

Tides, Sox Collide Sunday

Sept 4, 1975

In Wide Open Flag Chase

By STURGIS HEDRICK.

'T WAS REALLY quite the strangest of dreams. Thousands of baseball zealots encircled the field in Swinson Park. Twenty white-and-red-clad diamond rivals extending along each base line formed a perfect "V", with all eyes focussing on the base of the triangle, the flag pole in center field.

'T WAS THE 18th of April in '76 — 1976, that is. The Seashore League opponents in the season opener were the finalists in the 1975 playoffs, the Carteret Tides and the Newport Red Sox. The dreamer couldn't ascertain which team reigned as playoff champion, because both squads wore uniforms of white on red or vice versa.



~~There's nothing quite like a tape measure home~~ run to excite the Seashore League baseball fans. And big Alex Fox, reigning home-run king of the league with 7, 27 runs-batted-in and a batting average of .400, hopes to lead his Newport Red Sox to Sunday's opening playoff victory over the Carteret Tides at 2 p.m. in Swinson Park.

A massed band of several hundred representatives of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard and all local schools and Veterans' organizations stood transfixed at attention, waiting to break into the exciting music of Our National Anthem.

GOVERNOR James E. Holshouser and Mayor Bud Dixon flanked the flag pole. Centered proudly between them, there stood the 1976 President of the Seashore Baseball League.

Our eyes were dimmed with emotion. The president looked like Wade Bell. Or it could have been Ray Scoggins. Or Otis Pittman. Or Lockwood Phillips.

IN ANY CASE, this April the 18th of 1976 ranked as a date that long would be remembered in the history of Carteret County.

Sure, it seems passing strange, this dream. But we all know, subconsciously or no, that dreams form the substance that transform mere visions into the actualities of victory or success or championship.

AND YOU CAN rest assured that Manager Rodney Kemp and Skipper Donnie Aycock have been dreaming the most wonderous dreams for their respective playoff contenders, the Carteret Tides and the Newport Red Sox.

This is a 2-out-of-3-game series for the league title. All 2 or 3 games will be played on consecutive Sundays, beginning this Sunday at 2 p.m. in Swinson Park.

MANAGER WILSON Davis' Eastern Blues won the regular-season championship with 19 victories and 1 defeat. Then they collided with a fired-up team of Newport Red Sox last Sunday and bowed, 4-1, right in the Blues' home Smyrna pasture in the pines.

That triumph qualified the Sox for this Sunday's playoffs with the second-place Tides, who qualified by winning a comeback thriller from the Salter Path Braves, 11-5, in Swinson.

IT MIGHT be conventional to say that this Sunday's opener will go to the team that wants it the most. Desire goes a long, long way, when championships are at stake.

But both the Tides and Sox want this one so badly that you can almost discount desire as a factor. Donnie Aycock hopes to have a roster of 13 players at his disposal this Sunday. That's quite a contrast from the 9 or 10 players who have found themselves available the last 2 Sundays or so.

HENCE, DONNIE finds himself with an embarrassment of playing talent. Just for pitching choices alone, he can choose among fire-balling Jay Garner,

(See SEASHORE LEAGUE Pg. 5-A)

SEASHORE BATTING LEADERS
PLAYER AB R H 2b 3b HR SB RBI AVE.