

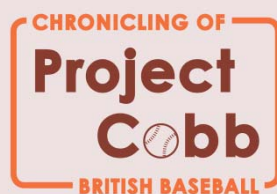
# BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 3

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August 1973

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# BASEBALL

## Mercury.

No. 3. AUGUST 1973.

### EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The tournament to decide the XIIIth. European Championship was played at Haarlem, from Saturday, June 30th until Sunday, July 8th. A week before the opening date, and with the scheme of competition already finalised, West Germany dropped a bombshell by announcing that it was unable to send a team, giving as its reason inability to finance the trip. The Royal Netherlands Baseball and Softball Association decided that in view of the work and expense already devoted to arranging the programme, West Germany would be invited to come at the expense of the Netherlands Association. In spite of this offer West Germany still declined to send a team.

A new programme of games was arranged. The six countries competing, Holland, Italy, Belgium, France, Sweden, and Spain were to play initially what the Dutch describe as a half-competition, that is each country played one game against each other country. The four countries finishing in positions 1 to 4, would then form one pool which again would consist of each of the four contestants playing one game against each of the other three. In this pool the results of the games in the earlier half-competition between the four countries would be included. The teams which finished in places 4 and 5 were to play a game against each other, again the result of the earlier series of games was reckoned in deciding the final positions.

The final placings were 1. Holland: 2. Italy: 3. Spain: 4. Belgium: 5. Sweden: 6. France.

The games were held at two grounds in Haarlem, the morning games started at 11.00 and were played at Badmintonpad, some readers in England may recollect that this was the ground on which London All-Stars played during the 1st. Haarlem Baseball Week in 1961. The two other games played daily were staged at Pim Mulier Stadium, usually starting at 14.00 and 20.00. Games at Badmintonpad cost 2 guilders admission, at Pim Mulier admission was 5 guilders. Passe-partouts cost 35 guilders.

Due to the high standard of baseball seen at the Haarlem Baseball Weeks, it was obvious that most of the games during the European Championships held little interest for the general baseball public in Haarlem, many of the games being very one-sided. Most of the morning and afternoon games seemed to be attended mainly by holders of passe-partouts. Two games between Holland and Italy were sell-outs, indeed as a spectator at these two games could confirm they were more than sold out, thousands of spectators who had purchased tickets having to stand behind the outfield fence. Estimates of attendance at each of the Holland v. Italy games ranged from 7,000 to 10,000.

On Monday, July 2nd. Bowie Kuhn, Commissioner for Baseball arrived in Haarlem, having crossed the Atlantic for the express purpose of attending part of the tournament. The Netherlands Association had been trying to get a visit from the Commissioner for Baseball for several years. It was unfortunate that Mr. Kuhn could not have been present two days later, when he would have seen an exciting night game. Holland beating Italy 7 - 6 before a packed stadium. As it was he saw three games, none of them well attended, which could not have created a very favourable impression of European baseball, the results being Italy 11 - Spain 2, Holland 16 - Sweden 1, and Holland 21 - France 0. Mr. Kuhn was more impressed by the quality of the grass on Dutch baseball fields than by the quality of the play. An informant states that Mr. Kuhn declared that no major league park had turf of the high standard that the Dutch fields attain.

Following the final game two veterans of the Dutch team, Boudewijn Maat and Wim Crouwel announced that they were retiring from the international baseball scene.

Official Prize Winners. Batting Average, Hamilton Richardson .619. Best Pitcher, Winneke Remmerswaal. Most Valuable Player, Hamilton Richardson. Best Coach, Ron Fraser. Homerun King, Giorgio Castelli (Italy). Most Unlucky Player, Henri Hendrickx (Belgium).

An interesting feature of the tournament was the contest between Ron Fraser who had managed Holland in the early 1960's and Bill Arce who after managing Holland for some years had switched to managing the Italian team. Holland persuaded Fraser to take over their team once again, and the two Americans had an earnest but friendly duel for supremacy in Europe.

Ron Fraser has since the tournament arranged for Winneke Remmerswaal to study and play baseball at the University of Miami.

Scores of games. France 8 - Sweden 7. Holland 7 - Spain 0. Italy 20 - Belgium 2. Spain 7 - Sweden 1. Holland 16 - Belgium 0. Italy 14 - France 1. Belgium 19 - France 4. Italy 11 - Spain 2. Holland 16 - Sweden 1. Holland 21 - France 0. Italy 25 - Sweden 0. Spain 1 - Belgium 0. Sweden 4 - Belgium 3. Spain 4 - France 1. Holland 7 - Italy 6. Sweden 10 France 7. Italy 9 - Spain 5. Holland 8 - Belgium 0. Sweden 6 - France 5. Holland 10 - Spain 2. Italy 17 - Belgium 1. Spain 11 - Belgium 3. Holland 6 - Italy 2.

