

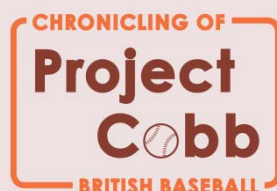
BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 29

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

February 1982

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BASEBALL Mercury.

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MIDLANDS 1981 by Mrs. S. Williams.

The Bert Imms Trophy was played for on the 17th. May, and turned into a very torrid affair. Cougars were drawn against Hornets in the first semi-final. This produced a great game of baseball, Hornets snatching victory by 3 runs to 2. The following semi-final was between Top Valley Tigers and Bromsgrove Dodgers, from which sensationally withdrew when Bill Casey was sent-off for using foul language. Dodgers were trailing 7 - 3 at the time.

The final was a one-sided affair, Hornets crushing Tigers 21 - 4.

Unfortunately, Hornets could not be presented with the Trophy as Bromsgrove Dodgers were mean enough to take the trophy with them when they withdrew.

Steve Frost (Hornets), who pitched well and had a good game at first base, was selected as the Player of the Day.

Senior Baseball

Four teams competed in the Midland League. These were Southglade Hornets, Clifton Cougars, Top Valley Tigers, and Birmingham Hawks. Southglade Hornets ended as Midland League Champions, and went forward to the semi-final of the British Baseball Championship. In the semi-final they were thrashed 24 - 3 by Hull Aces; the game being cut-short at 7 innings.

The Nottingham Cup Competition was held on Sunday, 9th. August. All four Midland League clubs should have taken part, but because of holidays, both Hawks and Cougars had to make late withdrawals. The competition thus became a straight fight between Tigers and Hornets. Hornets won 22 - 6, taking the Cup for the third year in succession. Mick Harrold, who in spite of appalling conditions pitched with good control, was awarded the Player of the Day Trophy.

Junior Baseball

In the Midland Junior League four teams competed, Top Valley Tigers Juniors, Southglade Eagles, Rugeley Raiders, and Birmingham Bears. Top Valley Tigers won the league title.

One unusual game took place between Rugeley Raiders and Birmingham Bears. The game was tied at the end of the regulation seven innings. The game went on until the end of eleven innings, when the score was still tied. The umpire decided that he had to call the game at that point, and the game remained as an eleven inning tie.

The Lol Whelan Tournament took place on the 4th. July; Tigers, Raiders, and Eagles competing; Tigers beat Raiders in the first game; and Eagles beat Raiders in the second contest. The final between Tigers and Eagles was a close fought game, swinging first one way, then the other. At the completion of the third inning, Tigers led 3 - 1. Eagles evened the score in the fourth. Both teams were now under pressure. Eagles took their last bat and brought in six runs. It looked as if they had clinched the tournament, but Tigers scored seven in their final bat and snatched victory 10 - 9. Stephen Peet (Southglade Eagles) hit a home run against Raiders, and one against Tigers. Stephen played well at third base in Eagles first game, and had a good game as catcher in the final. He was given the Player of the Day Award.

The Under 13's representative game between Humberstone and Midlands took place on July 11th. Midlands took an early lead, and led 9 - 0 at the end

of the fourth inning. However, Humberside came back at them in the fifth, scoring seven runs, but that was not enough. Midlands piled on the pressure in the bottom of the fifth, scoring six. Final score 15 - 10 to Midlands.

Darren Chatterton (Rugeley Raiders) played well at first base, and pitched Midlands out of a hole in the last inning. He capped his all-round performance with a home run; and he well deserved the trophy awarded for the Player of the Day.

NORTHWEST AMERICAN BASEBALL LEAGUE by N. Wells.

Season 1981 was planned with a great deal of optimism, with the United States Army base at Burtonwood returning to competition in our league. They spent a great deal of money on reconstructing their playing field.

Before the first ball was thrown however, we had to face a disappointment. Due to several late pre-season transfers, Liverpool Royals were not able to field a team.

The Tigers had moved out yet again to Skelmersdale, and had become affiliated to the "Buffs". They found themselves with a surplus of club members, so they decided to absorb the remaining Royals players, and to operate a second team. This second team was named "Duffs". Because "Buffs" consisted in the main of complete novices, it was decided that it would only play friendly games. Tigers and Duffs would be considered to be one club, the Skelmersdale Baseball Club; and all players could play for Tigers if needed.

