

Baseball on the prairie

Baseball on the Prairie: A Unique Sporting Experience

**** Experience the thrill of baseball amidst the vast expanse of the prairie! Discover the unique challenges and rewards of playing America's pastime in this unconventional setting. Learn about adapting to the environment, equipment modifications, and the strong sense of community fostered by prairie baseball. Explore resources and find a game near you! PrairieBaseball OutdoorSports Baseball UniqueSports RuralSports** The image of a baseball game conjures up visions of manicured green fields, bright stadium lights, and cheering crowds. But what if we shifted that image to the wide-open spaces of the American prairie? "Baseball on the prairie" isn't a formally defined league or organization, but rather a concept representing the adaptation and enjoyment of America's pastime in a unique, challenging, and rewarding environment. It encompasses informal games played on uneven, often dusty fields, often with minimal equipment and a strong focus on community and camaraderie. This will delve into the specifics of what makes prairie baseball so distinctive, the considerations involved in playing it, and the overall experience it offers. Why Play Baseball on the Prairie? While there isn't a formalized "Prairie Baseball League" with specific benefits laid out, the experience offers unique advantages:

- **Connection with Nature:** *Playing amidst the vastness of the prairie provides a profound connection with nature, offering a stark contrast to the controlled environments of typical ballparks. The ever-changing landscape, the sounds of nature, and the feeling of open space significantly enhances the experience.*
- **Community Building:** **Prairie baseball often involves a strong sense of community. Teams may be formed from neighboring towns or rural communities, fostering social bonds and shared experiences. Games become social events, drawing people together for an afternoon of friendly competition.**
- **Adaptability and Resourcefulness:** **The challenges of the prairie environment necessitate adaptability. Players learn to overcome obstacles like uneven terrain, strong winds, and fluctuating weather conditions. This fosters resourcefulness and problem-solving skills.**
- **Simplicity and Pure Fun:** **Stripped of the commercialization and complexity of professional baseball, prairie baseball focuses on the core fun of the game. It's about the camaraderie, the challenge, and the pure joy of playing.**

Adapting to the Prairie Environment

Playing baseball on the prairie requires adjustments to equipment and strategies. The unpredictable weather, inconsistent terrain, and potential for wildlife encounters necessitate a flexible approach. Challenges:

- **Uneven Terrain:** Finding a perfectly flat field on the prairie is unlikely. Players need to adjust their footwork and fielding techniques to accommodate bumps, dips, and uneven surfaces.
- **Wind:** **Prairie winds can be strong and unpredictable, significantly impacting batting, pitching, and fielding. Players need to anticipate wind**

direction and adjust their throws accordingly. • Weather: *Prairie weather can be extreme, ranging from scorching heat to sudden downpours. Players need to be prepared for a variety of conditions and adapt their gameplay accordingly.* • Wildlife: **Prairie ecosystems are home to various animals. Players should be aware of potential encounters with wildlife and take necessary precautions.** Adaptations: • Equipment: **While standard baseball equipment can be used, some modifications might be necessary. For example, lighter bats might be preferred in strong winds.** • Strategies: **Game strategies need to account for the environment. Bunting or short hits might be favored on windy days, while defensive positioning needs to consider the unpredictable bounces on uneven ground.**

Equipment Modifications for Prairie Baseball

Equipment	Modification	Rationale
Bats	Lighter weight	Easier to control in strong winds
Balls	Possibly a slightly more durable ball	To withstand rougher terrain
Gloves	Well-padded gloves	To protect hands from uneven surfaces and impacts
Clothing	Loose-fitting, breathable clothing	To cope with fluctuating temperatures
Protective Gear	Consider extra padding for shin guards, etc.	Increased chance of ankle/shin injuries on uneven ground

Finding a Prairie Baseball Game

Unfortunately, there isn't a central registry for prairie baseball games. The best way to find a game is through local community networks, rural sports clubs, or simply by asking around in rural areas.

