

INTERVIEW WITH: BOOMER HARDING

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Name of interviewee: Wilfred "Boomer" Harding (BH)

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BH: ... play the army, well, I played against them a couple of years and then I got in the army myself in '42 or something. And then I played for 'em. Only job when I went in the army was to play sports pretty well. [laughs]

DK: Who was the Page Fence Giants? Have you ever heard of them?

BH: Umm...

DK: You know the guy.

BH: Teams used to come out of Detroit and they'd get backers and that's what it was.

DK: Just barnstorming.

BH: They were semi-pros, semi-pro, yeah.

DK: They'd come out and play whoever wanted to play sort of thing for half the game?

BH: Yeah. You would have to either - it was usually there's 60--40 or they'd play you 60--40, winner takes the 60, loser 40. Or else they'd wanna \$50 guarantee or something, which was a lot of money. It would pay their way across the border, you know. Three or four cars. And uh, we put on some good exhibition.

DK: That's what they're saying about well, when you guys first went onto the berth and played Sarnia Red Socks and you beat them. And this Jack Calder<sup>1</sup> was saying how well, the OBAA in Chatham needed money anyway, like the league needed money and you guys needed money to travel and he was saying how you only won five dollars or something - oh here it is here [reading]:

"No one seems quite clear on just where the Stars stand right now, but it's probable that they'll be notified that they'll be in the finals. If so, the Stars will have some long travelling to do on the meagerest of finances. Their share of the gate yesterday was one fin<sup>2</sup> -- five green dollars, not enough to pay the expenses of grooming the diamond for the future play."

BH: Well, there's how we were fortunate now. Today, the kids' softball team, Blake's team and that, they have to pay two or three hundred dollars every year for the diamond.

DK: Mm hmm

BH: Their share. Now that's -- take that among seven and eight teams. Cities, you know, the taxpayers don't have to pay for it, but back in them days, they looked after diamonds. We helped sometimes if they weren't on the bit, well, we'd get the diamond in shape. And didn't cost us a penny. They looked after it. But of course, I don't know, how the city made it on keeping up the diamonds. It just taxed it - entertainment for the people.

DK: Yeah, that's what I was saying about baseball coming back. Was that it was the depression.

BH: True

DK: And there were a lot of guys out of work. And it was like a social event, as well as like activities for the unemployed.

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BH: Stuff to do. Very much. This is why they drew so much from Stirling Park was handy. But then they come from out in the country and everything else. So they would probably have went to Athletic Park, but just seemed like everything was happening at Stirling Park. You was right in on the game, the closeness and that, and it was quite an evening.

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<sup>1</sup> Sports writer for Chatham Daily News, later went on to write for Canadian Press.

<sup>2</sup> Fin is slang for \$5.00 bill.

DK: Yeah, they're always talking about the executive meeting in the basement of Stirling Store after the game for a meeting, stuff like that.

BH: They also giveaway two...

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BH: And after they beat us 21 to 4. We didn't have any money, you know. He just, we didn't mind travelling. And they offered us \$200.00.

DK: Yeah, right. Yeah, I got that written down

BH: Oh? And we let them have the third game because we'd have drawn more people away from home than we could - we'd get a lot of people here but they wouldn't pay. They'd watch it for nothing or put in a quarter or something. And we'd took the chance of going up there and beating them on their own home diamond. And they'd come through. We done that two or three different times.

DK: Here: [reading]

"Stars to beat the Penetang, 16th of October."

and it was 4 to 2.

"Stars arrive home after all night drive. Boys left here Sunday afternoon and remained in Midland for the night proceeding to Penantang the next morning."

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BH: We weren't allowed to stay in Midland. They were filled right up, they claimed. And it was raining. Anything to provoke us. Them were the days.

DK: And there's a big editorial from when you won in the Chatham paper.

"Stars lose to Penetang 10-9."

You won the first game and then lost to them 10-9.

