

1914 Virginia Mountain League, "One & Done"

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The Virginia Mountain League is formed in the spring of 1914 ... originally intended to have a membership of six Central and Southwestern Virginia towns, the league debuts on May 13, as a Class D minor league with four teams – Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Covington and Staunton - and a promising future.

On July 25, after a little more than two months into the season, league officials suspend operations due to financial problems caused by poor attendance and rumors of possible game fixing amongst its players.

Following the collapse of the league, Covington and Clifton Forge elect to play a 10-game championship series with the Railroaders capturing the league "title" winning seven of the 10 games.

VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN LEAGUE IS IN CLASS D

AUBURN, N. Y., April 7.—The Virginia Mountain league, embracing the territory of Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Covington and Staunton, Va., has qualified for membership in class D baseball leagues, according to decisions given out today by Chairman Farrell, of the national board of arbitration. The franchise and players of the Selma club of the Cotton States league have been transferred to the Georgia-Alabama league.

Services awarded: Harris to Selma; Pace to Macon.

Claims disallowed: Tyleman against Valdosta, Ga.

VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN

Is the Title of a New Class D League Just Organized.

BY D. S. CROCHETT.

CLIFTON FORGE, Va., March 14.—Editor "Sporting Life."—At a meeting here last night a four-club Class D league was organized with the following circuit: Clifton Forge, Covington, Staunton and Charlottesville. Two more towns will be taken in later. B. F. Donovan, of Clifton Forge, was elected president, D. R. Ellis, of Covington, was elected vice-president; E. C. McCarty, of Charlottesville, secretary and treasurer. D. S. Crockett, one of the promoters of the league, will have charge of the Staunton Club, and can be addressed at No. 807 Jamison avenue, Roanoke, Va., until April 12, then Staunton. The season will open May 14 and close September 12. This league will be called the Virginia Mountain League.

The Teams

Clifton Forge Railroaders: The town of Clifton Forge grew along with Virginia's burgeoning railroad industry in the 1850s and it becomes a major maintenance facility for steam locomotives for the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad.

Charlottesville Tuckahoes: Tuckahoe is a disparaging term used in the 19th century to describe slave-owning plantation owners.

Covington Papermakers: Covington is named after General Leonard Covington, a War of 1812 hero, is the site to one of the largest paper mills in the United States.

Staunton Lunatics: Staunton is the home of the Western State Lunatic Asylum, a hospital for the mentally ill, which begins operations in 1828.

Virginia Mountain League Chronology

March 3, 1914

At a meeting in Lynchburg, Va., preliminary steps are taken for the formulation of a six-team Class D baseball league with teams tentatively slated for Lynchburg, Danville, Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Staunton and Covington ... a salary limit of \$800 (per team) monthly is established ... each of the towns involved are reported to have ample financial backing except Lynchburg, which is hesitant to commit because of a previous \$700 lien on its territory, a result of the town's previous time in the Virginia League.

March 12, 1914

The formation of the four-team Virginia Mountain League is announced at a league meeting in Clifton Forge, Va. ... franchises are awarded to Virginia towns of Clifton Forge, Covington, Staunton and Charlottesville ... league

MANAGER IN NEW LEAGUE.

W. Steinhouse to Handle Charlottesville Virginia Mountain League Club.

Charlottesville, Va., May 3.—W. Steinhouse has been chosen manager of the Charlottesville team in the newly organized Virginia Mountain League.

He is well known to fandom in eastern Virginia, having been connected with the Portsmouth team.

Joel M. Cochran, president of the local club, has been receiving applications from ball players who are desirous of affiliating themselves with the new organization.

Virginia Mountain League [2 of 3]:

officials leave open the possibility of two more teams being selected from the towns of Danville (Va.), South Boston (Va.), Harrisonburg (Hinton (W. Va.), Ronceverte (W.Va.), and Lewisburg (W. Va.) allowed in later ... B. F. Donovan, of Clifton Forge, is elected league president. D. R. Ellis, of Covington, vice-president ... the league's inaugural season will open May 14 and close September 12.



Western State Lunatic Asylum

Erwin to Manage Clifton Forge.
[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
Harrisonburg, Va., April 5
"Brownie" Erwin, of Woodstock, a former Virginia League player, will manage the Clifton Forge team in the recently organized Virginia Mountain League. Erwin is said to be the smallest man that ever wore a professional uniform. He was known as the midget of the Virginia League, when with Danville several years ago.
The new Mountain League is composed of Clifton Forge, Covington, Staunton and Charlottesville. Hinton and Lewisburg, W. Va., will be added in the near future.

◀◀ April 6, 1914

Clifton Forge announces that Clarence "Brownie" Erwin, a former Virginia League player, will manage the team ... Erwin is reported to be the smallest man to ever wear a professional baseball uniform ... Erwin is known as the "Midget of the Virginia League" when he played in Danville several years earlier.

April 7, 1914 ▶▶

On the same day that the franchise and players of the Selma club of the Cotton

States League are transferred to the Georgia-Alabama League, the fledgling Virginia Mountain League qualifies for membership in professional baseball at the Class D level.

Virginia Mountain League Qualifies.

Auburn, N. Y., April 7.—The Virginia Mountain League embracing the territory of Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Covington and Staunton, Va., has qualified for membership in class D baseball leagues, according to decisions given out today by Chairman Farrell of the National Board of Arbitration.

April 18, 1914

Clifton Forge manager Brownie Irving visits Washington, D.C., in search of ball players for his team ... Brownie is not successful in signing any of the local amateurs due to the league's small salary limit.