The Social Impact of Prairie Baseball

Prairie baseball transcends the game itself. It fosters community, encourages physical activity in rural areas, and provides a unique cultural experience. The shared effort of setting up the field, overcoming environmental challenges, and enjoying the game together creates strong social bonds. These games often become community events, drawing in families and neighbors for a day of fun and fellowship. Conclusion: **Baseball on the prairie offers a unique and rewarding sporting experience. While it lacks the structure and organization of formal leagues, it compensates with its connection to nature, its emphasis on community, and the challenges and rewards of adapting to a dynamic environment. If you're looking for an unconventional and enriching sporting experience, consider seeking out a prairie baseball game. The simplicity, camaraderie, and the raw beauty of the surroundings are sure to leave a lasting impression.** Advanced FAQs: 1. What are the safety considerations for playing baseball on the prairie? Always be aware of wildlife, uneven terrain, and extreme weather conditions. Appropriate protective gear and first-aid should be readily available. 2. Can I organize my own prairie baseball game? **Absolutely! Find a suitable (relatively) flat area, gather some friends, and have fun. Remember safety precautions and adapt your rules as needed.** 3. What type of equipment is essential for a prairie baseball game? **Standard baseball equipment is a good starting point; however, consider lighter bats and well-padded gloves for better adaptability to the environment.** 4. How do I find a location suitable for a prairie baseball game? **Look for relatively**

flat areas away from hazards. Check for potential wildlife presence and ensure sufficient space for the game. Private land permission is crucial if not on public land. 5. Are there any official rules for prairie baseball? ** There are no official rules; the games are typically informal and adaptable based on the players' preferences and the conditions of the playing field. The emphasis is on fun and community.

Baseball on the Prairie: A Timeless American Pastime Rooted in the Heartland

There's a certain romance to the idea of baseball on the prairie. It conjures images of wide-open skies, endless fields of green, and the distinct sound of a crackling bat against leather echoing across the vast, unpopulated landscapes of America's heartland. This isn't just a quaint picture; it's a reflection of a deep-seated connection between the sport and the very fabric of rural American life. Baseball, often dubbed America's Pastime, found fertile ground on the prairie, becoming more than just a game – it was a social gathering, a community builder, and a source of pride for generations. From the dusty diamonds of small towns to the impromptu games played in farmers' fields, the spirit of baseball has long been interwoven with the prairie experience. It's a story of resilience, community, and the enduring appeal of a simple game played under an enormous sky.

The Early Days: Diamonds in the Dust

When settlers first pushed westward, carving out lives on the seemingly endless prairie, they brought with them their traditions and entertainment. Baseball, already gaining popularity in the East, was an ideal fit. It required minimal equipment and could be played virtually anywhere. Empty fields, a few makeshift bases, and a shared love for the game were all that was needed. These early prairie diamonds were often far from manicured parks. They were simply patches of earth, cleared of rocks and uneven terrain as best as possible, where spirited games would unfold. The nomadic nature of some prairie life also meant that baseball teams, often informal and fluid, would spring up and disband as families moved or as seasons changed. Yet, the spirit of competition and camaraderie persisted. Local rivalries, often spanning miles of open country, became legendary. Traveling teams, sometimes comprised of talented amateurs, would journey between settlements, bringing with them the excitement of organized play and offering a welcome diversion from the hard work of taming the land. These games weren't just about winning; they were about coming together, sharing stories, and experiencing a collective sense of normalcy and fun.

Community Hubs: More Than Just a Game

In the tight-knit communities of the prairie, a baseball game was often the highlight of the week, if not the month. The local ballpark became a de facto community center. Families would pack picnic baskets, dress in their Sunday best, and head to the diamond. It was a place where neighbors could catch up, children could play, and the stresses of rural life could be temporarily forgotten. The

cheers of the crowd, the smell of hot dogs and popcorn, and the thrill of a close game all contributed to a vibrant atmosphere. The teams themselves were often a reflection of the community. Players might be farmers, mechanics, teachers, or shopkeepers. They were friends and neighbors, playing for the love of the game and the pride of their town. Fundraising for new equipment, field improvements, or even local charities often revolved around baseball games. Bake sales, concession stands, and benefit games were common ways for communities to support their teams and, in turn, support each other. This shared investment in the local ball club fostered a strong sense of belonging and collective identity, a vital element for survival and prosperity on the prairie.

