



THE LEROY STORY

2012-2013: PRE-LEAGUE

2012: It all started with a stick and an ear of corn. The idea of a lawn Olympics was growing through Leroy. Bags, Volleyball, Hillbilly golf were activities scheduled for the event set for early August 2012. The event was a hit with 20+ people attending, but the biggest hit wasn't any of the events above. It was a wood backstop, orange fencing, painted foul lines, a yellow bat, and a white ball with holes on only one side. Everyone said to keep the field up and for the next couple weeks' pick-up games were played among friends. With a line of corn lining the whole outfield wall, the talk of town was if they could "Go Corn" and how many rows deep that could hit it into the corn. Even to this day the phrase "Going Corn" exists and is present, including the name of our main podcast show.

2013: The field was left over the winter and with some brief adjustments brought back to life for the 2013 year. A local newspaper gained interest in the idea and came to film footage of the league. Although his story was never brought to life due to "computer failure" it sparked some interest through the group of friends. A second field was built to reach demand, yet no official stats and every game was still a pick-up game. A highlight video names "Highlight Video August 1, 2013" made with top plays from that year is still the highest watched video on our channel.

2014-2015: INAUGURAL YEARS

2014: The offseason of 2013-2014 was a struggle, players were torn on keeping it pick-up games and fun between friends, or expanding the league and growing it to an official league. The latter came about as Kyle Reynhout and Tim Wiltjer officially formed the league in 2014. The league would be made up of 6 Teams with 4 Man rosters, and a 10 game season with all teams making the playoffs. Huge upgrades were needed as the league was to be founded with 6 teams in the 2014 season. The corn was traded out for additional fields as Austin Warner, Kyle Reynhout, and Grant Reynhout helped make 5 fields. Stone was added in the foul lines and PVC strike boards were added as upgrades. Rope was used for the foul lines as well. Word spread quick about the league and interest was at a huge high. The draft was held in the barn with some basketball being played during picks. The six initial team owners were: Kevin Vreogh (Master Batters), Kyle Reynhout (Honey Nut Ichiros), Grant Reynhout (Muffin Men), Drew Eenigenburg (Chainsmokers), Neil Krooswyk (Superior Strikers), and Jordan Mosel (Backdoor Sliders). The Superior Strikers were disfranchised after the first week and became the Leroy Truckers with Tim Wiltjer leading the team. Commitment was a struggle during the 5-week regular season as 35 guys made their way out to the fields at least once. The league was entered into the National Wiffleball League Association (NWLA) during the year. The league took home one award its it first season: Best Team Name – Honey Nut Ichiros. The Chainsmokers won the Championship against the Master Batters in a 3-game battle. Alan Myszkowski won MVP and Drew Eenigenburg won Mr. Leroy.

2015: The hype was so big in the offseason that the league jumped to 8 teams. Jordan Mosel brought back the Backdoor Sliders for a second season. Grant Reynhout renamed his Muffin Men to the Soup a Stars. Kevin Vreogh also renamed his team, going from Master Batters to Fantastic Four. Drew Eenigenburg brought the Champion Chainsmokers back for a second season. Alan Myszkowski the reigning MVP started a new franchise called the Southside Sluggers. Nick Fiene started the Legends of Leroy, a team name that would eventually inspire the Nationals team name. Jared Jonkman started a new franchise called the Bushleague Badgers. Finally, Brett Detmar led the charge and started a new franchise called the Brewcrew Screwballs. The draft moved to Facebook messenger as 32 of the 35 players were drafted, Leroy was like no other leagues as they used formulas to create a salary for each player based on performance. Each team could only draft players under the salary cap and had to meet those restrictions all season whether by trade or signings. Many of the players in the league were on the Illiana Christian baseball team that kept winning and ended up playing into mid-June, causing many forfeits and scaling back the desired 15 game schedule into just 10 games. Only 25 guys made it to the diamond in the 2015 season which turned out to be a huge setback and disappointment. Only 4 new players came to play in 2015 and 14 guys didn't return from the previous season including former MVP Alan Myszkowski. Fantastic Four won the Championship defeating the Soup A Stars. Caleb Jonkman from Fantastic won the MVP with Jon Gibson from Soup A Stars, won Mr. Leroy. After the season league morale was at an all time low and things league was facing extinction after a failed expansion.

