

# Pinch Hits: "The Amphibians of Ketchikan"

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This story ran in the *Salt Lake (Utah) Telegram* on November 6, 1914:

Ketchikan, Alaska. This city boasts the most unique baseball diamond in the world. The team that owns it, or rather that has commandeered it, has the appropriate name of "Amphibians."

It is a wonderfully fast diamond sometimes. At other times it is hidden beneath a frothy covering of tiny breakers for the Ketchikan ballpark is a part of the beach. At Ketchikan, the hills snoop right down to the seashore so that on dry land there is no flat space big enough for baseball, and therefore it has been necessary to commandeer a chunk of Neptune's domain and dedicate it to the national-pastime. At low tide the water runs far out at Ketchikan and leaves a broad expanse of shimmering, level sand.

Here the Amphibians have established their diamond. The bleachers are the open beach and the grandstand is the back stoops of some of the residences of the city, which are built on piles almost over the water. The inland mining camps send baseball teams to do battle with the Amphibians, who, so far, have always won.

This they attribute to their skill, but their opponents say it is because they always play barefoot and have become thoroughly accustomed to running on the sand.

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Ketchikan, Alaska, claims a unique baseball diamond. When baseball players of this

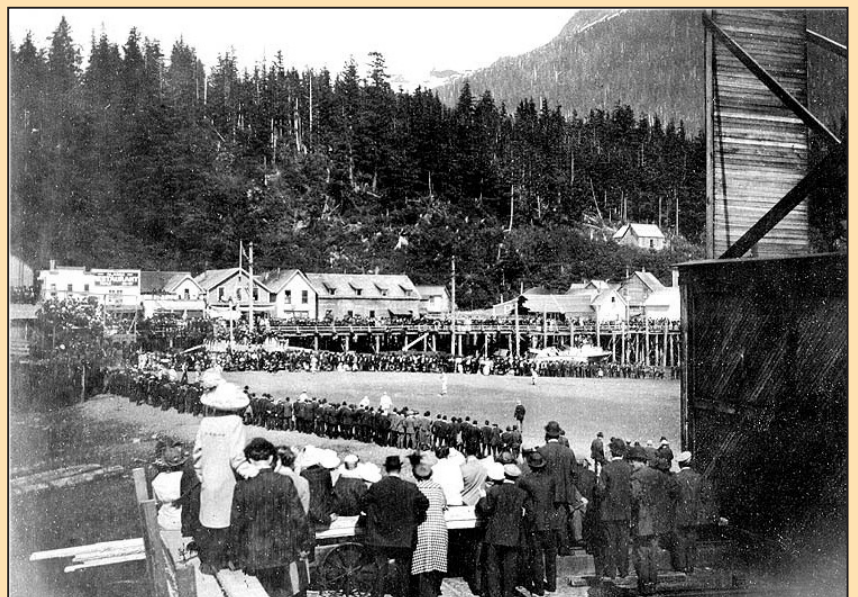
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## CHAMPION BASEBALL TEAM OF FAR NORTH USES A PIECE OF THE OCEAN FOR A DIAMOND

The Shimmering Sands of the Beach Are the Bleachers and the Back Stoops of Waterfront Residences Are the Grandstand.



Upper picture shows the baseball diamond at Ketchikan, Alaska, when the tide is out, while below the field is shown with the tide in.



## The Amphibians of Ketchikan [2 of 2]:

southern Alaska city schedule games they always take tide conditions into consideration, for the park is built on the flats below the city, and at high tide the playing ground and lower seats of the grandstand are under water. Games are played at low water after the park has been rolled by the waves. Long games are often called on account of rising tides.



### BASEBALL GAMES IN ALASKA

Inhabitants of Ketchikan Wait Until Tide is Out Before Cry is Made, "Batter Up."

Baseball is making its way toward the arctic circle. F. Ogden Norwood, a trader and enthusiastic "fan" from Ketchikan, Alaska, who is visiting his home at East Orange, N. J., says the 2,000 inhabitants of that isolated place cry "batter up!" every time the tide goes out. Shops close up, offices are forsaken, and even the 18 saloons forget all about business while the proprietors chase down to the beach to see the great American game.

Norwood organized the two nines among the whites and the Indians. The settlement is so closely fitted in between the mountains and the sea, with the tide rising normally to the height of 20 feet, that it is built on piles. It is only when the tide ebbs that there is a place to play, and its return marks the finish of the game, threatening, as it does, to wash away players, backstop, bases and all.