



PUPPY TOWN STARS



SOCCER CLUB

Charlie Finds a Team

By Steve Jameson



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Charlie Finds a Team



Charlie Cocker lived in Puppy Town. Puppy Town was built by Charlie's great- great grandfather and was open to all animals. "Charlie thought Puppy Town was *"outrageous"*. Outrageous meant, "terrific, great, wonderful" to Charlie and his friends.

Charlie lived with his Uncle Tom and Aunt Peg Horseman. Many people thought Tom had been a cowboy, because he always wore a big cowboy hat. Tom had actually been a professional soccer player with the Detroit Pony Express. He had played against many of the world's best teams, including England's, Manless United.

Charlie loved to play with his soccer ball. He thought soccer was *"outrageous"*. Charlie dribbled his ball all over the yard. Charlie could even perform toe taps.

However, Charlie's all time favorite trick was the roll over. Charlie would play roll over all day, if his Aunt Peg would let him. She would always stop

him to come inside and wash his paws before dinner, or take out the trash, or tidy up his room, or some other boring thing like that.

One day, Charlie was sitting next to his Uncle Tom, watching a soccer game on tv.

“Uncle Tom, can I play on a real soccer team?” asked Charlie.

“That could be difficult,” replied Uncle Tom. “There is only the Wolves, and they only allow real wolves on the team.”

“Oh, I don't want to play with those mean dumb wolves anyway,” sighed Charlie.

Charlie thought for a moment. Then a big smile came across his face.

“I'll start my own team and you can be the coach, Uncle Tom”, said Charlie.

“If you find the players, I will be the coach,” said Uncle Tom.

“*Outrageous,*” shouted Charlie, throwing his paws in the air.

“These kids today,” declared Uncle Tom, shaking his head.

Brittany Penguin



Early next morning, Charlie set out dribbling his ball around Puppy Town to find players for his team.

It wasn't long before he saw Brittany Penguin. Brittany was waddling down the street eating an ice cream for breakfast.

“Brittany!” shouted Charlie. “Would you like to join my soccer team?”

“ Soccer, I love soccer,” stated Brittany. “I used to play it all the time when I lived at the South Pole. Pass the ball to me, Charlie, and I will show you my favorite trick.”

Charlie passed Brittany the ball and she began to pass it from foot to foot. She started slowly and then went faster and faster and faster. She went so fast that Charlie wasn't sure if he could see the ball.

“That was *outrageous!*” exclaimed Charlie, with joy. “With that skill, you could be a defender.”

Charlie and Brittany went side by side down the street. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball then, passed it to Brittany who passed the ball from foot to foot at great speed. Brittany then gave the ball back to Charlie.

““Oh no!” exclaimed Brittany. “I almost forgot. I have to go to the store to buy fish for dinner. I’ll see you on Saturday for practice.”

Brittany left Charlie and waddled off towards Majors Supermarket.

“Right,” said Charlie. “I have Brittany and myself. That makes two,” said Charlie, doing a toe tap on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away two, leaves nine. I only need nine more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed nine toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Sussie Snake



Charlie dribbled across the street and around the corner and there he saw Sussie Snake.

“Hi Sussie! I’m starting a soccer team. Do you want to join?” asked Charlie.

“Soccer, I love soccer. I played it all the time growing up in Brazil,” said Sussie.

“Pass the ball to me, Charlie, and I will show you my favorite trick”.

Charlie passed the ball to Sussie. She Pulled the ball back and away from Charlie and began to dribble, twisting and turning, turning and twisting around Charlie. She started slowly and then went faster and faster and faster. Charlie was practically placed in a trance from the graceful movement.

“Wow, that was *outrageous!* I’ve never seen anyone move like that before,”

said Charlie. “You would make a great midfielder.”

Charlie and Sussie went side by side

down the street. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball, then passed it to Sussie who dribbled, twisting and turning with the ball at great speed.

Sussie then gave the ball back to Charlie.

“Oh!” exclaimed Sussie. “I almost forgot, I was on my way to have my shoes heeled for the Mayoral Ball. I’ve been invited by the Fants. I’ll see you on Saturday for practice.”