Our league also ruled this year, that the B.A.B.S.F. registration card, would also be the registration card for our area. That is, in order to play in our league, a player must hold a B.A.B.S.F. registration card - this ensured 100% registration in our area.

At the commencement of the season it was decided to adopt the Burtonwood proposal that the double elimination system be used to decide our area representative for the B.A.B.S.F. championship games. The system requires that a team be beaten twice to be eliminated from the competition.

The tournament filled three complete week-ends, and resulted in a play-off between the Trojans and Tigers. This was played on 1st. August, and produced one of the best baseball games ever seen in this area. Trojans beat Tigers 1 - 0. The winning score coming in the bottom of the 9th. inning. I have no recollection of any 1 - 0 game in our area before.

Our league competition ran along quite smoothly with Trojans and Tigers much in contention. High hopes had been held that Bromsgrove Dodgers and Burtonwood Braves would make a four horse race for the title, but the pace proved somewhat too fast for them.

The Lancashire Cup, from which the finalists of the double-elimination tournament were excluded, was won by Burtonwood Braves at Burtonwood. This format was adopted in order to give extra incentive and additional games to those clubs which had been eliminated

Our area supplied nine players to the Great Britain squad.

Liverpool Trojans were defeated by London Warriors in the semi-final of the B.A.B.S.F. Club Championship.

The Northwest Area staged the B.A.B.S.F. Club Championships, both Junior and Senior at Kirkby Stadium on Sunday, 13th. September. London Warriors beat Hull Aces in the Senior final. Hull Aces beat Ashford (Middlesex Eagles) in the Junior final.

* * * * *

THE BIG BALL GAME.

Softball claims to have displaced tenpin bowling as the leading U.S. pastime as far as numbers of participants are concerned sometime in the early 1970's. The sport claims that it is America's National Pastime - this title was used of baseball in the late 19th. and early 20th. Centuries.

Some 30 million persons play softball in the U.S.A., about 85% of these play slow-pitch softball. This version of the sport was devised in the early 1950's in response to a desire for a game in which there would be more action than in the version played hitherto. This version, now described as fast-pitch, is a low-scoring game dominated by the pitchers. Slow-pitch enables batters to hit more frequently, this gets the fielders more into the game, and scores are higher.

As enthusiasts assert, the only thing slow about slow-pitch is the name. Most slow-pitch is played with a 12" inch ball, as is fast-pitch. However, there is a 16" version whose stronghold is Chicago; this version claims to be the fastest growing bat and ball game in the U.S.A. Its fans claim that it is the finest blend of all bat and ball games.

Such enthusiasts claim that baseball has lost a lot as it has got more sophisticated, with many conferences and pitching changes which are very time consuming. Fast-pitch softball tends to be a battle between the opposing batteries. They claim that 12" slow-pitch should be renamed homer-ball, as the top amateur and professional teams score from 20 to 50 runs a game, of which half may be home-runs.

16" softball is a lower-scoring slow-pitch game. This because the pitcher is stationed 38 feet from home-plate, and batters find it more difficult to tee-off on pitches because of this shorter pitching distance. The 16" softball weighs 10 ounces, and is much more difficult to hit for distance because of the increased air resistance. So men can play on the same area field that is needed for Little League baseball. In Chicago where it originated this space-saving characteristic is very important.

Bases are 55 feet apart; runners are allowed to lead-off but not to steal. Outfield fences are usually set at a maximum of 250 feet from home-plate. In Chicago most 16" softball is played gloveless; and frequently teams consist of both male and female players.

Softball was invented in Chicago in 1887, and was originally an indoor game. The 16" version traces its history to an 18" fast-pitch version which was played in Chicago gymnasiums. In the early 1930's this game moved out of doors, where the ball was reduced in size, and the pitch slowed-up.

About 100,000 players compete in leagues in the Chicago area. As Chicagoans have relocated in the Sun Belt states such as Arizona and Southern California, they have taken the game with them; and it is in these areas that it is growing fastest. In the Sun Belt it is generally played with gloved fielders.

Infields are usually 5-man, and it takes a great deal of skill to punch the ball through the five-man infields. Bats can be longer than for other versions of softball - up to 37".

