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Senate

WARE'S INDIANS: MASSACHUSETTS CHAMPIONS

Mr. TSONGAS. Mr. President, Ware, Mass., has again lived up to its national reputation as "The Town That Can't Be Licked." Just as Ware was able to whip economic disaster during the 1930's, the Ware High School baseball team whipped all opposition this year to become Division III Massachusetts State champions. The team and the town's people are proud of this first State championship for the Ware High Indians.

Ware High did not become champs overnight. Through the leadership and fine coaching ability of George Robidoux, Ware High made it to the State finals last year only to be defeated in a close game. This year under the tutelage of Dave Robidoux, George's son, and assistant coach Tom Orszulak, Ware High not only won its division with a 22-2 record, but went on to beat Palmer High for the western Massachusetts title, and Matigon of Cambridge in the State semifinals. The Indians took the State championship by defeating Blackstone/Milville by a score of 6-4.

The Robidoux father/son team has worked over a 12-year period to bring Ware High this championship. There have been many fine players over the years, but the 1981 team was indeed exceptional. In fact, this team placed an unprecedented seven out of nine starters on the western Massachusetts all-star team.

The 1981 championship squad was led to the State title by a talented group of seniors whose spirit and enthusiasm gave the team that little extra needed to gain the championship. Among them was the team's ace pitcher Kevin Lavallee. The "Boomer," as he is called by his teammates, had a record of 10-1, with an ERA of 0.49 in 1981. During his high school career he struck out an amazing 294 opponents in just 159 innings. He also was a powerful hitter with a batting average of .346, 7 homeruns and 30 RBI's.

Another team leader was second baseman Pete Orszulak. Pete was described by Coach Robidoux as "the best athlete on the baseball team." He played varsity football, basketball, and baseball in each

year of his 4 years at Ware High, a feat accomplished by very few athletes in the high school. Pete had a career batting average of .393 and was a defensive standout.

The team was blessed with fine on-the-field leadership in the person of all-star catcher Greg Taggart. Greg batted .411 in 1981 and had only one passed ball in the 24 games he caught. Greg not only excelled on the baseball field but in the classroom where he graduated second in his class.

The first base position was anchored by senior all-star Dana Kent, considered by many fans to be the most pleasant surprise of the season. Dana did not start a game for the 1980 baseball squad but ended up hitting .444 in 1981. Dana's best performances were during the tournament game where he batted a sizzling .600, going 9 for 15.

Sean McQuaid, a senior left fielder, stabilized an inexperienced outfield with many fine defensive plays during the year. Sean hit a solid .273 in 1981 and had six game-winning hits—a team record.

The last of the group of seniors was Sean Madigan. Despite a 3-year absence from baseball, Sean returned to the varsity in 1981 and ended the season with a .311 average. Known by his teammates as "Mad Dog," Sean inspired the team with his hard-nosed play and constant enthusiasm.

The juniors on the team were led by third baseman/pitcher Billy Joe Robidoux. Billy Joe was 6-0 as a pitcher and hit an astonishing .584 on his way to shattering his own school record for most hits in a season (43) with 47 hits in 24 games. Billy Joe's fine performances in the district and State tournaments were acknowledged when he was voted the "Most Valuable Player" of the tournament.

Junior shortstop Chip Malbeouf, in his first year on the varsity squad, was considered by team followers to be the offensive and defensive spark plug of the team. From his leadoff position Chip batted .371 and drove in 19 runs. Chip's all-star performance far exceeded the expectations of his coach and the Ware

fans.

Another key performer on the Ware team was junior pitcher outfielder Brian St. Onge. Brian had many key relief performances during the tournament, pitching up four saves and finishing the season with a record of 5-1. In addition to being selected to the all-star team in baseball, Brian is also a member of the western Massachusetts all-star basketball team.

Rounding out the starters for this year's championship team was centerfielder Steve "Koko" Kocur. Steve batted .381 during the tournament games and is an outstanding centerfielder. Many of his acrobatic catches in the outfield squelched opponents' rallies and were greatly appreciated by the Ware fans, witnessed by their standing ovations.

Mike Kutt, a junior reserve outfielder, played well when he was called on. He batted .400 as a pinch hitter and displayed promise as an outfielder.

David Desforges, a junior pitcher/infielder was 1-0 on the mound and batted .375. Dave is expected to be a key member of next year's pitching staff.

The only sophomore on the Ware squad was reserve catcher Sean Slatery. Sean batted a team-leading .615, including a game when he had six hits in six at-bats. Sean has a bright future and fits right into the proud Indian tradition of excellence.

Complementing the successful efforts of the team were the dedicated performances of third base coach Mike Dowd and manager Dave Gaugler.

Mr. President, on August 15, 1981, the Ware Sports Booster Association, under the leadership of Athletic Director Paul Orszulak, will honor the Ware High Baseball team with a chicken barbecue at the Knights of Columbus grounds. An elaborate program is planned. A tape recording of the tournament games' highlights, as broadcast over radio station WARE will be played. Don Prohovich, a former Ware High athletic superstar and now coach of the Harwich Mariners in the Cape Cod League, will return to his hometown and be the keynote speaker. The team will receive a special resolution passed by the Massachusetts State House of Representatives. A major highlight of the evening will be the presentation of championship rings to each varsity player and the coaches. Local merchants, industries, clubs, organizations and town residents have contributed over \$3,000 for this worthwhile memento.

Mr. President, I want to add my congratulations to the division III State Championship Ware High baseball team for a job well done this year and wish them all the best for a successful season in 1982.