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**I Could'a Been A Contenda**

**By Aron Wallad**

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I Could'a been a Contenda

I am not going to say that I could have been a contender, but at one time in my life, as well as I am sure most men my age we thought we were destined for the "Big Show". I mean Baseball was our world. I remember all I ever wanted to do was get out of school and play. I would do anything I could to get my brothers to throw me a ball but when they were busy I would throw the ball as high as I could running up the street and pretending I was Willy Mays or Mickey Mantle. I would make up games and lineups for my All – Star teams and if I missed the ball as it came back to earth, then that player would be a base runner. I used to throw the ball at the curb and bounce it off and try to field it. Again if I missed, the batter would advance. These were my childhood games and they taught me the basics of playing Baseball. There was never a time that I can remember when I didn't have my Jim Davenport glove or Stan Musial one as I got older.

I tried out for the Little League and was put on a Farm team, in other words I wasn't good enough for the Coach. It didn't matter because I still got to play. I was on the Gallante Giants and since I hadn't made the grade as a third baseman, which was what I liked to play I tried out to be the starting Pitcher. I was fast and I could throw that ball every which way but loose. I had a great wind-up and when I concentrated I could throw a curve ball or knuckleball dead center over the plate. I remember the catcher calling the Coach over and telling him how good I was and that he should try me out as a pitcher. I was so excited. I just couldn't wait. Sure, the first thing the Coach wanted to see was how I would do with a batter because until now all I had ever done was throw the baseball into the glove of a catcher with no batter.

Well everyone by now had heard about the new kid with the fast – ball and all the crazy pitches he had, but no one had put a batter in front of me. Well I went to the mound a rookie and a virgin as for pitching to a batter, and wouldn't you know it the batter hid the catcher and made him look small. So there I was 8 years old and on the stage. The catcher just kept saying go – ahead pitch it like you've been doing. I took the ball beat my glove as I had always seen Whitey Ford do and swung my arms up over my head like Bob Turley and reared back and then forward gripping the ball as it slid out of my hands and it

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headed for home plate with the batter standing there ready to hit. The only thing was the ball did everything I wanted it to do except hit the catcher's glove, no instead it hit the batter and ouch! I know it must of hurt.

Well now everyone was just saying and trying to calm me down, It's Ok just simmer down and do it again. No problem! Here we go again and the same thing happened. Now I have two men on the bases and my creditability as a pitcher is waning fast. Oh well Rome wasn't built in one day so I tried again. Low and behold I was awful. I hit the third batter. Well that was the end of that career but it taught me a valuable lesson. Stick to what you know not what you think you know. See I was a third baseman not a pitcher but I wanted to play so much I at least tried and no one can fault someone for trying except maybe the three kids I hit that day.

This story was written by Saul Applebaum ( The Contenda )

Aron Wallad has been a baseball lover for over 40 years. Writing about his favorite subject, baseball, has been a blessing. You will enjoy the heartwarming stories, the unusual statistics and inspiring quotes. But mostly you will love the heartwarming stories that hit a home run to your heart. Join his ezine <http://www.baseballprideandjoy.com/index.php?tag=goart>

**By**



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