

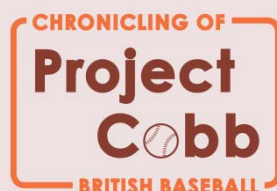
BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 26

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December 1980

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BASEBALL Mercury.

EDITOR -----

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NATIONAL CUP FINAL by N. WELLS.

In the semi-final of the competition, Hull Aces defeated Southglade Hornets. Liverpool Trojans met London Warriors at Coptnall Park, Mill Hill, and after a very hard fought game Trojans emerged as victors 6 - 2.

The final was played at Coptnall Stadium. In our view it was excellently presented and organised, and was also very well umpired. We congratulate the Southern Area for such a fine affair.

Trojans took the field in 'T snirts' supplied by a Danish shipping company, which had given some form of sponsorship to the final.

Hull Aces went to bat first, and failed to score. Trojans reply was a two run homer by Brian Bretneron, which also scored Alan Campbell.

The Trojans had been using Brian on the mound with increasing regularity this season, taking over the chores of manager Art. Bolton, and with considerable success. So it was in the final. By the 6th. inning Aces had failed to score. Brian was well backed up solid and steady fielding. On the other hand, by this point, Trojans had built the score to 10 - 0, the result of consistent batting right through the team.

In the top of the 7th., Aces first-baseman John Read, obtained a base on balls, and was batted home by his son, N. Read, this broke the shut-out, and also staved off the termination of the game under the 10 run advantage rule. However in the bottom of the 7th. Trojans scored twice, thus ending the game with the score 12 - 1.

I must admit to having mixed feelings on this rule. On three occasions now, I have seen interested spectators being disappointed at the early termination of games.

All credit must go to the Aces, who together with their veterans had some very young players in their line-up. Trojans on the other hand fielded a team that has played together for many years now, in many highly competitive games, both in England and abroad. Six of the Trojans had pitched more than one winning game this season.

Two players I select especially, our Venezuelan catcher, Omar Villegas who filled the gap left by the departure of Jim Kelly, and our third baseman, 16 year old John Maguire, who has also been pitching with great success. John is a young man with tremendous potential.

The game was covered by the National Broadcasting Company of the U.S.A., unfortunately it will not be seen on this side of the Atlantic.

Aces sorely missed pitcher Pete Darnell, out because of a broken leg. It would have been a different ball game with Peter on the mound.

MIDLAND AREA by S. Williams.

<u>Midland Senior League final placings:-</u>	W.	L.	%
Southglade Hornets	8	0	1.000
Clifton Cougars	5	3	.625
Bromsgrove Dodgers	4	4	.500
Top Valley Tigers Seniors	2	6	.250
Birmingham Hawks	1	7	.125

<u>Midland Junior League final placings:-</u>	W.	L.	%
Top Valley Tigers Juniors	5	1	.833
Southglade Eagles	4	2	.667
Rugeley Raiders	3	3	.500
Alderman White Tornadoes	0	6	.000

Midland Senior Player of the Year was Mick Harrold (Southglade Hornets), who also took the Top Batter Award. Midland Junior Player of the Year was Ian Andrews (Top Valley Tigers).

The Bert Imms Tournament was played at Garringtons, Bromsgrove on 18th. May. Dodgers beat Top Valley Tigers in the first game, Tigers took an early lead, but Bromsgrove played themselves back into the game to win 8 - 5. Southglade Hornets beat Birmingham Hawks 18 - 4.

The final between Hornets and Dodgers produced some good base-ball. Tony Mee pitched well for Hornets, as did Stuart Casey for Dodgers. Hornets scored 0-0-1-0-1-1, and Dodgers 0-1-1-0-1-1, Dodgers winning by 4 - 3. Stuart Casey was presented with the 'Player of the Day' Award; Fred Causer accepted the Bert Imms Trophy, which was presented by Mrs. Imms.

The Nottingham Cup Final took place at Southglade Park, Nottingham on 27th. July. This was a three-team play off, the clubs competing having qualified through previous knock-out rounds. Hornets took on Clifton Cougars in the first game, winning by 13 - 7. Cougars then played Dodgers, losing by 6 - 12. In the final Mick Harrold pitched for Hornets, and Stuart Casey for Dodgers. Hornets scored 0-4-0-1-1-1, and Dodgers 0-0-0-0-1-3, Hornets took the Nottingham Cup by 7 runs to 4. Steve Frost, Hornets first baseman, won the trophy for 'Player of the Day'.