“Now, let me see,” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Sussie and myself. That makes three.” said Charlie, doing three toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away three, leaves eight. I only need eight more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed eight toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Sookie Squirrel



Charlie continued to dribble around Puppy Town. He went around a corner and under the railroad bridge. There he saw Sookie Squirrel.

“Hi Sookie! I’m starting a soccer team. Do you want to join?” asked Charlie.

“Soccer, I love soccer,” stated Sookie. “I play it all the time. I don’t have a ball, but an acorn works just as well, in a pinch. Pass the ball to me, Charlie, and I’ll show you my favorite trick.”

Charlie passed the ball to Sookie. She began to dart to and fro performing stop turns all over the place. She started slowly and then went faster and faster and faster until Charlie lost his balance and fell over.

“Wow, that was *outrageous*. I’ve never seen moves like that before,” said Charlie. “You would make a great midfielder.”

Charlie and Sookie went side by side down the street. Charlie performed a roll

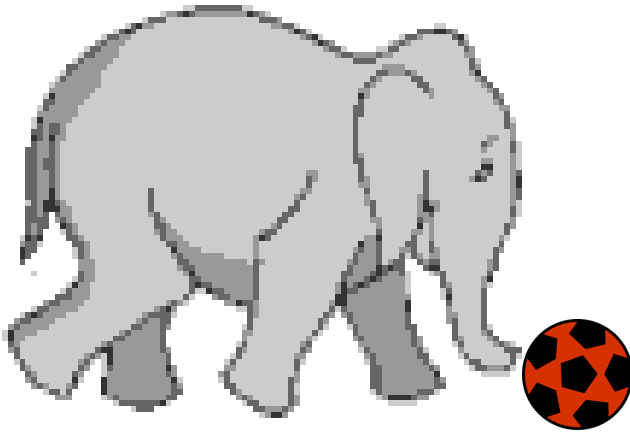
over with the ball, then passed it to Sookie who darted to and fro performing stop turns with the ball at great speed. Sookie then gave the ball back to Charlie.

“Oh no!” screamed Sookie. “I’m supposed to be at my grandmother’s house, to help her cross the street. I’ll see you on Saturday for practice.”

“Now, let me see,” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Sussie, Sookie and myself. That makes four,” said Charlie, doing four toe taps with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away four, leaves seven. I only need seven more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed seven toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Ernie (L. E. Fant)



Charlie continued to dribble around Puppy Town.

Suddenly, Charlie stopped. “I have three girls and only one boy on the team,” thought Charlie. “I need to find a boy to join my team. I know, I’ll see if Ernie wants to play.”

Leonard Ernest Fant was the son of Puppy Town’s mayor. His father’s first name was also Leonard, so people called him by his middle name, that way no one would be confused. Ernie was big and rather slow, but he was surprisingly light on his feet.

“I’m sure that I can find a position for Ernie to play,” said Charlie.

Charlie dribbled back under the railroad bridge around two corners to Main Street. Charlie began to skip as he dribbled. He was feeling rather proud of himself.

At the top of Main Street was the townhall. Ernie was sitting on the steps eating peanuts and throwing the shells in the street.

“Hi, Ernie! I’m starting a soccer team. Do want to join?” asked Charlie.

“Soccer, I hate soccer!” exclaimed Ernie.

That wasn’t the answer Charlie was hoping for.

“Ernie, won’t you get into trouble for throwing the shells in the street?” inquired Charlie.

“My dad’s the mayor. I can do what I want,” stated Ernie.

“Leonard Ernest Fant. What do you think you are doing!!” came a booming voice from behind.

Ernie turned to see his mother come bounding down the townhall steps.

“Pick up all of those shells at once, young man and place them in the garbage can, before I tell your father what you said,” commanded Ernie’s mother.

“Yes mother,” said a now sheepish Ernie.

“Charles, when is the practice for your soccer team?” inquired Mrs. Fant.

“Saturday at 9am,” said Charlie.

“Ernest will be there,” replied Mrs Fant.

“Oh Mom!” cried Ernie, “You always want to embarrass me.”

