



ON DECK

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Newsletter of the BEANTOWN SOFTBALL LEAGUE

P O BOX 428 KENMORE STATION BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS 02215

15 Years of Gay Softball in Boston

Congratulations!! As a member of the BSL you belong to one of the oldest and largest gay organizations in New England. It was way back in 1977 that leagues in New York and San Francisco sent their champions to play in what was called the first Gay World Series in San Francisco. The coverage of this event in several gay publications planted the idea in several people's minds that we should have a league here in Boston.

Joe Leo, the publisher of a now defunct gay bar publication called The Esplanade Newspaper, started the Esplanade Softball League in 1978. The playoff finals that year featured teams from Chaps and Herbie's Ramrod. The Herbie's team prevailed and were the first champions.



Early in the 1979 season the Cabbagetown Group Softball League in Toronto invited teams from Boston to the Canada Cup. A group of volunteers from several teams rented a van and drove to Toronto as the first Boston participants in a gay softball tourney. Although decided underdogs (we still played in T-shirts and bluejeans then), the Boston "Pops" went undefeated.

The team returned filled with enthusiasm for this new level of play and soon after an invitation arrived from the newly formed North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance to send our league champion to the 3rd Gay World Series which would be held in Milwaukee. Paradise won the league championship that year and was the first Boston entry in the GWS.

During the winter of 1979-80 it was obvious that the softball league in Boston could not be run by just one person. The sport had grown so fast and it was necessary for a group to undertake the increasingly complicated and tedious task of running the league. And so, the Esplanade League folded and a group of 15-20 players wrote a constitution, held elections, and formed the Beantown Softball League. The first BSL Commissioner (Seth Hyde) and Ass't Commissioner (Frank Mickelson) still play and enjoy the camaraderie of gay softball!



On Deck is written and produced by the League Secretary, Seth Hyde with assistance from Warren Mitchell. We encourage league members to contribute articles, artwork, or whatever to future issues!

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