

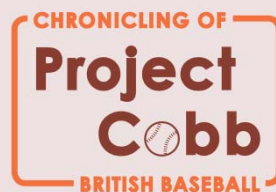
BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 24

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

April 1980

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BASEBALL Mercury.

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Mo. 24 APRIL 1980.

SOFTBALL ON MERSEYSIDE by John Bennett.

Here is an account of the progress of softball in this area during the last seven years.

1973. Started the Southport Bootleggers when at the time we had enough followers of baseball to make it a feasible proposition.
1974. We were joined by Lucas Royals of Liverpool, who were in a similar situation. We managed to stage a softball game prior to our baseball game with Royals.

1975. The sport received a boost when wives of U.S. Army men at Burtonwood NATO depot formed a team. The Aintree Indians also produced a team, thus enabling a four team league to operate.

Sergeant Bob Hooper and our old stalwart Ned James combined to donate a very handsome trophy. We arranged a one day tournament to compete for the Hooper-James Trophy. This tournament was played at the Burtonwood U.S. Army base. The host team beat Lucas Royals in the final. 1975 was a very successful season, each team played six league games in addition to the Final Tournament. Final placings were U.S. Army, Lucas Royals, Eirkdale Bootleggers, Aintree Indians.

1976. A similar format was enjoyed this season, with Birkdale Bootleggers emerging victorious on all counts.

1977. Aintree Indians had disbanded during the close season. After having played only two games Lucas Royals also disbanded. Their demise being caused by an unfortunate disagreement among their officials. This left only Bootleggers and the U.S. Army Burtonwood Babes to finish the season. Bootleggers were again champions. During the 1977-78 close season Burtonwood left the scene because of declining numbers at the U.S. base.

During that close season, Mr. Meadows and myself managed to produce a junior team from Litherland High School. We also came up with a boys' base-ball team from the same school. We also succeeded in forming a very junior team from Bootle I.M. & Y.W.C.A.

1978. We only managed to play the occasional game, four in all; plus two one day tournaments with R.A.F. Bawtry, near Doncaster. One of the tournaments was played at R.A.F. Bawtry, the other at Southport. These tournaments were arranged in co-operation with Captain Al. Richards, who was on loan to the R.A.F. from the U.S.A.F.

1979. A very similar set-up, Bootle I.M., Litherland High School and Southport Bootleggers. By now Bootleggers were becoming despondent at the lack of opposition, although we did have a repeat tournament with R.A.F. Bawtry, which we won.

A three team tournament was laid on at Southport in late July. R.A.F. Bawtry were unable to compete. Litherland Wildcats were victors, carrying off the Hooper-James Trophy from Bootleggers after both these teams had

vanquished Eootle Y.M.C.A.

The season ended with Litherland High School going to Hull to play Canon de Spartaan of Amsterdam. Even with the help of two very experienced players, Doreen Megson and Lil Fowlie, both of Hull, Litherland lost by 22 - 9.

This was I believe the very first international softball game arranged in this country, and the B.A.B.S.F. officials who organised it are to be complimented on their initiative and progressive attitude to the sport.

The publicity, which we managed to obtain as a result of this international game, has enabled me to interest two more groups; and we expect to have five teams in action in the 1980 season.

+ + + + +

C.E.B.A.

1979 Statistics.

	Players.		Umpires.	Scorers.	Clubs.	Fields.
	Senior.	Junior.				
Italy	8,053	17,097	339	74	404	423
Netherlands	5,977	10,356	112	28	155	140
Spain	789	4,213	101	60	123	30
Sweden	476	730	110	81	35	15
France	302	1,431	10	14	22	15
Belgium	312	476	29	41	17	14
England	310	141	15	18	29	20
W. Germany(x)	45	275	7	6	7	5
Denmark(xx)	72	139	2	2	5	3
Czechoslovakia	150	24	33	14	7	7
San Marino(x)	25	150	-	5	5	2
Total 1979	16,511	35,032	758	343	809	674
Total 1978	16,438	29,192	876	338	725	677
Difference	+73	+5,840	-118	+5	+84	-3

(x) Estimated by C.E.B.A.

(xx) Affiliation to C.E.B.A. in 1980.

