

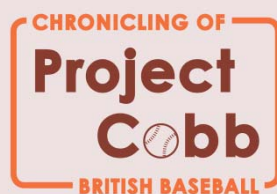
BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 10

<http://www.gbbsa.org.uk/mercury.html>

August 1975

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BASEBALL

Mercury.

No. 10. AUGUST 1975.

EUROPEAN CUP.

The first round of the European Cup was played in two groups; Group A in Madrid, Group B in Rotterdam. Group A consisted of Haarlem Nicols (Netherlands), Fortitudo (Italy), and Condepols (Spain). Group B comprised Rotterdam Sparta, Bagarmossens (Sweden), Luchtbal (Belgium), and Nice University Club (France).

Results and Final Standings.

Group A (Madrid). Condepols 3 - Haarlem Nicols 5: Haarlem Nicols 6 - Fortitudo 1: Fortitudo 6 - Condepols 7: 1st. Haarlem Nicols 4pts; 2nd. Condepols 2pts; 3rd. Fortitudo 0pts.

Group B (Rotterdam). Rotterdam Sparta 16 - Bagarmossens 2: Nice University Club 1 - Luchtbal 19: Bagarmossens 1 - Luchtbal 9: Nice University Club 0 - Rotterdam Sparta 28: Bagarmossens 13 - Nice University Club 7: Luchtbal 0 - Rotterdam Sparta 28: 1st. Rotterdam Sparta 6pts; 2nd. Luchtbal 4pts; 3rd. Bagarmossens 2pts; 4th. Nice University Club 0pts.

Haarlem Nicols, Condepols, Rotterdam Sparta, and Luchtbal proceed to the final group.

Rotterdam Sparta playing on their own ground Nieuw-Vreelust drew attendances of about 1,000 to see their game with Bagarmossens, a similar number versus Nice University Club, and about 1,200 to see them play Luchtbal. These attendances contrast strangely with the 200 spectators that games between Rotterdam Sparta and Haarlem Nicols have been drawing during the past few years.

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ENGLAND v. WEST GERMANY.

As reported in the April number, the Confederation Europeenne de Baseball Amateur, decided that these two countries should play a game to decide on a replacement for Belgium, which had announced that it would not be taking part in the European Championships at Barcelona. The B.A.B.F. tried to arrange for the game to be played in London on May 11th., as the West German team had requested a London venue. Unfortunately, Robert Garrod who had been given the task of organising the game in London, was unable to obtain a suitable ground. It chanced that the Merseyside American Baseball League had arranged to stage an All-Star game on that date, on the ground of Southport A.F.C., a Football League club. The game was arranged in order to raise funds for Southport A.F.C. who are in difficulties financially; and also to play a baseball game under show-case conditions, a rare event in England.

The Merseyside League invited the B.A.B.F. to play the international game at Southport, where it would be played in place of the well advertised All-Star game that had been arranged. The B.A.B.F. accepted the invitation.

The game was played under ideal conditions in front of some thousands of spectators. West Germany won 13 - 0. The West German pitcher had a perfect game going into the ninth inning, only to see his perfect game disappear when his catcher dropped a third-strike. The West German team scored nine runs in the third inning, and had ten hits, and two home runs in the game.

The British Amateur Baseball Federation faced problems as a result of the financial strain caused by playing this game. Because of the circumstances under which the game was played, the B.A.B.F. had received no portion of the gate receipts, yet the game had cost £414.13. Included in this amount was the sum of £105 which the hire of a coach to transport the West Germans to and from London had cost. Also a Belgian umpire claimed £105 in travelling expenses; this was exclusive of meals and overnight expenses which had been met by the Merseyside League. By drawing on reserves the B.A.B.F. were able to reduce the deficit to £258.68, but intensive fund-raising is necessary if the B.A.B.F. is to reach a state of solvency, and all areas have been asked to assist in this effort.

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C.E.B.A.

