



When It Was a Game: Vintage Base Ball Returns to Cantigny!

Ballists, arbitrators and kranks will gather for early version of America's pastime

WHEATON, IL, May 21, 2010 – The Cantigny Park Parade Field is the place for old-time “base ball” on the first two Saturdays in June. Park visitors will see and learn how the game was played in the Civil War era when Cantigny hosts two exhibition tournaments:

- **June 5** will feature the Beloit Olympians, Downers Grove Plowboys, Oregon Ganymedes and Cantigny’s own team, the Oak Leafs.
- **June 12** will be a round-robin match between the Lockport Sleepers, Oregon Ganymedes and the Iron Diamonds of Porter County.

Each day’s games begin at 11 am and are free with regular paid parking (\$5 per vehicle). This is the third straight year for vintage base ball at Cantigny.

“People enjoy watching the games and being transported back in time,” said Will Buhlig, assistant director of the Robert R. McCormick Museum, and organizer of the June tournaments. “These matches provide a glimpse into 19th century American life and recreation. Baseball was a gentleman’s game back then with its own rules, terminology, uniforms and relaxed style of play. The players visiting Cantigny are skilled living history interpreters. They put on a good show and educate too.”

The rules of “base ball” from 1858 will be enforced by “arbitrators.” That means no overhand pitching, no called balls and strikes, no stealing bases, no sliding and no leading off. Ball gloves are prohibited too! Batters are out if a fielder catches the ball on one bounce, and out if they overrun first base.

To help follow the action, spectators (or “kranks”) will receive a list of rules and base ball slang from pre-Civil War days. For seating, fans should bring a blanket or chair.

Players (or “ballists”) will be wearing vintage-style uniforms based on 1850s photographs housed at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

Kranks and their families might also wish to attend **Cantigny’s first “Movie in the Park” of the summer, on June 24 at 8:30 pm**. The feature film will be *A League of Their Own*, parts of which were shot at Cantigny. Released in 1992, the PG film starring Tom Hanks, Geena Davis and Madonna tells the story of the first all-women’s professional baseball league, formed during World War II. Prior to the movie, park visitors will be able to meet and mingle with reenactors from the Rockford Peaches!

Outdoor “Movies in the Park” are free admission with paid parking (only \$2 per vehicle after 5 pm). Movies are also scheduled for July 8, July 22 and August 19.

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About Cantigny

Cantigny, part of the Chicago-based McCormick Foundation, is the 500-acre Wheaton (Illinois) estate of Robert R. McCormick. Cantigny Park is home to the McCormick Museum, First Division Museum, formal gardens, picnic grounds, walking trails and a Visitors Center with banquet and dining facilities. More information, including hours, directions and upcoming events is online at Cantigny.org. Cantigny Golf, adjacent to the park, features a 27-hole championship golf course, full-service clubhouse, Cantigny Golf Academy and the 9-hole Cantigny Youth Links. For more information, visit CantignyGolf.com.

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