MOUNTAIN LEAGUE NOW DOING REAL BUSINESS

Covington and Charlottesville Land Victories in Opening Performances—Good Games.

Covington, Va., May 14.—The Virginia Mountain League season opened here to-day. Covington won from Clifton Forge, 7 to 6, before a crowd of 1,500 people.

The game was exciting all through, but loosely played, owing to nervousness on the part of the players. Krieling and Ellis features for the locals at bat, both getting clean home runs. Lewis, who relieved Davis in the box for the locals in the sixth inning, with the score tied, won his own game in the eighth inning by a clean single to left, scoring Padgett. Both teams play here again to-morrow and Saturday.

Score by Innings: R. H. E.
Clifton Forge ..012012000—6 3 1
Covington20211001*—7 9 1
Batteries: Clifton Forge, Winstead, Graham and Eschback; Covington, Davis, Lewis, Goodman.

◀◀ May 13, 1914

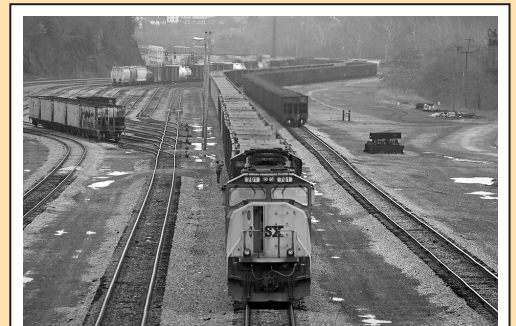
The Virginia Mountain League opens for business with home standing Charlottesville and Covington claiming opening day victories ... the Tuckahoes, behind a route-going seven-hit effort by southpaw Frank Dye, defeat the visiting Staunton Lunatics 10-4 ... Charles Rentz and catcher Edward Copeland hit home runs in the victory ... in a "loosely played game" Covington's Krieling and Ellis hit home runs in an 7-6 win over Clifton Forge in front of 1,500 enthusiastic fans.

June 26, 1914

The Covington Papermakers announce that Frank "Peggy" Moore has been let go as the team's manager ... faced with numerous injuries and a 12-man roster limit, team directors feel that it could not afford a non-playing manager ... third baseman Carver is placed in charge as playing manager.

The Papermakers also announce that "Lefty" Grice, recently let go by Moore because of "light hitting", has been reinstated to the team roster ... the Portsmouth, Ohio native celebrates his

return to the team with two triples and a home run against Clifton Forge.



Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, Clifton Forge

Virginia Mountain League [3 of 3]:

July 1, 1914

The League Office announces that the players and equipment of the Staunton Lunatics are being transferred to Harrisonburg (Va.) for the remainder of the season ... the Lunatics are currently mired in last place with a 15-22 record.

July 25, 1914

The Virginia Mountain League announces that it is disbanding.



Covington Paper Mill

Final Standings	W-L	GB	Managers
Covington Papermakers.....	37-26	--	Frank (Peggy) Moore/Carver
Charlottesville Tuckahoes.....	31-30	5.0	Walter Steinhauser
Clifton Forge Railroaders.....	28-34	8.5	Clarence Irwin/Harry Bailey/Edward Eschback/Buck Hooker
Staunton/Harrisonburg Lunatics	26-32	8.5	Dave Crockett/Pat Krebs

August 8, 1914

Two weeks after the league officially disbands, Clifton Forge sweeps a double-header from Covington 5-4 and 5-3 to win the Virginia Mountain League "championship" ... the Railroaders win seven of the 10 games played ... following the double-header a farewell reception and banquet is held for the Clifton Forge players.

Aftermath:

Leroy Lewis, formerly with Harrisonburg and Clifton Forge, signs with the Newport News Shipbuilders of the Virginia (C) League ... while with the Railroaders, Lewis pitches in two games against Covington in the post-season series, winning them both ... Gene Hudgins, also of Harrisonburg, signs with Petersburg Goobers ... John Leading, who has been playing with Covington returns home ... Leading, doing the bulk of the receiving for the Papermakers, is hitting for a .280 average ... earlier in the season, Leading was with Portsmouth before being transferred to Covington.

1914 Virginia Mountain League Partial Rosters

Covington Papermakers:	Charlottesville Tuckahoes:	Clifton Forge Railroaders:	Staunton Lunatics:
Carter	Anderson	Bailey.....OF	Edward Copeland.....C
Lefty Davis..... P	Beers..... P	Barnes..... P	Davey Crockett..... 1B
Ellis.....OF	Carvers..... P	Bruce Calder..... 3B	Dillinger.....C
Lefty Grice..... OF	Cole.....	Cousins.....	Gallagher.....P
Krieling.....	Crockett.....	Deoppe.....C	Henderson.....P
John Leading..... C	Dollinger.....	Brownie Erwin.....	Buck Hooker.....
Moore	Frank Dye..... P	Jack Graham.....	Jamerson.....P
	Charles Rentz.....C	Hornsberger.....P	Leroy Lewis.....P
	Edward Copeland.....C	Harry Bailey.....P	Gene Hudgins.....
	Herbert Martin..... P	Edward Eschback.....	Pat Krebs.....
	Scheme..... P	Buck Hooker.....OF	Mike Shields.....
	Schel..... P	Dutch Kline.....	
	Michael Schroeder..... OF	Lewis.....	
	Walter Steinhauser..... OF	Porter.....	
	Stillwell.....C		