

Brad Piner, Rusty Nelson Win in 13-HR Carnival

By STURGIS HEDRICK

'TIS FORTUNATE indeed that Wilson Davis appears to have a corner on the baseball market in Carteret County. He just might need more than a few of them next Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

That's when his Eastern Blues entertain the Newport Red Sox in the second round of the double-elimination Seashore League playoffs on the Smyrna School diamond.

Because, last twilight, as the sun sank slowly in the West, little boys were still searching desperately for no less than 8 home-run balls that disappeared into the stately pines encircling the same cozy park.

Because the first-place Blues lambasted 6 circuit blows and the Coastal Greys blasted 2 more in the 20-2 Downeast triumph. Count 'em up: Manley Gaskill 2, Tony Hancock 2, Braxton Piner, Milton Scott, Wardell Johnson and Monroe Johnson 1 each.

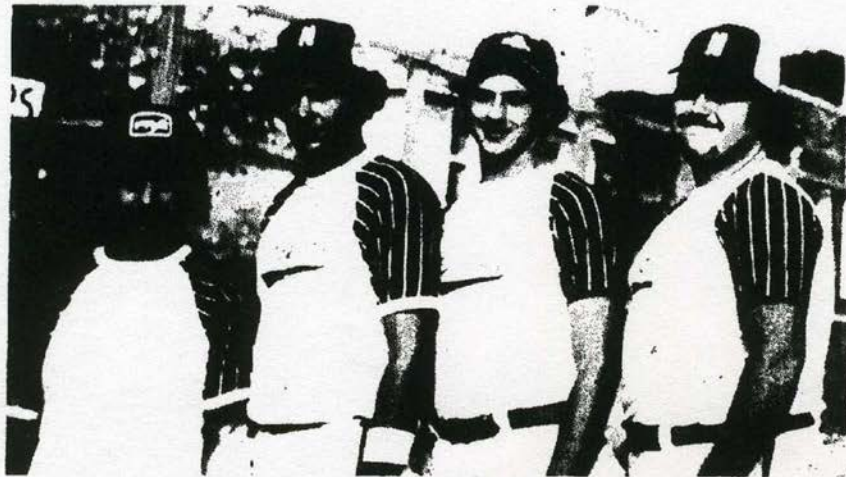
DONNIE AYCOCK'S Sox played the role of pikers, by contrast. All Newport could muster added up to a mere 5: Tom Mann 2 and 1 apiece for

Don Zagorski, Rusty Nelson and little Allen Garner.

The 6-foot-1 235-pound broth of a 19-year-old growing boy named Rusty also weighed in with his best and one of the best pitching performances of the entire season. He walked just 2, struck out 6 and yielded 6 hits in quelling the defending champion Carteret Tides, 10-1, in the Salter Path Ball Park.

Zagorski established the pattern when he hammered one of his copyright tape-measure jobs far far away over the 9-foot-high left-field wall in his very first appearance at bat in the 2nd inning. Don's 13th in 12 Seashore games this year rather aptly celebrated his 23rd birthday, which coincided with his 2-for-4 at-bats yesterday afternoon.

THE HOME RUNS boomed louder and farther. Nelson and the Mighty Mr. Mann followed with roof-rattlers in the same 2nd inning. Tommy played no favorites. He gave the natives residing beyond the left-field wall an interesting souvenir to pursue and then he lined his second over the towering right-field fence in the 4th.



Home-run stars of the victorious Newport Red Sox, from the left, are Allen Garner, Tom Mann, Don Zagorski and Rusty Nelson.

SEASHORE PLAYOFF STANDINGS (Double Elimination)

	W	L
Eastern Blues	1	0
Newport Red Sox	1	0
Carteret Tides	0	1
Coastal Greys	0	1

That proved the end of John Turnage, who gave up 7 hits and 5 runs in his 4 frames. "I just didn't have it," said John.

But that didn't really tell the story, because the Sox touched up George Gilbert for 10 hits and 5 more runs in the latter's 4 innings. Only Fletcher Poulk, who retired Newport 1-2-3, in the 9th got by unscathed. The pint-sized Allen Garner smacked his 8th-inning homer just inches inside the left-field foul pole in the 8th.

Just for the record, neither team committed anything approaching an error, passed ball or wild pitch and the entire spectacle consumed just 2 hours and 13 minutes.

YOUR HOME-RUN ADDICTS enjoyed a field day in Smyrna, but a brilliant young right-handed pitching prospect named Brad Piner stole the show. He hurled a masterful 3-hitter with a crackling curve and darting, humming fast ball that baffled possibly the toughest batting crew in the league, the powerful Greys.

Manley Gaskill, the artist who can do it all for the Blues, clouted his 2 circuit blows with 2 men on base and then a grand-slammer. Chalk up 2 of the league leaders' 14 hits to Paul Damren and a triple for Richard Arthur.

Never count out for one moment the Tides and the Greys in next Sunday's 2 p.m. challenge in the Salter Path Ball Park. This has been a season of surprises and both teams will be fighting desperately to escape elimination.