

BOSTON POLICE vs. BSL ALLSTARS – a brief history

by Seth Hyde, HOF'06



As Commissioner in 1980, I had contacted the BPD and the BPD Union about playing against the BSL for charity. For homophobic reasons, they wouldn't accept the challenge even though the Jimmy Fund was the designated charity. It was the Union bosses that refused to let the patrolmen/officers play against us. At the time, there had been some nasty attacks on Gay men in the Fenway. Candlelight marches were being held in the Fenway and the local press was covering them. The Gay Community felt the Boston Police

were not reacting to the attacks on Gay men in the Fenway and the local press was covering the story. The Gay community had mobilized with candle light marches protesting the lack of police presence and what was conceived as a lackadaisical response to the hate crimes. The BSL put flyers out about the game with the BPD explaining that it would be an opportunity to bridge the gap between the Gay community and the BPD by giving the Police a chance to better know Gay people. I was very ambitious that first year and also wanted the BSL to march en masse in the Pride parade but many of us weren't out then and it just didn't have much support. The BPD waited until a couple of days before the scheduled game date to decline our invitation/challenge which prompted me to drop in on the Fire Station on Columbus Ave near Berkeley during my work day in my company truck and in company uniform to ask them if they were interested in playing us. Their jaws literally dropped! They were reluctant mostly because the BPD had already declined.

We decided to play the All-Star game anyway, even if it was amongst ourselves, because we were aware that people were going to be at the Commons to see the BPD vs BSL game and I think we had a crowd of about 100-150 people that evening. I remember calling all 3 T.V. stations for coverage and telling each station that the other two were sending camera crews, but no one showed up. Then I saw a Channel 5 van idling on Charles Street and I approached it. Dave Ropeik was the reporter and he and his cameraman came over and conducted an interview with me and I tried to explain what we were trying to accomplish and that the BPD didn't want to play us. The interview was never aired. I remember Alfredo on the Herbies team



was way out of camera range but came running over screaming to "turn off the camera" because of his fear of being recognized. That may have been why it didn't air but I was also a bit frustrated by that time as well, and may not have given a very good interview. We held the All Star game, and it was very professional with someone announcing the names of the players as they approached the plate and all of that stuff! Afterwards we went back to Buddies.

Even though we didn't play the BPD we felt it was a minor success because of the turn out from the Gay Community. The BSL vs. BPD game wasn't pursued in 1981 but BSL Commissioner Jim Vierra and the BSL Executive committee were able to get it done in '82 or '83 and we beat the BPD handily! They were pretty stunned about losing but I think it made them realize that as a community we were quite diverse. In the end, I guess you could say that we accomplished our goal after all!