1974 Statistics.

	Players.		Umpires.	Scorers.	Clubs.	Fields.
	Senior	Junior				
Italy	5,470	19,141(x)	417	108	337	72
Netherlands	5,286	3,744	100	20	165	135
Spain	691	1,896	79	51	184	9
Belgium	426	58	12	14	10	9
France	208	-	6	-	9	3
Sweden	123	66	8	7	14	4
West Germany	65	120	7	5	7	4
England	(y)	(y)	(y)	(y)	(y)	(y)
Czechoslovakia	114	-	10	5	5	3

(x) 15,807 juniors in 1973.

(y) Figures for England not available because of reorganisation.

San Marino did not supply details for 1973, and appears to have also failed to give details for 1974.

I have reproduced information supplied by C.E.B.A. with the exception of a category Other Members.

Readers may care to compare the above statistics with the 1973 figures given in the August 1974 issue of Baseball Mercury, and consider these comments. I am of the opinion that the countries composing C.E.B.A. have probably different standards, so that figures given by one country are not strictly comparable with those of other countries. Also I suspect that countries are not consistent from year to year in compiling their own statistics.

One country for example will include any site on which baseball is played as a "field", this is the case in England, whereas another country will only supply the number of authentic "baseball fields" in its statistics. The 1973 figures had no junior players in England, whereas everybody connected with the game in England knew that there were junior players.

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HUMBERSIDE SCENE by Don Smallwood.

Local fans were greatly interested by the visit of West Germany to play England in May, unfortunately Hull was out of the running to host this game, as when it proved impossible to stage it in the South of England, and it had to be switched elsewhere, Hull Aces ground was being re-surfaced, and Hull Royals new ground at Orchard Park was still under construction.

Peter Darnell (Aces) and Peter Bolton (Royals) were selected for the national squad. Darnell well deserves this honour, he took over Hull Aces when many of the players who had brought national honours to the club were reaching the age of retirement. His managerial role was to try to rebuild the team, and though not yet among the national honours they are still one of the best teams in the country.

The pilot scheme sponsored by the Sports Council was well received in the schools. In connection with this scheme there was hope that an England v. Italy game might be played on Humberside in late season; also that a Spanish junior team might visit England.

A new club has been formed Hull Nomads, W. Holmes is still anxious to hear from players willing to join Nomads.

A highlight of our season was the June 1st. clash between the Humberside All-Stars and Merseyside All-Stars. Going into the 4th. innings the game was a scoreless tie, then Merseyside scored a run on an error. Humberside then went ahead 3 - 1, but Merseyside made it 3 - 2. Dave Pinder scored to put the home team ahead 4 - 2. U.S. Serviceman, Don Hems pitching for Merseyside drove in a run to make it 4 - 3. The game was saved for Humberside by a brilliant double-play between Jellie and Bolton. The game certainly enhanced the claims of some local players to be selected for the national squad.

Hull Royals trip to the Low Countries was disappointing as far as results went, but helped to strengthen the ties between Humberside and its nearest European

neighbours. After starting their games well, Royals tended to lose concentration allowing their Dutch and Belgian opponents easy runs, which proved disastrous.

Following their overseas trip Royals settled down in earnest to their programme of league and cup fixtures. Hull Nomads were beaten 22- 8, the next day British champions Nottingham Lions came to Hull, and Royals won a thrilling game 11 - 10, the lead changing hands several times. Royals next gained a decisive victory over Hull Aces 11 - 3, terrible lapses by Aces in the third inning allowed 8 runs to come across the plate. The following Sunday these old rivals clashed yet again in a National Cup contest, but what a contrast this game proved to be. A four hour duration nail-biting battle which went 14 innings. Everyone present will remember this game, none more so than the umpires led by Wilf Holmes, who on a blistering hot day must have lost pounds in weight. Royals won this thriller 8 - 5.

