



Things that could only happen to Peck.

Little League

I grew up in Cleveland, Mississippi, a small town in the Mississippi Delta. When I was about 10-years old, all my friends were trying out for Little League. I was athletic like most other kids around this country town, so I tried out too.

During tryouts they put me in the outfield where the coach would hit fly balls to each of the players. Every time he hit the ball to me, I missed it; I didn't even touch the ball; never even got close. No surprise that I didn't make the Little League team that year, but I was very hurt because all my friends did.

A few days later, I was in school where the teacher asked me to read the chalkboard. Through squinting eyes, I could barely make out the fact that there were blurry images on the chalkboard. The teacher then asked me if I'd ever had my eyes checked. I told her I had not. That afternoon, she sent a note to my mother who immediately took me to the eye doctor.

The optometrist put glasses on me and I was flabbergasted by the difference it made. "You mean that everyone can see like this?" I asked. I was amazed and understood why I couldn't catch those balls in the outfield—my self image still stinging from that defeat. Clearly, my eyesight was **terrible**.

The next year I made the Little League and was put on the White Sox. One particular night when we were playing the Red Sox, I was playing left field and action was pretty slow. Willy Hilburn, one of the Red Sox' best hitters, came to bat. I was in left field daydreaming and chewing on a leather lace on my glove next to a Cloverleaf that I had drawn with a ballpoint pen. I was probably thinking about riding my horse.

Willy took a powerful swing and hit a screaming line drive to left field. That ball never got more than four or five feet off the ground and was moving very fast. Meanwhile, I'm chewing on the leather string and all of a sudden, the ball hits my glove! I'm thinking, "where did this ball come from?" All of my teammates were hollering, "throw it Peckenpough...throw the ball." I finally threw the ball, but Willy ended up with a home run. **I did not get MVP that night.**

What are the chances of a ball hitting my glove while I'm daydreaming and chewing a piece of leather? I was very lucky the baseball didn't hit me in the face, and I believe that's the moment when I decided to try a safer sport—like **dirt bike racing**.