"The deciding game was to be played in Guelph."

Oh here's the writeup about the darkness: The headline:

"Chatham ahead when game was halted by darkness"

and here's the quote:

"With Chatham Coloured Stars leading 3-2 and the Penetang latter half of the 11th frame, the umpires called time in the OBAA intermediate B-1 final game here yesterday afternoon and the score reverted to a 2-all tie. The game will be replayed. Stars got third run in the top of the 11th; it got dark fast so Penetang didn't get to bat. So therefore the score reverted."

Oh yeah. This guy talks about Penetang's pitcher, guy named -

BH: Phil Marchildon

DK: Marchildon, yeah. Then he says Marchildon is facing, can really pitch when he is aroused and Flat Chase might have been drilling that ball in there yesterday."

[both laugh]

Oh this is when you won: this is pretty good. Front page headline, again, right on the first page it says:

"Crowd acclaimed victorious Chatham team. Stars overpower Penetang 13 to 7. Two thousand people greet the team on arrival home at the Fifth Street Bridge."

BH: After a long drive home [laughing].

DK: Band and the mayor's speech and a small parade. Then you had dinner at the Pitt, William Pitt. Oh this is from, this is Happy Parker. This is a bit on him.

BH: about getting a job.

0:19:39.4

DK:

"Amid much cheering, Happy Parker, manager of the team spoke briefly thanking the council and people for the fine reception given the team. 'We received a telegram from the mayor and we knew the people of Chatham were behind us,' he stated. 'We started out to win and we did. We cannot attribute the success to any one player. Every man was out there doing his part. The mayor told us to bring home the bacon and we did.'"

Oh yeah and about Guelph, it says, this is what Parker said too:

"The Stars were warm in their praises of the Guelph people for the hospitality extended to them during their stay there and particularly to Frank Babcock, the proprietor of the Wellington House."

He was from Chatham originally? That's what they were saying.

BH: Ohh I didn't realize that.

DK: I didn't write it down, but they went on to say how he was a lacrosse star from years gone by and there was a picture in the hotel and Happy Parker said something about that gave you the drive to win for the team. [laughing] I thought it sounded more like press time

0:20:40.9

BH: You know there were quite a few places we couldn't even stay at.

DK: Where did you stay when you were in Midland then?

BH: We stayed at a main hotel in Midland, but we couldn't stay in Penetang. They wouldn't have us. They were very prejudiced. That was the trouble. And then in Guelph on that day, we moved into the same hotel they were and they moved out as soon as they found out within. They wouldn't stay in the same hotel with us.

DK: A lot of this stuff is really, really interesting. Oh this is after you won, in the editorial in the paper:

"Chatham Coloured Stars, clever local exponents of baseball are the champions of Ontario. These boys deserve our homage and our tributes of admiration and praise. Years ago the Page Fence Giants made a great name for themselves all over the country as a wonder ball team composed of all coloured players, though not from Chatham. Now the Maple City has stepped forward with another such team which has defeated the best culminations in Ontario".

That was uh..

BH: Later years we had chances to go up north and tour, just like that but the money wasn't there - you know, to leave your jobs, which we weren't making much at your job, but still, you had to work.

DK: In '34 like, were most guys employed?

BH: Hotel work. Hotel and garages that's all the work we had.

DK: Pete Gilbert, he financed to go up to --

BH: to do trips, yeah. He'd give us gas.

DK: Three cars of something? I wrote that down.

BH: Kaiser Oil, he helped us on a few trips because he was - sometimes he'd go to the games - a lot of times he'd go to the games. He'd offer Flat a coat - the coat he was wearing if he'd hit a home run. Flat would hit the home run and he'd give him the coat off his back or something like that [laughing]. And there's - I don't know if it's in the papers you read there, but in that Guelph game when Flat hit one of his home runs or got one of his big hits, this fellow put his, one of our backers, put his peanuts in the shell and all you know, just ate 'em and he didn't realize what he was doing until he spit 'em out. He was eating the shell and peanuts and all.

