

BASEBALL

Mercury.

No. 16. AUGUST 1977.

	C.E.B.A.					
	1976 Statistics.					
	Players.		Umpires.	Scorers.	Clubs.	Fields.
	Senior.	Junior.				
Italy	7,067	25,563	426	123	414	88
Netherlands	5,148	3,772	380	15	149	150
Spain	745	2,808	69	31	224	15
Belgium	292	379	25	20	15	13
Sweden	194	268	46	48	18	9
England(x)	250	60	5	3	28	23
France	151	253	19	7	14	17
West Germany	60	185	8	6	6	5
Czechoslovakia(x)	126	Nil	12	10	5	4
San Marino(x)	25	150	Nil	5	5	2

(x) Figures for 1975 - because the 1976 figures were not available.

Baseball is still expanding in Europe, in addition to the countries listed above, the game is now being played in Denmark, Finland, Poland, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia.

The 1978 World Championships will be organised by Italy, three European countries will be allowed to compete, one of which will be Italy.

The 1976 Mediterranean Cup was played at Parma, Italy, and was won by Germal Parma. France was not represented in the tournament.

Catalunya v. Germal Parma 0 - 11. Canonier v. Catalunya 7 - 0.

Canonier v. Germal Parma 0 - 5.

EUROPEAN CUP. 1977.

First round results.

Pool A(Parma) : Bagarmossens v. Germal Parma 1 - 10. Tetramin Nicols v. Johnson y Johnson 10 - 5. Germal Parma v. Tetramin Nicols 6 - 4. Johnson y Johnson v. Bagarmossens 6 - 12. Bagarmossens v. Tetramin Nicols 0 - 15 (7 inns.). Germal Parma v. Johnson y Johnson 15 - 4.

Pool B(Rimini) : P.U.C. v. Mannheim Tornados 1 - 4. Derbigum Rimini v. Luchtbal 17 - 0. Luchtbal v. P.U.C. 12 - 7. Mannheim Tornados v. Derbigum Rimini 0 - 13. Luchtbal v. Mannheim Tornados 1 - 9. Derbigum Rimini v. P.U.C. 11 - 1.

Germal Parma, Tetramin Nicols, Derbigum Rimini, and Mannheim Tornados qualified to play in the finals, which are scheduled for September 23-25. Qualified clubs have been invited to apply for the right to organise the finals. Clubs applying have to offer a regulation baseball field with a first class lighting system.

* * * * *

MERSEYSIDE REPORT.

The U.S. base at Burtonwood was unable to produce a team this season, due to lack of personnel. This meant we were down to four clubs, but Stan Williams developed a team that he had founded last season. With the aid of appeals on Radio City, which produced several young Americans living in the area, Stan was able to create the "Aintree Indians". Nevertheless, with five teams we still have the problem of the Merseyside League being dominated by two clubs, with a great disparity in standards.

To help the situation, we formed a four team "Minor League", for beginners and youngsters. Trojans managed to field a new team in this league, named Red Sox.

Tigers after many years, left their ground at the NALGO club, Alder Road, and moved out to overspill town Skelmersdale. They are now named Skelmersdale Tigers. Their home ground is now the Skelmersdale F.C. ground, White Moss Park.

Birkdale Bootleggers moved to Southport R.U.F.C. ground, and became Southport Bootleggers.

In addition to the above leagues, the Merseyside American Baseball and Soft-ball Association, also continued to run the Northern Major League, which, this season was officially recognised by the British Amateur Baseball Association. Unfortunately the six team league visualised, was reduced to five, when Nottingham Lions decided not to participate. Nevertheless, there have been some good games played, and we feel that this is the best way to have competitive baseball.

And of course we are also involved in the "Mattesons Yankees League". We, on Merseyside, had high hopes of winning this league, but things didn't work out that way. We have been defeated by the Southern All-Stars, and Humberside All-Stars, although we have won both our home games versus Midlands All-Stars, and Humberside All-Stars.

Up to now, attendances have been very poor, mainly because not enough 'paid for' advertising was used. In the past we have found, that given plenty of coverage, we can get large attendances.

The situation in the leagues is as follows.

Major League. Trojans are leading, with three games to play.

Merseyside League. Trojans and Tigers are tied for the lead, but have yet to meet.

Minor League. Leaders - Lucas Royals.

The Lancashire Cup finalists are Tigers and Trojans. The Artco and Robertson Trophies are still to be resolved.

The baseball scene was brightened last weekend with a visit from Seattle High Schools All-Stars. There was quite an interest shown, particularly in the Southport area.

Southport laid on quite a show for them, and a large attendance saw them beat Trojans by 11 - 8 in the 9th. inning despite trailing the whole game. I believe many new converts were won at this match, mainly due to the excellent commentating by former "Stretford Saint" Peter Dawson.

The High School boys, had, the previous day, defeated Skelmersdale Tigers by an identical score at Skelmersdale. The smartness and discipline of these boys has left a fine impression on all who saw them.

