



# Town Ball: The Glory Days of Minnesota Amateur Baseball

*Armand Peterson, Tom Tomashek*

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Fondly remembered and celebrated throughout Minnesota, old-fashioned town team baseball was the glue that held a community together and generated a great sense of pride and passion among its residents. A love of baseball—and, of course, the desire to whomp the neighboring town's team—spurred on players and fans alike. The game was intense and personal, connecting people from all walks of life at every hard-fought game. Featuring individual stories of success and defeat, hundreds of photographs, and scores and statistics, Armand Peterson and Tom Tomashek chronicle the unfolding of a fascinating period of Minnesota baseball history—a span of sixteen years beginning in 1945 and the euphoric postwar days to 1960, the year before the Washington Senators became the Minnesota Twins. During this time Minnesota experienced a magical era of amateur ball, setting records in town participation and attendance that have not been matched since. Along with the anecdotes, *Town Ball* offers an in-depth study of the era and examines the social and economic factors that contributed to the postwar boom and subsequent decline. It tells the stories of some of the more successful teams, such as Albert Lea, with five consecutive Class AA championships, and Warroad, a team with ten consecutive appearances—but no trophies—in the state tournament. And it includes profiles of many of the top players in Minnesota, famous locals like Dick Siebert, Paul Giel, and Bud Grant as well as the major-league talents of Bill Skowron, Herb Score, and Hilton Smith. Here nostalgic baseball enthusiasts and history buffs alike will revel in the wide-ranging stories and compelling portraits of the players and fans—the people who made Minnesota town ball truly great. Armand Peterson is a retired engineer and a former town team player. Tom Tomashek is a retired sportswriter for the *Wilmington News Journal* and a former town team player.

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