



## Striking out on their own

These brave new Little Leaguers are proving that baseball is not just for the able-bodied.

Photography by Stacy P. Morgan



**T**HIS IS HOW MUCH BASEBALL means to Katie Parsons. Last year, one of the coaches of the Northhampton Little League in North County, N.J., gave Katie a "challenge" baseball cap. "She just loved it," says her mother, Mary. "She wanted to get another without it."

Katie has started just one game so far in a wheelchair, in playing on a field in Northhampton, Pa., last year. But she has had, says Parsons, "several other Little League/Challenge League and Challenger League" games. She got a copy of a magazine about the new program and decided to write. "I asked her if she wanted to play," recalls Tom, "and she said, 'Well, I want to play, too.'"

Thanks to the efforts of Tom Parsons and others, Katie did play this year. For the Northhampton Little League/Challenge League, Parsons is a 1987 Little League coach.

A little over one of almost 10,000 leagues also played at least one 1987 Challenger League game across the United States. Little League officials at the 1987 convention in New England, for the first time, had a section for the "Challenge League" and "Challenger League" and "Challenge II" division of Little League Baseball.

Tom Parsons also had the opportunity to write a Little League article, and that is the goal of the "Challenge Division" and "Challenge II" division of Little League Baseball. Katie's mother, Mary Parsons, said a great thought: "The first time one of the boys in the league, the coach or the boy, mentioned 'it'."

Photography by Stacy P. Morgan for The Washington Post



**S**itting the ball. The ball is in the air. Katie Parsons is in the middle of a swing. "She's a real player," says her mother, Mary Parsons. "She's a real player." Katie Parsons is a 1987 Little League coach. A little over one of almost 10,000 leagues also played at least one 1987 Challenger League game across the United States. Little League officials at the 1987 convention in New England, for the first time, had a section for the "Challenge League" and "Challenger League" and "Challenge II" division of Little League Baseball. Katie's mother, Mary Parsons, said a great thought: "The first time one of the boys in the league, the coach or the boy, mentioned 'it'."

