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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“Out Of The Game”

Small standard mystery
(not murder) version
for 12 to 16 guests

by Stephanie Chambers

Third edition (previous versions known as “Death On The Mound”).
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Although this mystery is loosely based on some real events, the characters and plots are totally fictional.

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The Suspects

Sometimes embarrassing things are deliberately left out of the history books. They are covered over and forgotten. The truth is that the 1919 World Series wasn't the only black mark in baseball history – there was a far worse event in 1944.

At the tail end of the war, good baseball players were in short supply as they were all overseas doing their duty for their country as part of the war effort. So, as some of you may know, women baseball players were enlisted to fill the gap. What you might not know is that there was still one male baseball team and they played against the women's teams. They were the Boston Odd Sox. The team was comprised of baseball players who couldn't do their military service for various (mainly physical) reasons.

The Odd Sox were competing against the Chicago Cheeky Chicks. The Odd Sox needed to win this game in order to reach the finals. The Chicago Cheeky Chicks were the worst team in the League having not won a single game.

But there were rumors afloat that the Odd Sox were under control of some powerful gambling entities and that they were going to throw this game. A lot of money was resting on it. Most, but not all of the players were in on it as they stood to make an extra year's wages in just one game.

In the first two innings the Cheeky Chicks had performed as admirably bad as usual and the Odd Sox, despite their efforts not to win, were in a slight lead. The problem was that the girls all kept hitting the ball so that it landed on the bases and, thus, it couldn't be easily ignored by the person manning the base.

And the girls – all flat-footed and overweight – didn't run very fast so despite ball fumbles and other tactics, the Odd Sox couldn't get them out without totally revealing to their fans that they were trying to lose the game. Things were getting desperate for the Odd Sox and it was time for them to bat.

Although they tried to miss hitting the ball, the pitcher Petticoat Peterson kept pitching so that her ball hit their bat no matter where they moved it. Then in the last and final innings, Petticoat Peterson ran off the field and locked herself in the bathroom and claimed she had been given a laxative. The game was called off and because the umpire was the cousin of a police officer, the police were called in to investigate.

Now you might assume the Odd Sox were responsible, but apparently there was some pretty strong in-fighting going on amongst the players in the Cheeky Chicks. And with fans, managers, gamblers and others involved, no one knew for sure who did it. So now let's relive this moment in history and find out who really did it.

The Boston Odd Sox

Righty Mathews (*right fielder*) He is called "Righty" because he bats with his right hand whereas everyone else on the team is left-handed. He carries the team emblem (a skunk) wherever he goes. He couldn't go into the army because he had a knee injury from falling off a roof as a child. He is currently unemployed. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Bat. Carry a stuffed toy marked to look like a skunk (or a picture of one). Wear odd socks.*

Shoey Jacobs (*left fielder*) He is called "Shoey" because he wears a different pair of shoes to every match. He has more shoes in his cupboard than Imelda Marcos. He couldn't go into the army because he was flat-footed. He works as a waiter at a high-class restaurant. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Make each of your shoes look different to each other in some way. Carry a spare pair of shoes for the game. Wear odd socks.*

Double-Take Edwards (*pitcher*) He is cross-eyed. He couldn't go into the army because of this. He can do fantastic, sneaky curve balls and is a great pitcher as long as you point him in the right direction and as long as he chases after the correct one of the balls he sees. He is the sound man for a radio station. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Carry a ball. Wear odd socks.*

Sleepy Joe (*catcher*) He has very big hands and when he's awake, he's a great catcher. He couldn't go into the army because he suffers from a rare disease which makes him fall asleep at odd times. He works as a legal clerk for the county office. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Wear a catcher's mitt and carry a pillow. Wear odd socks.*

Doorbell Dunstan (*first base*) He is quick on the mark if he knows what's going on. The problem is that he often doesn't hear the bat hitting the ball so he doesn't know a player is heading his way. He wasn't accepted by the army because he is deaf. He is a university microbiology student. He is a close friend of Sleepy Joe. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Carry a hearing funnel. Wear odd socks.*

