

Bay Area Vintage Base Ball opener salutes San Jose's 1892 state champs

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jody Meacham, 408 / 288-2934, jody@sjsa.org
Steve Gazay, 408 / 378-1872, sgazay@earthlink.net

SAN JOSE (March 25, 2005) – Baseball the way Abner Doubleday meant it to be played (and Webster said it should be spelled) becomes a reality in the Bay Area at 10 a.m. Sunday, April 3, when the San Jose Dukes play the South County Jaspers at Willow Street-Bramhall Park in the season-opener for Bay Area Vintage Base Ball.

It's the inaugural season for the Bay Area league, affiliated with the national Vintage Base Ball Association, which was formed in 1996 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first match between organized base ball teams. The association has teams in 18 states and the province of Ontario.

"We address the umpire as 'Sir' and play with the highest degree of sportsmanship," said Steve Gazay, Bay Area Vintage Base Ball president. "It's a refreshing change to today's game, and a lot of fun too."

The San Jose Dukes are named after the 1891-92 team that won the California State League Championship and will, like all Vintage Base Ball teams, wear period uniforms and use the rules and equipment of the time. That means seven balls and three strikes and the ability of the batter to request a specific strike zone. And it means small gloves with no webbing and 50-ounce bats.

"It makes the game completely different when you play by the older rules, and then use the 1880s-style equipment as well," Gazay said.

Additional Bay Area teams are still forming. Males 18-50 years old are eligible. There are no tryouts, and the cost is \$50 plus equipment. For more information, visit the BAVBB website at www.eteamz.com/BAVBB or contact Gazay by phone at (408) 378-1872.

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