

On Target



By Sturgis Hedrick

ONE NAME ALONE dominated Seashore League baseball for the first 3 years of its existence.

That name, Dallas Wayne Arthur, became the symbol of the Eastern Blues' glory days. And this fine left-handed pitching ace deserved every word of his fame.

He won 18 league games in a row, in fact, until Manager Donnie Aycock's Red Sox halted Dallas' string with a 3-2 zinger of a mound duel June 6, 1976.

The Sox then added insult to injury in the league playoffs last Sept. 26 when they hammered Lefty Arthur for 13 hits in a 7-2 victory over the Blues. Home-run king Don Zagorski hit 2 home runs for his 15th circuit clout in 13 league games.

BUT THE SEASHORE League launches its 4th season Sunday April 24 when the 1975 champion Carteret Tides play the Blues on the Smyrna School diamond and the Coastal Greys invade the Red Sox in Swinson Park. Both games are set for 2 p.m.

And this could be another year for King Arthur and his Court of Royal Blues. Adversity has a way of rebuilding strength. Dallas and the Blues just might show the rest of a vastly-improved league that they are no one-time flash-in-the-pan.

Perhaps most important of all, this season may give the Blues' two fine right-handed pitchers, Brad Piner and Richard Arthur, their shining hour in the sun.

IT TAKES A full squad to succeed in a game of baseball. And their recent setbacks just might provide the inspiration to revive the Eastern Blues that used to be.

Mr. Hustle himself, Crawford Pigott, best summed up the subject after the Blues' April 3 exhibition loss to the Carteret Tides.

"Well, the Blues have lost their quota now," Crawford told his teammates. "I played just a few games with you last year and we lost just one of those. So now we've lost our quota for this season. No more defeats."

TRAGEDY STRUCK every Downesster when two veteran Marshallberg supporters went to that

special Valhalla reserved for baseball fans.

Rudolph Dowty and Everett (Peck) Fulcher both died in recent weeks and their memories will last as long as baseball is played in Carteret County. They both represented the very best in enthusiastic sportsmanship.

They both meant so much to the Eastern Blues, in fact, that they just might inspire their favorites to outdo themselves from sheer respect for Mr. Rudy and Mr. Peck.

Mr. Rudy's immortal war cry, "You bettah than he are," certainly will outlive the pines themselves in the venerable Smyrna ball park.

THAT DIAMOND showplace of Carteret County, the Salter Path Ball Park, has seen some mighty fine baseball. It took two high school teams, however, to come up with the best game there this season.

Coach Donald Leatherman's West Carteret Patriots hardly figured to provide much in the way of competition for the unbeaten White Oak Vikings. But the fired-up West warriors carried the Vikes to one extra inning before the Pats succumbed, 8-3, last Friday.

Georgie Willan, poised West right-hander, pitched his heart out, yielding just 3 earned runs over the distance. Then the youngster tired and his fielding support lapsed and the Vikes roared along to their 10th win in a row.

MORE THAN ONE irate fan has suggested some solutions to the Lenny Randle assault on his manager, Frank Lucchesi, of the Texas Rangers. I must agree they all make better sense than the holier-than-thou, hands-off policy of Bowie Kuhn, the oh-so-legal commissioner of baseball.

This one hits squarely "On Target": "If that character (Randle) is not barred from further participation for the rest of his life, then pro baseball should call it quits."

Personally, I am waiting for the day when all owners form their own union and dictate to these characters what they are going to pay them.

If these "athletes" (admittedly grossly underpaid in years gone by) don't like the idea of an owners' union, I submit a two-word suggestion.

Get lost.