(The above summary has been drawn from information supplied to me by the firm of J. deBeer & Son, Inc. P.O. Box 11570, Albany, New York 12211, U.S.A. They supply balls and bats for 16" softball, and retain a consultant advisor on the game - Bob Campbell. deBeer's film on 16" softball "A Game For Everyone" is available on loan in 8 mm., or 16 mm. cassette. Descriptive brochure and Rules Summary are also available.)

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1981 EUROPA CUP - BASEBALL.

The final tournament for this competition was staged at Parma, Italy during the period 15th./19th. September. Berchem Stars(Belgium) had qualified to play by winning the B Pool tournament. The other entrants were Haarlem Nicols and Kok Juwelier Neptunus, both of The Netherlands; Parmalat Parma, Glen Grant Nettuno, and Papa Barzetti Rimini, all three of Italy.

Results - 15 September. Papa Barzetti - Berchem Stars 6 - 0; Glen Grant

- Haarlem Nicols 2 - 9; Neptunus - Parmalat 4 - 6.

16 September. Glen Grant - Berchem Stars 12 - 2; Papa Barzetti - Neptunus

7 - 4; Haarlem Nicols - Parmalat 7 - 9.

17 September. Parmalat - Berchem Stars 4 - 0; Haarlem Nicols - Neptunus 12 - 8.

Glen Grant - Papa Barzetti 4 - 14.

18 September. Berchem Stars - Neptunus 6 - 7: Haarlem Nicols - Papa Barzetti
 5 - 2: Parmalat - Glen Grant 8 - 3.
 19 September. Berchem Stars - Haarlem Nicols 0 - 14: Neptunus - Glen Grant
 7 - 3: Papa Barzetti - Parmalat 1 - 4.

| Final Placings. | Pl. | W. | L. | Pts. | F. | A. |
|--------------------------|-----|----|----|------|----|----|
| 1. PARMALAT FARMA | 5 | 5 | 0 | 10 | 31 | 15 |
| 2. Haarlem Nicols | 5 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 47 | 21 |
| 3. Papa Barzetti Rimini | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 30 | 17 |
| 4. Kok Juwelier Neptunus | 5 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 30 | 34 |
| 5. Glen Grant Nettuno | 5 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 22 | 40 |
| 6. Berchem Stars | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 8 | 43 |

Leading hitters. 1. Jan Collins(Neptunus) .688.
 2. Thijs Vervaat(Haarlem Nicols) .550. 3. John Guggiana(Parmalat), Paolo
 Ceccaroli(Papa Barzetti), Stefano Manzini(Parmalat), all with .500.
 MVP. Jan Collins(Neptunus): Best Pitcher. Giacomo Bertoni(Parmalat).

The fifteen games played in the tournament attracted a total attendance of
 36,377. The largest crowd was present for the meeting between the arch-rivals
 of Italian baseball, Parmalat Parma and Papa Barzetti Rimini; they drew
 11,837.

The smallest crowd was for the game Berchem Stars v. Haarlem Nicols;
 this was 1,037. The most exciting game was that between Haarlem Nicols and
 Parmalat Parma, watched by 3,851 people.

This was the 19th. Europa Cup Competition. Parma are the most successful
 club with 4 wins. Haarlem Nicols, and Milan have each won it 3 times; while
 it has been won on two occasions by the following clubs - Piratas Madrid,
 Nettuno, Rimini, and Picadero Barcelona. Bologna won the trophy once.

In the first six competitions, 1963 to 1968, it was won 4 times by Spanish
 clubs. Spain seems to have dropped out of serious contention since 1968. From
 1969 to 1981, Italian clubs have dominated with the exception of 1974/75
 when Haarlem Nicols broke this Italian domination with 2 wins.

1981 EUROPA CUP - SOFTBALL.

The Italian city of Finale Ligure was selected as the venue for the 1981
 Europa Cup. Seven teams from six countries participated. The final placings
 being - 1st. TERRASVOGELS(Netherlands), 2nd. Kerodex(Italy), 3rd. H.H.C.
 (Netherlands), 4th. General Motors(Belgium), 5th. Bagarmossens(Sweden),
 6th. Munkene(Denmark), 7th. Democraticas(Spain).