“Ernest, you know that is not true, You are a very good soccer player” said Mrs Fant.. “Charles, he starts for his school team.”

Ernie attended the prestigious Royal Game Academy.

“Pass him the ball Charles, and watch him do his favorite trick,” added Mrs. Fant.

Charlie passed the ball to Ernie. He began to move the ball from side to side. Not with his feet but his trunk. He started slowly and then went faster and faster and faster, until Charlie began to feel quite dizzy.

“Wow, that was *outrageous*. I’ve never seen moves like that before,” said Charlie. “I think that I have found a great defender.”

Charlie and Ernie went side by side down the street. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball then passed it to Ernie who moved the ball from side to side with his trunk at great speed. Ernie then gave the ball back to Charlie.

“Ernest!” shouted an excited Mrs. Fant. “We must leave now. I almost forgot we have an appointment to get our ears cleaned for tonight’s Mayoral Ball. We’ll see you on Saturday for practice.”

Mrs Fant began dragging Ernie by the trunk back up the steps to the townhall. All the while Ernie complained loudly that he had just washed his ears last month.

“Now, let me see,” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Susssie, Sookie, Ernie and myself. That makes five,” said Charlie, doing five toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away five, leaves six. I only need six more players to make my team.” Charlie performed six toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Peter Giraffe



Charlie continued to dribble the ball around Puppy Town, looking for more players for his team. He went from one side of the street to the other and back again. He turned corners to the right and to the left. He even had to back out of a narrow street, when a delivery truck was heading his way.

The townhall clock struck twelve o'clock. Charlie performed toe taps to each "*Boing*".

He was beginning to feel hungry.

"I think it is time for lunch," said Charlie. "I have a five dollar gift certificate to Snausages R US in my pocket. I think it is time that I used it. Charlie performed five toe taps then, skipped away dribbling the ball to his favorite restaurant.

Inside Snausages R Us, Charlie found Peter Giraffe serving behind the counter.

“Hi, Charlie.” said Peter. “I see you’ve been playing soccer.”

“Yes,” replied Charlie. “You don’t happen to play. Do you?”

“Do I!” exclaimed Peter. “It’s my favorite sport. I’m almost done here. How about after you finish your Snausage Combo, we go outside and I show you my favorite trick.”

Charlie wolfed down his food and drink so fast that he almost made himself sick.

When outside, Peter took the ball from Charlie and began to bounce the ball on his head. Peter bounced it and bounced it and bounced it so many times on his head that even Charlie’s head began to ache.

Wow, that was *outrageous*. I’ve never seen moves like that before,” said Charlie. “You would make a great forward.”

Charlie and Peter went side by side down the street. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball then picked it up with his paws, he gently tossed it for Peter to head it back to him.

A voice from across the street shouted out. “Peter! Peter! please come quickly. My kitten is stuck in the tree.”

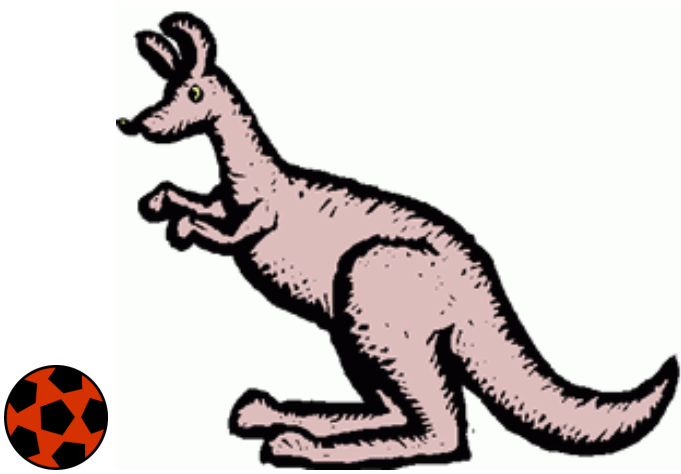
“I’ll be right there, Mrs. Cat,” replied Peter. “Charlie, I’ll see you on

Saturday at practice.”