Czechoslovakia is an associate member of C.E.B.A., as is also South Africa. Poland is an affiliated member of C.E.B.A., although I can not recollect ever seeing any statistics supplied by that country.

Yugoslavia which is neither a member nor an associate of C.E.B.A. was allowed to enter a team for The European Cadets Championships (boys 15 and 16 years old). This tournament was played at Madrid from July 21 - 25, 1979. Final standings were :

	Pl.	W.	L.	%
CHAMPIONS ITALY	5	5	0	1.000
2nd. Netherlands	5	4	1	.800
3rd. Spain	5	3	2	.600
4th. W. Germany	5	2	3	.400
5th. France	5	1	4	.200
6th. Yugoslavia	5	0	5	.000

Some years ago I commented in Baseball Mercury on what appeared to me to be inconsistencies in the statistics supplied to C.E.B.A. by member

countries. I am still of that opinion. Different countries must have widely divergent standards.

Just to select one example from the 1979 statistics. The Netherlands, which has more than 16,000 players, and which operates what by European standards is a huge programme of national and regional leagues, has 28 scorers. Belgium, Spain, and Sweden which have very much smaller programmes all give higher numbers of scorers than The Netherlands.

Comparing the statistics for 1979 with those for 1976, I note that in the space of three years the number of junior players in Italy fell by more than 8,500. In the same period numbers of juniors rose in The Netherlands by more than 6,500, in Spain by more than 1,400, and in France by more than 1,100.

C.E.B.A. lists member countries in descending order of total membership, this total includes a category, "Other Members", that I have not shown in my tables.

The three leaders in 1976, Italy, The Netherlands, and Spain, retained their positions in 1979. Belgium fell from fourth to sixth, Sweden has climbed into fourth place. France has risen from seventh to fifth; while England has slipped one place, and now ranks seventh.

P.U.C. 1979.

Olivier Dubaut, a member of the Paris University Club, and former secretary of the Federation Francaise de Baseball has written to me giving details of his club's 1979 record. He also requested details of all British, and Irish(?) clubs. In 1979, P.U.C. had 132 players competing in senior, junior, cadet, and mini-baseball, and in girls' softball.

FRENCH NATIONAL LEAGUE.

	W.	L.	%
1. RICE UNIVERSITY CLUB	8	2	.800
1. NIPPON PARIS	8	2	.800
3. Paris U.C.	7	3	.700
4. Limeil	5	5	.500
5. Baseball Club de France	1	9	.100
5. Strasbourg U.C.	1	9	.100

Girls' Fast Pitch Softball.
Final Game; Nice U.C. beat P.U.C.
9 - 3.

Juniors(17 - 18 years old).
Final games; P.U.C. beat Limeil
25 - 8, and 19 - 4.

Cadets(14 - 16 years old); P.U.C.
finished in 1st. place.

Mini-baseball (8 - 13 years old);
P.U.C. finished in 1st. place.

P.U.C. First team played a total of 19 games versus French teams winning 12, losing 6, and one game was stopped in the third inning. Six games were played against foreign teams. From 13th. to 16th. April, P.U.C. played three games in Italy, losing 11 - 0 to Parma, and 13 - 2 to Collecchio. P.U.C. beat Micheli San Pancrazio 6 - 5. At home P.U.C. lost to Miesbaden Eagles 10 - 2, and beat Rotterdam University 2 - 1, and C.B. Viladecans(Spain) 8 - 2.

Death of Welsh baseball legend.

The above headline appeared in the South Wales Echo in January. It was about a man with whom I became acquainted in 1939. It was in 1939, that the National Baseball Association sent a paid organiser to Cardiff to launch the American game. The organiser, Andrew McGraw, an Edinburgh man, had lived in Cleveland, Ohio for many years. Before coming to Cardiff he had been successful in fostering the game in Yorkshire. For example, the game was introduced to Hull in 1936, and by 1938, there were 1,000 players in that city.

The rest of Yorkshire did not show

such explosive growth, nevertheless cities such as Leeds, Bradford, York and Sheffield had amateur baseball, and schools' baseball leagues.