The Golden Age of Small-Town Baseball

As the 20th century progressed, many prairie towns developed more established baseball leagues. These were the days of the semi-pro teams, where local heroes emerged and their exploits were talked about for years to come. The names of these teams – the O'Neill Oilers, the North Platte Sky View, the Grand Island Islanders – might not resonate with national sports fans, but they were legendary in their own right. Players often honed their skills on these teams before perhaps moving on to bigger opportunities, or they stayed, becoming pillars of their communities, both on and off the field. The infrastructure around these games grew too. Grandstands, though often modest, provided a place for spectators to sit. Scoreboards, sometimes manually operated, added to the formality of the occasion. The crack of the bat, the roar of the crowd, and the strategic calls of the umpire became familiar sounds that marked the rhythm of prairie summers. The Minor League Baseball system also played a role, with teams in larger prairie cities providing a higher level of competition and a pathway for aspiring professional players.

The Prairie Athlete: Grit and Determination

The athletes who played baseball on the prairie were often forged by the very environment they inhabited. They possessed a grit and determination born from hard work and a deep understanding of perseverance. Life on the prairie wasn't easy; it demanded resilience in the face of harsh weather, unpredictable crops, and the isolation that could sometimes set in. This same resilience translated onto the baseball field. These players understood the importance of teamwork, dedication, and pushing through adversity. A game on a hot, windy day with dust clouds swirling was not an excuse to give up; it was a challenge to be met. The physical demands of farm labor often translated into strong arms and powerful swings. Many of these players were multi-talented athletes, excelling in other sports or activities as well. Their connection to the land also gave them an innate understanding of the nuances of different playing surfaces, from hard-packed dirt infields to outfield grass that might be more or less forgiving depending on the season.

Modern Echoes: Preserving the Prairie Baseball Spirit

While professional baseball has largely shifted to urban centers, the spirit of baseball on the prairie endures. Small towns continue to field amateur teams, often with dedicated leagues and passionate

fan bases. These games may not draw thousands, but they are vital to the social fabric of these communities. They provide opportunities for young people to learn valuable life lessons, for families to spend quality time together, and for neighbors to connect. The rise of independent baseball leagues and the continued existence of collegiate summer leagues also offer opportunities for high-level play in prairie states. These leagues often serve as proving grounds for future professional talent, and their games bring a renewed sense of excitement to towns that might not otherwise have access to organized baseball. Furthermore, the romanticized image of baseball on the prairie continues to inspire. It's a theme that resonates in literature, film, and art, reminding us of a simpler time and a connection to the land that many of us still cherish. The story of baseball on the prairie is a testament to the enduring power of sport to unite people, build communities, and create lasting memories, no matter how vast the horizon may stretch.

Preserving the Legacy: Ballparks and Beyond

Many historic prairie ballparks still stand today, testaments to a bygone era of small-town baseball. While some may have fallen into disrepair, others have been lovingly restored and continue to host games. These venues are more than just baseball fields; they are living museums, preserving the architectural styles and the intangible memories of generations of players and fans. Organizations dedicated to historic preservation often work to protect these iconic sites. The legacy of prairie baseball also lives on through the stories passed down through families and communities. Oral histories, old photographs, and local newspaper clippings all contribute to a rich tapestry of memories. These narratives highlight the dedication of players, the enthusiasm of fans, and the profound impact that baseball had on shaping the identity of these prairie towns. The simple act of playing baseball in an open field, under a boundless sky, continues to hold a special place in the American consciousness. It represents a connection to our roots, a celebration of community, and the timeless joy of a game that transcends time and place. The echoes of crackling bats and cheering crowds may be softer now, but the spirit of baseball on the prairie remains as strong and vibrant as ever.

The Enduring Appeal of the Prairie Diamond

What is it about baseball on the prairie that continues to captivate our imaginations? Perhaps it's the sense of space and freedom that the vast landscapes evoke. Perhaps it's the connection to a more authentic, less commercialized era of the sport. Or perhaps it's simply the universal appeal of a game that, at its core, is about skill, strategy, and the pursuit of a common goal. The prairie diamond, whether it's a meticulously maintained field in a small town or a makeshift patch of dirt between farm fields, represents a pure form of the game. It's a reminder of where baseball came from and what it means to so many people. The stories of prairie baseball are not just about the game itself; they are about the people who played it, the communities that supported it, and the enduring spirit of the American heartland. From the dusty infields to the outfield fences that seem to stretch into infinity, baseball on the prairie is a story worth remembering and celebrating. It's a vital thread in the tapestry of American culture, a testament to the power of sport to connect us all,

no matter how far from the city lights we may be. The game, much like the prairie itself, is expansive, enduring, and deeply, profoundly American.

