



Blake and the Bitty League Blast-Off!

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Blake and his best friends, Ricky, Sam, and Shawn, were always together. They loved playing all sorts of games, their laughter echoing through their neighborhood.



One sunny afternoon, they decided to join the local bitty league baseball team at Hoback Park. Blake and Shawn were bubbling with excitement, but Ricky and Sam seemed less enthusiastic.



Blake and Shawn absolutely adored baseball. They spent hours practicing throws and catches, their faces alight with pure joy and determination.



However, Sam and Ricky weren't big fans of the sport. They'd often rather be doing anything else, finding baseball a bit slow and boring.



On their first practice day, Blake and Shawn arrived at the field, bats slung over their shoulders, practically bouncing with energy. They couldn't wait to play!



Sam and Ricky were already there, sitting on a bench, looking a little glum. They kicked at the dirt with their sneakers, clearly wishing they were somewhere else.



The coach, a friendly but firm character with a big whistle, gathered the team. He clapped his hands, his smile wide as he greeted all the young players.



The team spread out across the bright green field. Blake took his spot at third base, a huge grin plastered on his face, while Shawn happily jogged to second.



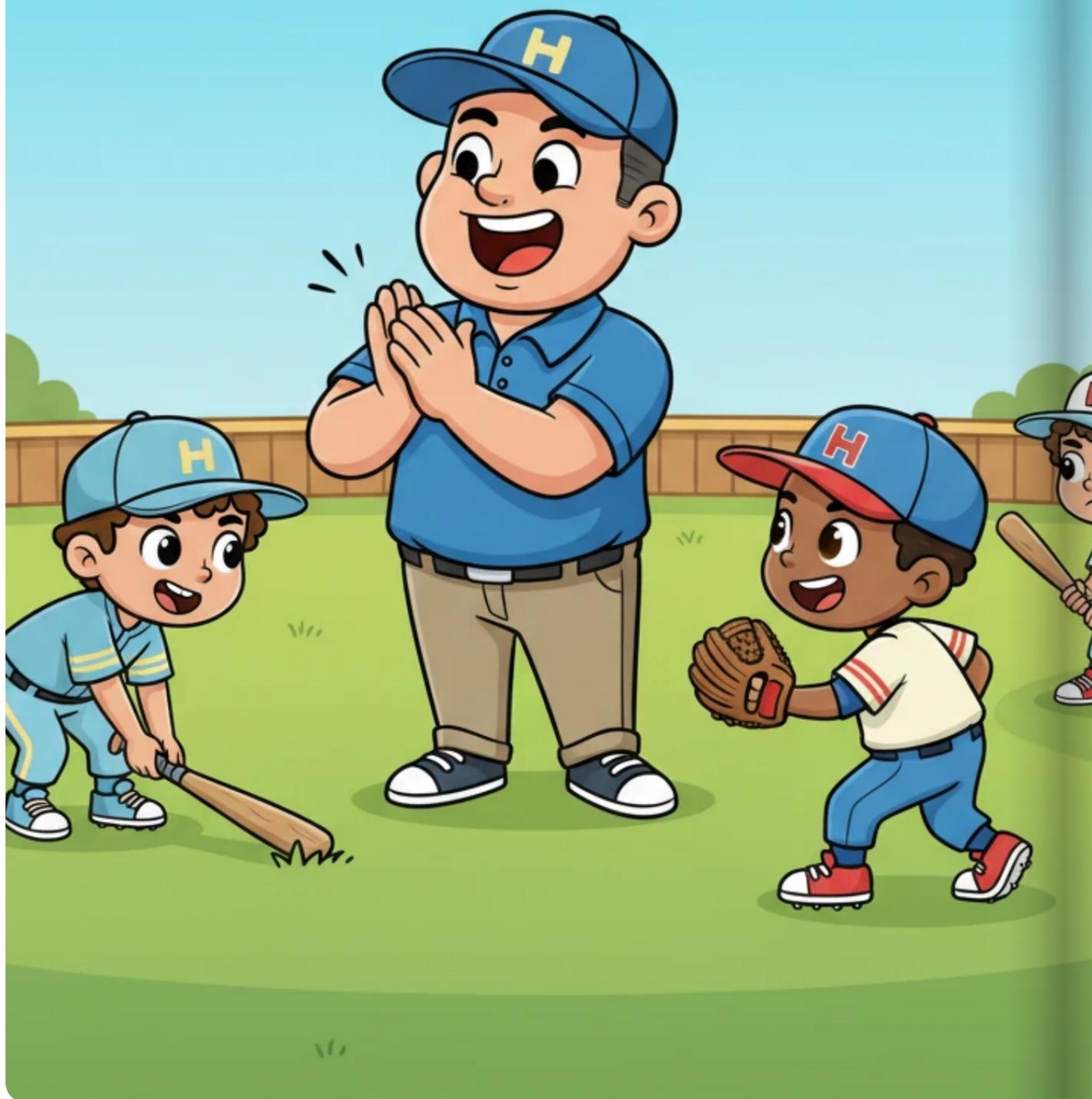
Blake and Shawn expertly tossed the baseball back and forth, their movements smooth and practiced. They communicated with quick nods and smiles, a perfect duo.



