

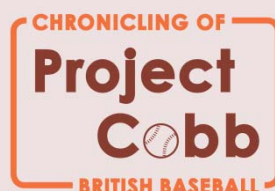
# BASEBALL Mercury.

Issue 33

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July 1983

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# BASEBALL Mercury.

EDITOR -----  
WILLIAM MORGAN,  
6(B), STEVENAGE RD.,  
LONDON, SW6.

No. 33. JULY 1983.

## **NORTH WEST AMERICAN BASEBALL - SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**

We started the 1983 season with the discovery of a group of base-ball players in the Manchester area; they had been playing among themselves for a few years.

The group consists of about thirty Venezuelan students. Unfortunately for us, as their examinations take place in June, they could not play as a team in the early part of our season. However, several signed for the Monarchs, and will play for that club until such time that they can form their own squad. This should be late July. By that time we will have completed the competition for the North West League. So the Venezuelan squad will be included in a round robin Special Trophy.

The group does get together to play All-Star games. To date we have played one such game, the North West All-Stars winning by one run. For the rest of us, we have still maintained a six team league. The Skelmersdale Buffaloes have been replaced by the Skelmersdale Giants.

All clubs are looking a lot stronger than last year, and seem to be more even in strength. Burtonwood Braves thanks to a new pitcher, J. Parker, are now quite formidable.

Tigers have returned to Liverpool from Skelmersdale, and are stronger as a result. We all welcome the return of Ken Dulson, after an absence of a good few years.

Liverpool Monarchs are greatly strengthened thanks to their signing a number of Venezuelans. Garrington Dodgers, last season's youngsters, are beginning to show real potential.

Skelmersdale Giants, under the guidance of Bob Tune, are a much stronger side than the side they replaced.

Liverpool Trojans still have the same experienced players as last year; and last year's rookies are really coming through. At present Trojans are undefeated this season. This despite the tremendous set-back of losing centre-fielder, Alan Campbell, due to a broken thigh during early season training.

On July 30th., we have a One Day Tournament, which is sponsored. It will be played at Kirkby Sports Centre. Contestants will be the top four teams in the North West Baseball League, which will have been decided by then.

Two trophy competitions have been decided so far; one was staged in a local sports festival which involved many sports, Trojans beat

Tigers in the final. The other trophy was the Lancashire Cup, this was won by Burtonwood Braves. We are in the process two All-Star games with the Nottingham area. Otherwise the shop-window baseball has been painfully absent. The anticipated T.V. led boom, has failed to materialise so far. On the youth baseball scene, we started out with plans for six teams, of which we managed to turn out three only. These three we hope will form the basis of a much larger number next year. We have Youth All-Star games arranged with Nottingham. We have staged a One Day Youth Tournament, which was won by Ince-Blundell Freebirds. Concluding my report on the local baseball scene I must mention the Veterans team, which is competing in a mid-week league for the third consecutive season. Now, over to ladies softball. There is a five team league in operation this season. It consists of the following teams - Skelmersdale Jets, Marston Bentley Blue Caps (Liverpool), Litherland High School, Hull Aces, Hull Ladybirds. The league season proper commenced on July 3rd. We have already staged a one day event, this was for the Sefton Festival of Sport Trophy. The winners were Skelmersdale Jets. A team from Leicester was expected to compete, but never arrived.

Norman Wells.



## CANADA

Baseball Canada, the governing body of the game in the Dominion, publishes under the same title what appears to me to be an annual review. My thanks go to the organisation, presided over by Cas Pielak, for sending copies of the 1982 and 1983 issues. Canadian Baseball Championships 1981.

Medal	Senior	Bison	Midget
Gold	New Brunswick	Manitoba	Quebec
Silver	Nova Scotia	Quebec	Nova Scotia

1982.	Senior	Junior	Bison	Midget
Gold	Windsor, (Ont.)	Manitoba	Windsor (Rivers.)	Quebec
Silver	Saskatchewan	Quebec	New Bruns.	Ontario
Bronze	New Bruns.	New Brunswick	Nova Scotia	Alberta.

The 1982 Championships were hosted by the following centres - Senior - St. John's, Newfoundland; Junior - Niagara Falls, Ont. Bison, Sarnia, Ont; Midget - Stettler, Alberta.

The Pearson Cup Competition for 1983 was played in Montreal on 5th. May. The Toronto Blue Jays beat the Montreal Expos by the score of 7 - 5.