Early in the season the Humberside League held its annual tournament designed to give newcomers an opportunity to try their hand at baseball. As with all such tournaments, novices at first attempt to hit the ball out of the park, until they find that it is not as easy as they imagined. Many good players have been unearthed in Hull in previous years by this type of competition, and this year's crop of rookies should develop a number of stars. This year's "Rookie of the Day" award went to J. McKenzie who gave a good account of himself in the difficult shortstop position.

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SOUTH AFRICA.

Western Province won the inter-provincial championship, with which goes the Arthur Berezowski Cup, for the first time by beating Transvaal 4 -0 in a tense final. A great deal of credit for the victory went to American pitcher Rob Nelson. Showing great control Nelson struck-out 8, while allowing 5 hits. He received magnificent support in the field from a well drilled team that was always on its toes. Western Province got 8 safeties, Ray Tew and Willie Jacobs getting two apiece. For Transvaal only Ronnie Desilla who went 2 for 4 showed anything like normal form. Their recognised big hitters, Kourie, Richards, Corbett, and Schoeman all flopped.

South Africa is to stage the 1977 Intercontinental Cup Tournament. This news came hard on the heels of South Africa's acceptance of an invitation to play in the 1976 World Championships to be held in Taiwan. Last year saw South Africa competing for the first time in a World Championship Tournament, held in St. Petersburg, Florida. The Springboks had an inauspicious debut in World Championship play, but there can be no doubt that the competition has benefitted the game in South Africa.

Two top softball teams have toured South Africa. A New Zealand mens team, Cameron Cardinals, the Kiwi champions made a three week tour in which they played 15 games against the strongest clubs in South Africa, mostly in double-bills.

An American women's team, the Sun City Saints also toured the Union, Sun City were runners-up in the 1974 U.S. championships and were formidable opponents, they were in S.A. for 15 days, playing in half a dozen centres.

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EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The European Championships took place at Barcelona from 25th. July to 3rd. August. The Montjuich Municipal Baseball Field, constructed in 1954 and already used for two earlier European Championships, 1955 and 1960, had received a complete face-lift. Lights were installed, an electric scoreboard, new dressing-rooms, and 1400 new seats. The field measured 286 feet down the foul lines, and 325 feet to centre-field, with a concrete outfield wall about ten feet high. Because of these dimensions predictions were made before the tournament that homeruns would be plentiful, such proved to be the case.

Organising secretary for the tournament was Miguel Ortin, secretary of the Federacion Catalana de Beisbol y Sofbol, who stated that a large part of the income of the tournament would be raised by the fees for three live TV transmissions.

Results

Pool A. West Germany 6 - Sweden 3. W/p. Budny, L/p. Jobs. HR. Poppenhofer, Konig (W.G.): Netherlands 9 - West Germany 3. W/p. Neuteboom, L/p. Menzel. HR. Van de Berg, Jacobs, Zschuschen, Ben Richardson (N). Konig (W.G.): Sweden 1 - Netherlands 12. W/p. Vakkers. L/p. Leander. HR. Zschuschen, Sieval, Fijth (N). Standings. 1st. Netherlands 2-4, 2nd. West Germany 2-2, 3rd. Sweden 2-0.

Pool B. Italy 9 - Spain 0. W/p. Miele. L/p. Villarejo, HR. Romano, Russon, Orrizzi, Ciccione 2, Varial (I): France 0 - Italy 13. W/p. Romano. L/p. Kadri.