Other kids on the team also practiced their throws and catches, creating a lively symphony of thwacks and shouts across the park. The air buzzed with activity.



Blake and Shawn focused on improving their skills, concentrating hard with every throw. They aimed for precision, their eyes tracking the ball through the air.



Suddenly, the coach clapped his hands loudly, his voice booming across the field. "Boys, grab your bats!" he called out with a cheerful grin.



A wave of excitement swept through the team. Blake and Shawn, with huge grins, sprinted joyfully towards the bat rack, eager for their turn.



The boys lined up, bats resting on their shoulders, patiently waiting. Sam and Ricky were in line too, though they still looked a little less excited than their friends.



One by one, the players stepped up, taking turns hitting soft pitches. The ball flew through the air, sometimes a soaring hit, sometimes a gentle tap.



As the sun began to set, practice came to an end. The coach waved goodbye to the team, saying, "Great job today, everyone! See you on Friday night for the game!"



Ricky and Sam exchanged a quick glance, their eyes rolling in unison. The thought of a game didn't fill them with the same excitement as Blake and Shawn.



"I'm not ready for the game, I don't like the idea of baseball," Ricky confessed to Sam, his shoulders slumping a little in defeat.



Sam nodded in agreement, a slight frown on his face. "I don't like it either. It's just not my thing," he replied, sharing Ricky's sentiment.



Meanwhile, Blake and Shawn were practically jumping for joy, high-fiving each other with booming claps. They couldn't wait for Friday night's big game!



Blake's mom arrived in her cheerful minivan to pick up the four friends. The boys piled into the back, their bags and gloves clanking together.



"Are you guys excited for the game?" Blake's mom asked, glancing at them in the rearview mirror, her smile warm and encouraging.



Ricky shrugged his shoulders, muttering, "I don't know." Sam flat-out said "no," while Blake, looking puzzled, asked, "Yes, but why aren't you guys excited?"



Sam explained, "We don't like playing baseball. Just because you like it doesn't mean we HAVE to LOVE it." Blake listened, a thoughtful expression on his face.



"Okay... but do your best on Friday," Blake said, his voice earnest. Ricky and Sam nodded, agreeing to give it their all for their friend and the team.



Thursday night, Ricky and Sam were glued to their screens, playing Duos on Fortnite until midnight. Despite their late-night gaming, they decided they would try their best at the game.



That same Thursday night, Blake and Shawn were at the park with Blake's older brother, practicing their swings and throws until 7 pm. They were worn out but happy.



On Friday morning, Sam and Ricky showed up late to school, looking sleepy and disheveled from their late night. Blake and Shawn exchanged worried glances, hoping their friends would still play well.



After school, the team met at the park for the game, a buzz of excitement in the air. Blake, Ricky, Shawn, and Sam turned to each other, a shared determination in their eyes.



"Yeah, let's do this!" Ricky and Sam declared, grabbing their gloves with a new sense of purpose. The game was about to begin under the bright stadium lights.