

## The Twelve

The "Bad News Bears" of The Beantown Softball League first emerged during the spring of 1981. Under the sponsorship of Prelude, then a popular Boston women's bar, and the supervision of Leslie Tiffany, then a popular Prelude assistant manager, the groundwork began. Despite the failing fielders, the offensive offense, and the overall trying tryouts, the then sometimes popular coach of the team, was somehow able to select sixteen women to form Prelude, then the sometimes popular team of the coach. However, forming Prelude was just the beginning, for after the try-outs came spring training, a spring that would not be soon forgotten.

Spring training, then referred to as 'boot camp' by the team, was a series of both major and minor setbacks, but Leslie, then referred to as 'sir' by the team, was somehow able to persevere. Despite the chronic complaining, the belly-aching athletes, and the exhausting excuses that accompanied spring training, the overall end product did justify the means. At the close of spring training, 'sir', then called coach by the team, was able to polish off the rough edges of sixteen individual players and form a working network, then called a team by the coach. Prelude was then officially entered into The Beantown Softball League, becoming the first women's team in the originally all men's league. With this, the 1981 season began.

The 1981 season could be best described as consistent, then termed the agony of defeat, however, it was not without one end of the season win, then termed the thrill of victory. Despite the mental miscues, the injurious innings, and the disheartening defeats, Prelude survived the season. The Beantown Softball League was so impressed with the good sports(women)ship and general positive attitude of Prelude that they bestowed the "Best New Team Award" on the team at the close of the 1981 season.

Although Prelude's first season was not one of visible victories, it was one of well-learned lessons. What began as a group of sixteen individuals grew together through trial and error(s), and evolved into a team's team, a team which would carry with it the trials and tribulations of the 1981 season and re-emerge in the spring of 1982 as an even stronger network.

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The spring of 1982 brought with it both similarities and differences. The 1270, a now popular Boston mixed bar, had become the new sponsor for the former Prelude team. Leslie, a now popular 1270 assistant manager, aside from a change in her employer, remained the same. When try-outs began for The Twelve, now the name for the former Prelude team, a number of players did not return for a second season, however, the turn-out at try-outs was impressive. There was a remarkable improvement in the quality of athletes that wanted to play. Therefore the traumatic try-outs of 1981 gave way to the tremendous try-outs of 1982 which of course gave way to spring training.

Spring training, although most of the team claims it should have been called winter training, went a lot smoother than it had in the previous year. The team appeared much stronger, more united, and most importantly, more of a working network. Therefore spring training brought with it the positiveness necessary for any team that is about to enter a season.

The 1982 season was in many ways an improvement, although the team was still losing games it was doing so by less runs. Defensively The Twelve was considered one of the best teams in the league. However, after many near wins The Twelve finally earned its first victory, actually beating Chaps, the best team in the league. Although the 1982 season ended with only one victory, the team was now looking to the San Francisco Gay Olympics.

At the end of the season, practice started for the upcoming Olympics. The Twelve having competed solely with men's teams for the past two seasons felt the need to test their strengths with other women's teams. A tournament was held in Boston with teams from various other Boston area women's bars and at the end of a six-hour round robin tournament The Twelve proved victorious, winning the entire tournament. Therefore, despite the disheartening defeats that the team has experienced during their two seasons as the only women's team in a men's softball league, The Twelve looks forward to competing in San Francisco and feels confident that at the very least they will be a team that is respected and remembered.

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