Unfortunately, in Liverpool, we had to take second place in press coverage to the England v. Wales, English Baseball International.

Nevertheless, despite a broken car windscreen and several smashed greenhouse panes, their visit went down very well, and more games of this standard would surely give baseball a boost in this area.

* * * * *

The next issue of Baseball Mercury should appear in December. The subscription for three issues is 30p. Subscriptions and any items for publication should be sent to ; - William Morgan, 89 Sterndale Road, Hammersmith, London, W.14.

NOTTINGHAM NEWS by S. Williams.

Our Junior League, which operated for the first time this year, was a great success. We found that, at this age, 11 to 15 years, the youngsters were attracted like bees round a jam pot. All scheduled games were played without a hitch, and the four teams involved were Cougar Cubs, Lions Cubs, Southglade Eagles, and Top Valley Tigers. Tigers are a school team and we were particularly pleased at the club's formation, which was made possible by the interest and hard work of Mr. Terry Wilson, one of the form masters. Tigers were perhaps a little unlucky to lose most of their games, but were particularly happy to take two points in a clash with Cougar Cubs which ended with a 5 - 4 score. Cougar Cubs played Lions Cubs in two very hard games, the score lines showing a difference of only one run and both teams managing to snatch their home game. Southglade Eagles played consistently well and were very worthy winners of the Nottingham Junior League, gaining 10 points from a possible 12, the final placings were as follows : -

1st. Southglade Eagles, 10 points. 2nd. A tie between Cougar Cubs and Lions Cubs, each having 6 points. 4th. Top Valley Tigers, 2 points.

The "Player of the Year" Trophy for the Juniors was taken by Mark Scotton of the Top Valley Tigers club, who was a very deserving winner.

The Junior clubs all take part in the Lol Whelan Tournament, which was planned as a one-day tournament, and we managed to get the semi-finals played before weather conditions halted proceedings altogether. Lions Cubs and Southglade Eagles got through to the final which has yet to be played.

The Junior Inter-City Tournament for the Nottingham Lions Challenge Trophy, is still to be played at the time of writing. This will be a straight game between Nottingham and Hull as no other area was able to accept our invitation to compete. May we, again, through the Mercury, extend an invitation to all areas to enter a team in this competition for 1978.

The Midland League is well under way with Nottingham Lions, Southglade Hornets, Clifton Cougars, Pressac Panthers, and Corby Red Sox competing for the championship. Nottingham Lions are well on top so far, not having lost a game this season. Corby Red Sox are lying second. The Nottingham Cup was won by Nottingham Lions, who are also through to the B.A.B.F. semi-final.

In the Mattesons Yankees League, Midland Mets have failed to win a game, and have one home fixture left to play. Our two home games in this League have not been treated very favourably weather-wise but we had around 200 people at each game, and the hot dogs went very well.

* * * * *

HUMBERSIDE REPORT by. D. Megson.

This season, we have had an upsurge of spectator interest, due I feel mainly to the Mattesons Yankees League games, where we have had about 1,000 people in attendance. Some of the people attracted to the Yankees League, are now coming to watch the normal league fixtures. We have three senior clubs, Hull Aces, Royals, and Giants.

The Giants seem to be the more organised and disciplined, and being a young side look to have a rosy future.

On the junior side we have shown real progress, having around 150 boys of school age playing in junior leagues. Our local girls, under my guidance, have started playing softball. We have some 26 girls training hard every Monday evening. There is also an interest in softball being shown in West Hull, training will start there next week. We have had softball training for five weeks now, and hope to have a friendly match against a team from another area. We were invited to give an exhibition of baseball at Washington, Co. Durham; and went there on July 23rd. We took 18 senior, and 13 junior players, in order to show how the game can be adapted to varying age groups.

Weather marred the day, it was wet and windy, but after our boys had finished, the public were allowed to try their hands at batting. Quite a lot of interest was shown.

In September, the Humberside All-Stars are to play an exhibition game at York.

Enclosed are short reports by Barry Marshall, Ron Marshall, and D. Pinder, on Hull Giants, Hull Royals, and Hull Aces.

Hull Giants were only formed this season, and are a mixture of youth and experience. Average age of the players is 19 years. We provided five players to the Humberside All-Stars. Catcher Mark Storey is having an excellent season, and at only 17 years of age is one of the best catchers in England.

Billy Talbot and John Egan are two other players who are catching the eye. These three along with Mark Thrower, Kevin Shaw, Basil Radge and a couple of experienced players give the foundation of a good team which can only get better. The squad consists of 16 players who are keen and dedicated, and are prepared to work hard for the team.

This season we are holding our own, having won more games than we have lost. Our ambition is to become the best club side in England within 4 years. Hull Royals have had a disappointing season, with many poor results in both the Northern Major League, and Humberside League. In fact, halfway through the Major League programme, only one game has been won. This was a defeat of Hull Aces.

