

Bushels of Fun: Early Baseball in the Black Hills

The 1868 Treaty of Laramie ceded all land west of the Missouri River, including the Black Hills of present-day South Dakota, to the Great Sioux Nation, restricting the area to white settlement. However, early trappers in the region heard Natives talk about the presence of gold, and in 1874 the US Government dispatched the Seventh Cavalry under the command of Lt. Col. George Custer to the Black Hills to investigate the rumors. His party found small traces of gold in the area around French Creek, near what is now the city of Custer, South Dakota. By that time at least two baseball¹ clubs had been formed among the soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry, and the “Alerts” and the “Actives” played a ball game in August 1874, the first known occurrence in the Black Hills.²

When news of the gold discovery got out, prospectors and miners came into the region but few found deposits of any value. Then, in 1876, brothers Moses and Fred Manuel discovered the Homestake deposit, the so-called “mother lode” near the present-day town of Lead, and soon others flooded into the Black Hills hoping to strike it rich. Although the Hills were Sioux land, and not open to white settlement, the US Government took the position of discouraging settlement but elected not to forcibly remove the trespassers. As more whites entered the region, they demanded protection from the Sioux and the US Army established Fort Meade, near present day Sturgis, in 1878.

In their 2016 book *Baseball in the Mining Camps*, Kemp and Runge³ note that baseball emerged as a popular activity in the Black Hills in 1878, but a year earlier, in July of 1877, the *Daily Champion* of Deadwood noted that a baseball club at Crook City called the “Bushwackers” had been practicing daily. A week later the *Black Hills Times* ran a short item declaring that, “The baseball fever has at last reached Deadwood and a club is now in process of organizing,”⁴ adding that the local nine had twenty members, one of them being Dick Pierce.⁵ The article added that, “Probably there will be an opening game of baseball at some suitable spot, to be decided upon at a meeting to be held this evening.” However, no record of a meeting, or any subsequent games that summer, could be found.

At least three clubs, the Deadwood Nine, the Lincoln Baseball Club, and the “Juveniles” were formed in Deadwood in 1878. In addition, the “Rough and Readys” and the “Tri-Mountain Club” represented Central City. Lead (Lead City) formed a ball club, as did the commissioned officers and soldiers at nearby Fort Meade. On July 4 the Tri-Mountain club defeated Deadwood 8-5 in what was described as “the most interesting match ever played by non-professionals west of Chicago.”⁶ Deadwood won against the Seventh Regiment at Fort Meade later in July by a score of 30-12 but the officers refused to allow the soldiers to leave the post for a return game saying, “the men are hell on Indians, but not much on baseball.”⁷

Kemp and Runge document what may have been the first benefit baseball games in the Hills. In August of 1878 a Deadwood nine played a picked team of amateurs from mining camps at the Catholic Church picnic to raise money benefitting the parish. A month later, in September, the Tri-Mountain Club of Central City played the Deadwood nine, with the proceeds contributed

to the county hospital. Black Hills papers only mention three baseball clubs in 1879, Deadwood, Lead City, and the Favorite Baseball Club of Fort Meade. Deadwood easily defeated Ft. Meade 18-2 at the fort in late May. A return game was planned at Deadwood's July 4 celebration but no record of the game could be found. The two clubs met at least one more time, in early September, and this time the soldiers turned the tables, defeating Deadwood 19-7.

“The visitors left the following morning for home delighted with the kind and hospitable manner in which our young men received and entertained them.”

Black Hills Journal (Rapid City), August 28, 1880

In 1880 the Fort Meade club was called Alerts, in recognition of the earlier Seventh Cavalry ball team, and based on their win over Deadwood the previous fall, were considered the unofficial champions of the Black Hills. The Alerts left the fort at 4 a. m. one morning in late August 1880 for the 6 ½ hour trip to Rapid City to face the “Eighty Stamps”, one of the new clubs that had sprung up in the region. The attire of the respective clubs was not described in any detail but the Eighty Stamps were noted to have a “very tasty and elaborate get up thereof,” and that the ladies “superintended the makeup of the costumes.” After a twenty-one run fifth inning by Rapid City, which gave them a 33-3 lead over the Alerts, a light rain began which, “...annoyed the girls with their new hats and frizzies, and light dresses, and they began to return home”, and soon both teams left the field as well. Rather than make the lengthy return trip after the game, the Alerts were overnight guests of the Eight Stamps. As was customary at the time, the host ball club was expected to provide entertainment and accommodations for the visiting club, which included a complimentary hop, (with 20 ladies present), music by string band, and a dance until a late hour.

The Fort Meade club, now called the Athletics, returned the favor the following year when they hosted the Eighty Stamps at their grounds at the army post in June 1881. Newspaper accounts focused more on the social aspects of the day than the game itself. The Eight Stamps left Rapid City at 4 a.m., and after a stop for breakfast at the Adler Spring Valley ranch, arrived in Sturgis around noon. They were met by their hosts and were taken to the Scotland Hotel for dinner and then transported the two miles to the post. The soldiers won a sloppily played game 25-20 and the Rapid City paper noted that, “there is no doubt that both clubs could be greatly improved by occasional practice games.” The game report did feel the need to single out the work of the umpire, a soldier named Corcoran, “...whose decisions were pronounced by all who witnessed the game as just and impartial as it was possible to make them.” After the game, the visiting team was taken back to the Scotland in “government ambulances” where they were served refreshments and entertained by the “famous Meade band.”⁸

One of the most notable games of 1881 in the Hills was between the Deadwood Stars (white) and the Plutonians (colored).⁹ Although it was not specifically stated, the Plutonians were likely a team comprised of members of the black 25th Infantry, the so-called “Buffalo Soldiers”, stationed at Fort Meade. In addition, another source noted, “The Plutonian B.B.C. organized in 1881. The Plutonians, composed of soldiers, played white nines.”¹⁰ The match game of ball between the new Deadwood nine – Stars – and the colored club on the Ingleside grounds, resulted in favor of the

Stars by a score of 27-7, in seven innings.”¹¹ This game may have been the one of the earliest between teams of white and black ballplayers, at least in the west.

Joe Flanner

Although he never played baseball, one early resident of the Black Hills was influential in the development of the game on a national level. A young attorney named Alonzo Joseph Flanner arrived in the Hills in 1877 and as District Attorney, successfully prosecuted the first murder case in the Territory. In 1883 he moved to Topeka, Kansas and sometime later relocated to St. Louis where he worked as a baseball writer with several newspapers including the *Republic*, *Globe-Democrat*, and *Post-Dispatch*. In the early nineties he was hired by Charles Spink as a writer for *The Sporting News*, at the time the premier baseball publication in the country.

He eventually became editor of *The Sporting News*, a position he held until 1909. It was said that “...in being a deep student as well as perfect master of the game, no baseball writer living has the edge on Joe Flanner. In wide acquaintance with players and officials no one can begin to compete with him. Mr. Flanner is one of the honest and conscientious writers of the game.”¹² In February 1903, while still with *The Sporting News*, Flanner used his experience as a lawyer to help draft the National Agreement, a document that governed the relations between the established National League and upstart American League. This led to the two leagues establishing a three-member National Commission which oversaw player contracts and the championship series between the two leagues which became the modern World Series.