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#### ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The Xth. Asian Baseball Championships opened at Manila, Republic of the Philippines on Saturday, April 28th., closing on Tuesday, May 8th. South Korea were the defending champions, others competing were Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, and Australia. Game results. Japan 4 - Taiwan 0. Philippines 8 - Australia 3 (8 innings). Japan 8 - Australia 0. South Korea 5 - Philippines 4. Taiwan 3 - Philippines 0. South Korea 8 - Australia 3. Japan 13 - Philippines 1. Taiwan - South Korea 5-5 tie. Japan 3 - South Korea 2. South Korea 7 - Australia 3. Taiwan 8 - Philippines 3. Japan 7 - Australia 1. South Korea 7 - Philippines 2. Japan 10 - Taiwan 2. Philippines 3 - Australia 1. Japan - South Korea 2-2 tie. Taiwan 4 - Australia 3. Japan 13 - Philippines 5. South Korea - Taiwan 3-3 tie.

A result is missing from the above, but from the final standings given below it appears that Australia must have gained a victory over Taiwan.

	W.	L.	T.	Pts.
1. Japan	7	0	1	15
2. South Korea	4	1	3	11
3. Taiwan	3	3	2	8
4. Philippines	2	6	0	4
5. Australia	1	7	0	2

The XIth. Championships are to be held in Japan in 1975.

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#### BASEBALL IN NORTH LONDON (PART I) by P.S. Ash.

This article outlines the decline and fall of the game in a small area of England.

The earliest reference to the game in the area was during the early twenties when players of Barnet Alston soccer club played baseball at the Underhill ground (the present home of Barnet F.C. a Southern League club).

During the late thirties a team in the ~~LONDON~~ London Major League played at Harringay Stadium, and in 1937 a number of their junior fans formed the Hornsey Red Sox. This club joined the 3rd. Division of the Metropolitan Baseball League in 1939.

The Second World War put a stop to nearly all baseball, and it was not until 1946 that the Hornsey club was re-formed by the late Fred Merritt, it started playing at Brook Farm, Whetstone. It was while at this ground that the 'Sox became one of the leading clubs in the country, when during the 1949 season they won the Baseball Association Cup, the Southern Counties Baseball Association Cup, the London East League Cup, and the London East League Championship. In addition to these competitions a number of friendly matches were played with teams from other areas and U.S. Service teams. The record for this season was 32 wins and 2 defeats, attendance at home games usually topped the 1,000 mark, many coming from the Harringay area to watch ice hockey players such as Rickey Rickard shine at the summer game.

Not only did 1949 see another 'senior' team in North London, the Enfield Cardinals (who finished in fourth place in the London East League), but also saw the re-forming of Standard Telephones at Southgate, and the formation of a junior team at Whetstone, the Hornsey Bruins. These teams played a number of evening games in order to introduce beginners to the game, one of these new players was Peter Ash.

The following season the Hornsey club formed its third team, the Athletics, and moved to a new ground at Muswell Hill. This ground had a high brick wall on one side of the outfield. It was very impressive to watch players taking the ball off this wall in U.S. Major League style. The Red Sox reached the finals of the B.A. Cup, and retained the other two cups, but finished 4th. in the League, one place ahead of Enfield. The Athletics were 4th., and the Bruins 6th. in the 2nd. Division of the London West League.

While 1951 saw the continued growth of baseball in the London area, with the Hornsey Braves and Albany Pirates being formed in North London, it was also the zenith of post-war baseball in England. In 1951 occurred the first of a number of splits that caused so much trouble and wasted effort in English baseball.

One of the main causes of acrimony between certain Essex clubs and the Hornsey and Briggs clubs was the number of American Service players being used. The London East League passed a rule that a club could only sign three in a season. Hornsey and Briggs withdrew and joined the London West League. This withdrawal prompted the London East League to leave the Southern Counties Baseball Association, to change its name to the South Eastern Baseball League, and to form a new county organisation, the South Eastern Counties Baseball Association. Not to be outdone, the London West League changed its title to the Western Amateur Baseball League, and also formed its own county body, the Western Counties Baseball Association. While this was going on the Baseball Association Ltd., merely looked on from the Olympian heights.

The teams in the South at that time were :-

Western Amateur League. Division 1.

West London, Wembley, Surrey Tigers, Hornsey Red Sox, Briggs Brigands, and Division 2.

Mitcham, Wokingham, Standard Telephones, Kodak, Briggs Tigers, and Wellingborough. Division 3.

Blue-Jays, Albany, Hornsey Athletics, Hornsey Bruins, Sutton, and Surrey eagles.

South Eastern Baseball League. Division 1.