Nottingham Boys (age group 13 years and under) were invited to play Humberside Schoolboys on 31st. August, at Burton Constable Hall, Hull, as part of the Humber bridge Commemorative Celebrations. This game was very enjoyable to watch and the youngsters provided some good baseball. Ian Williams pitched well for Nottingham, who took an early lead which they were able to retain while scoring 2-0-3-0-2. Humberside scored 0-1-0-2-0. Result - Nottingham Boys 7 - Humberside Schoolboys 3. Both teams were presented with medals by Don Smallwood, B.A.B.S.F. Secretary. Tony Mee, manager of Nottingham Boys, accepted the trophy for the winning team.

Midland Area were winners of the All-Star League.

The Lol Wnelan Junior Final took place at Southglade Park, on 19th. July, the two finalists had won their way through previous knock-out rounds. Top Valley Tigers always looked in command versus Rugeley Raiders, winning by 16 runs to 3. Ian Andrews, Tigers pitcher, won the 'Player of the Day' award.

Top Valley Tigers, qualified for the National Championship final in London by beating Hull Danes, Humberside champions, in the semi-final. In the final, Top Valley started well, but eventually lost to Isleworth Tigers 10 - 4.

The Orford Trophy Tournament took place at Garringtons, Broms-grove, on 21st. September. It produced the best day's baseball I have seen for some time. In the first game Southglade Hornets were drawn against Liverpool Trojans. Steve Frost pitched well for the Hornets, and Hornets' young second baseman, Dave Ellis, had an excellent game in the field. Result - Hornets 3 - Trojans 1.

The second game saw Hull Royals matched with Bromsgrove Dodgers. This was another close game, Royals running out winners 2 to 1.

The final was a nail-biter, Martin Adamson pitched for Hull Royals, and Steve Frost was the starting pitcher for Southglade Hornets. Hornets edged into the lead, and hung-on to win 2 - 1.

Hornets' manager, Alec Williams, was presented with the Orford Trophy, while the 'Player of the Day' trophy was won by Martin Adamson(Hull Royals).

The next issue of Baseball Mercury should appear in April, 1981. Annual subscription is 50p. Subscriptions should be made payable to William Morgan. Items for inclusion in Baseball Mercury are always welcome.

XXVith. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP.

These world championship games were staged in Japan, from 22nd. August to 5th. September. Cuba repeated as world champions. A number of countries, including Venezuela and Puerto Rico, protested at the use of players with U.S.A. nationality by Italy. One of the Italian players, Mondalto, was stated to have played at one time in the Canadian national team. Puerto Rico, beaten by The Netherlands 9 - 5, protested at The Netherlands use of pitcher Rocky Angela, as it was rumoured that Angela had already signed a contract with a professional club in North America.

Standings.

	Pl.	W.	L.	%
1. CUBA	11	11	0	1.000
2. Japan	11	9	2	.818
2. South Korea	11	9	2	.818
4. U.S.A.	11	8	3	.727
5. Canada	11	6	5	.545
6. Italy	11	5	6	.455
7. Australia	11	4	7	.364
7. Colombia	11	4	7	.364
7. Puerto Rico	11	4	7	.364
7. Venezuela	11	4	7	.364
11. The Netherlands	11	1	10	.091
11. Mexico	11	1	10	.091.