This helped endear Flanner to American League President Ban Johnson and he moved to Chicago to work as Johnson’s secretary and serve as the official statistician of the new American League. A few years later he returned to his job as editor of *The Sporting News* and along with Joseph Richter, editor of the Philadelphia-based *Sporting Life*, worked as official scorer at the World Series. Later he was asked to join the National Commission to help manage the minor league cases brought before the body. “No man in America has a larger acquaintance among the minor league players than Mr. Flanner so that his selection for the position in question is a particularly happy one.”¹³

The Eighty Stamps of Rapid City organized again in 1883 and played an early season practice game against a second nine of “boys from the ranches in the neighborhood”, called the Corn Field Pirates. The country boys won 45-15 which meant that the Pirates had players talented enough to be added to the Eighty Stamps’ regular nine if needed for outside competitions. The Eighty Stamps arranged to meet the Athletics of Fort Meade on July 4 at their home grounds in Rapid City. Both nines participated in a pre-game parade and the local paper provided one of the earliest descriptions of the respective team’s uniforms. “...the Athletics baseball nine in white knee breeches, shirts and caps, and red stockings, and next came the Eighty Stamps nine of Rapid City, in black velvet knee breeches, white shirt and stockings and black caps.”¹⁴ The game account also noted the gambling taking place among the spectators, estimated at between 800 and 1,200 people. Early in the game, when the score was still close and the outcome in doubt (the Eighty Stamps eventually

won 29-7) a few small bets were offered by the officers (Ft. Meade) and promptly taken. One man offered a bet of \$100 on the visiting nine but when the home club rallied to win, he apparently skipped out when it was time to collect because “when ‘called’ he failed to materialize.”¹⁵

Although baseball was played in town earlier, Harry Marshall recalled that 1882 was the first year that a ball club was organized in Lead City and took the nickname “Homestake”, although other names such as the “Beefsteak Eaters”, “Conquerors”, and “Blue Spots” were also considered. In July of that year the Lead club challenged the Eighty Stamps to two games at the grounds in Rapid City. The agreement was for the first to be played in the morning, the second in the afternoon, and if the teams split, a third game would be played at a later date on grounds to be determined. The Lead City nine arrived Thursday evening, July 19 and the next morning Rapid City won the first game 17-5 and swept the series by taking the afternoon match 48-8. The visiting club stayed around for a post-game ball sponsored by their hosts and didn’t begin their trip home until 3:30 am the next morning, “...having had a splendid time.”¹⁶

After the July 4 game, the Eighty Stamps and the Athletics arranged for another game to take place in August at Fort Meade. After the visitors took a 16-6 lead after three innings “The game looked gloomy for the Fort Meade boys” and it looked as if the game might be a repeat of the earlier easy win by the Eighty Stamps. To make matters worse, the Athletics catcher took a ball to the face “...and was hurt so badly he was forced to retire.” Another man, identified as Sargent Sniffin, was hunted up to catch, and with a reshuffled line up the solders rallied, and ended up losing by just a run, 18-17. After three cheers for the teams, umpire, and scorers¹⁷, all retired to Sturgis for a hop and all who attended “...unite in pronouncing every detail perfect itself. The music was excellent, and nothing less could be said of the supper.”¹⁸

Equipment and Style of Play

The “Mets” wore blue flannel panties made to show their forms, which they did, as they split up the front, and down the back, and cross wise, and in several other directions.

Deadwood Pioneer-Times, August 12, 1885

The gold rush and other mining activity brought people to the Black Hills from all parts of the United States in the 1870s and 1880s. Some were familiar with baseball in other locations and brought their ideas and knowledge with them. Brothers Frank and Charles Maskrey, both of whom had played professionally in the east, arrived to play on the Deadwood nine in the mid-1880s. A report from 1886 compared Frank Maskrey’s pitching style to that of “Terry of the Brooklyns, who in delivering the ball takes four steps, swings his arm different ways, spits on the ball eight times, wipes in on his trousers three times, and just as the spectators get up to stretch he takes two steps of the highland fling and shoots the ball across the plate.”¹⁹

A pitcher named William H. (Adonis) Terry pitched for the Brooklyn, New York clubs in the American Association and National League from 1884 to 1891. The writer may have been exaggerating a bit, but the detail in his statement implied that he had personally witnessed Terry, or at least had knowledge of Terry’s pitching style. Another pitcher, W. L. McLaughlin of

Deadwood, may have been employing the modern theory of “pitching to contact”. A report noted, “[McLaughlin] also has a style of his own, apparently calling for very little effort, and indicating little care whether the batsman hits the ball or not. His peculiarity is to advance the right leg and then deliver the ball with a sour look to the batter. It is the sour look that keeps down the base hits”²⁰

“There are plenty of nice young men who would join our baseball clubs if they knew that the regulation ball is to be softened this year. So many catchers getting crippled has made the modification a necessity.

Black Hills Times (Deadwood), May 11, 1879

Catcher’s masks were first introduced in the eastern part of the country in the late 1870s but were not widely used, if at all, by clubs in the Black Hills until much later. There were several reports of catchers being hit in the face by a pitched or batted ball that resulted in serious injury. The Eighty Stamps club of Rapid City announced that they planned to purchase a catcher’s mask prior to the 1884 season²¹, perhaps the first in use in the area. During a Deadwood-Sturgis game in 1885, catcher Al Flaherty was hit on his left eye and “gracefully retired for surgical treatment.”²² The game report noted that Flaherty was “behind the bat and without a mask”. This is significant for two reasons. At the time catchers were transitioning from positioning themselves well back of home plate (and sometimes catching the pitch on the first bounce) to moving directly behind the plate. Flaherty may have still been adapting to this move. Secondly, the fact that it was noted that he was without a mask, implied it was somewhat unusual. It may have been his club could not afford to purchase one, or he preferred playing without the protection.

At the same time, baseball rules were undergoing a transition from pitchers being required to deliver to the ball underhanded, or side-armed, to being allowed to throw overhand. This meant they could throw harder, which put their catchers at greater peril. It was noted that some clubs purchased “gloves” as a part of their equipment. It was not clear what type of gloves these were but they were certainly nothing close to the catcher’s mitts we are familiar with today. In an 1885 game, Deadwood rallied for five ninth inning runs to defeat the Central City Golden Belts 16-15. The defeat was blamed on the fact that Golden Belt pitcher Walter Simpson, said to “throw the swiftest ball of any pitcher in the Hills”, had to “let up” on account of catcher McIntyre’s hands, which were bleeding badly. Another Central City player, Sullivan, took over for McIntyre for a couple of innings and “...concluded by that time that his life was in danger, and was glad when relief came.”²³

On May 4, 1884, the *Black Hills Times* of Rapid City printed a preview of the baseball clubs that were expected to form in the area that summer. The hometown Eighty Stamps reported that a balance of \$13.15 from last season would be turned over to the treasurer and that, along with a one-dollar tax imposed on each member, funds would be used to support the expenses of the club, including the purchase of a dozen bats and half dozen balls. Rapid City was also planning improvements to their grounds. A new club was organized in Rochford and the club at Fort Meade

was expected to be competitive because they, “have a good grounds and plenty of time for practice.” Deadwood did not field a club the previous (1883) season but were expected to organize a team called the Metropolitans, or Mets, for the coming year and Lead City would also field a team but cautioned that their players “are principally working class, consequently, will not have much time to practice.”²⁴