“Now, let me see,” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Sussie, Sookie, Ernie, Peter and myself. That makes six,” said Charlie, doing six toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away six, leaves five. I only need five more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed five toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Bruce Kangaroo



Charlie continued to dribble his ball around Puppy Town, looking for more players for his team. He dribbled along Belsay Road and down Maple Avenue. He passed the soccer complex, hoping to see someone at play. All he saw was the Raccoon Waste Management Company, who were emptying the trash cans, and the Billy Goat's Lawn Service, who were busily trimming up the fields.

Charlie dribbled all the way to Majors Supermarket. There he saw Bruce Kangaroo with his mother, Sheila. All the children loved Mrs.. Kangaroo. She was known to all, as Sheila. She even gave them rides in her pouch.

Sheila stood looking rather cross at Bruce. The grocery bags were peering out of her pouch. Bruce was hopping up and down trying to get something out of one of the bags.

“Bruce! Will you stop that at once. I will not tell you again. You will have to wait until you get home. The parking lot is not the place to play soccer,”

Sheila said.

Charlie's ears stood up high. "Soccer. You play soccer?" he asked Bruce

"Not yet," replied Bruce. "But, my mom has enrolled me in The Little Kritters class, and I can't wait."

"I'm starting my own team," added Charlie. "Do you know any tricks?"

"Of course, he does," declared Sheila. "All Kangaroos can make the ball hop. Show Charlie how it is done"

Sheila reached in her pouch and, from one of the grocery bags she pulled a brand new soccer ball and passed it to Bruce.

Bruce placed the ball between his feet and hopped up and down. The ball hopped with him. He hopped higher and higher and higher. Then he placed his foot under the ball and, with a quick flick of his toes, the ball hopped by itself into the air.

Charlie giggled and said, "That's *outrageous*. I've never seen anything like that before. Do you want to join my team?"

"Can I Mom, can I!" shouted Bruce hopping up and down.

"Of course you can," said Sheila. "I want you to go to the Little Kickers class as well. Your father and I want you to get a full education"

Charlie and Bruce went side by side down the street. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball then passed it to Bruce who moved the ball up and down between his feet at great heights. Bruce then gave the ball back to Charlie.

“Boys, Boys, stop at once!” shouted Sheila. “Whatever was I thinking of, letting you two boys play soccer in Majors parking lot. It is much too dangerous. Bruce, you and I have to be going. We have to get our spring cleaning done. We’ll see you on Saturday for practice.” And, with that, they turned and sprang off into the distance.

Now, let me see.” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Sussie, Sookie, Ernie, Peter, Bruce and myself. That makes seven.” said Charlie, doing seven toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away seven, leaves four. I only need four more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed four toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice. Then moved on.

Herbie Skunk



Charlie continued to dribble the ball around Puppy Town, looking for more players for his team. He dribbled across the street and around the corner and into Puppy Town Park. There, he saw lots of animals at play. There were the Fox twins on the swings, Gerry Gecko was climbing an apple tree and the whole Rabbit family was playing “Duck, Duck, Goose”.

Charlie was beginning to think that he would never find another soccer player, when he saw someone playing with a soccer ball beyond the swings.

“Oh, no,” said Charlie. “It’s Herbie Skunk. I don’t really want him on my team. He smells.”

It is true, Herbie did smell. He rarely bathed. He never used deodorant, and he had the worst diet of all the people in Puppy Town. Herbie’s idea of a six course meal was a three week old bean burrito with lots of jalapeno peppers, onions, garlic and smothered in mustard and ketchup.

Charlie quietly turned to leave the park and Herbie's smell. But it was too late. He had been spotted.

"Charlie! Charlie Cocker!" shouted Herbie. "You're just the puppy I've been looking for."

Herbie bounced towards Charlie. Charlie froze, not sure whether to run or hide. Mrs. Rabbit gathered her children and ran to the nearest hole. The twins fell off the swings and ran home crying. Gerry Gecko climbed further and further up the apple tree.

"Hey Charlie, my old buddy, old friend," said Herbie, with a very wide smile on his face. "Sookie Squirrel tells me you're starting a soccer team."