Results- arranged in descending order, with winning team named first. Cuba - Puerto Rico 23 - 1(7inns.); Cuba - Australia 3 - 1; Cuba - Colombia 25 - 0 (7inns.); Cuba - Canada 15 - 1 (7inns.); Cuba - Venezuela 11 - 3; Cuba - South Korea 9 - 3; Cuba - Mexico 10 - 0 (8inns.); Cuba - Italy 10 - 2; Cuba - The Netherlands 8 - 0; Cuba - Japan 1 - 0; Cuba - U.S.A. 5 - 4.
 Japan - Colombia 8 - 5; Japan - Italy 8 - 6; Japan - Canada 6 - 4; Japan - Puerto Rico 12 - 1 (7inns.); Japan - Australia 7 - 3; Japan - U.S.A. 9 - 5; Japan - Mexico 12 - 2 (8inns.); Japan - The Netherlands 4 - 0; Japan - Venezuela 5 - 0.
 South Korea - The Netherlands 11 - 6; S. Korea - Venezuela 4 - 3; S. Korea - Italy 11 - 6; S. Korea - Japan 6 - 4; S. Korea - Colombia 6 - 1; S. Korea - Australia 13 - 0 (7inns.); S. Korea - Puerto Rico 8 - 3; S. Korea - Canada 12 - 2 (8inns.)
 S. Korea - Mexico 11 - 2.
 U.S.A. - Canada 12 - 1 (8inns.); U.S.A. - S. Korea 4 - 3;

U.S.A. - Colombia 16 - 6 (8inns.); U.S.A. - Mexico 10 - 1; U.S.A. - The Netnerlands 9 - 3; U.S.A. - Venezuela 7 - 2(13inns.); U.S.A. - Puerto Rico 15 - 8; U.S.A. - Australia 6 - 5.
 Canada - Mexico 5 - 4(10inns.); Canada - Italy 7 - 3; Canada - Australia 5 - 4(11inns.); Canada - The Netnerlands 10 - 5; Canada - Colombia 4 - 3; Canada - Venezuela 6 - 3.
 Italy - Mexico 9 - 0; Italy - U.S.A. 12 - 5; Italy - Venezuela 6-3; Italy - Puerto Rico 16 - 1(7inns.).
 Australia - Venezuela 4 - 0; Australia - The Netnerlands 5 - 2; Australia - Mexico 10 - 9 (11inns.); Australia - Italy 5 - 2.
 Colombia - Mexico 7 - 6; Colomoia - Italy 9 - 4;
 Colombia - Australia 9 - 2; Colombia - The Netnerlands 7 - 4.
 Puerto Rico - Australia 8 - 5; Puerto Rico - Colombia 11 - 4;
 Puerto Rico - Canada 4 - 3 (10inns.); Puerto Rico - Mexico 7 - 5.
 Venezuela - Colombia 8 - 1; Venezuela - The Netnerlands 4 - 3;
 Venezuela - Puerto Rico 8 - 7; Venezuela - Mexico 15 - 12.
 The Netnerlands - Puerto Rico 9 - 5. Mexico - The Netnerlands 7-6.

1980 ALL-STAR LEAGUE

1st. MIDLANDS W. 4 - L.2 - .667 ; 2nd. South W. 4 - L. 2 - .667 ;
 3rd. Merseyside W.3 - L.3 - .500; 4th. Humberside W.1-L.5 - .167.

SOUTHERN BASEBALL LEAGUE. Final Positions 1980.

	W	L	%	GB
1. LONDON WARRIORS	14	2	.875	-
2. Croydon Bluejays	12	3	.800	1½
3. Crawley Giants	12	4	.750	2
4. Thames Board Mills Raiders	10	5	.667	3½
5. Regents Park Eagles	8	7	.533	5½
6. Wokingham Monarchs	3	10	.231	9½
6. Golders Green Sox	3	10	.231	9½
8. Sutton Braves	3	11	.214	10
9. Rocnester City Dodgers	1	14	.067	12½

All-Star League, and Southern Baseball League information supplied by Brian Holland. Brian has also written two short reports on the two international games played by the Great Britain team in 1980.

August 2nd. Great Britain v. Belgium.

Although this could have been a prestige game for British baseball, it was played under atrocious conditions. The field was literally a cow pasture. Even if the final score, 3 - 2 to Great Britain makes it sound as if the game was a thriller, it turned out to be most dull.

Great Britain took an early lead in the first inning when Van Woensel's error on Marty Jewer's grounder allowed Barry Marshall and Denis King to score two runs.

Jewer featured again in the third inning, when, after reaching first base thanks to another error by Van Woensel, he crossed the plate with the help of Hugh King's grounder.

It was not until the fifth inning that the Belgians started to threaten Pete Darnell's pitching. The first two Belgian batters in this inning hit singles, and they were followed by Renard who doubled to left field to drive in two runs.