The record now stands at three wins for Montreal, one win for Toronto and one tie game.

The Pearson Cup Game is played annually, and the two major league clubs concerned donate the proceeds to amateur baseball in Canada. National Baseball Week 1983 was to be celebrated between the 10th. and 16th. July. Special events taking place during the week included.

3.

Canada's National Team playing in the Intercontinental Cup at Antwerp, Belgium.

Canada's National Youth Team( 18 year olds and under) playing in the World Friendship Series in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Bill MacKenzie, Technical Director of Baseball Canada, contributes two items annually. The first is Team Canada Review for the previous year; the second is headed Technical Director's Message and appears to attempt to spell out hopes and plans for the current year.

Because of the differing educational systems in Canada and the U.S.A., particularly the emphasis on college sport in the U.S.A., and the availability of athletic scholarships in the U.S.A., Baseball Canada attempts to place the better prospects emerging from its youth programmes with colleges in the U.S.A. This enables such talent to be brought along more readily than if the young men attended universities in Canada.

Team Canada has developed steadily as a result of this policy, out the best products of the system are not available for very long as they tend to be signed by professional clubs. The following players have gone this way in recent seasons.

1979. Steve Moberley... San Diego Padres: Maury Ornest... Milwaukee Brewers.

1980. Pat Dumouchelle... Baltimore Orioles: Tim Clarke.. Chicago Cubs.

1981. Perry Lychak.. Toronto Blue Jays: Cam Walker.. Milwaukee Brewers: Dave Montanari.. Chicago Cubs.

1982. Chuck Westgard.. New York Yankees.

Baseball Canada's major sponsor is The Labatt Brewing Company Ltd. This company is to receive the Corporate Sponsors of the Year Award from the International Association of Amateur Baseball in recognition of its outstanding contribution to Amateur Baseball in Canada.

A secondary sponsor is Irwin Troy Ltd., Canadian distributors for Rawlings, this company makes a donation of 5,000 Can. dollars a year, and supplies free baseballs for all Canadian Championships. Now for a little history.

William Phillips, from New Brunswick, is considered the "first" Canadian player to reach the major leagues. Phillips spent eleven years with Cleveland(NL), Brooklyn and Kansas City(American Association) between 1879 and 1891. Phillips was a fine fielder and a good hitter.

The most intriguing of these early players was Arthur Irwin, born in Toronto on St. Valentine's Day, 1858. He devoted nearly forty years of his life to baseball, playing many roles on and off the field. He broke into the big-time in 1880 and played for thirteen years. He was considered by many to be of the premier shortstops of that era.

During this era, William Henry Watkins, another prodigal Canuck, managed the Detroit Nationals to the National League championship. He was 28 at the time. He started his managerial career at the tender age of 24 with Indianapolis, and also managed Pittsburgh and Kansas City.

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The next issue of Baseball Mercury should appear in November. Subscription is £1 for four issues. Subscriptions and items for publication should be sent to the editor.

# Nottingham Baseball and Softball Association

Standings as at 26.6.83.

## EAST MIDLANDS JUNIOR LEAGUE

	P.	W.	L.	%
Southglade Eagles	5	5	0	1.000
Southglade Kestrels	6	4	2	.667
Newark Titans	5	3	2	.600
Rugeley Raiders	5	3	2	.600
Nottingham Tigers	6	3	3	.500
Leicester Dodgers	5	1	4	.200
Leicester Saints	6	0	6	.000

## EAST MIDLANDS SENIOR LEAGUE (DIVISION I)

	P.	W.	L.	%
Menwith U.S. Base	3	3	0	1.000
Clifton Cougars	3	2	1	.667
Southglade Hornets	3	1	2	.333
Nottingham Tigers	3	0	3	.000

## EAST MIDLANDS SENIOR LEAGUE (DIVISION II)

	P.	W.	L.	%
Rugeley Rebels	2	2	0	1.000
Southglade Pirates	2	1	1	.500
Sutton Coldfield Royals	2	0	2	.000

## NOTTINGHAM SENIOR OPEN LEAGUE

	P.	W.	L.	%
Clifton Cougars	2	2	0	1.000
Southglade Hornets	3	2	1	.667
Sutton Coldfield Royals	3	1	2	.333
Rugeley Rebels	2	0	2	.000

The second round of the Nottingham Senior Knock-out Cup was played on Sunday, 26th. June. In a very close game Cougars beat Hornets beat Hornets 6 - 5. Tigers beat Rebels 14 - 0. The final will take place on Sunday, 24th. July; and the winners of this cup will qualify for the B.A.B.S.F. semi-final.