Baseball on the Prairie: A Cultural Thread Woven Through the Heartland In the vast, windswept expanses of the American Midwest, where golden wheat fields stretch beneath wide-open skies and the rhythm of rural life beats slow but steady, baseball has long held a special place—not just as a sport, but as a living tradition. Baseball on the prairie is more than a game; it is a cultural anchor, a shared experience that binds communities across generations. Rooted in simplicity and resilience, this unique expression of America's favorite pastime reflects the spirit of the land and its people. Harsh yet beautiful prairie conditions have shaped how baseball is played, enjoyed, and preserved in small towns and rural areas. Unlike the polished stadiums of urban centers, prairie ballgames often unfold in modest fields with minimal infrastructure—barely fences, weathered bleachers, and a deep reliance on community spirit. This understated setting fosters authenticity, where players and spectators alike become part of a living narrative, where every pitch and every catch carries the weight of history and connection.

Historical Roots and Regional Identity

The story of baseball on the prairie stretches back to the late 19th century, when settlers brought the game from Eastern states and adapted it to their new environment. As railroads expanded and farming communities grew, baseball became a cornerstone of social life. Local teams formed spontaneously, often composed of farmers, ranchers, and schoolteachers who played not only to compete but to strengthen neighborhood bonds. Over decades, these games evolved into cherished rituals—summer fundraisers, Fourth of July celebrations, and seasonal tournaments that drew families from miles around. The prairie's open skies and wide horizons provided the perfect stage, where the game's pace matched the unhurried rhythm of country life.

Community and Social Impact

At its core, baseball on the prairie is a powerful force for community cohesion. In small towns where resources are limited, shared baseball fields become gathering places where generations meet, children learn values through teamwork, and adults forge lasting friendships. These games offer more than competition; they serve as social glue, reinforcing identity and mutual support in regions often isolated by distance. Local leagues foster inclusion, welcoming players of all ages and skill levels, promoting health and camaraderie while preserving traditions that might otherwise fade. The game's accessibility—requiring little more than a ball, a bat, and a patch of dirt—makes it uniquely suited to thrive in rural landscapes.

Benefits Beyond the Diamond

Engagement in prairie-based baseball brings tangible benefits that extend well beyond athletic performance. For youth, participation nurtures discipline, resilience, and leadership, as players learn to handle victory and defeat with grace. The sport encourages physical fitness, mental focus,

and strategic thinking, all within a supportive, low-pressure environment. Economically, local leagues stimulate small businesses—equipment suppliers, refreshment vendors, and event organizers—helping sustain rural economies. Culturally, they safeguard intangible heritage, passing down stories, customs, and regional pride from one generation to the next. Baseball thus becomes a quiet steward of community vitality, reinforcing social networks and fostering pride in place.

Looking to the Future

As society evolves, baseball on the prairie faces both challenges and opportunities. Urbanization and digital distractions pull younger generations away from rural life, yet the enduring appeal of the game persists. Innovations in outreach—such as mobile leagues, youth clinics, and digital storytelling—help bridge the gap, connecting youth with their roots while attracting new participants. Sustainability efforts, including eco-friendly field maintenance and cooperative resource sharing among neighboring towns, ensure the longevity of these cherished spaces. With growing interest in localism and heritage, baseball on the prairie is poised to remain a vital thread in America's cultural fabric, evolving while preserving its soul. The future looks bright for a game that, in its quiet way, continues to ground communities in shared values and timeless joy. Baseball on the prairie endures not merely as a sport, but as a living tradition—resilient, inclusive, and deeply human. It reminds us that even in vast, open spaces, connection thrives when people come together, one pitch at a time.

Baseball on the Prairie: A Timeless American Saga

The smell of freshly cut grass, the crack of a wooden bat echoing across open fields, the roar of a crowd under an impossibly vast sky – these are the sensory hallmarks of baseball on the prairie. More than just a sport, baseball in these wide-open spaces has woven itself into the very fabric of American identity, a testament to resilience, community, and the enduring dream of a perfect game. From dusty diamonds to meticulously maintained ballparks, the love for America's pastime flourishes where the horizon stretches endlessly, offering a unique and captivating narrative.