Eltham, Essex Nationals, Paragon, Thames Board Mills, and Hornsey Braves.

Division 2.

Aveley, Braintree, Essex Nomads, Fords, Fondu, Headleys, and Marley Youth Club.

Clubs formed during the season. U.S. Navy (London), Collegians, Snowdon Colliery, Benfleet, and Southend.

During the winter of 1951/52 something went wrong with the organisation of the Hornsey Club. A number of the original officers decided to give up the game. Team organisation of the Braves (who moved to Hackney Marshes but failed to complete the season), and of the Athletics (who moved to Hampstead Heath) remained intact. The Red Sox completely disappeared. While the Bruins knew nothing of the disintegration of the Hornsey club until early April, when during the third period of an ice hockey match at Harringay, the remaining players formed the North London Bears. This team joined the S.E.B.L., Division 2 finishing as runners-up. However the club proved to be "a one man band" and did not survive the following winter, due to some extent to my being called up for National Service.

1953 started with only Hornsey Athletics and Standard Telephones left in North London. The next year saw the revival of DeHavilland Comets at Leavesden, and the forming of a new club at Edgware. However, Standard Telephones folded. The Athletics moved to Brook Farm in 1955 and celebrated the return of baseball to Whetstone by winning the South Eastern Baseball League Championship.

(Part II will appear in the next issue.).

SPRINGBOK'S TOUR.

The South African Baseball Federation selected sixteen players to take part in a five country tour of Europe. The manager of the team was Neville Leake, Chairman of the S.A.B.F., and the coach was L. Roome.

Players selected were Robin Corbett, Clyde Booyens, Killer Nel, Ian Matthews, "Booitjie" Bezuidenhout, Brian Coulson, Gordon Coulson, Ron Desilla, Frank Fingleson, Alan Kourie, Piet Kruger, Pat O'Brien, John Price, Jannie Schoeman, Raymond Tew, and Trevor Tew. The Tew brothers are both double internationals having represented South Africa at softball against a New Zealand touring team.

Springbok captain is Jannie Schoeman. Alan Kourie, probably the best Springbok player, had a trial with the Minnesota Twins in the spring of this year. Ten players were provided by Transvaal who have dominated the inter-provincial series.

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MISCELLANY.

The Italian Baseball and Softball Federation has organised a tournament for the Intercontinental Cup, to take place at Rome from August 30th., to September 9th. Countries expected to take part are Italy, Japan, Taiwan, Ecuador, Canada, U.S.A. and Nicaragua. Holland was invited, but declined to enter.

On Sunday, 22nd., July, at the Nieuw Vreelust ground, Rotterdam, Sparta 1972 Dutch champions met the European Cup-holders, Glen Grant Nettuno in the semi-final of the European Cup. Sparta won 2 - 1, gaining revenge for last year's semi-final defeat at the hands of Glen Grant, when the Italian club won 8 - 1 in Italy. Hamilton Richardson hit a 2 run homer to win the game for the Rotterdam club.

The final, venue not yet fixed, will be a best of three series against the Italian champions Fortitudo Amaro Montenegro of Bologna.

The 45th. Japanese National High School Championships had a crowd of 50,000 at a quarter-final game. The crowd turned out to see a sensational pitcher Suguru Egoua, who struck-out 20 batters in this game, and extended his scoreless innings mark to 25 for the tournament. He increased his consecutive scoreless innings mark to 136, inclusive of games pitched during 1972.

Toru Hamaura, a Japanese playing for Fresno in the Californian League, currently leads that league in strike-outs. He hopes to be the first Japanese to make it big in the U.S. major leagues.

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NOTES FROM HOLLAND.

In conversations with youngsters who were Babe Ruth League players with the Kinheim Club, whose ground at Badmintonpad was used for morning games during the European Championships, the following items were gleaned.

Upon joining the club members have to supply themselves with all their own playing gear, including uniforms. The annual contribution for the BRL players was the equivalent of £7.50 a year. The Kinheim club has 250 members in its baseball section, and operates 11 teams. It is sponsored by an employment agency Actie '68, which pays about £1,400 a year to the club.

The former Haarlem Nicols club is now styled Raak Nicols. It is sponsored by Raak, a Haarlem soft drinks firm, to the tune of some £4,000 a year.

Many Dutch clubs are now sponsored by firms seeking additional means of advertising, indeed of the clubs in the Premier Division of the Dutch National League only three are not sponsored by outside firms. The three are OVVO of Amsterdam, and the two Rotterdam clubs Sparta and Feyenoord. Sparta and Feyenoord being sponsored by the parent soccer clubs.

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The next issue of Baseball Mercury will appear in November. Items for inclusion should be sent to:- William Morgan, 89 Sterndale Road, London, W.14.

The subscription for four issues is 25p.