Sheila Williams.

## SOFTBALL INTERNATIONAL

RECORD 23 COUNTRIES ATTEND CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOFTBALL FEDERATION.

Twenty-three national associations/federations were in attendance at the XI I.S.F. Congress held in Oklahoma City, May 13-15. Highlights of the Congress were the awarding of the 1985 Boys and Girls Junior World Championships to Fargo(North Dakota) U.S.A.,

and the Women's World Championship for 1986 to Auckland, New Zealand. Several amendments were made to the I.S.F. Code and Technical Code. One of the amendments provided for the holding of the Junior World Championships every two years instead of four, by scheduling the girls and boys competitions in separate years.

The 1985 Congress was awarded to Guatemala City.

Midland, Michigan is the site for the 1984 Men's World Championships.

ISF PROPOSES WOMEN'S SOFTBALL FOR SEOUL.

The ISF will formally submit to the Organising Committee for the Seoul 1988 Olympic Games that women's softball should be a demonstration sport.

Women's softball is now played on an organised basis in more than 50 countries.

ISF HALL OF FAME.

Five persons including the first player were elected to the ISF Hall of Fame. The player, Marjorie Nelson from Australia, competed in world championships and also in many other international competitions.

Nol Houtkamp (The Netherlands), national coach of the Dutch federation, has a dual distinction. He is the first coach to be elected, he is also the first European to be elected. Three administrators were elected, one of whom was Don Porter, Secretary-General of the I.S.F.

1983 SCHEDULE OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS.

Central American-Caribbean Championship - Men

June 24-July 1, Cartagena, Colombia.

2nd Haarlem Softball Week - Women. July 9-16, Haarlem, Netherlands.

Hongkong International Invitational Tournament - Women

July 5 -10, Hongkong.

European Championship - Women. Parma, Italy, August 23 - 28.

European Cup Championship - Women. September 22 - 25, Santpoort, The Netherlands.

Softball is bidding to become an Olympic sport in 1992. Softball was recognised by the IOC in 1977.

Softball in the U.K. is in a somewhat fragmented state, it is played as a recreation sport in many schools, and youth clubs. A number of groups have played for many years in various London parks.

Peter Hunt, who has staged some American sports events in a major stadium in London, is trying to co-ordinate groups in the London area. Known men's teams are - The Brompton Aces, The Paddington Bears, Regents Park, The Softies. Contact addresses are being sought for - The Geezers, The Ealing Commoners, The F-Troop, The Spatchcocks.

Known women's teams are - Ashford Harriers, Crawley Angels, London Alleycats, Sloane Rangers.

SOFTBALL FEVER?

The following appeared in a Trans-Atlantic publication a few years ago.

Greenville, S.C. - A softball game between Laurel Creek and Fountain Inn ended with the umpire shot to death, another man nursing broken bones and a coach in jail charged with murder. Lt. Earl Barnett of the Greenville County sheriff's department said Willie Lee Spurgeon, 44, of Fountain Inn was arrested at his home and charged with murder in the slaying of Raymond Dawkins, 52.

Barnett said the shooting broke out when an umpire made a "bad call" during a softball game at Laurel Creek, just outside

Greenville.

An umpire, but apparently not Dawkins, made a disputed call and an unidentified man ran onto the field with a knife. Spurgeon, who was in a dugout, pulled a pistol.

A fight ensued with exchanged. Ballistics tests later showed that Dawkins was killed by a bullet from Spurgeon's gun. During the fight, Spurgeon himself was shot in the hip, and his pants fell off when the bullet hit him, authorities said.

Meanwhile, someone attacked James Thompson, 36, of Greenville, with a bat, beating him on the head and shoulders. He was listed in satisfactory condition at Greenville General Hospital with head, face and shoulder injuries.

Authorities said Thompson was playing second base and had pulled a gun during the melee.

#### A VISIT TO CARDIFF.

I was in Cardiff about two weeks ago to attend a funeral service. During the late afternoon of the day on which the service was held, I attended a junior schoolboys' baseball game, which had been the subject of a news story in the South Wales Echo the previous evening. The game in question was between St. Patrick's and St. Francis, and there was a certain amount of "needle" about the game as far as the teachers were concerned anyway.