Freddie Fish, the person referred to by the headline, was the only well-known player to desert the Welsh Baseball Union code to take up the American code. He was buried on January 3rd. of this year.

Andrew McGraw, as part of his launching effort, hired the Jackson Hall in Cardiff. There, each Monday evening, from early in 1939 until the season began, interested people could attend and get the feel of gloves, by throwing balls to each other; swing bats at a ball fixed on a batting tee, and study the rules. This study period ended with a film show set for the end of April.

McGraw managed to get seven teams organised, R.A.F. St. Athan, R.A.F. Balloon Barrage, Western Mail & Echo, Central Y.M.C.A., Lumberjacks, St. David's, and Penylan Social Club. The two R.A.F. teams, and Western Mail & Echo had baseball uniforms, the other clubs started the season with either football or cricket shirts, and wore grey flannel trousers which they tucked into the tops of their socks. Y.M.C.A. eventually obtained a set of black or navy baseball trousers which they wore with their red and black squared soccer shirts.

For most of the season the best team in the Cardiff Amateur Baseball league, described in the local press as the Cardiff American Baseball league, was R.A.F. St. Athan. This team, playing in colourful green and gold uniforms, consisted of Canadians, with the exception of the third baseman, a native of Halifax, Yorkshire. R.A.F. St. Athan was the team that drew the crowds. They went on to win the league championship.

Central Y.M.C.A. were very lucky as they managed to sign a young man who had been educated in the U.S.A., and had played baseball at college level in upstate New York. He was named Glanville Davies, and did the pitching for Y.M.C.A., he was almost certainly the best pitcher in the league.

Freddie Fish also signed for Y.M.C.A., in the E.B.A./W.B.U. game he played in the covers, and when he transferred to the American game he played in the outfield, which would more or less be akin to playing in his earlier role. He had played for Wales versus England on a number of occasions, captaining Wales versus England at the Cardiff Arms Park in 1936.

Behind the pitching of Glanville Davies, and with the considerable hitting ability of Freddie Fish, the young and very keen Y.M.C.A. team improved rapidly as the season progressed. At the end of the season they shocked the R.A.F. St. Athan team, which had overpowered the opposition during the league season, by beating them in the final of the Welsh Cup.

Freddie Fish was barred by the Welsh Baseball Union for playing the American game, but successfully appealed for re-instatement during the war years. When I attempted to organise the American game in Cardiff in 1950, he contacted me, and introduced me to several potentially useful contacts who might have joined such a movement if I had continued with my effort.

I last met him in August 1978, and he still showed an interest in learning of the state of the American game in the U.K.

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The next issue of Baseball Mercury should appear in August. Annual subscription is 50p. Subscriptions should be made payable to William Morgan.

* * * * *

BELGIUM.

DIVISION I	Pl.	W.	L.	%
LUCHTBAL	20	17	3	.850
Berchem	20	16	4	.800
Royal Antwerp	20	14	6	.700
Bell Telephone	20	14	6	.700
General Motors	20	14	6	.700
Borgerhout	20	13	7	.650
Deurne Spartans	20	7	13	.350
Zeeuwse Honk	20	5	15	.250
Brasschaat	20	5	15	.250
Wilrijk	20	4	16	.200
Berendrecht	20	1	19	.050

In 1980 the First Division will consist of eight teams, therefore the Dutch club Zeeuwse Honk, and Brasschaat had to play-off to decide which was to retain its place in the top rank. Zeeuwse Honk beat Brasschaat twice in the play-off 8 - 5, and 8 - 6.

Most Valuable Player, Philippe Klein-jans (Royal Antwerp): best hitter, Raymond van Herck (Luchtbal): best pitcher, Arthur Weyenberg (Berchem): rookie of the year, Marc Demolie (Royal Antwerp).

Luchtbal II won the Second Division. Deurne Spartans won the Cadet League, and Royal Antwerp won the écoliers league.

In 1979 a new team played in Division II, this was Beveren, which is connected with the soccer club of the same name that won the Belgian soccer championship in 1979. In 1979 Belgium had a new national coach, Ken Dugan, head coach of David Lipscomb College at Nashville, Tennessee. This college won U.S. College National Titles in 1977 and 1979.