2016: LEGENDS ARE BORN

2016: Tim Wiltjer gave a last-minute effort to spur new life into the dying league with the Winter Bowling Classic. The event would be held in during Christmas break of 2015 and would be a fundraising event as well as Live Draft. It would be a great event for everyone to get together during the long offseason. The total attendance for the event was 19. The league went back down to 6 teams and the owners voted on a demanding 20 game schedule with playoffs. Jordan Mosel brought the Backdoor Sliders back for a third season. Grant Reynhout once again changed his team name, he went with the One Hit Wonders for 2016. Kevin Vroegh returned with his 2015 Champion Fantastic Four. Brett Detmar rebranded and became the Jager Corn Bombers. Jared Jonkman returned his Bushleague Badgers for a second season. The only new owner in 2016 was Robby Zandstra as he started the Sultans of Soy.

As the season approached Caleb Jonkman and Brett Detmar fueled a new energy into the league when the idea of going to a National Tournament came about. The NWLA hosted its 5th National Tournament in Dublin, Ohio. For the Legends to get there they had to head to a regional located in Morenci, Michigan. A team that consisted of Caleb Jonkman, Kevin Vroegh, Jon Gibson, Matt Dykstra, and Brett Detmar. They were 4 regionals in 4 different locations with 6 teams in each regional. The legends had to finish in the top 16 to make the main tournament and were placed in the toughest regional. After finishing 2-3 with a very controversial win over Huntington Wiffle League they were given a ticket to the National Tournament. Every Mock draft and league had the Legends finishing 15th or 16th among the 16 teams present at Nationals. The team added Jared Jonkman, Tim Wiltjer, Jordan Mosel and Jeremiah Wiltjer for the National squad and lost Matt Dykstra, Jon Gibson, and Andrew Sitter. The team went 2-1 in pool play enough to get the 8 seed. They had Pool Play wins over SWBL and GAWL, while losing to HFWB. It was only fitting they started the double elimination tournament against HFWB, a team slated to finish in the top 3. Caleb Jonkman pitched a gem, Jordan Mosel had a homer on Brian Kelly sending both Hess Field fielders over the fence and the Legends upset Hess Field 3-1. The manager Tim Wiltjer made a controversial move not starting there #2 pitcher Brett Detmar and went with Kevin Vroegh against the reigning champion WSEM. After a 7-0 loss the team was scheduled to play another top 4 team and pitcher in Tyler Flakne of HRL. Fortunately, Tyler pitched an extra inning game the night before and Brett Detmar got the easy victory with a 7-1 win ensuring the Legends of a top 8 finish. The Legends went up against Kalamazoo Wiffle in the next matchup, the league who won the regional just the month before. Caleb pitched a gem and we fell 1-0 against a very good Mike Hogan led team. The Legends finished 7th and shocked the world in 2016, and with a top 8 finish got an automatic bid to the 2017 tournament.

After a great National run, a core group of 15-20 guys came week in and out through the 20-game season. A total of 29 players came in 2016 with 5 new players and only 1 guy from 2015 not returning. All games were recorded and uploaded to Youtube from this season and Brett Detmar's Jager Corn Bombers won the Championship defeating the Sultans of Soy in a great 3 game series. The Sultan's Caleb Jonkman won his second straight MVP and Brett Detmar won Mr. Leroy.

The league also hosted its first Golf Outing in June, with a total of 16 people the first outing was a blast. It was held at Oak Knoll Golf Course in Crown Point, Indiana.

Caleb Jonkman was signed to the Maple City Magic for the prestigious tournament called Hometown Cup in South Bend Indiana.