Several of the clubs sported new uniforms, or suits or costumes, as they were sometimes called, for the 1884 season. The Athletics of Fort Meade ordered new uniforms from Spaldings²⁵ of Chicago and the Ploughboys, a new club formed in Rapid City, sported an outfit of blue knee breeches, white shirts and stockings and hats. After an enrollment and subscription drive, the Eighty Stamps, had \$78.75 in their treasury by mid-June, so obtained suits of blue breeches, red stockings and white shirts (the national colors). The local paper said, “...the boys are determined to make them the winning colors this year”, but added, “Whether they will be able to do so remains to be seen.” It is interesting to note that the uniforms of the new club, the Ploughboys were “made” while those of the more established and better-financed Eighty Stamps were “ordered.”²⁶

As baseball became more popular in the Hills, teams faced a dilemma. Early in the spring towns began planning their July 4 celebrations which included trying to secure a commitment from a neighboring team for a game against the home nine during the event. The reasoning being, “...without some assurance of a celebration at home, the baseball boys may accept an invitation from some other place, and if the club would leave town for that day it would not go alone.”²⁷ In other words, if the ball team played out of town on the Fourth, many local fans would follow them, thus putting a damper on their event. Even with a commitment from an opponent, there was nothing to prevent them from reneging if a better offer came along.

The matchups that were finally agreed upon for the Fourth were the Ploughboys and Eighty Stamps playing in Rapid City and the Athletics of Fort Meade, with a pitcher reportedly able to throw four curves, visiting Lead City. The Rapid City game was one of the first in which handicapping was employed to, presumably, encourage betting on games between two teams of uneven ability. The rules agreed upon were that the Eighty Stamps needed to outscore the Ploughboys by a ratio of at least three runs to one (each inning) to win the purse. They had no trouble achieving this eventually winning 6-8. To their credit, the Ploughboys lasted seven innings, playing, “...until they got so hungry they couldn’t stand it any longer”, and the game was closed.²⁸ In the other Independence Day game, Fort Meade beat Lead City 14-2 and the next day, playing for a “gold badge”, Fort Meade left the field trailing 10-7 in the fourth inning after their catcher was disabled, thus allowing Lead to win and claim the badge.²⁹

Sunday Baseball

“A couple of the lady teachers coming along saw some of their truant scholars in the game and they boldly marched onto the diamond field, collared them, took the balls away from them, and marched them in triumph to the house of prayer.”

Deadwood Pioneer-Times, May 31, 1881

In many parts of the country, the playing of baseball on the Sabbath, Sunday, was illegal, but in the “anything goes” atmosphere of the Back Hills in the 1880s, there were no formal restrictions on the practice. Often it was the only day the miners had off work to attend games, so Sunday games drew the largest crowds. However, some citizens raised objections on moral grounds. In a letter to the editor in the June 26, 1884, issue of the *Black Hills Times* of Deadwood, a writer signed “First Base” noted that a new baseball club had been formed from the Deadwood hose (fire) team and that they planned to play a match game on Sunday. “First Base” argued that the practice was setting a poor example and said, in part, “...these young gentlemen...are willing to desecrate the Sabbath day so shamefully. We expect nothing better from hoodlums in our cities, whose example and conduct are not copyrighted for their good morals, in the community in which they reside. If these young men will bring themselves so low in the estimation of good society, what can we expect from our younger boys, who ever stand ready to imitate the pattern of their elders. I hope the new nine will give this matter a sober second thought.”³⁰

Three days later, a writer signed “Common Sense” had a rebuttal published in the *Times*. He argued that the majority of the residents of Deadwood favored Sunday baseball and cited statistics indicating that the Roman Catholic Church and even [Martin] Luther “did not see any objection to participation in Sunday amusements or anything else”, and argued that, rather than desecrating the Sabbath, as “First Base” contended, “Sunday amusement is the means of fostering and strengthening the family circle”, and, “Sunday baseball will be conducive to the peace, the comfort, and the good morals of the people.” Further, “Common Sense” noted that the city of Columbus, Ohio recently passed an ordinance prohibiting Sunday baseball, but that the ordinance was initiated by the saloonkeepers of the city who said that their business suffered when people went to ball games on Sunday afternoons instead of their establishments.³¹

Apparently, baseball wasn’t a real serious matter in Deadwood in 1884. In late July an “impromptu” nine of “players who have been out of practice for years...although some of them, before the discovery of gold in the Black Hills, were considered good ones”³² went over to Fort Meade to take on the Athletics. Umpired by “a muffer from the wood camp” the Athletics easily defeated Deadwood 30-7. The local paper dampened expectations for the Deadwood nine writing that [the trip], “...was made solely for the enjoyment of the ride and a pleasant visit at the post, and with no thought of playing a close game, much less of returning victorious, they were disappointed in no particular.”

Whether it was the same group of players or not was not stated, but a few weeks later a club calling themselves the Deadwood Champion Base Ball Club went to Lead City but lost by just one run, 17-16. Fifty dollars were subscribed to fix up the grounds at the Driving Park in Deadwood and in early September a second nine, the Unvincibles “comprising the most expert muffers in the city and vicinity” was formed. The Unvincibles soon issued a challenge to the Champion Club and, if accepted, “Bushels of fun are anticipated.”³³ In what started out as good-

natured ribbing, the Champions readily accepted the challenge, threatening to, “mop up the earth with you”, and advised the Unvincibles to, “Please bring your family physician with you.”³⁴

Surprisingly, the Unvincibles took an early lead but, “Unfortunately their pitcher and catcher weakened at the third inning...” and the Champions surged ahead and eventually won 34-15. One member of the Unvincibles didn’t take the loss well and accused the Champions of using all kinds of questionable tactics in a letter printed in the *Times*. “We were willing to be ‘mopped’ by the self-styled moppers, provided it was done legitimately, but when they continuously recruited players from the outside³⁵; constantly replenished the box with curved pitchers; when they rung lively balls on us when they were at bat, and substituted dead balls when we went in; when they called strikes when our batter was rubbing dust from his eyes, and whanged (sic) him in the neck as though by accident; when they took two bases on passed balls, and confined us to one; when they resorted to all sorts of monkey work, and then beat us only by the skin of their teeth.”³⁶

The Marshalls

Two of the most influential men in Black Hills baseball began their involvement with local teams in the mid-1880s. Romeo Marshall moved to Lead sometime in 1884 and opened a barber shop on Mill Street. The following year, his brother Harry joined him in the “tonsitorial fraternity”, as barbers were sometimes called then. In 1893 Harry and Romeo were involved in organizing all of the barbers (“whisker eradicators”) of Deadwood, Lead, Central City and Terraville into a union for the purpose of “mutual protection”, meaning setting standard prices of twenty-five cents for a shave and fifty cents for a haircut. Harry was elected president of the organization and Romeo, secretary.

Little is known of the Marshall’s backgrounds other than it’s likely they were originally from St. Louis. A brief news item from 1891 noted that Harry had returned to town after visiting his parents in that city. Harry married a woman named Hattie Marshbanks in Lead in 1887 and the couple had a son a year later. Romeo was also married, and he and his wife had a daughter who attended Oberlin College in Ohio.