In winning the cup Terrasvogels beat Bagarmossens 17 - 0, General Motors
 14 - 4, HHC 3 - 1; and beat Kerodex twice 4 - 0, and 1 - 0. The other Dutch
 club, HHC, beat Democraticas 10 - 0, lost to Kerodex 3 - 2, and beat Munkene
 24 - 0. HHC gained third in the rankings by beating General Motors 9 - 0.

This was the fourth time that the Europa Cup Competition has been held.
 Terrasvogels have won it three times, and HHC once. Terrasvogels by winning
 the Dutch Championship for Women's softball in 1981 have qualified to play
 in the 1982 Europa Cup.

Four of the games were transmitted live on Italian television, these
 were HHC - Kerodex, HHC - Terrasvogels, and the two games Terrasvogels
 -Kerodex.

The tournament was handled so well by the authorities of Finale Ligure,
 that the 1982 Europa Cup Softball Tournament has been entrusted to them.

1981 EUROPEAN SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP.

This tournament was staged at the Noorder Sportpark, Haarlem, from
 Saturday, 12th. September to Saturday, 19th. September. This is a lighted
 field.

The tournament was won by The Netherlands, 2nd. Italy, 3rd. Sweden,
 4th. Belgium. I do not have scores for all the games, but give those that
 I do know. Italy - Sweden 3 - 1. Belgium - Sweden 4 - 3. Sweden - Netherlands
 1 - 14.

Sweden - Italy 3 - 7. Sweden - Belgium 10 - 9. Netherlands - Sweden 14 - 0. Belgium - Sweden 9 - 10. Sweden - Belgium 4 - 2. Netherlands - Italy 1 - 0. Netherlands - Italy 2 - 1.

The tournament MVP was 2nd. base player Monique Fris(Netherlands). The best pitcher was Els Koks(Netherlands), who had also been voted best pitcher at the previous European championship.

SWEDEN 1981.

| DIVISION 1. | | | | | DIVISION 2. SOUTH | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|------|----|-------------------|----|----|------|----|
| Pl. | W. | L. | Pts. | | PL. | W. | L. | Pts. | |
| Bagarmossen | 19 | 17 | 2 | 34 | Alby | 12 | 10 | 2 | 20 |
| Leksand | 20 | 16 | 4 | 32 | Momotaro | 11 | 9 | 2 | 18 |
| Sundbyberg | 20 | 15 | 5 | 30 | Kungsangen | 12 | 8 | 4 | 16 |
| Ljusdal | 21 | 14 | 7 | 28 | Taby | 12 | 7 | 5 | 14 |
| Sundsvall | 21 | 8 | 13 | 16 | Kungsbacka | 11 | 4 | 7 | 8 |
| Skarnpack | 20 | 6 | 14 | 12 | Corona | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Skelleftea | 20 | 3 | 17 | 6 | Alingsas | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Rattvik | 21 | 2 | 19 | 4 | | | | | |

| RESERVE LEAGUE. | | | | | DIVISION 2. NORTH | | | | |
|-----------------|----|----|------|----|-------------------|----|----|------|----|
| Pl. | W. | L. | Pts. | | PL. | W. | L. | Pts. | |
| Leksand | 8 | 7 | 1 | 14 | Ormkarr | 9 | 9 | 0 | 18 |
| Ljusdal | 7 | 6 | 1 | 12 | Nalsta | 10 | 7 | 3 | 14 |
| Sundbyberg | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 | Insjon | 10 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Sundsvall | 8 | 2 | 6 | 4 | Falun | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| Skelleftea | 7 | 1 | 6 | 2 | Borlange | 10 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| | | | | | Enkoping | 7 | 1 | 6 | 2 |

The top four teams in Division 1 played in the Swedish Baseball Championship Series, while clubs in places 5 to 8 played in the Relegation Series.

Semi-final series of the Swedish Championship - Leksand - Sundbyberg 3 - 2; Leksand - Sundbyberg 12 - 1; Ljusdal - Bagarmossen 2 - 3; Sundbyberg - Leksand 4 - 8; Ljusdal - Bagarmossen 3 - 7; Ljusdal - Bagarmossen 3 - 9. Leksand and Bagarmossen went forward to the finals.