0:22:58.2

DK: Who was -- okay, in '33 there was a couple of the Crosby brothers, eh? were playing. And then they kind of dropped out in '34.

BH: Windy was one of the regulars he was kind of a shortstop and fielder

DK: Like this was all local talent, when you first started out in '33?

BH: Oh yeah. And Clarence was the pitcher. Southpaw pitcher was very good. Had former experience with the older fellows and was trying out with us

DK: How did that come about in '33? Like Dunc Williams, he was the manager, like did he, like how come you all got together? Just because you lived in the same neighbourhood? Something to do with the work guys?

BH: We was playing over in Stirling Park is where it all started. Like in the playground at Stirling Park. And something to do mostly. And it branched out from city league softball. They had inter-city league softball uptown but we had industrial or some- I think it was an industrial league softball. And for some reason or other, like myself I never, like you say, I never got to play junior ball for a junior team, I just started right out in baseball with the coloured boys.

DK: When you played the Merchants - Chatham Merchants for the inter-city thing? Or after you'd won inter-city? It says.

[clock chiming 0:24:20.9]

BH: Blake McCoy played for them. He was the greatest from the old-timers and Lonnie Mason and he had some real good players on there. A little over the hill like you see, they'd been boys who'd been carrying on the torch for Chatham and the old Merchants.

DK: Yeah, Merchants were the local reps for the Essex League it says.

BH: Oh yeah

DK: Anyway, Stars won city league hands-down, like you'd only lost one game - er no. You didn't lose - you tied. It was 13 or 14 wins and one tie. It was, so anyway, it says

"Now Merchants set up a game against the Stars. Merchants import baseball aces from other regions to face Stars."

And then here's this quote,

BH: [laughing] I forgot that

DK: Jack Isber

BH: Yeah

DK: He was a produce importer or something?

BH: Yeah

DK: So this is what this Calder has to say about him: [reads]

"So the ruler of imports so far as this city's baseball ivory is concerned has done nobly in his selection for an epic."

Then he says,

"Chatham Merchants augmented by three Petrolia players captured yesterday's 'crucial' [in quotation] exhibition game from the Stars by a 7-2 score at Athletic Park. But left unsettled the question as to which of the two teams deserves the rights to the term 'Chatham's best'."

BH: [laughing] I didn't realize that.

DK: Why there's a lot of it. And then the - oh another thing, like most of games, you know, like when Bragg and Dunn played or something, like there was two, three hundred people. Then when you guys started to win in '34 this Calder was amazed. He was going "Christ, there's fifteen hundred people at some of these games." Like, did you guys do any barnstorming? Like did you get a piece of that gate? Or was this all for the league?

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BH: Uhh, well I wasn't in on the managing part and the two or three thousand people would be at maybe 50 cents. You know which wasn't much. Which was quite a bit in them days because a gallon of gas was only 25 or 30 cents

DK: Oh yeah?

BH: Oh yeah. It's -- money wasn't the thing. It was for the players. And there were no big gates that I know of until later on when we started playing against teams from Detroit and then it was up in the 75 cent ticket. Or maybe a dollar. Then it started, money started to mean something. But back in the old days we were just playing for the fun of it.

DK: This was pretty interesting - I didn't write it all down like, see they don't have a machine where you can photocopy and so I had to write it all out by hand. But this August 17, '34, so that would be getting down to when you were playing for the championship. The headline was:

"One of the Stars' most reliable men"

and then there was a tribute to the baseball ability of King Terrell. And this is a quote from one of the pitchers from the other teams:

"There's a batter I hate to pitch to," he said, "You can put Chase up there or Washington or Jeffrey or any other - any of the rest of the boys but I'd sooner pitch to any of them than King Terrell."

