

Ledger Dispatch

Crushers settle for third at Base Ball World Series

Amador County, California

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By [Staff Report](#)

The Amador Crushers vintage baseball team played three games in a little more than three days last weekend to take third place in the first-ever "Vintage Base Ball World Series" in Westfield, Mass.

The Amador team, made up of local vintage style baseball players, qualified for the series by winning out the local playoffs, to represent the Gold Country Vintage Base Ball League, also winning a free flight and lodging for the four-day tournament.

Vintage "base ball" features the rules of 1886, although some teams play by the earlier rules that include underhand pitching. The hobby also incorporates the equipment and the uniforms used in the the early years of professional base ball.

Playing before crowds of more than 1,000, the Crushers opened the series with a 15-8 decision over the Michigan Stars. However, the west coast representatives then fell to the host Westfield Wheelmen, 18-12, and to the eventual champions, the Hartford, Conn., Senators, 20-7.

The "California" Crushers were well-received by the many "cranks" - the old term for fans - who attended the games, many dressed in outfits from the 1880s. The series was sponsored by the Vintage Base Ball Federation, headed by former major league pitcher Jim Bouton, with the federation covering the cost of the team's airline tickets and hotel accommodations.

In the opening round, the Crushers fell behind early, 3-0 after two frames, and trailed 5-3 going into the sixth. However, six runs in that inning and six more in the next two innings put the game away. Meanwhile, Westfield also rallied in its opener to defeat Hartford, 21-11.



Amador Crushers show the vintage scoreboard: A bribe offered to the young scoreboard operator to reverse the score did not work out. Front from left, Bones Sherman, Timebomb Coxe, Crunch Edwards, Wheels Alton and Stretch Welch. Back from left are Hawk Hawkins, Downtown Dalton, Kid Flores, Meat Tamantini, Candy Gandy, Claw Peterson, Goose Carey and Scrap Iron Smylie.

Photo by: [Courtesy to the Ledger Dispatch](#)

The next day Hartford eliminated Michigan, 17-9, setting up the winners' bracket game Saturday night between the Massachusetts team and Amador County.

The Crushers tallied six times in the first inning as things looked bright for the Amador nine. However, they would not score again until the sixth inning, by which time the Wheelmen had a comfortable lead. Then the Crushers scored six more in the sixth to close the gap and had opportunities to do even more damage. But in the end, the more experienced hosts prevailed by the 18-12 count.

The Crushers then met up with Hartford in the match to determine which team would advance to the championship game. The Senators, a veteran team of many years of vintage base ball, scored early and often to move on to the title game. Although the tournament featured California-type weather, the Crushers were a bit worn down by the third game in less than three days. Gold Country Vintage Base Ball League teams play only once every two weeks.

Hartford was also worn down, or so it seemed in the early going of the championship game. Westfield led 7-1 midway through the contest and appeared to be coasting to the title. However, Hartford overwhelmed the Wheelmen by a final count of 16-7.

As several of the local ballists noted, it was a great experience. They were treated as celebrities throughout the event.

Plans are already in the works for future trips to and from the two coasts. Following the title game, the Crushers received \$2,000 in prize money and the third place trophy bat.

This weekend, Gold Country Vintage Base Ball will resume, as the Mother Lode Miners and Rancho Murieta Bandits meet 11 a.m. Sunday at Argonaut High School. On Sept. 1 the Crushers will meet the Sierra Highlanders in Woodland.



Teams entered the park by horse-drawn wagons; the Crushers unload -and then unloaded in their opener against Michigan.

Photo by: [Courtesy to the Ledger Dispatch](#)