
Honoring and Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County



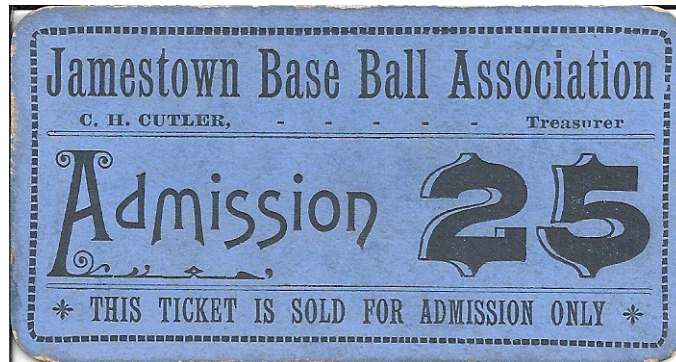
Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

April 2016

Old Baseball Ticket Discovered

Chad Kehe, owner of Midnite Towing on Harrison Street in Jamestown, walked into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame asking for help. He related that he was doing some remodeling in an old home in the city when he discovered the following item laying on a rafter support:



The 25 cent admission price, the fact that "Base Ball" was spelled as two words rather than one, and the printing style led us to think that the ticket was quite old. Maybe it was from a team that played at Celoron Park before the current Diethrick Park baseball stadium was constructed in 1941.

Research was undertaken starting with the names C.H. Cutler and W.S. Carnahan as reference points. The following article from a *Jamestown Evening-Journal* article of July 7, 1939 led us to the answer.

Jamestown's First League Ball Club Recalled

Nearly fifty years ago Jamestown had its own league baseball club and its own little baseball park. The club was in the old New York and Pennsylvania League and the park was located in the county fairgrounds at Marvin Park, not far from the boatlanding, with horse car service from the downtown business section right to the gates. The grounds were entirely enclosed and were equipped with bleachers and a grandstand, being one of the most completely equipped establishments of its kind in a town of Jamestown's size, about 18,000. The late Herbert Whitney Tew, enthusiastic baseball fan, served as manager both years. H.F. Allen, widely known as "Hote" Allen, served as president of the club in those days, with Winfield S. Carnahan, a famous old player, vice-president; Dr. Laban Hazeltine, secretary; and Charles H. Cutler, treasurer.

In 1890 the league was made up of Jamestown, Meadville, Erie, Bradford, Olean and Dunkirk, and in 1891 Elmira took the place of Dunkirk. Jamestown won the pennant both years.

The league teams of those two years were outstanding in the number of players sent to the big leagues, a veritable training school for just the sort of young men they needed.

Cuppy, star pitcher, who afterward went to Cleveland of the National League and made good for four seasons, and Nichols, centerfield, also played with Jamestown in 1890, the league's first season, and helped the local club to capture the pennant. Playing with them on that same famous team were such well known stars of the period as Spurney, Sippi, Collopy, Burke, Casey, Flannigan, Roxburg, DeWald and Abbott. DeWald was a left-handed pitcher recognized as one of the best in the league.

On the 1891 team appeared one of the outstanding figures in the league in the person of Kelly, the Negro first baseman who was the Babe Ruth of his day, knocking home runs with remarkable regularity. He also played his position well and many a fan of a half century ago will remember the peculiar manner in which he shot the ball back to the pitcher after making a put-out.

Bradford Fans Lose

In the first league season the various teams of the league started on a reasonably even footing. Some of the old-timers may recall the opening game with Bradford. The Bradford fans invaded Jamestown with large wads of money and bet the Jamestown fans to a standstill. The result was disastrous to Bradford and the Pennamites returned considerably poorer than when they came.

As the season wore on, however, it became evident that either Jamestown or Erie would win the pennant and the supporters of those two clubs began to contribute cash toward strengthening their respective teams. It developed an unusual situation in which representatives of Erie and Jamestown were scouting the big league (there was only one in those days) for available talent. It is related that toward the close of the season, Mr. Tew bought two members of the Boston team for \$600 and neither of the players showed up.

Dunkirk was a tail-ender in the league with a series of games scheduled for both Jamestown and Erie. At the critical moment, the Jamestown fans passed the hat to keep the Dunkirk team on earth long enough to play off their series. Patrick Moynihan of this city was sent to Dunkirk to manage the team. It was singular that the Erie followers did not perceive the trend and make provision to continue Dunkirk after the Jamestown schedule was played off, but they paid no attention to the circumstance and as a consequence the Dunkirk team disbanded immediately after its last game with Jamestown and the Erie nine had to contend with stronger teams, although it did not matter much for by that time the rivalry between the two towns had developed teams that could easily beat any of the others in the league.

As the end approached, Jamestown was baseball crazy and with reason, for the standings of the two towns were so close as to shift with nearly every game. Jamestown eventually won the pennant by a mighty close margin for the second and last season of league baseball and it flew triumphantly from a staff in the baseball park.

Unfortunately Jamestown could not support such high pressure baseball. Lacking cash which Mr. Tew and others contributed freely for two years, it was inevitable that the league would disband. There have been independent clubs which provided good baseball but none that were quite up to the standard of the old New York and Pennsylvania league, in the opinion of the old-time fans.

**So Chad Kehe's mysterious baseball admission ticket was from 1890 or 1891!
What a great find! And to make this tale even sweeter, Chad revealed that he
actually found several tickets and that he would donate one to the CSHOF!**

1890 Jamestown Base Ball Association Team