Bell Telephone is celebrating its 50th. year in 1980, while Berchem is celebrating its 30th year. Each club is arranging a major tournament to mark these important landmarks.

Belgium will compete in the North European Cup which is being held at Stockholm, Sweden in late June. The European Junior Championships will be staged in Belgium in 1980, from 8th. to 15th. August.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

Baseball and softball are governed by the Czech Baseball & Softball Association; the games are played in Bohemia and Moravia, but not in Slovakia, hence a body representing the whole of the federation could not be formed. However, the sports are recognised and supported by the national sports federation.

DIVISION I basic tournament.

Tempo Praha	.917
Kovo A Praha	.833
Prirodni vedy Praha	.667
Technika Brno	.417
Motorlet Praha	.250
Kovo B Praha	.250
Podoli Praha	.167

Championship play-offs won by Tempo Praha.

For the first time a Czech All Stars team went abroad. In the Netherlands the team played eight games in nine days. The Czech team had as head coach Miroslav Vojtisek.

Results.

Lord Nelson Devils v. Czech A-8	5-0
Run '71	v. .. 3-4
Zuidvogels	v. .. 4-2
H.S.C. IJenen	v. .. 4-2
H.S.C. Maastricht	v. .. 2-0
Flying Petrels	v. .. 2-1
Dutch Cadet team	v. .. 7-0
Kohafo Caps	v. .. 0-1

Division I in 1980 will be similar to the 1979 set-up, but Kovo A will be replaced by Sahradnickvi Praha. There is also a Czech Cup competition which will begin in March; 10 to 12 teams will compete for the cup.

An important event is to take place in September, The Prague Baseball Week; this is intended to be an annual event. At least three Dutch teams are to take part, and three Czech teams, All Stars, Praha, and Kovo.

The four leading hitters in 1979 were - 1st. Reichert (Motorlet) .541; 2nd. Stépanek (Tempo) .488; 3rd. Chmura (Kovo A) .484; 4th. Kubalík (Prirodni) .467.

JAPAN 1977

CENTRAL LEAGUE

	W	L	T	GB	%
1. Hiroshima	67	50	13	--	.573
2. Taiyo	59	54	17	6	.522
3. Chunichi	59	57	14	7 $\frac{1}{2}$.509
4. Hanshin	61	60	9	8	.504
5. Yomiuri	58	62	10	10 $\frac{1}{2}$.483
6. Yakult	48	69	13	19	.410

Batting Champion, Felix Milan(Taiyo) .346: HR. Masayuki Kihefu(Hanshin) 48: RBI. Koji Yamamoto(Hiroshima) 113: SB. Yoshikiko Takahashi(Hiroshima) 55: Pitching, Best ERA. Masaji Hiramatsu(Taiyo) 2.39: Leading Winner, Shigeru Kobayashi(Hanshin) 22 - 9.
Total Pennants Won. Tokyo Yomiuri Giants 30: Hanshin Tigers(Osaka) 6: Hiroshima Toyo Carp 2: Chunichi Dragons(Nagoya) 2: Taiyo Whales (Yokohama) 1: Yakult Swallows(Tokyo) 1.

Most of the Japanese clubs are owned by industrial concerns, and are usually described by the name of the owner, and not by the name of the city in which the club plays. For examples, Yomiuri is a newspaper group; and Taiyo is the name of a whaling company.

Three years ago I gave details of the Japanese clubs. Since then Taiyo Whales have moved from Kawasaki to Yokohama. Lotte Orions have shifted from Sendai to Kawasaki. Crown Lighter Lions played in Heiwadai Stadium (Fukuoka), they have transformed to Seibu Lions, and now play at Tokorozawa Stadium(Saitama).

PACIFIC LEAGUE

	W	L	T	GB	%
1.	*	*	*	--	*
2.	*	*	*	*	*
3. Nippon H.	63	60	7	13	.512
4. Lotte	55	63	12	18 $\frac{1}{2}$.466
5. Nankai	46	73	11	28	.387
6. Seibu	45	73	12	28 $\frac{1}{2}$.381

I have not given details for first and second places, as the standings I was able to obtain gave Kintetsu in first place, but showed the second place Hankyu as having a better won and lost record.