"Yes," said Charlie, through a scrunched up face. The smell was so overwhelming that tears began to fall down his face.

"Do you think that there could be a place for me, old buddy, old pal?" asked Herbie.

Charlie wasn't quite sure what to say. All he knew was that he needed to move away from Herbie before he fainted.

"Come on, Charlie. I'll be your best friend," said Herbie.

"I guess so," replied Charlie, without moving his lips.

Herbie bounced up and down singing, “I love soccer, I love soccer. It’s the best game in the whole wide world.”

“Pass the ball to me, Charlie, and I’ll show you my favorite trick.”

Charlie reluctantly passed the ball to Herbie. He dribbled the ball, then began to wave his feet over the top of the ball, as if he was giving it a haircut. He started slowly and then went faster and faster and faster. Amongst all the movement came a faint sound “Phewwph”.

“Oops. Sorry,” said Herbie. “It must have been the cabbage soup that I had for lunch.”

Charlie began to giggle. He thought, with talent like that and a smell like that, no defender would ever want to mark Herbie.

“Let’s pass the ball around,” said Herbie.

“Ok,” replied Charlie. ”But, how about we work on distance passing.”

Charlie and Herbie moved further apart. Charlie performed a roll over with the ball, then made a long pass to Herbie, who performed scissors over the ball at great speed. Then gave it back to Charlie.

“Oh!” exclaimed Charlie. “I need to go home. I promised my Aunt Peg that I would. Er, er,” Charlie thought for a moment. Then blurted out, “I would take out the trash. That’s right, take out the trash.”

“Oh! that’s my favorite chore too .” added Herbie.

““I’ll see you on Saturday at practice,” said Charlie, as he hurriedly dribbled away giggling to himself.

Charlie arrived home to find Uncle Tom mowing the lawn.

“Well Charlie, do you have a team yet?” inquired Uncle Tom.

“Now, let me see,.” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Sussie, Sookie, Ernie, Peter, Bruce, Herbie and myself. That makes eight,.” said Charlie, doing eight toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away eight, leaves three. I only need three more players to make my team.”

Charlie performed three toe taps, yelled out “*outrageous!*” at the top of his voice.

“Very good,.” said Uncle Tom. “Now, your Aunt Peg wants you to take out the trash before you wash your paws before supper.”

Charlie trotted into the house, saying to himself, “This has been a very good day. In fact, it has been better than good. It has been, *outrageous.*”

Mia Hamster and David Peckham



The next morning, at breakfast, Aunt Peg reminded Charlie that they were all going to the Puppy Town Art Fair down by the lake.

“I’m not going to any soppo art show,” stated Charlie.

“Oh, yes you are, young pup,” declared Aunt Peg.

Charlie’s head hung low, in fact so low that his nose was almost in his bowl of kibbles.

“I can’t go. I have a cold. Ahh Ahhh Ahhhh Schewww!!!!” Charlie forced a sneeze, that sent a spray of kibbles across the room.

Uncle Tom began to laugh, but caught the disapproving glare of Aunt Peg just in time. “Ah Ah, Aaaa, that will be enough of that nonsense, Charlie. We are all going to the art show whether we all want to or not.” said Uncle Tom.

“It’s an art fair, Tom, not an art show,” said Aunt Peg, correcting Uncle Tom,

“Same thing,” replied Uncle Tom.

“It is certainly not,” stated Aunt Peg. “Neither of you have an ounce of culture”

Charlie and Uncle Tom grinned at each other and said nothing.

The art show had its’ usual booths with paintings of lighthouses, country views, and of course the usual painting on velvet of humans playing cards. Charlie thought any painting with humans doing animal things like playing cards, drinking tea out of a cup, or driving a car was “*outrageous*”. Aunt Aunt Peg thought that they were amusing, but rather tacky and really did not belong at an art fair.

Uncle Tom and Charlie followed behind Aunt Peg for as long as they could. It wasn’t that Aunt Peg went so fast. It was because she went so *slow*. Looking at every painting, vase, sculpture, or piece of drift wood.

Charlie had spotted something familiar bouncing around behind one of the booths.

Surely his eyes were playing tricks. What would a soccer ball be doing at an art fair?

