

The birds and the animals play ball

Many years ago, the animals challenged the birds to a great ballgame. The birds accepted. Bear was the captain for the animals, Eagle for the birds. After the ball dance, the animals were bragging about how bad they were going to beat the bird team. The tree perched birds waited for the captain to give the word to start the ball game.

Along came two small four legged animals. They climbed the tree to address Eagle. Eagle asked why they didn't join the animal team. The little ones said the animals laughed at how small they were. Eagle felt sorry for the little ones, allowing them to join the team.

The bird team decided to make wings out of the groundhog skin atop the drum used during the ball dance. The birds stretched the hide with cane splints and fastened them to the front legs of one of the small animals. This is how the bat came to be. Two strong birds used their beaks to stretch the skin on either side of the small animal until they created a flying squirrel.

As the ball game began, the flying squirrel grabbed the ball, throwing it to another bird. The birds kept the ball in the air for a long time but finally dropped it. Bear rushed over to grab it but Martin darted after it throwing the ball to the Bat who was so fast that even the Deer couldn't catch it. The Bat finally threw the ball to the pole winning the game for the birds.

For winning the game, the birds gave Martin a beautiful gourd so he could build a nest. Today, he still has it.