Both men soon became involved in civic affairs, including the Lead baseball team. In addition to being a catcher and centerfielder for the Grays, Harry served on fund-raising committees and was elected to the office of treasurer for the Baseball Association. When not playing both Harry and Romeo were two of the most sought-after and respected umpires in the Hills. Harry was captain of the Lead polo cub and known as a very fast runner; one report said he, “runs the bases like Comiskey”³⁷, and often picked up extra money by winning foot races for bets. He also entertained others with is guitar playing and later ran a number of other enterprises out of his barbershop including selling pools (taking bets) and arranging cock fights, prize fights, and booking minstrel shows.

It wasn't unusual for enterprising young businessmen to get involved in community affairs, including the town's baseball team, but what was somewhat unique about the Marshalls, was that both were African-American.

Grounds

"The ball players found their field occupied by Noah Newbank's freight train yesterday, and the game did not amount to much as an exhibition of ball."

Rapid City Journal, September 14, 1887

Because of the hilly terrain in the Black Hills, finding a flat parcel of ground large enough to accommodate a baseball diamond was often a challenge for early clubs. For example, the grounds used by the team at Fort Meade sloped from left field to the backstop, "...and throughout the game the catchers have very hard work in consequence."³⁸ The location of the first games for the Deadwood nines was the Whitewood Grounds, described as being located in Centennial Valley, approximately eight miles from downtown Deadwood. In July 1878, Central City played Lead City on grounds "at the summit of Bobtail Gulch". When the Deadwood Nine played at Fort Meade later that summer, the game took place on grounds "between the camps of the infantry and cavalry" and when Central City organized a club in 1884, it was reported that ground had been selected "in the rear of the Hidden Treasure Mill."³⁹

In 1880 the Deadwood Driving Park and Fairground was erected on Boulder Park Road two miles east of town. The facility had a ½ mile horse track, horse stables, a wooden grandstand able to seat 700 people, and even a pool room and saloon under the seats. The baseball club needed permission to access the driving park and by August the Deadwood club had raised \$57.50 toward clearing a spot for their ball grounds. Club members noted that the grounds would be named for the person who subscribed and paid the largest amount of money.⁴⁰

However, after several years of use, by 1884 the grounds at the Driving Park had come under disrepair. During one game between two area second nines at the race track, "...the bad conditions of the grounds, almost all balls batted outside of the diamond becoming lost, and it being by the merest accident that a grounder could be stopped, the erratic movements imparted to the ball by the unevenness of the field bothering the players to an alarming extent, and rendering the prompt fielding of the sphere by professionals even, impossible."⁴¹ That was one of the reasons given for the lack of interest in baseball in Deadwood that summer because it was said that the nine "have neither the grounds nor facilities for an indulgence in the pastime."⁴²

When E. G. Dudley arrived in the Deadwood Gulch in 1876 he brought a steam powered portable saw mill he set up in Deadwood's downtown area situated between the mining camps of Elizabethtown and Virginia City. The mill was in continuous operation until it was dismantled in 1882. In the spring of 1885, the newly formed Deadwood Base Ball Association took over the site to construct new baseball grounds. After removal of several abandoned buildings and leveling the ground, including hauling in mine tailings to fill in low areas, the new grounds, said to be "as good a field as can be found in the territory"⁴³, were ready for play by late July. In addition to being

located on a relatively level section of town, the new site, which became known as the Dudley Sawmill Site, was right in town, as opposed to the former Driving Park which was two miles distant.

However, later that summer the local papers said, “The Deadwood grounds are not as fine as they could be. The catcher has only about ten square feet in which to operate. If he backs up any further, he has to climb a hill. A fence runs up to within ten feet of first base. Left field is a vast sawdust area and the home club is said to be drilled in the use of the shovel, with which implement they are obliged to dig up the ball wherever it strikes.”⁴⁴

Deadwood secured new grounds called Metropolitan Park, in 1889. The location wasn’t specified but “...are so much better in area and general condition than any before at the disposal of the Deadwood players, that no comparison is possible.” The only criticism seemed to be that “The left field is short and the old brewery building is somewhat in the way...” A fence enclosed the structure and although admission to the grounds was free, a ticket to the newly constructed grandstand was twenty-five cents.⁴⁵ Apparently it wasn’t well regulated as in the opener at the new park in mid-June against Fort Meade, 145 tickets were sold but “...three times as many crawled over the hill or over the fence...”⁴⁶

Early in 1882 the Rapid City club appointed a committee to prepare their grounds for a game on the Fourth of July. All members were instructed to report to the site to stake off the field, mark the baselines, and eliminate obstructions, including leveling of hummocks and removing rocks. The exact location of the grounds was not reported but “were as fine as could be found anywhere.”⁴⁷ By 1889 it was noted that a high board fence would be erected around new grounds, described as located “opposite the depot”. An enclosed structure meant the team could now charge admission to ball games, a new source of revenue for the ball club. After grading and leveling the grounds, plans were made to construct a grandstand “seventy feet in length and three tiers high”⁴⁸, install wire netting to protect spectators from foul balls, and build dressing rooms. Apparently, the grounds, owned by the city and rented to users, were intended as a multi-use site. It was suggested that the grounds could be flooded for use as a skating rink in the winter and “could be used as a meeting place for other athletes who might want to engage in feats of skill or endurance.”⁴⁹ For example, in addition to the ball games, a shooting tournament (at live birds) and foot races were held at the grounds during the town’s July 4 celebration.

As the population of the region continued to grow, and interest in baseball increased, more and more teams were formed. One way in which baseball interest was piqued was by local newspapers reporting scores and standings from the professional National League in the east. In addition to the team representing the respective towns, or army post in the case of Fort Meade, many communities also fielded “second teams” and juvenile nines.” Clubs still scheduled games by issuing written challenges to a rival in newspapers, but more and more these challenges contained details on the wager on the game, usually with each side putting up an equal amount of money, and the winner taking the entire purse. Sometimes the instructions were for the wager to be deposited in a local bank for safekeeping until after the game. Other times the winning team

would be awarded all or a percentage of the gate receipts, implying teams now had a process to collect an admission charge.

Late in 1885 an effort was made to introduce more structure into the baseball operations in the Black Hills. A meeting was called for August 14 in Sturgis to discuss the organization of baseball league. Present were representatives from the Metropolitans of Deadwood, the Eighty Stamps of Rapid City, the Belt Club⁵⁰ of Central City and Terraville, the Red Stockings of Spearfish, the Sturgis City Nine, and the Athletics of Fort Meade.⁵¹ Lead City did not send a delegate but were expected to join the league. The association, titled "The Black Hills League Baseball Association", elected officers, ratified a constitution and by-laws, adopted the rules of the National League⁵², and affixed a \$5 membership fee per team. At first it was suggested to have each member club play the others twice in a home and home format with the winner of the most games declared Black Hills champion. But it was soon realized that, due to travel and scheduling conflicts, it would be nearly impossible to complete this schedule before cold weather set in that fall.