2017: ORWBL PARTNERSHIP

2017: The league stuck with the Winter Bowling Classic for its draft home. The event doubled in size bringing in 38 people. The league decided to go to 7 teams in the 2017 season with a 18 game schedule. Jordan Mosel brought his Backdoor Sliders back for a 4th season. Grant Reynhout entered his 4th year as an owner and once again had a new team, this time Big Unit Bashers. Jared Jonkman's Bushleague Badgers made a return. The Champion Jager Corn Bombers made a return led by Brett Detmar. Tim Wiltjer brought the Leroy Truckers back after a 2 Year Hiatus. Caleb Jonkman tried to tackle ownership as he franchised a team named the Lake County Liners. Finally, the league "Dad" created a new franchise called the Dutch Ovens. Early in the year communication between Alex Friedman, Commissioner of ORWBL and Manager of Maple City Magic, and Caleb Jonkman started a LWA/ORWBL partnership for the 2017 season. Caleb Jonkman and Jared Jonkman signed with Maple City for the ORWBL season as well as all tournaments in the area. The Legends also sent a team to Hometown Cup composed of Matt Dykstra, Jordan Mosel, Sam Staal, and Austin Warner. The team struggled in pool play and finished just 1-3 in the tournament. Caleb and Jared Jonkman helped lead Maple City to many tournament wins, an ORWBL Championship, and second place in Hometown Cup.

The partnership sent 8 players from a variety of ORWBL teams to the Leroy Complex in 2017. Austin Warner helped the league get two newspaper articles for the league in both the NWI Times as well as the Chicago Tribune. With the ORWBL influx, Austin's newspaper leads, and word of mouth from many in the league, Leroy saw 29 new players come to the field in 2017. That is a 100% increase from the previous season, we had so much interest we added a 8th team early in the season made up of all Free Agent Players. This team was led by Alex Friedman and was called the Free Agent Otters. They ended up beating the #2 seeded Dutch Ovens in the opening round of the playoffs and were a game away from beating the Badgers and making the Championship.

The league saw many names start helping and an unofficial board of directors was formed. Among those was Greg Gierling who started his own Podcast called "Going Corn". It had player interviews, league rumors, and anything else related to the league. Some major upgrades were added to the complex. Every field was torn down and replaced with Major League replicas. Field one was named in honor of Harambe, it is a symmetrical field with 85 to each pole, 90 feet to left-center and right center, as well as a 95-foot center field. The other fields were a 1-4 model of there Major League affiliate. Field 2 was Minute Maid Park (Hill included), field 3 was Fenway Park. Field 4 was Wrigley Field, and finally field 5 is PNC Park. The complex also saw new strike zones as Grant Reynhout constructed all metal strike zones for each field. Sam Staal was a huge part in making sure the fields were ready to go each week and with the addition of lights in 2017 he made sure lights were always up and running for the night games. The league saw the introduction of score sheets, no longer were stats taking off video. Owners and teams were in charge of scoresheets throughout each game. The league saw its first female players with Lauren Ashby and Samantha Gromala playing in the 2017 season. Each week games were broadcast live on Facebook, with the playoffs having commentary along with umpires.

Tim Wiltjer and Caleb Jonkman were both featured on the National Wiffle Podcast, Two Wiffle Dudes.

2017: ORWBL PARTNERSHIP (CONT.)

The league sent a team to Nationals, which was located in Morenci, MI this year. Once again mock drafts and many leagues had Leroy finishing in the 10-14 range with a few having us around 9th or 10th. The squad was Matt Dykstra, Caleb Jonkman, Brett Detmar, Erik Detmar, Jared Jonkman, Lucas Meidema, Jack Hillegonds, and Jordan Mosel. Jordan was not on the official roster in time leaving Tim Wiltjer as the 8th man on the squad. The league mascot has always been Kermit the Frog and when the squad found a stuffed Kermit at a local garage sale they knew big things were going to happen. They came out hitting on all cylinders beating their cross town rival Griffleball League and BWACS in pool play. The final pool play game was against SWBL, of the 16 teams SWBL was a #1 seed and Leroy was a #2 going into that matchup. After a SWBL win the Legends finished 2-1 again in pool play, this time with a #4 seed. The team played an original tournament team in PWL against a star studded Jack Shannon in opening round and Brett picked up the 3-2 win. The next matchup going into Saturday night was against Hess Field the team we upset the previous year. It was a 10 inning classic that Hess scrapped through to win with Caleb pitching 9 1/3 innings pitched and took everything out of him. Sunday morning Brett showed up hungover as usual and still won the most controversial game in Tournament history against Jimmy Cole's AWAA. The Legends were down 2-1 in the final inning with 2 outs when Jack hit a dribbler that sent Erik Detmar home, after a missed tag Caleb came around to score and we finished top 8 once again. We were shut out in the next game against a future stud in 18 year old Tommy Loftus, and the Legends once again finished 7th.