However, an encouraging pointer to Royals' future is the formation of a second team, which will play some friendlies this season, and will compete in league activities next year. The opening, last season, of our new ground in an area of Hull not accustomed to baseball created a lot of interest, and this second team is a result of this interest. The players are all local lads, and are not expected to make any impression for two or three seasons.

In addition, Dave Fowlie, a Royals' player has formed a new junior team, Hull Danes, which has only lost one game this season, and has a chance of winning the Junior League. If they achieve this, it will be quite remarkable, as none of the lads had played baseball before this year. The Danes are not expected to be a junior team of the Royals, but we will benefit next season when two or three of the older players will have to leave the Junior League. Then, the younger players will stay together through the juniors, and we hope transfer as a team into the Senior League.

As stated, results have been disappointing, but for player strength, and financially, Royals have never been in such a good position.

Hull Aces got off to a bad start; fixtures having to be cancelled for various reasons. The club has had problems regarding the availability of players for Saturday games. There has been increased spectator interest this season. We have won away versus Bromsgrove, but have lost at home to Liverpool Trojans. We had to meet Hull Giants in a game to decide who would represent Humberside in the B.A.B.F. semi-finals.

Later this season our wooden dug-outs are being removed, and will be replaced by brick constructions.

* * * * *

XVth. EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The championship tournament was staged at Haarlem, The Netherlands, from 23rd. to 31st. July. It had been planned to start the tournament with two pools of three teams each. This plan was first used at Barcelona in 1975; but this year it was disrupted by the withdrawal of West Germany at short notice. No other country was able to fill the vacated place at such short notice.

West Germany had withdrawn just as suddenly from the XIIIth. championships held at Haarlem in 1973.

The withdrawal this year is believed to be a gesture indicating the displeasure of Mannheim Tornados, at the banning by C.E.B.A. of Mannheim's projected European League. Mannheim appear to be the only "German" club playing in West Germany, all other clubs being American. In order to create additional interest in West Germany, Mannheim came up with the Euro-League idea. They were able to recruit some members from clubs in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands; although in the last country no clubs in the higher divisions of the national league were interested.

Bruno Beneck, president of C.E.B.A. seems to have campaigned against the scheme. His country, Italy, does not need such a Euro-League at present. Also, the use of the title European League, would tend to give a false impression of the status of member clubs, none of whom would be as strong as the Italian champion club.

West Germany's withdrawal has resulted in that country being banned from playing in the European championships for five years.

Saturday 23rd. July. Netherlands 30 - Spain 1 ; Sweden 0 - Italy 29

Sunday 24th. July. Netherlands 12 - Belgium 2 : Spain 0 - Italy 22

Monday 25th. July. Belgium 14 - Spain 1 : Sweden 1 - Netherlands 10

Tuesday 26th. July. Italy 27 - Belgium 0 : Sweden 3 - Spain 8. Sweden versus Spain was the first game which created much excitement as Sweden led twice.

Wednesday 27th. July. Belgium 2 - Sweden 1 : Italy 5 - Netherlands 6. Two games which were watched by Peter O'Malley, president of the Los Angeles Dodgers, who stated that he was surprised at the standard of the Belgium v. Sweden game, considering the small numbers of players in those countries.

Thursday 28th. July. Sweden 2 - Spain 0.

Friday 29th. July. Belgium 7 - Sweden 6; Netherlands 2 - Italy 1.

Saturday 30th. July. Netherlands 4 - Italy 7 : Netherlands 1 - Italy 4.

Sunday 31st. July. Belgium 6 - Spain 4 : Netherlands 0 - Italy 1.

In the last game two Italian pitchers compiled a no-hit, no-run game.

Italy retained the title which it won in 1975. Other placings, 2nd. The Netherlands: 3rd. Belgium: 4th. Spain: 5th. Sweden.

Italy, The Netherlands, and Belgium qualified for the 1978 World Championships in Italy.

A total of 40,000 spectators attended the 17 games. Five games between Italy and The Netherlands drew a total of 24,000, the first and fifth games each drawing 6,000. A profit of 35,000 guilders (approx. £8,500) was made.

Individual awards. Best hitter, Landucci (Italy). Best pitcher, Bertil Haage (Netherlands). Most Valuable Player, Alfieri (Italy). Homerun king, Alfieri. Alfieri had 3 homeruns as had Landucci, and Ben Richardson (Netherlands), Alfieri won the award as he had fewer at bats than the other two.

The three leading hitters were Italian, Landucci .500; Spica .484; Alfieri .480.

Sports press prize, Ernie Myers, manager of The Netherlands.

Runs batted in, Alfieri, and Ben Richardson, each with 12.

Runs scored, Spica, and Ben Richardson, each having 14.

Stolen bases, Lagrilliere (Belgium), Halvarson (Sweden), Asuncion (Spain), and Wedman (Netherlands), each with 4.