

# On Target

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NOW IT CAN be told. Let's call it The Miracle of the Salter Path Braves.

Boy meets girl. They're co-workers in a Super Market, The Red and White at Atlantic Beach, as a matter of fact. They talk sports. After work, of course.

It develops that he's a dedicated baseball player, coach and all-around sports fanatic. She confesses shamefacedly that her father qualifies as a full-blown baseball nut.

Time passes and boy meets aging parental nut. They talk baseball, boxing and what have you. It turns out they have a mutual friend in John Turnage.

THE PLOT thickens. It turns out the young man who talked sports with the young lady played intramural

baseball and softball with and against Turnage at East Carolina University.

Both fell victim to the same bewildering fate at Greenville. It seems that East Carolina pre-picks its teams on the basis of baseball scholarships. Those not receiving same apparently waste their time trying out.

If this be unfair to ECU, let's re-phrase the statement. There are those who think John Turnage could and can play baseball. With Dallas Wayne Arthur. John ranks as the winningest pitcher in the Seashore League. Both have won 7 and lost 1.

LET'S INTRODUCE the young man who talked baseball with the aging parental nut. The young

man's name: Bill Whitehurst. And Bill, like Turnage, never received serious consideration for the ECU Varsity. East Carolina somehow had missed Whitehurst, too, when it was issuing its baseball scholarships.

But you can't keep a born ball player from playing ball, be it college, sandlot or just plain backyard ball. So many of the old-time big leaguers have admitted to that very fact, even though today heaps and heaps of king-sized dollar bills have be-fogged that enthusiasm.

Take Jimmy (Catfish) Hunter, for example. He's first to admit that he'd be back in Hertford or Ahoskie, toeing the mound for the town team, if he didn't happen to be contracted to the New York Yankees.

Jimmy might even be happier, in fact, because he loves to hit and he might be able to beat the rap on that designated hitter nonsense.

BILL WHITEHURST and John Turnage qualify with that same passion for baseball. Just try handing the umpires a lineup card that includes a designated hitter for a Turnage.

'Twould hardly make sense. John owns a batting average of .412 that included 3 doubles, 4 homers, 19 runs-scored and 19 runs-batted-in.

As for Bill Whitehurst, he ranks as the closest parallel to a human dynamo you can imagine, since the days of that Wild Horse of the Osage, John Leonard (Pepper) Martin, ring-leader of the 1934 St. Louis Cardinals' Gas House Gang.

LIGHTNING struck when Bill learned there existed in Carteret County something known as the Seashore League. He talked things over with Joe Moore, manager of the Beach Tavern, and for 5 years a pitcher in the Philadelphia Phillies' organization.

The situation came to a roaring climax when the 25-year-old Mr. Whitehurst began to hear rumors that the Salter Path Braves could use some ball players. His first recruit: Joe Moore, as they played catch on the beach. Joe's response: "Well, it's been a while, but you tell 'em I'll give it my best shot."

Bill coached baseball last year at Hobgood Academy in Halifax County and managed a team, the Hobgood Outlaws, that won 21 and lost 6 in competition similar in caliber to the Seashore circuit.

BILL WHITEHURST has his enthusiasms, apart from baseball. He has enjoyed the Bogue Banks way of life and immediately shared that joy with his teammates on the rootin'-tootin' Hobgood Outlaws.

He even succeeded in luring some of them to Carteret County to bunk in his roomy bivouac. These friends just happened to be ball players and fellow Outlaws.

One deserves the attention of any scout or bird dog who happens to be interested in looking at a 21-year-old catching prospect. This 5-10 175-pounder, Bob Stewart, hit .647, with 7 home runs in 14 games. He also took a turn at pitching and won 7 and lost 0. He's a right-hand thrower who bats left.

AND THUS WAS born the



WHITEHURST

miracle of Salter Path. Whitehurst mentioned a couple more of his room-mates, Buddy Leggett, a 5-8 190-pound outfielder, and Steve Burnett, a 20-year-old .625 hitting shortstop.

Salter Path Super Scout Ronnie Smith heard about these available players from the aging baseball nut who just happens to write the On Target column.

They all worked out Friday in Brave uniforms and that picturesque Bogue Banks community turned out in the greatest numbers since the dedication of the Salter Path Ball Park May 9. The excitement rivaled that June 13 nocturnal revel on Otis Pittman's front lawn.

And this all came to pass because boy met girl in a Super Market.