This isn't just about major league stadiums; it's about the Little League teams battling it out on a Saturday morning, the high school squads with their faded jerseys and fierce pride, and the adult amateur leagues that keep the spirit alive long after graduation. It's about the history of baseball, its evolution, and its deep-rooted connection to the rural American experience. This article will delve into the multifaceted world of 'baseball on the prairie,' exploring its historical significance, its enduring appeal, its challenges, and its bright future.

The Roots of a Rural Pastime: Baseball's Early Embrace of the Frontier

Baseball, as we know it, began its ascent in popularity in the mid-19th century. As settlers moved westward, they brought their games with them, and baseball quickly found fertile ground. The open, often flat landscapes of the prairie provided a natural amphitheater for the burgeoning sport.

Early games were informal affairs, played on any available patch of ground, with rules often adapted to local conditions and available equipment. This inherent adaptability allowed baseball to transcend social strata and geographical boundaries, making it a truly democratic game.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the formalization of baseball, with the establishment of leagues and standardized rules. Even in these nascent stages, prairie towns and communities embraced the sport with fervor. Local teams, often sponsored by businesses or civic organizations, became sources of immense local pride. The thrill of a local hero, a star pitcher or a slugging batter, could unite an entire town. The journey of a baseball team from a small prairie settlement to a regional championship became a celebrated narrative, echoing the broader American story of progress and aspiration.

Diamonds in the Dust: The Unique Landscape of Prairie Ballparks

What sets baseball on the prairie apart is its setting. Unlike the urban sprawl that often defines major league venues, prairie ballparks are frequently characterized by their breathtaking natural backdrops. Imagine a field where the outfield fence opens up to rolling hills, vast fields of golden wheat, or the endless expanse of the Big Sky. This visual grandeur adds a unique charm and a sense of scale to the game.

These diamonds, whether meticulously manicured or charmingly rustic, become central gathering places for rural communities. They are more than just sports fields; they are social hubs. Families gather, neighbors catch up, and generations bond over shared memories of games played and won. The simple beauty of a prairie ballpark, often bathed in the golden light of sunset, evokes a sense of nostalgia and a connection to a simpler time. This imagery is deeply ingrained in the American consciousness, often featured in classic films and literature that celebrate small-town America and its enduring love for baseball.

More Than Just a Game: The Social and Cultural Significance

Baseball on the prairie is inextricably linked to community. In regions where populations can be sparse, the local baseball team often serves as a vital unifying force. It provides a common interest, a shared identity, and a reason for people to come together. The camaraderie extends beyond the players to the fans, who often form strong bonds of loyalty and support.

Little League baseball, in particular, plays a crucial role in the development of young people in prairie towns. It teaches them teamwork, discipline, sportsmanship, and the value of hard work – lessons that extend far beyond the baseball diamond. These formative experiences contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals who often remain deeply connected to their hometowns.

Furthermore, baseball has often served as a lens through which to understand broader social and cultural shifts. From the integration of leagues to the evolution of playing styles, the sport has mirrored the changing landscape of American society. In rural areas, baseball has often been a constant, a reliable tradition in a world that is constantly in flux.

Challenges on the Horizon: Preserving the Prairie Diamond

Despite its enduring appeal, baseball on the prairie faces its share of challenges. Economic shifts, particularly the decline of certain agricultural sectors, can impact the resources available to support local sports programs. Maintaining fields, purchasing equipment, and funding coaching can become significant hurdles for smaller communities.

The increasing prevalence of organized youth sports in urban and suburban areas can also draw young athletes away from traditional community-based leagues. The allure of specialized training and highly competitive travel teams can sometimes overshadow the simple joy of playing ball with friends in a local park.

The geographic isolation of many prairie communities can also present logistical challenges. Travel for games can be time-consuming and expensive, especially for younger players. Ensuring access to qualified coaches and officials can also be a concern in areas with smaller populations.

The Enduring Spirit: Innovations and Resilience

Despite these challenges, the spirit of baseball on the prairie remains remarkably resilient. Communities are finding innovative ways to sustain their love for the game. Local fundraising efforts, partnerships with businesses, and volunteer-driven initiatives are often the lifeblood of prairie baseball programs.