I thought that was... but there's every now and again there is like large tributes - like you know, like two, three columns spreads. Which is quite a bit! Like that's more than half a page - like more than half the sports page.

BH: Very true. It was the number one thing.

0:27:49.6

DK: Oh this is something else that I found that was interesting. This was a game between the Merchants and somebody - I can't remember. But it was in that Sports in Short clip:

"Flat Chase and Ross Talbot were on hand to lend vocal encouragement to the Merchants' cause on Saturday and Chase claims responsibility for coaching in four Chatham runs with oratory from the bench. He was to have lined up with the Merchants on Saturday, but no uniform to fit him could be found."

BH: [laughing]

DK: Think that's - you know -- was that -- you know -- I don't imagine you remember that.



BH: No.

DK: And uh...

BH: But I do remember playing in Athletic Park when we first went out there. We had to play our - a lot of our playoff games there because they'd complain about Stirling Park being too small with the way you'd hit 'em you know? So uh we was playing this one team and he hit a homerun in the first inning, the first time at bat, yeah, it'd be the first inning - he was fourth batter all the time. And it cleared this guy's head. So the next inning, about the sixth innings or so, he come up and he hit another one over his head. So he went so far back the third time there was no fences there then you know, the arena wasn't built or nothing and no fences. And -- a big open park there. And the third time he was so far back he got to second base before -- on a line drive right straight at him. And in them days they didn't think of putting two or three men in the one field to cover a long hitter. And he really drove some long drives.

DK: This is that - remember I was telling you earlier about the fight on Olbey - Olbey binged this guy. Anyway, said:

"Close game...Kent Bridge lost but 6-4 was the final count; there's two men on."Anyways, it says "Gouy Ladd singled to the short. Olbey rounded the keystone sack and headed for third. Stevens was the centerfielder for the other team. He threw to third to flag the runner but went through Millen's legs and rolled to the fence. Olbey shoved Millen, toppling him over and scored while Ladd pulled up at third." And that's when the big altercation started. And there was - you know, they protested the game and there was a fight in the crowd and stuff like that."

0:30:15.5

BH: [laughing] Well this is what we had to do a lot was fight. There's no easy game. And Olbey always ran outside of first base. He always slid head first.

DK: Oh yeah

BH: Always

DK: Like Pete Rose.

BH: Yeah. He was - he never learned to slide. He went only head first [both laughing]. It was - he usually got to the bag.

DK: And then the next write up in the next day was saying - oh subtitle - oh what's this - oh, headline was:

"Dunn hands Stars first defeat in present campaign. Score 5-2. Considerable excitement after the game but no damage was occasioned."

BH: Where's this?

DK: This was in Chatham. This is when you were playing the Dunn. R. G. Dunn.

BH: Oh R. G. Dunn whatever it was.

DK: Says:

"There was considerable just after the game ended and looked as though there would be a near riot. It started on one of the bleachers when two fans, each an ardent supporter of their respected teams got into an altercation which resulted in one of them being shoved off the top of the stands."

BH: Dunny Milburn. I remember it [both laughing].

DK:

"Some of the other fans showed a willingness to mix it up, but there was no damage. As the players left the diamond some of them got into an argument and it looked as though there would be a general melee but peace was restored with no damage occasioned."

That was common eh? Like you know -

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BH: Oh yeah. Mrs. Stirling was number rooter for her son, Bill and Archie, her sons. And just vocal.

DK: Mhmm

BH: And Archi, never said a word. He was neutral all the time. But he was really behind us, you know. Any time we went out of town, but naturally it'd be for his sons who were playing against it, but he never spoke a word. He let us off the hook a few dozen times. [laughing]

DK: Here's another thing like every now and again they'd give the stats eh - like league statistics.

BH: Yeah

0:32:18.0

DK: Leading batters was: L. Harding, Washington, Millen, Rodmans, Olbey, Chase. Those were the only ones I wrote were the top six. So five of the six were guys from your team which I thought was interesting. Uh what else -- Stolen bases: Washington 7, Olbey 6, Abe Scott 6, and Ross Talbot 5.