The Leroy season finished on a very high note. The Jager Corn Bombers and Lake County Liners had the best series the league has every saw with both games 1 & 2 going into extras and needing 6 innings in a sudden death game 3 to decide the winner. The Jager Corn Bombers repeated as champions in the last year of the Detmar brothers. Caleb Jonkman won his 3rd straight MVP and finally got his Mr. Leroy this year as well. He also won player of the Year in the NWLA, the National Wiffle League Association with over 60+ leagues represented.

The Golf Outing was a huge success with as we went from 16 people in 2016, to 48 in 2017.

2018: TO BE DECIDED

This year has already started with more upgrades and new records. The 3rd annual Bowling Classic saw 50 people make an appearance with the draft being broadcast live on Facebook. The league expanded to 11 teams in 2018 with 44 players on the initial 4 man rosters. Jordan Mosel came back for the record breaking 5th straight season as the Backdoor Sliders. Brett Detmar made a return with a slight branding change up, now called the Corn Bombers. Jared Jonkman went forward with the Bushleague Badgers. Tim Wiltjer came back with the Leroy Truckers, as well as Caleb Jonkman coming back with the Lake County Liners. Robby Zandstra brought the Sultans of Soy back after a year hiatus. The league saw five new owners this season, Matt Dykstra started the Leroy Clams. Austin Warner started the Flyin' Hawaiians, Greg Gierling started the Noble Narwhal franchise. Erik Detmar split from his brother and started the Squints Sluggers. Finally, Marty Rasala started up the Diamond Dusters. With new salary restrictions and salary penalties this year looks to be the toughest for owners. Rules were passed that allows the commissioner to penalize team's salary cap based on attendance issues, scoresheet mishaps, and lineup incorrections. The season's opening day begins May 9, 2018. Expanded Rosters made its way to Leroy in 2018, teams are able to sign a 5th player to the roster on June 1, and a 6th player to the roster on July 1. Teams must have 4 players at the field each week from June 1 throughout the playoffs or they will be penalized

Leroy Wiffle finally adopted an official Board of Directors. Tim Wiltjer will remain as Commissioner for his 5th season. Brett Detmar and Caleb Jonkman were promoted to Vice Commissioners for the 2018 season. The remaining board members are in charge of the five Committees that were created. Grounds Committee will be led by Sam Staal, his committee will be in charge of game day operations and keeping fields maintained as well as upgrading them. Events Committee will be led by Greg Gierling, he will be in charge of the Bowling Classic, Golf Outing, and All-Star Game for the 2018 season. Media Committee will be led by Matt Dykstra, he will be in charge of everything Media in 2018 for the league. Whether that be social media, highlight video's, or podcasts, he will make sure the league maintains consistency throughout the year. The Outreach Committee will be led by Erik Detmar, he will lead the push to attract players of all age to the league with efforts of sporting 40 people each week during the season. Finally, Alex Friedman will lead the Marketing Committee. He will be in charge of sponsorships and building the Leroy brand and more importantly the Indiana Wiffle brand in 2018.

Leroy created a Leroy Wiffle Podcast Network that will sport 3 shows consistently producing throughout the year. Going Corn is back for its second season and will continue to be the main show for the network with interviews from league players as well as must know information. The Strikezone hosted by Erik Detmar and Brett Detmar will be a PTI style show where they go back and forth on many topics in the national scene, wiffle ideology, as well as the local scene. Fireside Chat will be the newest show hosted by Tim Wiltjer, it will be a short one segment show hitting all the latest rumors and giving hot takes throughout the league. Kyle Reynhout will also be starting his own blog named Tea Time with Tapper, as he will power rank the teams throughout the season as well as some other great articles. National figure Carl Coffee also wrote articles from time to time in his segment called Drink It In.

The fields look to have new upgrades this season with the subtraction of wood backstops and the addition of 7 by 7 netting at each field. Each field will also have a bench for each team to sit at during the games. Each week every game played at Harambe field will be broadcast live on Facebook with the team on bye being responsible for commentary duties. A huge addition to the league as viewers everywhere will be able to see each team broadcast 4 times throughout the season with commentary. A huge partnership with Dick's Sporting Goods saw an upgraded website and app system for managing the league. The league also purchased the leroywiffle.com domain name as well as upgraded the stats system to Mystatsonline, a professional stats website.