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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 15, 2020

It's the Fort Mackinac *Never Sweats* vs. the Portland *Blue Sox* in the 18th Annual Vintage Base Ball Game

MACKINAC ISLAND, MICH. — Catch the Fort Mackinac *Never Sweats* take on the Portland *Blue Sox* in a match of vintage Base Ball on Saturday, July 18, at 6:30 p.m. on the old ball field behind Fort Mackinac, presented by Mary's Bistro Draught House and the Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau.

“The vintage base ball game began in 2003 as a special event with the *Summer of Sports*, that numerous museums around Michigan took part in,” said Phil Porter, Mackinac State Historic Parks director. “We played a game of vintage base ball not knowing it would become an annual tradition. It is a fan favorite and really enjoyed by the staff and local residents that participate. It's a fun way to share another chapter of Fort Mackinac's really interesting part of history.”

The vintage base ball game showcases the game of “base ball” as it was meant to be played—barehanded and by gentlemen's rules. Guests will learn an old-fashioned cheer, watch players fined for smoking cigars on the field, and enjoy a good old-fashioned rivalry. The players will also play using 1880s “base ball” terminology.

“The soldiers really did play base ball on the field out there and teams throughout Michigan,” said Porter. “We're excited to welcome a new opponent to Mackinac Island and the Fort Mackinac ballfield this year in the Portland *Blue Sox*. We expect a spirited match that our ‘cranks’ will enjoy.”

Currently used by boy and girl scouts across Michigan, since 1934, the field was originally utilized by Fort Mackinac soldiers dating back to the 1870s, who continued to develop the field until the

fort closed in 1895. Local residents and summer workers played baseball at the “fort ball grounds” throughout the 20th century.

Cost to the game is by donation. Guests are welcome to bring blankets and chairs and any food and beverages they would like. Water will be available, as well as *Never Sweat* merchandise and special Mackinac Parks: 125 items. Baseball cards will be available of the *Never Sweats* players on a first come, first served basis.

The 2020 game will be broadcast live on DirectTV and online at Go Live Sports Cast.

As this is an outdoor event, masks are not required if proper social distance protocols are followed. A facemask or covering is required when engaging with any Mackinac State Historic Parks staff, or when social distancing isn’t possible. Players will wear masks when not on the field or at the bat.

Visit mackinacparks.com for more information. A downloadable version of this release can be found here. The pictures included are from the 2019 game. More pictures are available upon request.

Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan’s Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, the Biddle House, Historic Downtown Mackinac, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park, and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks’ rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or online at mackinacparks.com.

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