

*Special Award
1952 Little League
Champions*



**Members of the 1952 Norwalk National Little League world champions (left to right):
Front Row: Alan Sardin, Marcos Greggos, (unidentified bat boy from Williamsport), John Avery, Bob Avery, and Bob LaMorte. Second row: Dave Voorhees, Pete Federici, Charlie Mages, Harry Brower, Dave Newbauer, and Tony DiMeglio. Back row: Assistant coach Jack Sutton, Dick Masi, Ralph DiMeglio, Pete Pollard, Julio Landa, and manager George Buschbaum.**

Tonight the Norwalk Old Timers Athletic Association honors perhaps the single greatest accomplishment in our city's long and proud history by presenting its "Special Award" to the **Norwalk Ben Whone National Little League** to commemorate the 50th anniversary of its 1952 world championship.

It was in the summer of '52 that a team of unpretentious 11- and 12-year old boys from Norwalk pulled off the impossible dream by capturing the Little League World Series in Williamsport, PA.

What made their achievement even more amazing was the fact that Little League baseball in Norwalk had just begun in 1951, and this was only the league's second year of existence. But 11 times the young Norwalkers took the field and 11 times they walked off winners. And this was in the days of single-elimination — one loss and you were out.

But this Norwalk team refused to lose. They won three straight games in the district tournament. Three more, all by shutout, in the state tournament. Another two in the regionals. And then three more memorable victories in Williamsport.

They also earned the reputation that summer as "Comeback Kids." Five times they came from behind to win, including all three games at Williamsport. Five times they won in their last at-bat, including the last two games.

In fact, Norwalk was almost eliminated in its very first game against the Park City Americans of Bridgeport, but rallied for three runs in the bottom of the fifth to pull out a 4-3 win. In its next game, the locals trailed Fairfield 6-5 and were down to their last three outs, but scored a run in the top of the sixth to tie it and then pushed across another run in the seventh to win 7-6.

But that was nothing compared to when they got to Williamsport. In its first game, Norwalk trailed Whiting, Indiana 6-0, but came back to win 10-7. Then in the semi-finals against San Diego, Norwalk fell behind 2-0, but rallied to tie and then win 3-2 in the bottom of the seventh.

And, finally, on August 29, 1952, against heavily favored Monongahela, PA, before 10,000 fans in the championship, Norwalk posted its most dramatic comeback win, trailing 3-2 entering the bottom of the sixth, but rallying for two runs to win 4-3 and claim the Little League world championship.

The 1952 Norwalk All-Stars were the epitome of a true team too. If Ralph DeMeglio or Julio Landa weren't belting home runs, then Bobby LaMorte or Dick Masi were turning in masterful pitching performances. If Dave Voorhees, Pete Pollard, or Bob Avery weren't getting key hits, then Dave Newbauer, Pete Federici, or Tony DiMeglio found a way to get a teammate home. And if they had to manufacture a run, then someone like Harry Brower would draw a walk as he did in the last inning of the last game.

Back home, an entire city rallied behind the all-stars throughout their magical run, some traveling as far as Naugatuck, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania to watch them play. Many others turned out at the South Norwalk Railroad Station to give them a rousing sendoff to Williamsport, and even more lined the streets for a victory parade through town upon their triumphant return.

Fifty years later, the Norwalk Old Timers remember the 1952 Little League Champs.