BH: Abe Scott?

DK: Yep

BH: Oh he was their bat boy, but a lot of games they'd put him in and my brother would tell him to wait for a walk and he'd slam the ball out. He'd just - he couldn't have been over 15. or 14. He was a child. [laughs]

DK: And there was - oh here's the Stars 12 wins, one loss. Bragg 7 and 7. R.G. Dunn 5 and 7. And then Kent Bridge was 1 and 10.

BH: Can I see the lineup? Is there any lineup?

DK: Oh I got some lineups. This is '33. That's the first team, right there. You might not be able to read the writing. It's kind of atrocious.

BH: [laughs]

DK: Gross was the shortstop.

BH: Ohhh

DK: L. Harding: third base. Ross Talbot: first base. You: second base. Terrell: catcher. H. Williams: left field. That's the only time I saw his name - H. Williams.

BH: It's got me.

DK: Ben Talbot: centerfield.

BH: H. Williams...

DK: A. Hurst right field and Clarence Crosby, I guess.

BH: A. Hurst.

DK: as pitcher. Then these are the additions to the teams as the rest of the year went by.

BH: Yeah, they changed a lot.

DK: K. Crosby, G. Brown, Cliff Olbey. King Terell. W. Crosby, H. Crosby. Gouy Ladd. Guy named Montgomery. Guy named Parker. Dunc Williams. Guy named Franklin. See like that's the thing - in '34 half these names didn't show up again. So I thought you must have aligned your team or called in Washington and those guys.

0:34:20.2

BH: This guy wasn't no relation and he's from Buxton. Sagasta Harding, he was a piano player. That's what he's doing in the end. And we'd go and we'd eat in Strathroy and have the biggest party in a hotel. The guy'd play the piano, Sagasta would play the piano and Flat would dance. And King would carry on.

DK: There was something else I was going to read ya about Flat Chase. Just the guy said he looked like he was doing a rumba when he went to bat.

BH: I'd like you to see, if you're ever talking to Bill Stirling, is get him to show you a picture of Flat at bat in - he played for the C.Y.O. or something a few years later in Stirling Park and they taped it. They took pictures of it and it'd show you the crowds sitting on railroad cars - on box cars - and the place just flooded with people. And then when we get back to Flat at bat, before he hits one of them long ones. And like he says, he get set there and the rump would go like this and when that guy threw the ball he was set. And he got the prettiest follow through and everything. And it's right on that picture. I'd like to have it.

DK: Well how about Parker? They said he used to clown around a lot being third base coach. There was a whole write up in there about him and Flat Chase and their antics. Like if the game were slow they'd kind of entertain the crowd by doing these stupid things.

0:35:58.7

BH: Oh - "ain't that beautiful." That was one of his saying. Somebody'd make a good catch, or good throw, and he'd say "Ain't that beautiful." It was one of his favourite expressions. And then he had three or four more that all during the game he'd crack you up.

DK: Oh here this one: "Percy Parker third- base-coaching-box-Vaudevillian of the Stars organization put on a little floorshow by himself during the game. Saturday he held the Sarnia fans in high glee throughout the contest. He earned the name of "Feet" as he went through his own version of a Highland fling." That's when you played the Sarnia Red Socks. That's when you first entered into the OBA. OB-double A. Champion.

BH: Oh yeah

DK: "Flat Chase does something of a rumba every time he goes to bat. Not quite as the same as Dick Porter's<sup>3</sup> classic toe dance. Chase's little act should have been set to the music Ferde Grofe's Grand Canyon Suite.<sup>4</sup>That's about me."

[both laughing]

"It's good" -- this I didn't understand -- "It's good that weird something about it" --(I think that's a typographical error) -- "but how Chase can leather that apple. He's the hardest hitter in amateur baseball in this part of the province. And that's covering some territory." And that part was all in bold print. Whereas the first part about the toe dance was...