Batting Champion, Hideji Kato (Hankyu) .364: HR. Charles Manuel (Kintetsu) 37: RBI. Hideji Kato 104: SB. Yutaka Fukumoto(Hankyu) 60: Pitching, Best ERA. Tetsuji Yamaguchi(Kintetsu) 2.49: Leading Winner, Hisashi Yamada(Hankyu) 21 - 5.

Total Pennants Won. Nankai Hawks (Osaka) 12: Hankyu Braves(Nishinomiya) 9: Seibu Lions(Saitama) 5: Lotte Orions(Kawasaki) 4: Kintetsu Buffaloes(Osaka) 1: Nippon Ham Fighters(Tokyo) 1.

Japanese professional baseball has adopted a rule allowing a maximum of three foreign born players to a club, most of these players are from the U.S.A., Taiwan, and South Korea. A notable signing during the past winter has been that of Roy White, who, after 13 years of outstanding service to the New York Yankees, has joined the Tokyo Yomiuri Giants.

SOFTBALL NEW ZEALAND

Rothmans Cup for Women's Softball, tournament won by Wellington which won the final game versus Hutt Valley, 4 - 3(10 Innings) at Rugby Park, Hamilton.

Men's National Inter-Provincial Championships held at Invercargill, they were won for the first time by Waikato. This win broke the stranglehold on the title exercised by Wellington and Lower Hutt, who between them had shared the last 18 titles. Auckland won the title in 1961.

National Championships, Girls Under 15, won by Hutt Valley.

National Championships, Boys Under 15, final game of tournament, Auckland beat Wellington.

This month a 14 strong women's N.Z. team is visiting Australia, the captain is Marilyn Marshall.

SPAIN

The 1979 championship winners are given below.

35th. Spanish Championship. Seniors.

Champions: Condepols E.C. Madrid.

Runner-up: Hercules Las Cortes.

The winners were awarded the "Copa de S.M. el Rey". 39 games were played in this competition.

National League.

	Pl.	W.	L.
CONDEPOLS B.C.	26	24	2
Hercules Las Cortes	27	21	6
C.B. Gava	24	14	10
Pirates B.C.	30	17	13
C.D. Pamplona	29	15	14
S.D. San Ignation	30	8	22

A total of 83 games were played in this competition.

25th. National Junior Championships.

1. IRABIA: 2nd. Cinco Rosas:
- 3rd. Condepols M.B.C.: 4th. C.D. Ralpe: 5th. Halcones B.C.:
- 6th. Rias Baixas.

A qualification pool was played, this took 12 games. A total of 11 games were played in the final round.

14th. Cadets Championships.

1. ROCA RADLADORES (Barcelona)
2. San Blas (Madrid)
3. Halcones (Zaragoza)
4. Charlie Brown (Sevilla)
5. Helios (Lugo)
6. C.D. Ralpe (Bilbao)
7. Estrellas Negras (Murcia)
8. Jotatresa (Santander)

ITALY.

Division A. 1979

	W.	L.	%
DERBIGUM RIMINI	30	6	.833
Germal Parma	28	8	.778
Colombo Nettuno	28	8	.778
Biemme Bologna	25	11	.694
Juventus 48 Torino	22	14	.611
Hovalit Anzio 79	17	19	.472
Caleppio Novara	10	26	.278
Edilfonte Milano	10	26	.278
Diavia Bollate	8	28	.221
Fouchain Roma	2	34	.056

SWEDE

In 1979, the Swedish League had Division I; three Division II, which are regionalised; and a Division III which catered for seven teams in Stockholm.

Division I operates a basic league schedule, then the top four clubs play-off to decide the Swedish Champion. The bottom four clubs usually play an eliminating series to decide which club will be relegated.

Division I.

	W.	L.	%
Bagarmossen BS	19	2	.905
Leksands BK	18	3	.857
Sundbybergs BK	12	8	.600
Skarpnäcks BK	12	9	.572

Ljusdals BK	8	13	.381
Ormkärns BC	7	13	.350
Sundsvalls BC	4	17	.191
Alby BC	3	18	.143

Semi-finals. Best of five.