The Association finally decided to hold a tournament as part of the activities during a fair and exhibition scheduled for September 15-19 in Deadwood. The Black Hills Fair Association approved an expenditure of \$75 to the first-place winner of the baseball tournament and \$25 to the runners up. Organizers thought they could get six or seven area clubs to enter, but this being their first experience in planning such an event, weren't sure how to conduct the tournament. One idea was to have a single elimination event, with teams drawing lots to determine pairings, and the winning clubs being able to add players from teams that were eliminated. Still another idea was to play four-inning games.⁵³

Eventually a schedule was drawn up with Deadwood facing Spearfish on Tuesday September 15, Lead facing Sturgis the next day, and the two winners playing on Thursday. Fort Meade was then to play the Rapid City Eighty Stamps on Friday with the winner facing the winner of the Wednesday game for the title. In the opening game Deadwood downed Spearfish 22-11. General Sturgis, commander at Fort Meade, accompanied by all the officers on duty, their families, and the celebrated Seventh Cavalry band⁵⁴ all traveled to Deadwood in support of the Athletics in their game against the Eighty Stamps. Most of the betting was on Rapid City but the Athletics came out on top 16-15; the local paper reporting "The sudden indisposition of one of the Eighty Stamps near the close of the game is given as a reason for the defeat of the Rapid City club."⁵⁵

But from there things deteriorated quickly. Neither Lead or Sturgis showed up for their scheduled game for reasons described as "...the unanticipated arrival of the paymaster at Fort Meade, and the inability of several important members to leave home..."⁵⁶ The Sturgis club finally showed up a couple of days later but a game between them and the Eighty Stamps was called off when members of both clubs decided they would rather attend other events at the fair than play baseball. The Golden Belt of Central City didn't enter the original tournament but now scared up a scrub nine of Eighty Stamp and Deadwood players and challenged any club remaining at the fair.

The revised tournament schedule called for the Fort Meade Athletics to face the Deadwood Metropolitans in the championship game, with the betting pool favoring the Mets at odds of 5 to

3 ½, but the Athletics were ordered back to the post so the Mets “therefore did not care the play,” Finally, once the Athletics were able to return to the fair a few days later, the Mets reassembled their team and Fort Meade and Deadwood faced off in what turned out to be the championship game. The match, “witnessed by a large concourse” was won by Deadwood 29-21; the local paper commenting, “The figures do not indicate a very scientific game, but there was nevertheless heaps of fun.”⁵⁷

The McElroy Boys

Two of the more prominent members of the Eighty-Stamps during most of the 1880s were the McElroy brothers, Charley, who usually played shortstop, and Johnny, an outfielder/pitcher until he got older when he took over management of the Rapid City ball club. They grew up on a ranch outside of Rapid City that was homesteaded by their father, one of the original settlers in the gulch. The elder McElroy was born in Ireland, immigrated to the United States in 1854 and first came to Dakota as member of General Sully’s campaign against the Sioux in the 1860s. At different times he ran mail between Fort Pierre and the Black Hills, worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad, and was appointed the first justice of the peace.⁵⁸

Johnny followed his father’s footsteps when he was named Marshall (chief of police) in Rapid City in 1890. Although gun play was not uncommon during this time in the Hills, law enforcement involved more than chasing bank robbers and other dangerous criminals. In the course of his duties McElroy was called upon to chase boys who were playing baseball off of Main Street (“after giving them some good advice on the subject”) because their game was frightening the horses and causing some runaways.⁵⁹ On another occasion he and some deputies were summoned to round up stray cows that were wandering around the streets of Rapid City causing damage to tress and trampling lawns and flower beds. A new city ordinance was soon passed: “Every stray horse, cow, mule, or pig found after this will be taken to the pound...”⁶⁰

Another time McElroy conducted a raid at Mae Brown’s house because, “There has been considerable complaint lately about matters being run with a rather high hand in that part of town.” Nothing was said about the young ladies present, but fifteen young men spilled out of the house during the raid and McElroy and his deputies were able to capture ten of them. All were taken to jail and ordered to appear before the city justice of the peace, at which time the men and Mrs. Brown’s paid fines and were released. However, the justice admonished Mrs. Brown to, “keep a more orderly house in the future.” Naturally, “The young men taken in were very anxious that their names should not appear in print and their request in the matter is complied with this time”⁶¹

In June 1886, Deadwood added two new players who, according to Kemp and Runge were the first “outsiders recruited from other sources.”⁶² According to the *Black Hills Times*, E. M. McDonald, was formerly a shortstop and change curve pitcher of the Philadelphia Athletics and was “smuggled in on Saturday’s coach” to play right field. William E. Lowe, who was described as, “the celebrated backstop (catcher) and skillful base runner from the White Stockings of

Chicago” was inserted into the lineup to play center field.⁶³ They may have once been scouted or contacted by Philadelphia and Chicago, respectively, but no record could be found of either man playing in the major leagues, or at any level of professional baseball for that matter. It may have been a case of the men embellishing their prior experience to make them more attractive to other teams.

Despite the confusion surrounding last year’s tournament, the Deadwood Fair Association hosted another event at the end of the 1886 season, this time putting up a “silver mounted rosewood bat and silver ball” as a prize to the winning club. Four teams entered and in the opening game the Mets of Deadwood, despite being without three of their first nine (Charles and Frank Maskrey and John Eccles failed to appear for some reason) defeated Lead City 9-7. Because of the outside business obligations of many of their members, the Eighty Stamps of Rapid City didn’t organize until late August. They were scheduled to face the Athletics of Fort Meade in the other opening game of the tournament, but when Fort Meade failed to show up for some unknown reason, Rapid City was awarded a 9-0 forfeit win.

Betting was heavy for the championship game the next day, with most of the odds favoring Rapid City. That may have been because the Mets accused the Eighty Stamps of securing one of the Fort Meade players and importing a battery (pitcher and catcher) from Omaha for the game. The Mets decided to even things out by, according to reports in the Rapid City paper, securing an umpire described as, “a hay-seed barber named Gordon who no more the order of baseball knows than a spinster and a hired man.”⁶⁴ Rapid City further accused Gordon of having a stake in the outcome by placing bets on Deadwood. The game was a close, competitive affair with the Eighty Stamps holding a 6-3 lead after seven innings. However, Deadwood scored two runs in the eighth and seven more in the ninth to take a 12-6 win. Several questionable calls by Gordon, favoring Deadwood, were blamed on the defeat, confirming Rapid City’s suspicions that he was “on the take”. In addition to the financial losses sustained by the Eighty Stamp players and fans, the Rapid City paper summed up the sentiments saying, “That fool umpire may consider himself in great luck that he was not thumped.”⁶⁵

Umpires

“Unfortunately, the interest in the game was in great measure destroyed by the stupidity and pig headedness of the umpire”

Deadwood Pioneer-Times, September 12, 1886

Umpires were usually a trustworthy person chosen from the crowd who had a basic knowledge of the rules and met the approval of both clubs. After an 1885 game between Fort Meade and Deadwood, the umpire, Sargent “Noby” Clark of the Seventh Cavalry, was presented with a box of imported cigars “in testimony of the excellent way in which he conducted himself in that office.”⁶⁶ In another game a short time later Clark “...is highly commended for the able and impartial manner in which he officiated, and for his courtesy to all.”⁶⁷ Judge Robert Hamilton was selected to umpire a game that same year, and although there were arguments over some of his

calls, the game story defended his actions and said that the disagreements were, "...caused mostly from the ignorance of the rules manifested by the payers more than anything else."