Final series - Leksand - Bagarmossen 9 - 3; Bagarmossen - Leksand 4 - 13; Bagarmossen - Leksand 4 - 9. **LEKSAND 1981 SWEDISH CHAMPION.** This was the eleventh time that Leksand had won the Swedish Championship.

The Division 1 Relegation series finished in the following order -

1. Sundsvall; 2. Skarnpack; 3. Skelleftea; 4. Rattvik. Rattvik relegated to Division 2.

From Division 2 Ormkarr, Nalsta, Alby, and Kungsangen went into the Promotion series. The Japanese club Momotaro waived their right to play in the series; Kungsangen took the vacant place. The Promotion series ended with Kungsangen in first place, and the other clubs as follows
2. Ormkarr; 3. Alby; 4. Nalsta. Kungsangen therefore gained promotion to Division 1.

SOFTBALL.

| DIVISION 1. | Pl. | W. | L. | Pts. |
|-------------|-----|----|----|------|
| Sundbyberg | 20 | 16 | 4 | 32 |
| Leksand | 19 | 15 | 4 | 30 |
| Ormkarr | 20 | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| Bagarmossen | 20 | 8 | 12 | 16 |
| Skelleftea | 19 | 5 | 14 | 10 |
| Nalsta | 20 | 5 | 15 | 10 |

Teams in places 1 to 4 in Division 1 went forward to the Swedish Championship Series; and Skelleftea and Nalsta played in the Relegation Series.

| DIV. 2. NORTH | PL. | W. | L. | Pts. |
|---------------|-----|----|----|------|
| Leksand B. | 12 | 10 | 2 | 20 |
| Ljusdal | 12 | 7 | 5 | 14 |
| Insjon | 12 | 5 | 7 | 10 |
| Rattvik | 12 | 2 | 10 | 4 |

DIV.2. SOUTH

| | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| Alby | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 |
| Abo | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |

Skarnpack withdrew from division 2 South.

Semi-finals Swedish Softball Championship. Sundbyberg - Bagarmossen 2 - 3; Ormkarr - Leksand 3 - 20; Sundbyberg - Bagarmossen 4 - 0;

Ormkarr - Leksand 6 - 24; Bagarmossen - Sundbyberg 4 - 16; Leksand - Ormkarr 16 - 3; Bagarmossen - Sundbyberg 9 - 8; Bagarmossen - Sundbyberg 5 - 6.

Leksand and Sundbyberg went forward to the final series.

Final Series - Sundbyberg - Leksand 4 - 5; Sundbyberg - Leksand 5 - 4;

Leksand - Sundbyberg 4 - 5; Leksand - Sundbyberg 11 - 20.

SUNDBYBERG 1981 SWEDISH CHAMPION.

In the Relegation Series Skelleftea lost to Nalsta and will play in Div. 2 in 1982.

In the Promotion Series from Division 2 Alby beat Ljusdal 3 games to 1.

The Swedish Baseball and Softball Federation celebrated its Silver Jubilee with a number of events - one of which was a five team tournament featuring two American teams, Athletes In Action and New England All Stars, two Swedish clubs, Skarpnack and Swemade-Bagarmossen, and a Swedish Selection. Results - Swemade - Skarpnack 15 - 8; Swemade - Athletes In Action 0 - 10; Skarpnack - New England 4 - 12; Athletes In Action - Skarpnack 7 - 3; Sweden - Swemade 1 - 5; New England All Stars - Sweden 3 - 0; New England All Stars - Swemade 10 - 0; Skarpnack - Sweden 1 - 2; Athletes In Action - New England All Stars 0 - 2; Sweden - Athletes In Action 6 - 7. Placings - 1. New England; 2. Athletes In Action; 3. Swemade-Bagarmossen; 4. Sweden; 5. Skarpnack. This was baseball. + + + + +

EUROPEAN SOFTBALL REVIEW.

THE NETHERLANDS.

The Men's Softball title was won by Kokolishi (Den Haag), a club in its first season. Kokolishi's members are all from the Netherlands Antilles. In the final tournament played on the field of the Bloemendaal club, teams taking part were Kokolishi, Bloemendaal, The Herons and DVH. Kokolishi won the deciding game, beating Bloemendaal 3 - 0.

Women's Softball. Hoofdklasse. 1. TERRASVOGELS; 2. Bloemendaal; 3. HHC; 4. DSS; 5. BMZ-EDO; 6. Shell; 7. Westerkwartier.