That was about all in the way of excitement for the afternoon, except for the unusual game-ending double play. With Hemmerechts on first base, De Saedeleer lofted the ball to left field where John Harrington caught the ball with ease. Harrington completed the double play when he threw out Hemmerechts who was trying to make second.

August 30th. Great Britain v. France.

There was a good crowd on hand to see this floodlit game to celebrate the opening of the Humber Bridge. It's a pity the British players didn't join in the celebrations by scoring a few runs. The drum majorettes who paraded before the game could have hit the ball better with their batons.

The only British action came in the sixth inning. Norman Wells singled to left, later scoring on a base hit by pinch hitter Hugh King.

But by that time the French were way in front, and after Milio hit a home run in the seventh inning to score France's thirteenth run, the Dutch umpire called the game to put an end to Britain's misery. Final score - Great Britain 1 - France 13.

1980 MERSEYSIDE AMERICAN BASEBALL LEAGUE by N. Wells.

In order to provide more baseball, it was decided, that we would run two independent leagues. One league would be the conventional M.A.B.L., with the usual trophies and awards to be won. The other league was to decide the Merseyside entry for the National Cup semi-finals. These two leagues were played on alternate Saturdays. Cup games were played on Sundays. The M.A.B.L. consisted of - Liverpool Tigers, Liverpool Royals, Bromsgrove Dodgers, Liverpool Trojans, Merseyside Monarchs. The Qualifying League for the National Cup consisted of these teams, with the exclusion of Bromsgrove, who attempted to qualify by competing in the Midland League.

There were also our usual three cup competitions, and there was also added an independently run mid-week competition. This affair consisted of Royals, Monarchs, Litherland High School, and the newly formed Liverpool Veterans. This mid-week league was financed and organised by an independent committee - Messrs. Kenyon, Bennett, and Surgeon.

The M.A.B.L. did not finish until 12th. October, when we had to stage a play-off game between Trojans and Tigers. Trojans ran out eventual champions by 11 runs to 4.

The Tigers are once again a formidable outfit, and twice defeated Trojans this season. Both times in very closely fought games which were not decided until the ninth inning.

To summarise the final placings - they were :-
 National Cup :- Liverpool Trojans, runners-up Hull Aces.
 M.A.B.L. :- Liverpool Trojans, runners-up Liverpool Tigers.
 Lancashire Cup :- Liverpool Trojans, runners-up Liverpool Royals.
 Artco Trophy :- Liverpool Tigers, runners-up Liverpool Trojans.

The Monarchs won the mid-week competition, which seems to have been a successful and enjoyable programme, which featured the re-turn of many old players in the uniforms of the Veterans.

In addition to the competitions already mentioned, the Trojans also competed in and won 'The Inter-City League', the second win in a row.

In fact the Trojans club played a total of 35 games in 1980, including the Berchem Stars Tournament. Trojans only lost five of that total, one of these defeats was at the hands of Southglade Hornets 3 - 1, in the Orford Trophy. In addition some of the Trojans' players played All-Star, and International games.

The Merseyside participation in the All-Star League was once more, one of our unexplainable problems. We never seem to be able to arouse enough enthusiasm to achieve a 100% effort, or indeed to field a strong team. Nevertheless, despite losing three games we finished in third place. The games which we won, we did so convincingly, and Norman Wells took the All-Star League's batting award.

The M.A.B.L. Committee are at a loss to know how we can create some enthusiasm for the All-Star League. In fact in our away game versus the South, one volunteer had never played a game of baseball before.

Our Individual Awards were :- Player of the Year - Brian Bretnert (Trojans). Home Run King - Brian Bretnerton, 13 homers. Pitching Award - 2 awards were made this year. One to Brian Bretnerton, and one to Dave Taylor (Tigers).

Liverpool Trojans hope to form a ladies softball team for 1981.

SOFTBALL.