However, as games became more competitive, and betting became more commonplace, umpires came under more scrutiny and subject to more criticism. Incompetency, or calls that favored one team over another, could potentially involve the loss of large sums of money. In 1889, a club called the Brick Store Base Ball Nine issued a challenge to another team and one of the conditions for the game set forth (hopefully tongue-in-cheek) was, "All weapons of a deadly nature must be left at home. This clause does not permit the umpire from taking whatever precautions his safety may seem to demand, and should not be construed to include pocket pistols, if such are loaded with ammunition of approved strength and quality."⁶⁸

The Maskreys

Leech Maskrey had a five-year major league career (1882-1886) as an outfielder with Louisville and Cincinnati in the American Association. Two of his brothers also played baseball and spent time in the Black Hills. Charles Maskrey was a newspaper man who arrived in Deadwood in 1883 and at different times worked for the *Pioneer-Times*, the *Lead Tribune*, the *Rapid City Republican*, and a newspaper in Butte County. In 1885 he partnered with James Moody to buy controlling interest in the *Pioneer-Times*. Charles became involved in community affairs including the hose company (fire department) and the Deadwood baseball team, serving as an officer in the organization, acting as team manager, and playing as an infielder.

The third Maskrey brother, Frank, who had a brief career as a pitcher in professional baseball, came to Deadwood to visit Charles in June of 1886 and apparently stayed on for an extended visit as he pitched several games for the Mets that summer. Charles may have helped him secure a job, as by October he worked as a "typo" (typesetter) at the *Pioneer-Times*. The following spring, in April 1887, Charles received a letter from Frank indicating that he had signed a contract to pitch for a team in Steubenville, Ohio, but later that summer Frank was back in Deadwood again pitching for the Mets.

The last that was heard from Frank was that he remained in the newspaper business and was working for the *Salt Lake City Tribune* in 1889 and still trying to catch on as pitcher with a baseball team. Charles continued to work for the *Republican* in Rapid City and played shortstop for the town's baseball team. He left the area in the spring of 1889 to take a job with a newspaper in Caldwell, Idaho but his departure may have been related to some improprieties. He was accused of misappropriation of funds by accepting a \$25 per year salary as recording secretary of the Black Hills Firemen's Association before getting official approval at the Association's annual meeting.⁶⁹

Little organized baseball took place in the early part of 1887 but several pick up nines sprung up in the region, some with creative nicknames. There were reports of clubs named the Lead City Lightweight and the Buffalo Gap Wind Cutters and games between the Prickly Ash and Peach Pie nines of Rapid City, the printers and clerks of Deadwood, the Spearfish Nomads

and the Deadwood Scrubs, and a match between the Gold Street Swipers and the Holy Terrors of Keystone.⁷⁰ Most of them were not of very high quality. A game report of a contest between East End and West End, described as a couple of youth nines in Rapid City, commented, “The errors made were far too numerous to count, while the brilliant plays were totally lacking.”⁷¹

After a few pickup games earlier in the summer, the Rapid City Baseball Association was formed in mid-August. An initiation fee of \$1, with a monthly dues of 25 cents was levied on all members. It wasn’t stated how many joined, but enough money was raised to spend \$30 on a mask, gloves, and a protector for catchers and “a selection of the best of Spalding bats.” Something called the “ways and means committee” was placed in charge of Association finances and when the Deadwood Fair Association decided not to put up any prize money for a tournament this year, Rapid City decided to try and organize one of their own and offered a purse of \$100. But, when they asked potential teams to pay an entry fee, they found no takers and baseball petered out in the Hills for this season.

The Rapid City Baseball Association was one of the most active in the Hills and they met as early as February 1888 to plan for the coming season. In addition to the election of officers, committees on securing grounds, entertainment (raising of funds), and constitution and by-laws were appointed. They even embraced the idea of what would later become known as spring training when they appointed a committee on “gymnasium” who were assigned to negotiate for the use of the skating rink which contained “a complete outfit of gymnastic paraphernalia” to be used by the players “to harden themselves before the season opens.”⁷²

Jim Scott

Just as the 1888 season was about to begin in the Hills, a brief item appeared in the April 24 issue of the *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, that, at the time, had nothing to do with baseball, but would have great significance twenty years later. The announcement said: “Born. – Monday evening, April 23rd, 1888, to the wife of George W. Scott, a son of average weight.” The boy would be named James but later picked up the nickname “Death Valley” and would go on to have a nine-year career (1909-1917) in the major leagues as a pitcher with the Chicago White Sox.

The attempt to form a league among Black Hills ball teams in 1885 resulted in failure, but the Rapid City Baseball Association tried to revive the idea again in 1888. One of the motions passed at an early spring meeting was to have the secretary correspond with other towns and gauge interest about forming a league. The initial response was favorable, so a meeting was called for Sturgis for mid-May. In what should have been a sign of things to come, only Rapid City and Sturgis sent delegates, with Lead, Deadwood, Carbonate, and Spearfish joining by telephone proxy. They did, however, decide to form a league of four teams and drew up a schedule with games beginning May 30 with Rapid City at Sturgis and Deadwood visiting Spearfish. However, when Spearfish failed to show up for scheduled games in early-June at Sturgis and Rapid City, both resulting in forfeit losses, it was decided to call the idea of a league off. It turned out that only Sturgis and Rapid City

had organized teams, and as one of the area newspapers wrote, “The Black Hills league of ball clubs may be remembered among the things that were. Lead City, Deadwood, and Spearfish failed to materialize, the two former for the lack of players and the latter for want of financial support.”⁷³

Improved communication (telephone supplanting the telegraph) and rail transportation meant ball teams could now play a wider variety of teams from outside the immediate Black Hills region. In early June 1888, Rapid City began negotiating with the ball club in Chadron, Nebraska (a distance of 100 miles) for a series of games. At first Rapid City offered Chadron a guarantee of \$25 to play in their city but Chadron wanted to play for higher stakes and countered by asking Rapid to put up \$200 (which they would match) with the winner taking the entire \$400 in a game in the Nebraska city. They finally agreed to meet in Rapid City in mid-July for \$200 a side. The game was a pitcher’s duel between Ed Carroll of the locals and Williams of Chadron with Rapid City coming out on top 9-4, principally due to better fielding support (Rapid City committed only three errors compared to seven by Chadron). One of the consequences of playing a distant team, however, was that few backers were able to travel with the visiting club, and therefore few side bets were made.

The two clubs arranged for another game, this time to take place in Chadron in August. First the Rapid City club had to stage a benefit ball at the Hotel Harney to raise money. The *Rapid City Journal* said, “The object of the ball is plainly stated. It is for the benefit of the ball players, the proceeds to be devoted to the payment of some outstanding indebtedness, and to defray the expense of the trip to Chadron. The boys have worked hard to provide amusement for the Rapid City public, and it is but fair that the public should show its appreciation for their efforts by liberally patronizing the ball on Tuesday evening.”⁷⁴ The players rewarded their supporter’s patronage by defeated Chadron 10-9, their second straight against the Nebraska club.

