

Bay Area Vintage Base Ball will take game into another era

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jody Meacham, 408 / 288-2934, jody@sjsa.org

SAN JOSE (Jan. 26, 2005) – Handlebar mustaches are not required, but willingness to step back into another time is.

The time is when America's pastime was still young and spelled in two words – base ball. It's the time when players left their small leather gloves on the field when the town nine came in to bat; when Rule 7 read in part: "If a fielder catches a ball with his hat, no player can be put out on such ball, and each baserunner shall be entitled to one base;" when the uniforms were flannel and baggy; and lights were what you offered the gent with the cigar who was watching the game alongside you.

"We play the game the way it was before \$50 million contracts, shoe sponsorships and 25-man rosters," says Steve Gazay, president of Bay Area Vintage Base Ball, which is forming teams throughout the region dedicated to playing the game the way it was played in the late 1800s. The BAVBB will hold its next practice at 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 30 in Morgan Hill's Community Park, with future practices scheduled for San Jose.

The league is affiliated with the national Vintage Base Ball Association, formed in 1996 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first match between organized base ball teams, with teams in 18 states and the province of Ontario.

Gazay's hope for the season, beginning in March, is for teams in San Francisco, the East Bay, Morgan Hill-Gilroy and two in San Jose to play a season of eight to 10 games under the game's old rules and customs using equipment, such as heavy 50-ounce bats, reproduced to original specifications and old-time uniforms. One of the teams will be named the San Jose Dukes in honor of the team that defeated Los Angeles for the California League championship in 1891.

"We also hope to inform the public and work with local non-profits, museums, etc. to jointly showcase history of the time period using base ball as an educational tool," Gazay said.

Players will pay \$50 plus the cost of custom uniforms. For more information, visit the BAVBB website at www.eteamz.com/BAVBB or contact Gazay by phone at

(408) 378-1872 (night).

The San Jose Sports Authority actively supports youth and amateur athletics throughout the community. Visit our website at www.sjsa.org.