HR. Di Santo (I): Spain 11 - France 1. W/p. Gonzales, L/p. Kunetz. Standings. 1st. Italy 2-4, 2nd. Spain 2-2, 3rd. France 2-0. Italy v. Netherlands, and Spain v. West Germany were then played as the best of five, while France met Sweden in a best of three series. Results, unfortunately incomplete for Spain v. West Germany, and France v. Sweden. Italy 0 - Netherlands 2. W/p. Urbanus. L/p. Miele. HR. Lewis (N): Italy 7 - Netherlands 1. W/p. Romano. L/p. Neuteboom. HR. Ben Richardson (N). Orrizzi (I): Netherlands 1 - Italy 5. W/p. Matone. L/p. Vaekkers. HR. Romano, Spica, Castelli, Di Santo (I): Italy 4 - Netherlands 9. W/p. Urbanus. L/p. Miele. HR. Romano, Castelli, Spica (I). Van de Berg, Horeman (N): Netherlands 4 - Italy 9. W/p. Romano. L/p. Neuteboom. HR. Romano, Di Santo (I). Urbanus, Zschuschen (N). Italy won the series 3 games to 2, gaining its second European title, the first having been won in 1954 at Antwerp, which was the first ever European Championship Tournament. The Italian squad at Barcelona had 13 players who were former U.S. citizens but who now hold Italian passports. This strengthened Italy enormously, especially in pitching. The standout player of the tournament was Mike Romano (I) who won two games versus Netherlands, when not pitching he played shortstop at a level of skill unmatched by any other player at Barcelona. Spain 7 - West Germany 1. W/p. Casillos. L/p. Budny. HR. Villarejo 2 (Sp). West Germany 9 - Spain 4: West Germany 6 - Spain 3: Sweden 8 - France 4. W/p. Jobs. L/p. Kunetz. The final standings were 1st. Italy, 2nd. Netherlands, 3rd. West Germany, 4th. Spain, 5th. Sweden, 6th. France.

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The next issue of Baseball Mercury should appear in December. The subscription for four issues is 30p. Subscriptions and any items which readers may wish to send for inclusion in future issues should be sent to William Morgan, 89, Sterndale Road, London, W14 OHX.

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MISCELLANY.

In June, Australia competed in the 11th. Baseball Federation of Asia Series, held in South Korea, and followed this up with a tour of Japan. The 11th. B.F.A. Series resulted in a win for South Korea which won 7 and tied 1. Japan finished second and Australia a creditable third, ahead of Taiwan and Philippines. The Australian team won 4½ games, losing two to South Korea and one to Japan. The game has made great progress in Australia in the last ten years. Formerly it was an off-season sport indulged in by cricket players, nowadays baseball players tend to think of it as their main sport, a number of leading players have ceased playing cricket in order to concentrate on baseball.

On 28/29 June Belgium played two games against West Germany at Antwerp. On the 28th. Belgium won 10 - 9 in 12 innings. On the 29th. Belgium won 13 - 12. In the two games West Germany hit 9 homeruns and Belgium 2.

On July 6th. Burtonwood Americans retained the Lancashire Cup by beating Liverpool Tigers 6 - 5 at the NALGO ground.

On 24th. June California Stags went to Italy, there they played games against the top Italian clubs. Immediately prior to the departure of the Italian National team to Barcelona. California Stags played 5 games versus Italy, winning 2 and losing 3.

The Svenska Baseball Forbundet had a new national coach this season. He was Steve Land, assistant coach at University of Wisconsin. In 1973 the head coach at Wisconsin acted as Swedish national coach, while in 1974 the Swedish coach was Ron Brown who coaches at Chapman College, Los Angeles. This year Brown acted as assistant coach to Lands.

The Swedish team selected for the European Tournament was considered the best selection ever. For the first time the players did not have to pay their own travelling expenses to the championships.

This season the Swedes have a senior competition of a Division 1 with 7 teams, and two Division 2, a Northern and a Southern with 5 teams in each.

The Swedes have only a small federation, and face tremendous problems in the distances between the centres where the game is played, about 600 miles between clubs at the two extremities. One club Ljusdal Strikes on its formation had to play all its games away from home, as there was no suitable field in its home town, this entailed a round trip of at least 400 miles for every game. Another club Skelleftea is situated within 100 miles of the Arctic Circle.

The finals group of the European Cup is to be played on 20/21 September at Haarlem, Netherlands.

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