Bagarmossen - Skarpnäcks 14 - 4,
5 - 0, 4 - 5, 8 - 0.

Leksand - Sundbyberg 5 - 9,
10 - 7, 20 - 8, 14 - 5.

Finals. Best of five.

Leksand - Bagarmossen 6 - 9,
15 - 5, 8 - 2, 1 - 11, 10 - 4.

Leksand 1979 Swedish Champions, and Alby relegated to Division II.

Div. II South, won by BK 71 (Uppsala). Div. II East, Bärsärkarna (Skarpnäck). Div. II North, Leksand -71.

Rättvik of Dalarna won promotion to Div. I for 1980, while Täby BC won promotion from Div. III to Div. II.

Ljusdals BK won the Swedish Junior Championship. Insjöns BK of Dalarna won the first Swedish Championship for Cadets.

The Swedish Baseball & Softball Federation will operate on a budget of about £37,000 in 1980.

In February, all eight teams in Div. I played in an indoor baseball tournament, held in the largest sports hall in Europe, the Lugnet Hall at Falun.

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DENMARK

1979 Champions, Comets Horsholm.

	W.	L.	%
COMETS HORSHOLM	6	0	1.000
Bunkene Copenhagen	4	2	.667
The Bats Lyngbe	2	4	.333
A.B.C. Copenhagen	0	6	.000

The A.G.M. of the Danish Baseball &
 Softball Federation held in December
 was attended by three new clubs,
 Holbaek, Slagelse, and Vikings of
 East Copenhagen.

The DBSF received 5,000 Danish
 Crowns from the Danish Cultural
 Department.

The DBSF intends to send a national
 team to Stockholm in June to compete
 in the North European Cup; the
 federation needs another 20,000
 Dan. Cr.

For 1980 the DBSF will arrange a
 national junior tournament prior to
 the Danish Championship.

For 1980 only two foreign players
 will be permitted on the playing
 field at the same time; and clubs
 are only allowed the use of one
 foreign pitcher in a game.

FINLAND

The Swedish Baseball & Softball Fed-
 eration continues its contacts with
 Finland.

This coming season the girls softball
 team of Turku Bases will compete in
 the new Swedish Division II softball

league. The boys of Turku Bases are
 going to Stockholm to play friendly
 games versus teams in the Div. III
 baseball league.

The Finnish and Swedish teams taking
 part in this trans-Baltic activity
 are travelling free across the Balt-
 ic, courtesy of the Viking Shipping
 Line.

Finland may compete in the North Eur-
 opean Cup at Stockholm in June.

THE NETHERLANDS

Final Standings 1979.

Hoofdklasse	W.	T	L.	Pts.
AMSTEL TIJGERS (Amsterdam)	30	0	6	60
Unique Giants (Diemen)	25	0	11	50
Kok Juwelier Neptun. (Rotterdam)	24	1	11	49
Ola UVV Utrecht	21	1	14	43
Tetramin Nicols (Haarlem)	19	1	16	39
Fresh Up Quick (Amersfoort)	15	0	21	30
Nikon H.C.A.W.Bussum	14	0	22	28
Vax Kinheim Haarlem	12	1	23	25

Storks Den Haag	9	0	27	18
Sparta Rotterdam	8	0	28	16

Sparta and Storks relegated to
 1:e klasse.

1:e klasse A won by Olga Matrassen
 - ADO, runners-up Canon de Spartaan

1:e klasse B won by Feyenoord, run-
 ners-up P.S.V.

Feyenoord and Olga Matrassen-ADO
 promoted to the Hoofdklasse for 1980.

The Netherlands staged a Six Day
 Tournament at Haarlem in August

	W.	L.	Pts.
Indiana State U.	4	1	8
All Stars C.B.S.	3	2	6
Netherlands	2	3	4
San Diego State U.	1	4	2.

All Stars C.B.S. consisted of Amer-
 icans who were either playing or
 coaching in the Netherlands.

The eleventh Haarlem Baseball Week
 will take place from 11th. - 18th.
 August 1980. The following teams
 will participate: Cuba, Fumitomo
 Kinzoku(Japanese Amateur Champs.)
 University of Miami, University of
 California at Los Angeles, and the
 Netherlands.