Division 1. 1st. KINHEIM; 2nd. HCAW; 3rd. OLA-UVV.

Division 2A. 1st. MSC-HEILOO. Division 2B. 1st. JRC DUCKS.

1981 Women's Softball Awards. Best Hitter - Gerjanne Treuren (Terrasvogels) .379; 2. Elly Nijhuis (HHC) .340. Best Pitcher - 1. Els Koks (Terrasvogels) 2. Caroline Fris (Bloemendaal). Most Valuable Player - 1. Caroline Smit (EDO). 2. Gerjanne Treuren (Terrasvogels).

DENMARK.

Men's. 1. PILEGARDEN KNIGHTS; 2. Horsholm Comets; 3. Asahi; 4. Munkene.

Women's. 1. MUNKENE; 2. Horsholm Clowns; 3. Pilegarden Damsels; 4. Amager Vikings.

WEST GERMANY. Women's softball made its official debut in 1981. Munich Tigers won the title. A large increase in numbers of teams is forecast for 1982.

FRANCE. WOODY'S S.C. (Nice) won the women's softball title.

FINLAND. Finland was admitted into membership of the European Softball Federation in 1981. Its first women's championship was held in 1981.

1st. BASES, coached by Mr. Erkki Heikkila. 2nd. Club PT. 3rd. Sluggers.

BELGIUM. Women's softball. Division 1. 1st. GENERAL MOTORS; 2. Antwerp Eagles; 3. Luchtbal; 4. Brasschaat; 5. Berchem Stars; 6. Deurne Spartans; 7. Zeeuwse Honk; 8. Berendrecht.

* * * * *

THE E.B.A. GAME(2).

Following-up the item written on this topic last year. At the time when the name "English Baseball" was introduced, Liverpool was the major centre with 20 plus teams, Gloucester had 12 teams, and South Wales was stated to have 8 teams. Whether at this date 1892, the game was being played in Scotland, I do not know. The game, formerly described as "The

new rounders", or sometimes as "Modern Rounders", was certainly played in Scotland in 1890.

Why the game developed so rapidly in South Wales compared to the other centres is difficult to understand. It not only developed as far as numbers were concerned, but also in the style of play. For example, there was not any close contact between the game in Liverpool and South Wales until the first international match was played. This was on August Monday, 1908, in Cardiff. The England team in that game still retained traces of the rounders style of pre-1890. Some of the players still batted single-handed, considering that the bat which evolved following the rule changes made at the end of 1889 was possibly twice the length and weight of the earlier rounders bat, single-handed batting seems to be extremely difficult.

For whatever the reason, Cardiff seems to have pioneered in several aspects, once the basic rule changes had been made by the authorities in Liverpool. Cardiff pioneered schoolboys' baseball, women's baseball, and schoolgirls' baseball.

The use of the mask used by the catcher in the American game was introduced into the English game in the mid-1920's. However, as a boy in Cardiff, I had never seen a mask used until I attended the Wales v. England game at the Cardiff Arms Park rugby ground in 1938. The English backstop was using a mask in that game. Until recently I believed that this was due to influence from the National Baseball Association which had introduced the American code to Liverpool in 1934. I have since discovered that masks were being used earlier, probably more frequently in the game in Liverpool than in South Wales.

The Cardiff Schoolboys' Baseball League was founded in 1922, it grew slowly but steadily; it has since been renamed the South Glamorgan Schoolboys' Baseball League and has today more than 100 teams in competition. The Liverpool Schoolboys' Baseball League was founded in 1924.

Women's baseball was being played as early as the 1920's in Cardiff. Schoolgirls' baseball was introduced in Cardiff in the early post World War II period, and has since been introduced in Newport, and Liverpool.

As far as present numbers go in South Wales, there are 100 plus teams in the South Glamorgan Schoolboys' League; 55 teams in the South Glamorgan Schoolgirls' League. The Gwent Schoolboys' League has 50 plus teams; there is also a Gwent Schoolgirls' League. The Mid-Glamorgan Schoolboys' League is a fairly recent development, and has 12 teams at present.