Go Go Grimblat (*center fielder*) He doesn't miss much and he's one of the stars of the team. Unfortunately his skills come in equal weight with his arrogance and he is a bit of a pain. He wasn't in on the scam because he is too much of a big mouth. He has a slight hearing impediment and that he is why he wasn't accepted for military service. He is a car salesman. *Dress suggestions: Baseball clothes. Wear odd socks.*

Name tags

12 Suspects

Righty
Mathews
(suspect)

Shoey
Jacobs
(suspect)

Double-Take
Edwards
(suspect)

Peachy
Cream
(suspect)

Moldy
Cheese
(suspect)

Lippy
Lovell
(suspect)

Sleepy
Joe Peterson
(suspect)

Doorbell
Dunstan
(suspect)

Bouncy
Betty
(suspect)

Clumsy
Carol
(suspect)

Go Go
Grimblat
(suspect)

Slammit
Suzie
(suspect)

2 optional witnesses

King
Kordon

Mrs Paula
Dingle

2 optional authorities

Detective Sergeant
Mabel Finn

Dr Peter Pepin
(Police Medical)

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These are the clues for:

Righty Mathews

During this act, you must say:

- 1 Everyone thinks that because I carry the team emblem around with me that I am a great supporter of the team, but that isn't true. I carry it because I think the team stinks and “The Skunk” emblem represents that. I mean – look at us – what a bunch!
- 2 No wonder the army wouldn't have us. And it's embarrassing playing the girls and losing a lot of the time. I thought we may as well lose with some money in our pockets for our troubles. It is just a shame that our last game before the finals was against such a terrible team. No one has ever taught Petticoat how to do anything tricky. It was slow ball for her – that's for sure. All she cares about is her starched petticoats and how she looks.
- 3 When Peachy and Petticoat were young and at school, Petticoat stole Peachy's Barbie doll and wrecked its nails.

Righty Mathews - Act Two

During this act, you must say:

- 1 Petticoat kept pitching the ball so it hit our bat so we had no option but to run. I'm glad the scam is out in the open and my baseball career is over. At least I won't have to play the Cheeky Chicks ever again.
- 2 The doctor said the laxative had caused severe diarrhea and was probably herbal in origin.
- 3 Sleepy Joe had made enquiries about changing his surname from Peterson because he was embarrassed about being related to Petticoat. He found out it would cost more money than he could afford.

Righty Mathews - Act Three

During this act, you must say:

- 1 *(if anyone asks you why you had five minutes time out towards the end of the game to speak to your manager, say)* I wanted to talk to him about how I should bat today.
- 2 There were more than enough peaches to go around for the girl's pre-game snack.
- 3 After lunch Mrs Dingle – The Manager of The Chicago Cheeky Chicks – showed the girls home movies she had made of various baseball games and she discussed tactics with the team until it was time for the game.

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These are the clues for:

Peachy Cream

During this act, you must say:

- 1 To be honest I was just looking forward to the end of the game which would be the end of the series for us. I don't really like playing baseball. I only do it because my Dad's one of the league's big sponsors and my sponsor too.
- 2 Baseball is really dangerous. It's so easy to break your nails. Petticoat was telling me to stop doing my nails while the Manager was revving us up before the game. I think she was just jealous because she had bitten her own nails so much they barely existed.
- 3 Righty had recently been retrenched by the brick-making company he works for and he needed the money from the scam to start his own driveway construction business.

Peachy Cream - Act Two

During this act, you must say:

- 1 I admit that when Daddy was looking the other way during the game, I didn't bother chasing after that silly little ball. There were so many much more interesting things such as men to look at.
- 2 Daddy thinks Petticoat is fantastic just because she can pitch and she can hit the ball. He's been insisting that Petticoat spend the summer break with us. What a bore that will be!
- 3 Righty is in love with Petticoat's cousin Wilma but Petticoat kept telling Wilma she could do better than go out with him.

Peachy Cream - Act Three

During this act, you must say:

- 1 *(if anyone asks you if you poisoned Petticoat's peach, say)* How could you say such a thing? Wait till my father hears about this. I'm not answering any questions without my Daddy's lawyer present. And in any case, we all chose the peach we wanted to eat. I didn't hand them around. I'm not the maid.
- 2 Petticoat yelled from the bathroom: "I've been deliberately given food poisoning or a very strong laxative. I will be here for a while. Cancel the game."
- 3 Petticoat had a baked dinner last night – baked beans on toast.