Ist. Haarlem Softball Week. This year saw the inauguration of

a Haarlem Tournament for Womens Softball. Five teams participated, the national teams of The Netherlands, and of Italy, and three clubs from across the Atlantic. These were Harmony Centre (Saskatchewan), Ashland (Ohio), and Purple Power (Oklahoma). Don Porter, General Secretary of the I.S.F. was in attendance. The tournament resulted in a win for the Canadian club. Final positions: 1st. Harmony Centre W.6-L.2: 2nd. jointly. Ashland and Purple Power each with 5 Wins and 3 Losses: 4th. The Netherlands W.4-L.4: 5th. Italy W.0-L.8.

World's Championship, Men's Fast Pitch. At Cheney Stadium, Tacoma, Washington, the tournament played in July was won by the U.S.A., Canada finished in second place. A stand-out pitcher for the U.S.A. was Owen Walford, a New Zealander, who had starred for New Zealand in the 1976 World Championship Tournament.

Europa Cup. Played at Antwerp, from 26th. to 28th. September. No Italian club competed, and the two Dutch clubs were much stronger than the other competitors. The competitors were HHC and Terrasvogels (both from The Netherlands), General Motors (Belgium), Bagarmossens (Sweden), Independiente (Spain). Results, unfortunately incomplete - Terrasvogels - HHC 5-0: Terrasvogels - Independiente 8-0: Terrasvogels - General Motors 9-0: Terrasvogels - Bagarmossens 21-2: HHC - Independiente 15-0: HHC - General Motors 13-0: HHC - Bagarmossens 18-0: Independiente - Bagarmossens 16-1.

Final placings- 1st. Terrasvogels W.4-L.0: 2nd. HHC W.3-L.1: 3rd. General Motors W.2-L.2: 4th. Independiente W.1-L.3: 4th. Bagarmossens W.0-L.4. Award Winners were - MVP. Ludy van Mourik (Terrasvogels), Best pitcher - Els Koks (Terrasvogels), Leading hitter - Vera van de Ven (General Motors).

The 1980 Women's Championship of Sweden was won by Bagarmossens.

In Denmark, the men's softball title was captured by Comets, Horsholm, and the women's by Gentofte Munkene.

General Motors won the women's title in Belgium.

The Netherlands men's title was won by Bloemendaal, while the women's championship was won by Terrasvogels.

EUROPA BASEBALL CUP.

I attended the Amsterdam half of this tournament, played from 17th. to 21st. September. The other half was played on the ground of S.C. Neptunus (Rotterdam). The Amsterdam games were played on the field of Amstel Tijgers (Dutch champions in 1979 and 1980). Results at Rotterdam. Parma - Leksands 20-1: Neptunus - Leksands 6-1: Rimini - Leksands 12-3: Parma - Neptunus 12-0:

Rimini - Neptunus 4-1.

Games at Amsterdam. Tijgers-Rimini 1-0: Parma-Rimini 2-2 (game was called because of darkness at the end of the 9th.).

Tijgers-Neptunus 12-3: Tijgers-Leksands 16-0: Parma-Tijgers 6-2.

Final placings - 1st. PARMA (Italy) W.3 T.1 L.O. Pts.7:
2nd. Amstel Tijgers W.3 L.1 Pts. 6: 3rd. Rimini (Italy) W.2 T.1
L.1 Pts.5: 4th. Neptunus W.1 L.3 Pts. 2: 5th. Leksands (Sweden)
W.0 L.4 Pts.0.

The MVP award went to Claudio Corradi (Parma). Award for best pitch -er to Davide Farina (Parma).

The two Dutch clubs which accepted the responsibility of organising the tournament were well aware of the financial risks involved. Mid-September is very late in the season as far as Dutch baseball supporters are concerned, also as neither field had lights, games had to begin at a time when most people in The Netherlands are still at work. I believe that the organisers' original estimates were for an attendance of 400 per game. My estimate of the attendances at the five games at which I was present was about 250 to 300 for the first four games. The Sunday game between Parma and Amstel Tijgers drew from about 800 to 900 spectators. That game if it was being played at Parma would have drawn a crowd of possibly 10,000. A prominent figure in Dutch baseball assured me that if it had been played in the Pim Mulier Stadium, Haarlem it would have drawn up to 5,000 spectators.

The weather was very good apart from heavy showers during the Friday game Tijgers-Neptunus, but these stopped after about half an hour.

AMSTEL TIJGERS.