BH: There's no doubt about it. He was - and he could hit a ball low and he could hit it high or he could - there's no weak spot. He could - he'd hit the ball where it was pitched. If they thought, well, we'll pitch him outside - he'd hit it hard, he'd hit it out of the park, in left field just as easy as in Stirling which was small. But he'd still hit it further out of the park than a right hand batter would hit it out. So he was strong in any field and he'd hit it like it was pitched.

DK: Was there a difference between the reception you got in Chatham when you played and the reception you got out of town? Like in terms, like you know, okay like the people out of town, were they coming to see ball?

0:38:02.8

BH: They were coming to see us get beat and they also wanted a clown about it. When we went to Strathroy they used to write on the sidewalks that we was coming to town. But I guess, and everything else they were out to beat us, but they attracted big crowds and people come, you know, would give up their work and everything.

DK: Yeah, that's what they were saying -- they'd take a half day off.

BH: Well, they'd close the stores right in Strathroy and different places. This is true.

DK: I guess you know, like that's what I was thinking too. Like uh - well, hell, like three thousand people, right. Drawing 3000 people to a game. Whereas average attendance was 400. I mean they had to respect your baseball ability sort of thing eh?

BH: Yeah. Well you didn't know how it was going to happen in a game. Something was going to break loose before somebody could hold us for a little while. Then the bats would break loose and we'd make some little excitement some way. Run the bases or something else. And you didn't know what - it wasn't - we weren't really coached well. Everybody'd done his own thing. And with the advice we could get from this Don Washington and a few others, well, it turned out all right.

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<sup>3</sup> Dick Porter was a MLB player known for his twitches and wiggles on the field.

<sup>4</sup> Grofe was an early 20th-century American musician, composer and arranger.

DK: This is - okay, when you were in the championship and you came home, they kept writing editorials how they were going to have a big banquet and big dance for you. Did that ever come about?

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BH: It came about and they give us... kind of a...the Pad Factory<sup>5</sup> was running then and the city went about donating these jackets to us. I never wore mine once. I took the crest off and I've got it hanging it downstairs but I give the jacket away. It was that poor material, you know. Just kind of a washboard affair jacket. But it was something, you know, something that - some appreciation. And they had the banquet. And this was at the banquet I was telling you that Hap Parker, manager got up and thanked the council for giving this banquet for us. And I think they made money, they made a lot of money off us. Because the place was filled and he says, "We've brought baseball back to the city of Chatham for the first time - the first championship you know. OBA championship". And he says, "Now give the boys some jobs." Now some of the merchants give the boys jobs. Cause all we had was hotel work which was tips. And shining shoes and working in garages. Painting cars or something.

DK: How did that work out?

BH: Uhh it eventually opened up. Yeah.

DK: Yeah I noticed that too, and especially in '33 when you were first starting out. You played like London. You know, like hotel workers up there. And...

BH: Yeah

DK: As a matter of fact, it seems to me the one team was called the London Bellhops.

0:41:02.0

BH: Hotel in london, yeah. We done a lot of travelling. In cars. A whole lot of 'em down #2 Highway. One time I was coming back from a long trip and our - somebody thought of putting the bats we didn't have room - six in the car all the time - and tied the bats to the front bumper and they dragged for about 10 miles. And we ruined all the butts off our bats. [both laughing]

DK: That is good.

BH: We'd go some place and when one would move in the car the other two would have to move because you're so cramped up. And we was playing in Owen Sound one day and King Terrell from here to Owen Sound he told jokes and all the way back he told jokes and no two of 'em were the same. At any time he'd just kept us in stitches [laughs]. Yeah it's...

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<sup>5</sup> A textile factory in Chatham

DK: That game in Guelph that was called at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

BH: Approximately 5 o'clock. 5 fifteen and the sun shining.