“Uncle Tom, is that a soccer ball bouncing between those two booths?”

Charlie asked.

But, Uncle Tom wasn't listening. He was already moving in the direction of the ball and, asking for a pass?.

Charlie ran to catch Uncle Tom up. As soon as he reached the back of the booth he saw his uncle Tom passing a ball back and forward between himself and a hamster and a rooster.

“Soccer, I love soccer,” exclaimed Charlie “Can I join in?”

“Sure,” said the rooster. “My name is David Peckham, and this is my good friend, Mia Hamster.”

Charlie and Uncle Tom introduced themselves and began to pass the ball around.

Every time David received the ball, he would fake as if to move one way, then quickly side step to take the ball the other way. Charlie thought it was quite an “*outrageous*” move.

Every time Mia received the ball, she would stop the ball and drag it back behind her very quickly and then pass it on.

Charlie added his roll overs to the routine. And so it went, Charlie doing a roll over, then passing it to David, who would perform a step over turn, then pass it to Mia, who would perform her drag back, and finally to Uncle Tom, who would make a simple touch of the ball then pass it to Charlie. And, then the whole process would start over again.

All of a sudden, Charlie stopped and blurted out, “Do you two want to join my team?”

“Yes,” said Mia

“I’d love to,” said David

“*Outrageous!*” shouted Charlie

“*Outrageous!*” replied Mia and David.

“Charlie, how many players do you have now?” asked Uncle Tom.

“Now, let me see,” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Susssie, Sookie, Ernie, Peter, Bruce, Herbie, Mia and David and myself. That makes ten,” said Charlie, doing ten toe taps on the ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away ten, leaves one. I only need one more player to make my team.”

Charlie performed one big toe tap.

“*Outrageous!*” declared Mai and David together.

“Oh no!” sighed Uncle Tom. “ Peg is looking for us. We had better go.”

“See you on Saturday for practice,” yelled out David and Mia, as Charlie and Uncle Tom moved towards a searching Aunt Peg.

Uncle Tom and Charlie took their place behind Aunt Peg and continued around the art fair, pretending to be interested in the paintings, vases, sculptures and pieces of driftwood.

Ellen Octopus



“Uncle Tom?” questioned Charlie. “I don’t have a goalkeeper.”

“I was just thinking about that very problem,” replied Uncle Tom. “Quietly come with me. Aunt Peg will never miss us.”

Uncle Tom took Charlie further along the row of booths until they came to a booth where Mr. Octopus was painting several pictures of humans playing cards. Each tentacle worked on a separate painting.

“Now, that is art,” stated Charlie.

Uncle Tom wasn't looking at the artist, but at his daughter who was sitting in the corner juggling several soccer balls.

Charlie looked over at Uncle Tom and said, “Are you thinking what I am thinking?”

“I certainly am,” said Uncle Tom.

“Hi, I'm Ellen Octopus. Can I ask what you are staring at?” asked the young octopus.

“Hopefully, my next goalkeeper,” said Charlie. “I'm starting a soccer team. Would you like to be my goalkeeper.”

“Would I!” exclaimed Ellen. “I love soccer. I've always dreamed of playing on a real team.”

At that she threw a ball to each Charlie and Uncle Tom. They took turns at taking shots at Ellen. Her tentacles grasped each shot with ease.

“Hey, be careful. You'll mess up my art,” said Mr. Octopus.

“Ok, we’d better go,.” said Uncle Tom

“See you for practice on Saturday” said Ellen.

Charlie and Uncle Tom moved back towards Aunt Peg. She never even noticed that they had left.

“How many players do you have now?” asked Uncle Tom.

Now, let me see.” said a puzzled Charlie. “ I have Brittany, Susssie, Sookie, Ernie, Peter, Bruce, Herbie, Mia, David, Ellen and myself. That makes eleven,.” said Charlie, doing eleven imaginary toe taps on an imaginary ball with each name. “You need eleven players to make a real team. Eleven, take away eleven, leaves none. I have enough to make my team.”

“Outrageous” shouted out both Uncle Tom and Aunt Peg.