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These are the clues for:

*Shoey
Jacobs*

During this act, you must say:

- 1 I'm sorry about the scam. I didn't want to be part of it at first, but I kept thinking about all the shoes I'd be able to buy with the money and I need new shoes for every game. They give me luck – without them I'd just be a flat-footed no-hoper. My shoes make me feel special.
- 2 They are talking about banning us for life from baseball so I suppose that's an end to my baseball shoes collection. Maybe I'll take up basketball instead or golf. Golf shoes are pretty neat.
- 3 Petticoat and Bouncy worked at the same Diner. Petticoat got to be a waitress whereas Bouncy spent her time cooking eggs mostly. So Petticoat got tips and Bouncy didn't. The boss said he'd let Bouncy be a waitress next time one of the waitresses left or was off sick. But none of them wanted to leave.

Shoey Jacobs - Act Two

During this act, you must say:

- 1 I don't really like Petticoat. She's too bubbly and enthusiastic. She comes up and hugs me and stands on my shoes – that's not on in my book. I wanted to hit her when she did that, but I couldn't because she's a woman.
- 2 The doctor said Petticoat Peterson has been mildly poisoned. The exact poison is undetermined at this time. It will probably take a month of thorough testing to ascertain the poison. However, we do know the poison used was quick acting and had a laxative effect.
- 3 Double-Take did know about the scam. He blamed Righty for pointing him in the wrong direction, but he wasn't just pitching the wrong way – he was pitching less curve balls than usual.

Shoey Jacobs - Act Three

During this act, you must say:

- 1 Once this investigation is over, I'm going to take Clumsy Carol shoe shopping. I might take her to meet my podiatrist too. Once she learns how to wear shoes properly, she'll have to change her name – maybe to Cute Carol.
- 2 *(if anyone asks you whether you poisoned Petticoat when you were kissing her, say)* I was only kissing her for professional reasons. I didn't like her or anything. I just thought that if I kissed her she would be so excited about it that it would put her off her pitching. I certainly didn't poison her and anyway I never pass gum while kissing.
- 3 At lunchtime, the manager of "The Chicago Cheeky Chicks" served each player some bread and cheese.

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

Staple their clues here.

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These are the clues for:

Clue page for the witnesses or investigator

*Print as many copies as you need
of these four pages.*

Staple a copy of their name tag here

Act Two

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

Staple their clues here.

Act Three

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

Staple their clues here.

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These are the clues for:

Extra Clues

You should divide these 12 clues amongst the witnesses and authorities (and the suspects too if you don't have many guests playing the optional roles). Please make sure they are all given out.

During the game, when Petticoat was batting she hit the ball towards Righty, but he missed it and he fumbled and she made it to first base. His team-mates jeered him and Petticoat laughed.

During the game, Doorbell hit a ball in the direction of Peachy. She tried to duck but it hit her on the head. This really hurt as she didn't stop it with her hands for fear of breaking her precious nails. Petticoat told her in front of everyone that she had let the team down as it should have been an easy catch.

Petticoat always teases Bouncy about the way she makes the ball bounce when she hits it. Often at a practice session, Bouncy ended up in tears because of Petticoat's endless taunts.

Before it was announced that the game was cancelled, Peachy and Lippy were overheard saying how happy they were that Petticoat was out of the game for a while. They said that now they'd get the attention they deserved.

Sleepy Joe had bought along some coffee to sip so he wouldn't fall asleep during the game, but Petticoat bumped his mug when she first took her place to bat and he spilt the lot.

During the game, because Sleepy Joe hadn't had his coffee, he fell asleep. No one noticed except Petticoat as she was batting. She woke Sleepy Joe up by making a song and dance about how he was asleep and she embarrassed him in front of the crowd.

After the last game, the Cheeky Chicks went out dancing together to celebrate their manager's birthday. Petticoat refused to share a taxi cab with Moldy so Moldy had to go in a cab by herself and pay the whole fare.

Petticoat sprayed Moldy with Eau D' Cologne during the game. Moldy hates that smell with a passion.
