braves	8	8
Carteret Tides	13	3	Beaufort Sea Dogs	4	13
Newport Red Sox	9	6	Western Blues	1	19

### GAMES SUNDAY AT 2 P.M.

Newport Red Sox at Eastern Blues.  
Beaufort Sea Dogs at Carteret Tides (Swinson Park).

to the high-caliber right arm of Johnny Bench? Aycock makes up for his so-called deficiency by getting the ball away with the zip snap-throw of the old-timers. He hit .335 last year.

AND, FOR A writer who attempted to catch himself and idolized and even worked with Mickey Cochrane and Gabby Hartnett, there's no better place for a manager than behind the plate.

Hear the immortal words of Leo Durocher who, after all, did his share of winning: "A playing manager has a big advantage. In my heyday as a playing-pilot, I was into everything. It's much easier to move a player when you're right on top of the action. When your pitcher begins to lose his sharpness, your first sense it and then know it."

LET'S CONTINUE down the middle to Bruce Maness. He fields with the best. At shortstop, the Red Sox have Tom Mann or Jay Garner. Both can gun that ball. And at second, Richard Collins ranges far and wide, has sure hands and makes the double-play. Lefty George Metrick ranks 1-2-3 among the league's best center-fielders. He can roam, throw and hit.

But quick, Wilson, the case for the rebuttal. Manager Davis' Eastern Blues boast possibly the strongest down-

(See SEASHORE LEAGUE Pg. 4-A)

### ECHS Boosters To Meet Tuesday

Tom McQuaid, athletic director for East Carteret High School, reports that a meeting of Mariner boosters will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the school lunchroom to discuss fund-raising plans for the coming year.

"Anyone interested in our athletic program is invited," he said. "We want as many parents there as possible."



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