



DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

WALKIN' ROLL BASEBALL LEAGUE

*Take me out to the ball game,
Take me out to the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and crackerjacks,
I don't care if I ever get back....*

Everyone knows the tune, and most of the words. The sport of sports for Americans everywhere. Baseball.

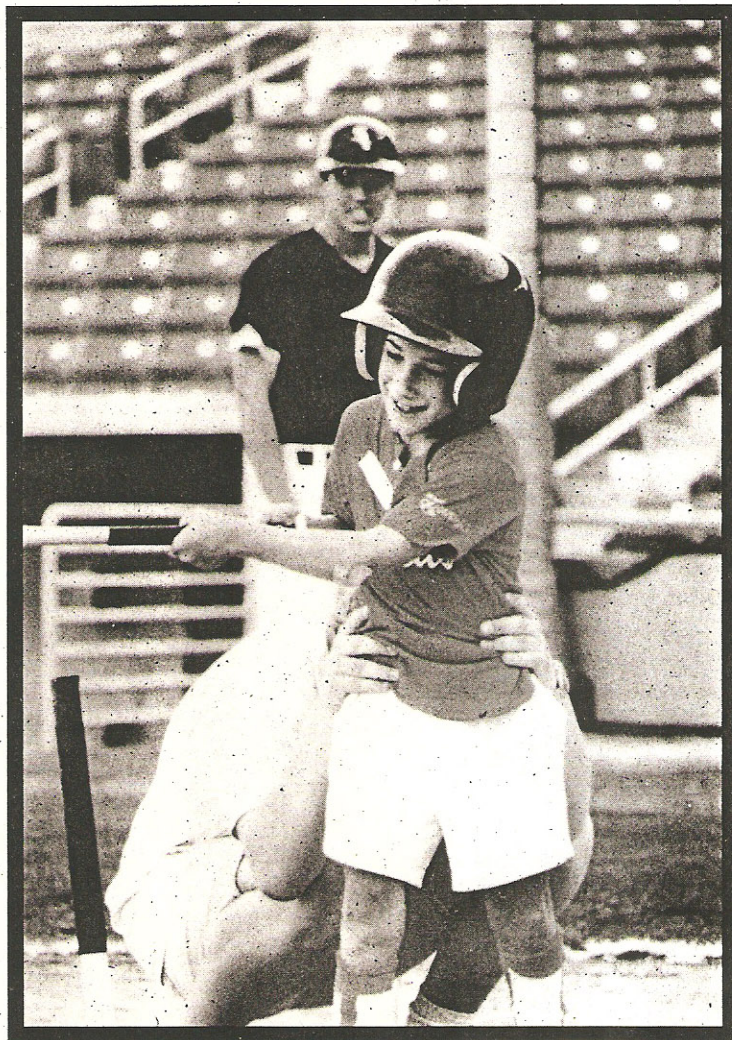
Providing a team sports opportunity for developmentally disabled children is the aim of the Walkin' Roll Baseball League, designed by Catawba County Mental

Playing ball in a "professional" manner gives kids with disabilities a winning season, no matter who wins the game.

Health. The intent is to enrich the children's self-esteem and provide training in the concepts of teamwork and sportsmanship. The idea grew out of an annual T-ball game sponsored by the area program.

Organized as a joint venture with the Hickory Crawdads (a Chicago White Sox minor league affiliate), the league played eight games from April 30 through June 4. Four teams were created, each of which consisted of 15 disabled children, ages 6-12, and fifteen buddies. Families of the disabled children and others were encouraged to participate as team managers, coaches and "buddies." Once a buddy was chosen, each partnership participated as one player.

The consistency of playing several weeks in a row built enthusiasm and pride and permitted the parents to see their children in a very new and different light.



Real teamwork: *Young player in Walkin' Roll Baseball League gets assistance from his buddy. A Hickory Crawdad player is in the background.*

Playing eight games in a "professional" manner was great fun for the children, buddies, parents, and spectators. As a grand finale, the last game was played in the L.P. Frans Stadium, home of the Crawdads.

Community businesses and groups have provided monetary and spirited support, while media coverage brings large cheering sections of spectators for each game. ||