The Welsh National Baseball League was formed by fusing a number of leagues, it had 68 teams playing in 1981. The Cardiff Women's Baseball League had 32 teams in membership in 1981. So that the number of teams playing under the auspices of the Welsh Baseball Union is 317 plus.

I do not know how many teams are at present playing in England; in the 1930's there were seasons when possibly 100 teams were playing in England, mainly in Liverpool, but there were schoolboys' leagues in Warrington, and probably in Chester, and Manchester. A recent development is the formation of a Schoolgirls' Baseball League in the Liverpool area.

I have seen a reference to the game having died out in Gloucester during World War I.

As for international matches at the senior men's level. Up to the outbreak of World War II, 22 games were played in the series. Of these games, England won 8 (6 home, 2 away), and Wales 14 (9 home, 5 away). Since World War II, 34 games have been played. England have won 7 (6 home, 1 away), Wales have won 26 (15 home, 11 away). The highest sequence of Welsh victories is 11, from 1958 to 1968. England's highest winning sequence is 5, from 1935 to 1939. One game was abandoned due to rain.

The game enjoyed greatest public interest in the 1920's and 30's; since the advent of television spectator interest has declined dramatically. The highest attendance recorded at an international match is 16,000, this was at Cardiff in 1948.

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THE SPANISH SCENE.

Baseball and softball are growing in Spain. In 1975 the Spanish federation had 2,800 members; today it has more than 7,000. The games are also spreading. Earlier there were only three areas where baseball was played, these were Bilbao, Barcelona, and Madrid. Now baseball and softball are played in Asturias, Coruna, Lucena, Navarra, Seville, Valencia, Vizcaya, Zaragoza, and Jaen. Baseball is also played in Pontevedra, Murcia, and Malaga.

There are now about 120 clubs, which almost all play baseball and softball. There are in Madrid, six clubs in the highest class of baseball; these are Arquitectura, Madrid, Santana, Veteranos, Ciudad Jardín, and Pirates. Madrid has also four clubs in the highest class of softball, namely Arquitectura, Santana, Independientes and Pirates. Pirates B.C. is the oldest baseball/softball club in Spain, it was founded in 1931.

The Madrid area has the greatest number of members - 1500 +. Second is Catalonia in which Barcelona is situated, this has 970 members. Third is Zaragoza with 820 members; Navarra has 730, and Murcia 515. The Bilbao area, one of the oldest, has shown little growth, and has just 220 members.

Spain has been host to the European Baseball Championship (Seniors) four times, in 1955, 1960, 1965 and 1975; and has a lighted baseball stadium at Barcelona. Spain won the European championship in 1955, following this win Spain played in the Global World Series in the U.S.A.

Rapid development is taking place in youth baseball and softball.

MISCELLANY.

Some time ago the official magazine of the Netherlands Baseball & Softball Association published an article analysing its growth in membership in comparison with the growth in sports membership generally in The Netherlands, and further breaking down its figure between baseball and softball, and age groups and areas.

The total membership of organisations affiliated to the Netherlands Sports Federation increased from 1969 to 1979 from 1,500,000 to 3,500,000 which was an increase of 133%.

The KNBSB increased its membership in the same period from 11,089 (8856 baseball, 2233 softball) to 21,495; this was an increase of 93%. Thus the KNBSB was trailing behind the general increase.

When the membership was split between softball and baseball, it was seen that softball had increased from 2233 to 8948, Baseball had increased from 8856 to 12,413. Baseball had increased by 41%, which was less than one third of the general increase in sports membership. Softball had grown by 300%, which was more than twice the general average.

This process is still taking place - the KNBSB now has more than 25,000 members; the percentage increase in softball for the most recent period has been 12.2% as against 5.4% for baseball. Softball is still largely a female sport, but about 27% of softball players are men.

For the 1982 World Amateur Baseball Championship to be staged in Seoul, South Korea, the Korea Amateur Baseball Association is having a new 50,000 seat stadium built on the area of the Korea National Sports Complex. This is a remarkable complex - on a site of about a square mile there are two other outdoor stadiums, plus several covered arenas. It will be the centre for the 1988 Olympic Games.

The 12th. Harlem Baseball Week will take place from 14 - 22 August 1982. Participants will be the host team - The Netherlands, Mississippi University, Grand Rapids Sullivans, and for the first time ever, the U.S.A. national team.

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