Later in the summer other clubs in the area organized and in late July Fort Meade met the Metropolitans of Deadwood at the Driving Park in what was described as one of the most exciting games anyone could remember. The soldiers held a five-run lead going into the bottom of the ninth inning and it looked bleak for the home club when the first two Met batters went out. “The ball thence on was unmercifully pounded into all parts of the field”, until Deadwood had cut the lead to one and loaded the bases. Brewster, the next Deadwood batter, drove in the winning runs, “catching the yarn on the tip of his willow, drove it to the farthest corner of right,” giving Deadwood a 21-20 win.⁷⁵ “A scene of great confusion ensued, in which everyone shouted himself hoarse.”

“An effort will be made in the future to suppress the roughness on the part of the audience that has hitherto characterized the games played on these grounds [Lead City], so that ladies as well as gentlemen may witness them without listening to unseemly language.”

Deadwood Pioneer-Times, April 11, 1889

The first newspaper stories about baseball each spring encouraged teams to begin practice as soon as the weather warmed and the grounds dried out. Many early season losses were blamed on the lack of practice, and this may have contributed to a near fatal incident. In the opening game

of the 1889 season, the Nuggets of Lead played the Deadwood Mets on the grounds of Lead. Hal Edson, batting for the Mets, was hit in the head by a pitch by Deadwood's Walter Simpson. One report⁷⁶ said that Edson "dodged the wrong way", implying he stepped into the pitch, but another⁷⁷ said that Simpson, who "throws a ball with wonderful swiftness, somewhat out of practice, made a wild throw." Edson fell to the ground unconscious but fortunately the Lead manager, W. R. Dickinson, who was a physician, tended to him immediately and took him to his hospital. Edson lapsed in and out of consciousness over the next 24 hours, and although his condition was serious enough that Dickinson would not allow his transport back to Deadwood, by the next day his condition was improving. Nothing more was written about Edson's condition, so presumably, he recovered.

Deadwood planned to host a baseball tournament during their Independence Day celebration held on July 4-5, 1889. One of the difficulties in scheduling the tournament was in getting commitments from outside teams. The soldiers on the Fort Meade team never knew in advance if they could get permission to leave the post and many of the members of the other teams in the Hills were also members of their respective town's hose (firefighting) teams and thought that participating in both the hose competitions and the baseball tournament would be too taxing. The original schedule had three teams entered, with Lead taking on Deadwood in the morning and then Fort Meade playing the winner in the afternoon. It wasn't clear what actually happened. One source had Fort Meade beating Deadwood 37-20, but another said that Lead won the \$50 first place money.

Nonetheless, the other attractions garnered more attention. There were the usual speeches, a parade (including the home-town Metropolitan ball club in full uniform), a trap shooting contest, and entertainment by the Terraville band and the Italian band from Lead. John Beckman won the single-handed rock drilling contest, making a hole of 14 ½ inches in 13 minutes, 19 seconds and the Teeter brothers picked up the \$50 first prize in the double handed rock drilling contest with a time of 10 minutes, nine seconds. The main attraction was a competition between the area hose teams. The Pioneer Hook and Ladder Company, along with the C. & G. (Central City), Deadwood and South Deadwood, Homestake, Fort Meade, Anchor, and Chinese Hose Companies all competed. There were hook and ladder races, and events called a "hub and tub" race and a 300 yard "wet test". The main competition was the hydrant coupling contest. Central City's hose was "blown off at the nozzle", Deadwood recorded the fastest time but were disqualified when they failed to couple three full threads, and Lead's team, through some misunderstanding, forgot to bring their own hose and had to withdraw. It came down to the teams from South Deadwood and Fort Meade, with the former winning the \$25 first prize in a time of 13 1/2 seconds.

After sweeping them twice last year, Rapid City arranged for another game with the club from Chadron, Nebraska in August. Chadron reportedly strengthened their club with an imported battery, but Rapid City's star pitcher, Ed Carroll, refused to play for some unstated reason, resulting in a 22-8 Chadron win at the Rapid City grounds. While in the Hills, Chadron arranged additional games so after the win they took the freight train north to Deadwood. There they met a team called "Consolidated" (Cons. in the line score) made up of the top players from the Deadwood

Mets, Fort Meade and the Nuggets of Lead. “Consolidated” won the first game 29-13 but Chadron took the second 19-7. While on the trip, Deadwood treated the Chadron ball club and their traveling party to a tour of the area mills, mines, and brick store leaving their guests, “...filled with wonder at the magnitude of all they saw.”⁷⁸ Chadron players, “...cannot find the words to express their feelings of hospitality extended them while in Deadwood”, but offered a backhanded criticism of their hosts in Rapid City reporting to the local press that they were “indifferently received” while in that city.⁷⁹

“The Deadwood fielders had a lovely time chasing the ball around the gulch, and at the end of nine innings were very tired because of the enthusiastic way in which they did it.”

Rapid City Journal, August 31, 1889

Another club from Nebraska, West Point, reportedly composed of salaried players, toured the Hills a couple of weeks later. Their first stop was in Rapid City and although Carroll decided to pitch this time, several players were absent due to illness or injury, and West Point took the game 17-13. West Point then went up to Deadwood and dropped a tight game to Consolidated 9-7. The two teams played again the next day and West Point had an easy time of it winning 26-6. West Point stopped off in Rapid City on their way home to play one more game and, possibly because Carroll made himself again unavailable, “borrowed” their battery to Rapid City. They hit West Point’s second pitcher freely and took a 13-4 win in the final game of the 1889 season.

Conclusion

Seeds that were planted by the Seventh Calvary near Custer in 1874 blossomed into a vibrant baseball environment in the Black Hills over the next fifteen years. The population of the gulch grew rapidly and spurred by revenue from local gold and silver mines, not to mention the saloons and houses of prostitution, the area’s economy grew as well. Local baseball organizations were formed and thousands of dollars were wagered on teams that often included highly paid outside professionals. Local players and their ardent fans supported the game enthusiastically, but also had a great deal of fun. Excepting the organized professional leagues in the eastern United States, during the decade of the 1880s the Black Hills of South Dakota may have been the site of some of the most competitive baseball played anywhere in the country.

Endnotes

¹ Although baseball was usually spelled as two words, “base ball”, in contemporary newspaper reporting, the more common one-word term, “baseball” will be used throughout the text.

² See “Terry Bohn, “Many Exciting Chases After the Ball”, *Baseball Research Journal*, Society for American Baseball Research, Volume 43, Issue 1, 2014, Donald Jackson, *Custer’s Gold: the United States Cavalry Expedition of 1874*, University of Nebraska Press, 1972, Larry Bowman, “Soldiers at Play: Baseball on the American Frontier”, *NINE: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*, Volume 9, Number 1 & 2, Fall 2000/Spring 2001, University of Nebraska Press, or Brian Dipple, “Its Equal I Have Never Seen: Custer Explores the Black Hills in 1874”, *Columbia; the Magazine of Northwest History*, 19 (Summer 5), 2005.

³ David Kemp and Michael Runge, *Baseball in the Mining Camps: A Deadwood Baseball Book*, Mariah Press, 2016, page 7.