DK: That's amazing.

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BH: It's hard to believe, but I still say the two guys throwing up their arms and they had a prearranged signal I guess cause they just took right out running. There was no talking to em. They just took to running and jumped in the car and gone.

DK: Hmm. That's pretty good

BH: There was no way they was gonna win it that day.

DK: I had the '34 season here too. The lineup.

BH: You never run into anything on us Simcoe deal there? When we had four umpires?

DK: Simcoe? No

0:42:44.9

BH: One time we went up there in the playoff, the important playoff and the OBA sent two umpires and they brought two umpires of their own from their own league. So they couldn't make any arrangements. And they had a full house of people. They was packed there. And uh they worked the four umpires. The league style [laughs]. So we - I don't think we had any umpire trouble that day, but I don't remember - they got their umpires on the plate where they wanted 'em or it's just how it worked out. We went along with the four umpires I think.

DK: But when you played Taylor, Michigan. Remember that? Nah

BH: That was exhibition.

DK: Yeah. Exhibition, yeah. Emancipation Day celebration or something like. Oh they really gave you a good write up on that. They were saying how - how many - how many like coloured people were there in Chatham in the 30s?

BH: Ohh just in the hundreds.

DK: Because that's pretty well what they said. They said something about okay "nine guys from Chatham get together." Nine guys out of how many it was and they said they beat the best team

out of 180,000 coloured people, eh? out of Taylor, Michigan. And like this Jack Calder. You're right, you know. He was probably - he couldn't say anything 'cause he'd lose his job, right.

BH: Yeah he had to be careful what he said, yeah.

DK: But he really was you know like he seemed to be a real ball enthusiast and he respected, you know, despite any racial prejudice or whatever was there. He respected the fact that you guys could play really terrific ball.

BH: And I think he went on pretty high in his profession too. When he left Chatham. He went to bigger things.

DK: Robbins - the Robbins, there's two of them, they came in the '34. What about a guy named Brooks? Remember a guy named Brooks? In '34? Again, his name shows up once or twice and that was it.

BH: No. That's...

DK: Brooks

BH: And what year did Dutch Scott? And Blondzie?

DK: Dutch Scott - he wasn't with you until '34 and then he only played two, three games.

BH: He's quite...

DK: And once you did make the playoffs I noticed his name was never mentioned again. In '34 it was an all-black team, an all-coloured team. He never played any of the OBAA playoff games

BH: Well, he's one that started in '33 playing against us.

DK: Yeah right he did. I know he was playing against you.

BH: And Herman Kavinsky played against us. And they were both good hitters. And Flat would throw the ball at 'em and it would curve and they just - Herman just give up playing ball. Kavinsky just give up playing ball and went to softball and he got to become a real good star in town playing softball. And Dutch said he'd rather play with us than against us. So [both laughing] on account of Flat throwing the ball sometimes at their head or fly by 'em so fast that a lot of guys wouldn't bat.

DK: That was another thing is, Don Tabron, he got binged a couple time and knocked out at bat. Like was there a lot of that? Like it seemed like there was a lot of close pitching.



BH: Oh yeah and there was spikes and everything else. You - it was played pretty rough [laughs].

DK: Like okay, like just against you guys or between two white teams like the Merchants and Dunn or whatever?

BH: We just had...

DK: Or was it just rough ball.

BH: We just had to play it rough, we did. You get recognition there.

DK: Good. This is really good. This is really clearing up a lot of stuff. So Fergie came up from Windsor and so did Washington. Those are the only two guys?

BH: Washington come up from Detroit but we passed him off as Windsor.

[both laughing]

DK: Ohh I see.

BH: Because it was kind of a sin to play if he was from another country, but from Windsor, well, that's just Canada. You know? Smaller and you couldn't play on Sundays in them days. And over in Detroit they played on a Sunday so that might have been against the OBA.

[END]