The rise of adult amateur baseball leagues has also breathed new life into the sport. These leagues provide an opportunity for adults to reconnect with their passion for baseball, fostering a sense of community and friendly competition. The camaraderie and shared history among these players are palpable, often rekindling childhood dreams and friendships.

The romanticized image of baseball on the prairie, often celebrated in popular culture, also plays a role in its preservation. The nostalgia associated with images of cracker jack crowds, vintage uniforms, and sun-drenched fields inspires ongoing support and appreciation. Events like "Field of Dreams" nostalgia games or community celebrations centered around the local ball team help to keep the tradition alive and vibrant.

The Future of the Prairie Diamond: A Continuing Legacy

The future of baseball on the prairie is one of adaptation and enduring passion. As communities evolve, so too will the ways in which baseball is played and supported. The core values of teamwork, community, and the sheer joy of the game, however, are likely to remain constant.

Technology is also beginning to play a role, with social media facilitating communication and fundraising, and online resources providing valuable coaching tips and training strategies. However, the fundamental experience of gathering on a summer evening, under a vast sky, to watch a game unfold on a familiar diamond, will likely endure.

Baseball on the prairie is more than just a game; it's a living testament to the American spirit. It

represents the simple pleasures, the strong bonds, and the enduring dreams that have shaped the nation. As the sun sets over the vast expanse of the American heartland, the crack of the bat and the cheers of the crowd will undoubtedly continue to echo, a timeless saga played out on the prairie's grand stage. The legacy of baseball on the prairie is far from over; it is a continuous, unfolding story, as vast and promising as the land itself.

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As technology continues to shape education, digital books will remain an integral part of modern learning environments. The ability to download **Baseball On The Prairie** reflects an adaptive approach to education that prioritizes accessibility, efficiency, and learner empowerment. Digital literacy is now a critical skill.

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Questions & Answers About baseball on the prairie

No	Question	Answer
1	What exactly is 'baseball on the prairie,' and how does it differ from traditional baseball?	'Baseball on the prairie' often refers to informal, community-based games played in rural or open areas. It emphasizes fun and participation over strict rules and professional play, sometimes using modified equipment or field dimensions. It embodies a more nostalgic and accessible version of the sport.
2	Are there any famous historical instances or cultural touchstones associated with 'baseball on the prairie'?	While not a single famous event, the idea is deeply rooted in American rural history and folklore. Think of scenes from classic literature or films depicting small towns gathering for a game, symbolizing community spirit and simpler times. It's a recurring motif in depictions of rural life.
3	What are the essential elements or traditions of a typical 'baseball on the prairie' game?	Key elements often include a makeshift field (sometimes just a pasture), players of all ages and skill levels, a communal atmosphere, and a focus on sportsmanship. Food, gatherings, and family participation are common traditions surrounding these games.
4	How can someone organize or find a 'baseball on the prairie' type of game in their own community?	You can often start by talking to local community centers, historical societies, or even just friends and neighbors. Many rural areas have annual town festivals or events that include informal baseball games. Spontaneity is also part of the charm!

5	What kind of equipment, if any, is typically used in 'baseball on the prairie'?	Often, standard baseball equipment is used, but it's not uncommon to see modified or even improvised gear. Old bats, worn-out gloves, and even just a good sturdy stick and a scuffed-up ball can suffice. The goal is to play, not to have perfect equipment.
6	Does 'baseball on the prairie' have any connection to current amateur or recreational baseball leagues?	While not directly a league, 'baseball on the prairie' embodies the spirit of grassroots baseball that influences many amateur and recreational leagues. It highlights the love for the game itself, fostering community and healthy activity, which are core values in organized amateur sports.
7	What makes 'baseball on the prairie' such a resonant and enduring concept?	Its appeal lies in its simplicity, inclusivity, and connection to a romanticized past. It represents a break from the pressures of modern life, offering a chance for genuine connection, outdoor activity, and a shared sense of community, all centered around a beloved, timeless game.

baseball on the prairie, prairie baseball games, historical baseball on the Great Plains, prairie ballparks and local teams, outdoor baseball traditions on the prairie, great plains baseball culture, rural baseball experiences on the prairie, prairie baseball history and legends, seasonal baseball in prairie communities, prairie baseball festivals and events

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