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Sam's Sluggers, 10, White House Unit, 9

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WASHINGTON, June 8 — Almost unnoticed in the spate of words and the flare of revelations, there was another confrontation between the legislative branch and the White House this week—the dust flew, there were jeers and cheers—and the beer ran out in the third inning.

The occasion was the second annual softball encounter on Tuesday night between Sam's Sluggers, composed of members of Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr.'s staff and the staffs of the committees and subcommittees he conducts, and The Assistants, a White House-executive branch conglomerate.

Monday 13 in West Potomac Park, just in sight of the Lincoln Memorial and hard by the Tidal Basin, from which the gnats rose in battle formation in the steamy 86-degree heat of early evening.

This year's game, of course, was fraught with significance and attracted more than usual attention, at least from the media. The 1972 game ended in a 20-20 tie after some reported bad feeling. Or, as the coach of Sam's Sluggers, Bill Pursley put it: "We almost had a fight, but we Democrats cooled our tempers."

Mr. Pursley is chief counsel for the Revision and Codification Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee, which was well-represented among the 20 or so team members, most of whom wore shorts and the team's dark-blue tee shirts with the name of the team emblazoned in bright yellow across the chest.

The White House team—its formal name, The Assistants, is a reference to the fact that most of its members are assistants-to-someone or assistants-to-assistants-to-someone—were less formal. Their dress varied from tattered sweatsuits to bright printed shorts. Only one member, Liza Simmons of the Council of Economic Policy wore partisan markings—a Nixon 72 sweatshirt.

Ervin Pleased

Senator Ervin, whose Sluggers were founded five years ago, did not make an appearance at the game. His press secretary, Hall Smith, said today that the North Carolina Democrat was delighted as the Sluggers were victorious, 10 to 9.

As the team warmed up by cooling off with beer and chatter, the coach of The Assistants, Howard Beasley, an assistant to Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz, spoke of his team's appropriately modest aims—up to Tuesday night, their record this year was no wins and three losses—"We're just out to have fun and get to know other people in Government." They have had fun, but their record plummeted to a new low.

Joyce Hanula, the Democrats' pitcher and chief whipper-up of enthusiasm from the sidelines, gathered her little band around her as



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Lianne Carl, a substitute catcher for the White House "Assistants," team playing against "Sam's Sluggers," Tuesday night in Potomac Park, Washington. The Sluggers team is composed of members of Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr.'s staffs and committees. Miss Carl actually works for Representative Charles Wilson, Texas Democrat, but one member of the team said the group was non "partisan." We accept Democrats; so does the White House, if they're from Texas.

play was about to begin about 6:40 and urged them on in stirring words: "I don't have a prepared speech, but I do want to make a few things perfectly clear . . . anybody's who's serious about this game shouldn't be playing—we're going to win anyway."

And so they did, but it was a close and confusing struggle into the dusk in which the comment and general atmosphere were more memorable than the playing, according to expert observers.

"Who's up?" cried one of the assistants at one point.

"Take a vote," replied someone else.

There were some memorable moments. There was the bellow of the indigent shortstop for Sam's Sluggers pronouncing a ball dead because it had brushed a tree branch—"I heard it! I've got great ears!" There was the collision between a center fielder and a shortstop as they tried to catch a fly ball. There was the wedding ring lost somewhere in the outfield crabgrass by Mike Savage, an Ervin staff member.

And there were the erratic hits made bystanding a dangerous sport, prompting Mr. Smith to murmur: "I understand that the White House has denied that the foul balls coming into the press section are part of a continuous vendetta."

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