While in Amsterdam I was very intrigued when Joop Köhler, editor of the official magazine 'Inside', of the Dutch Baseball & Softball Organisation, told me that Amstel Tijgers was the only club in the Premier Division of the Dutch National Baseball League, which was not sponsored. Art Kruijs, an official of Amstel Tijgers, although very busy with supervising arrangements at the ground, was kind enough to spare me some time so that I could learn something of the club's history.

Formerly, Art Kruijs, and the club President, Hans Urbanus, had been members of OVVO, an Amsterdam club, founded I believe in the 1930's. OVVO was primarily a soccer club, which like many others in The Netherlands during the 1920's and 1930's had adopted baseball as a summer activity for its members. Anyway OVVO had won the Dutch national baseball title a number of times.

As Dutch baseball has become a more specialised sport, with a longer season, and increasingly with pressure to play on proper diamonds, conflicts of interest have increasingly arisen in multi-purpose sports clubs.

This conflict had developed with OVVO. An equitable division of profits from the canteen was a sore point. Meetings were held to sort out various problems, but as the baseball section had 60 members, as against 250 members of the soccer section, the baseball section considered that they would never achieve their requirements under the existing set-up.

They therefore polled members of the first team on the proposal that an independent baseball and softball section should be set-up. The consent of the first team was necessary, as a strong team was needed, in order to attract new members from among the youngsters in whatever area they would have to re-locate.

The new club was founded and the Dutch Baseball Organisation gave it a place in the First Division of the national competition. This decision in itself was controversial, as newly formed clubs normally have to join a regional league, and gradually win

promotion through the various divisions of a regional league, and then through the divisions of the national league. Even a club with a continuous record of success would take the best part of a decade to achieve the Premier Division of the National League.

In 1977, its first season, Amstel Tijgers won the championship of Division I. In 1978 Tijgers finished third in the Premier Division. In 1979 and 1980 Tijgers won the National Championship, and all this had been achieved with what is basically a very young team.

As for the lack of a sponsor, the club decided that as sponsors normally are in sponsorship in order to get the greatest return for their outlay, they tend to want to interfere with a club. One form that this interference takes, is that newspapers are always ready to publicise the importation of players from North America, so the sponsor decides that the club must sign several such imports. Meanwhile Dutch players have to sit on the bench, or if badly upset drift off to another club, or even drift out of baseball altogether. Amstel Tijgers came to the decision that in no way was this going to happen to their club, therefore - no sponsors.

Advertising - yes, there were about twenty advertising signs on their outfield fence.

Nobody draws any money from the club, even the senior players have to pay a subscription, currently about £33 a season. Each first team player also has to buy himself a uniform, as the first team plays twice a week, the club provides a second uniform.

Another source of income for sports clubs in The Netherlands is profit from the canteen. Here I must explain something of the circumstances involved in operating sports clubs in The Netherlands.

Almost all sports grounds and stadiums are owned by the municipalities in which they are located. In the case of Amsterdam, where leading baseball clubs are concerned, the municipality lays out the diamond, erects backstops, fences, and dug-outs; and also maintains the playing field in good condition. The clubs are tenants on a year by year contract, with the rent adjusted yearly. Providing a club owes itself, and as long as the city does not need that land for construction purposes, then the club is there in perpetuity. In the case of Amsterdam, such clubs are paying about £270 a year for the use of first class facilities. Furthermore, the club can restrict access to that ground; therefore an admission charge can be made. The club also has the right to erect buildings, stands etc. on the land, for the purposes for which the club exists to promote. Hence, Amstel Tijgers using only volunteer labour has erected a canteen, bleachers seating about 700 persons, a second building for the sale of refreshments, a batting cage behind one section of bleachers, and has also laid out flower beds, and other features. Altogether a most impressive scene for one coming from a country where baseball facilities are still primitive, and where the sports set-up certainly does not permit clubs involved with minor sports such remarkable advantages.

My informant stated that in other Netherlands cities, baseball clubs might be paying ten times the rentals charged by Amsterdam. Nevertheless as an observer, I must say that even a club paying ten times that rental is still getting a fair crack of the whip in comparison with most sports clubs in the United Kingdom.