⁴ “Base Ball”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), June 29, 1877:4

⁵ The article went on to state that Pierce was the nephew of “Pierce the famous baseball player of St. Louis”. Although the last name was spelled differently, this may have been a reference to Dickey Pierce, who played for the St. Louis Brown Stockings of the National League at the time and is recognized by many as the person who invented the position of shortstop.

⁶ Kemp and Runge, page 8.

⁷ Kemp and Runge, page 9.

⁸ “Day Visit to Fort Meade”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), June 18, 1881:1.

⁹ “Notice”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), April 23, 1881:4.

¹⁰ *Deadwood Black Hills Weekly Pioneer*, April 23, 1881.

¹¹ James E. Brunson III, *Black Baseball, 1858-1900: A Comprehensive Record of the Teams, Players Managers, Owners, and Umpires*, McFarland, 2019.

¹² Alfred H. Spink, *The national game; a history of baseball, America's leading out-door sport, from the time it was first played up to the present day, with illustrations and biographical sketches of the great players who helped to bring the game into the prominence it now enjoys*, Southern Illinois Press, 2000 (originally published in 1910, with a second, revised version in 1911).

¹³ Alfred H. Spink.

¹⁴ “Base Ball Game”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), July 6, 1883:1.

¹⁵ “Base Ball Game”.

¹⁶ “The Lead City Nine”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), July 27, 1883:1.

¹⁷ Each team often appointed a scorer and it wasn’t unusual, in the time of high scoring games, for their totals to differ at the end of games.

¹⁸ “The Game”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), August 31, 1883:1.

¹⁹ Kemp and Runge, page 23.

²⁰ “The Diamond”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), August 21, 1886:1.

²¹ “Base Ball Matters”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, May 4, 1884:1.

²² Kemp and Runge, page 18.

²³ “The Diamond”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 15, 1885:3.

²⁴ “Base Ball Matters”, *Black Hills Times* (Rapid City), May 4, 1884.

²⁵ Albert Spalding was one of the best pitchers in America during the nineteenth century. He later established a sporting goods business that supplied, among other things, baseball uniforms and equipment to amateur and professional baseball teams across the country. The Spalding Sporting Goods Company continues to operate today.

²⁶ “Base Ball”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), June 27, 1884:1.

²⁷ “Well! Will We Celebrate?”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), May 16, 1884:1.

²⁸ “The Base Ball Game”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), July 11, 1884:1.

²⁹ “How We Celebrated”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, July 6, 1884:3.

³⁰ “Base Ball”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), July 26, 1884:3.

³¹ “Sunday Base Ball”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), July 29, 1884:2.

³² “Base Ball”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, July 29, 1884:1.

³³ “Fun Brewing”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 5, 1884:3.

³⁴ “Challenge Accepted”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 6, 1884:3.

³⁵ This is one of the first instances in which a team was accused of using “ringers”

³⁶ “Base Ball”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 9, 1884:2.

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- ³⁷ “On The Belt”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, August 11, 1885:4.
- ³⁸ “The Game”, *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), August 31, 1883:1.
- ³⁹ “Base Ball”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), September 6, 1884:3.
- ⁴⁰ “Miscellaneous”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), August 17, 1880:4.
- ⁴¹ Kemp and Runge, page 27.
- ⁴² “National Game”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, August 2, 1884:3.
- ⁴³ Kemp and Runge, page 22.
- ⁴⁴ “Diamond Dust”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, August 12, 1885:4.
- ⁴⁵ “The Diamond”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), June 11, 1889:1.
- ⁴⁶ “The Ball Field”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), June 18, 1889:2.
- ⁴⁷ *Black Hills Journal* (Rapid City), June 16, 1882:4.
- ⁴⁸ “Base Ball”, *Rapid City Journal*, June 18, 1889:1.
- ⁴⁹ “Base Ball Grounds”, *Rapid City Journal*, May 8, 1889:1.
- ⁵⁰ The nickname of the Central City club, “Gold Belts” may have come from the area gold mines, or possibly from the new suits (uniforms) ordered from Chicago that spring— blue knee pants, blue stockings, caps of red, white and blue, and white and blue belts with nickel plated buckles.
- ⁵¹ Kemp and Runge, page 23.
- ⁵² It was noted in an article in the *Deadwood Daily Pioneer-Times* of September 5, 1885 that the principal difference between the rules of the National League, and those of the American Association was that in the former the foul bound was not an out, and the pitcher is not obliged below the shoulder, as in the latter.
- ⁵³ Kemp and Runge, page 23.
- ⁵⁴ Kemp and Runge, page 29.
- ⁵⁵ “What a Person Sees at the Fairground”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 19, 1885:3.
- ⁵⁶ Kemp and Runge, page 29.
- ⁵⁷ “The Fair”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 20, 1885:3.
- ⁵⁸ “Old Timer Dead”, *Rapid City Journal*, April 18, 1896:1.
- ⁵⁹ “A Bad Practice”, *Rapid City Journal*, September 30, 1890:1.
- ⁶⁰ “A Raid”, *Rapid City Journal*, October 2, 1890:1.
- ⁶¹ “A Raid”, *Rapid City Journal*, March 21, 1891:1.
- ⁶² Kemp and Runge, pages 30-31.
- ⁶³ “Base Ball”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), June 15, 1886:2.
- ⁶⁴ “Won’t Play Any More”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, October 13, 1886:3.
- ⁶⁵ “Won’t Play Any More”.
- ⁶⁶ “Base Ball”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, September 4, 1885:4.
- ⁶⁷ “The Ball Field”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), September 4, 1885:4.
- ⁶⁸ “A Challenge Accepted”, *Black Hills Times* (Rapid City), May 11, 1889:4.
- ⁶⁹ “A Peculiar Statement”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), April 6, 1889:3.
- ⁷⁰ A prospector named William Franklin discovered a rich vein of gold-bearing quartz in Pennington County. He quickly staked out a claim and the town of Keystone soon grew up around the new “Holy Terror” mine. At the time it was customary for mines to be named after the wife of the prospector, and that’s what Franklin did. His wife’s real name was Jenny, but the story goes that Franklin was a regular at the many saloons in the area and Jenny had to go in and drag him home by the arm. As he was being escorted out by his wife, it was said that Franklin winked at the other bar patrons and said, “Ain’t she a holy terror.” So, naturally the nickname of the new baseball team formed in Keystone was the “Holy Terrors.
- ⁷¹ “An Awful Game”, *Black Hills Journal* (Deadwood), June 3, 1887:1.
- ⁷² “Base Ball Matters”, *Rapid City Journal*, February 14, 1888:1.
- ⁷³ “The City”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), June 9, 1888:4.
- ⁷⁴ “Tuesday Evening’s Ball”, *Rapid City Journal*, August 12, 1888:1.
- ⁷⁵ The *Black Hills Times* reported the score 21-20 while the *Deadwood Pioneer-Times* had it 20-19.
- ⁷⁶ “Mineral Belt”, *Black Hills Times* (Deadwood), April 23, 1889:2.
- ⁷⁷ “A Baseball Accident”, *Rapid City Journal*, April 23, 1889:1.
- ⁷⁸ “On the Belt”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, August 11, 1889:3.
- ⁷⁹ Local Mélange”, *Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, August 18, 1889:3.