

THE PLAYERS

Every year, it seems, I get
Back together with some old
Childhood friends
For some baseball and immaturity

There aren't enough of us even
For a decent game, but it
Scarcely matters, it's just like
It was when we were small
And there was a throng of us,
Now most have trickled off,
But, well, the game's the same,
I haven't changed my style a'field,
The glove's a little more sure, that's
All

We're bigger, of course,
Make intricate jokes about making
The pros, fat chance,
And when the young girls
Pass by in their shorts,
Sleek white legs a blaze of softness,
I watch noncommittally,
Not allowing it to affect
My play,
And somewhat awkward with wet curls
And torn pants

But, say, the big thrill really comes
When you get that long one,
Boy, we don't even drink beer afterwards,
When we've walked home,
Glorifying our exploits as we go,
Coke's still enough for me,
At the family clubhouse
After the game

And with all that done
We give our stiff goodbyes,
I retreat up to my room;
There,
Finally alone,
I strip off my sweat-soaked clothes,
Feel the glow of fatigue
Right through to the marrow,
And resting for the next game,
Make a small and silent cry for love.

—*Steve Kilby*