I was surprised when I arrived at Sevenoaks Park about 30 minutes before game time to see the teacher in charge of the St. Patrick's team putting his charges through what could be described as pre-game drills. I say surprised because since 1972 I have seen two or three Welsh National League games each season, and I have never seen men players conducting anything which could be described as pre-game drills.

Anyway, St. Patrick's overwhelmed their visitors. During the course of the game I complimented the teacher on what I had seen him doing, and on the smartness of play of his charges.

The following morning, which was Saturday, I attended two games played simultaneously on adjacent pitches, which matched junior boys teams and junior girls teams drawn from the schools of South Glamorgan and Liverpool.

During the course of the morning I was introduced to Bill Olsen, who was mainly responsible for coaching the St. Patrick's team. He has them for a couple of 45 minute sessions two evenings a week, and for two hours on most Saturday mornings. Under four years of his tuition St. Patrick's have gone from being a "joke" school in baseball eyes to being the most formidable school in their age group.

During my attendance at the two representative games I was able to have a brief conversation with a teacher from Liverpool.

He informed me that there were 28 junior schools' teams in the Liverpool League. I questioned him about number of schoolgirls' teams; he told me that there were no schoolgirls' teams. That the girls playing for Liverpool Schoolgirls either played for the "B" teams of some schools, the "A" teams of which would consist of boys, or might be girls who played Liverpool rounders. One girl who came to bat while we were talking was exceptional, in that she played for her school's "A" team.

I questioned him further on schoolboys' baseball at secondary level, and was told that at that age level the game had died out within the last two years.

This would seem to be the first time since 1924 that boys of 12 plus were not playing schools' baseball in Liverpool.

To compensate to some extent for the loss of schoolboys' base

-ball the English Baseball Association has operated a Youth League for a few seasons.

My informant told me that the English Baseball Association had eight or nine teams in membership at the adult level.

Returning to South Wales; a friend named Ted Peterson sends me a copy of the Welsh National Baseball League Official Handbook each year. It is an excellently produced little publication, undoubtedly it could be improved by containing more information, but it carries presumably all the details that its member clubs are concerned about.

Looking through those that I possess, I note that in 1981 there were 58 teams in seven divisions, plus a youth division of ten teams. In 1982 and 1983 details of the Youth Division have been left out. In 1982 there were 60 teams in eight divisions, and in 1983 64 teams in eight divisions. Each year the league's press officer places a story in the South Wales newspapers regarding the number of new teams formed. Upon examining the league handbooks however, one discovers that these new formations are almost counter-balanced by losses. For example possibly thirteen new teams, and eleven teams folding.

The league has five cup competitions, plus a youth cup competition. The Welsh Baseball Union which is the governing body has its own cup competition which is open to all member clubs. The cup competitions operated by the W.N.B.L. are restricted to certain divisions, with the exception of the Welsh Brewers Cup, the number of teams allowed to compete for this trophy appears to differ from season to season.

The Welsh Brewers Cup competition is sponsored by the company named and the final is televised each year. Winners recently have been 1980 and 1981 - Llanrumney Youth Club; 1982 - Caerau (Ely). The Welsh Baseball Union Cup, for decades the most coveted trophy, has been overshadowed to a large extent by the Welsh Brewers Cup. Recent winners have been 1980 - St. Albans; 1981 - Llanrumney Youth Club; 1982 - Llanrumney Youth Club. The third cup in order of prestige is the W.N.B.L. Silver Bowl, this is restricted now to the sixteen teams forming the County and First Divisions. Thus the eight clubs in the Premier Division, the forty odd teams in the lower divisions are excluded.

W.N.B.L. Silver Bowl winners have been - 1980 - Llandaff North Athletic; 1981 - Alexandra Old Boys "B"; 1982 - Old Illydians. Premier Division winners have been Llanrumney Youth Club 1975 to 1982 inclusive - yes, that's right. The club has also dominated the Welsh Brewers Cup during the same period. The most successful run of league championships prior to Llanrumney Youth Club, was Grange Albion, winners of six consecutive Welsh League titles 1921-1926.

The greatest feat of all is claimed by Penylan Baseball Club. That is the Triple Treble in seasons 1960 - 1961 - 1962. The club won the three top competitions three seasons in a row. Penylan is the oldest existing club, having been founded in 1903.

#### AINBA equals IOC PLUS!

The International Association of Amateur Baseball made a giant stride forward in 1978 when it gained official recognition by the International Olympic Committee, and GAISF. Much of the growth of baseball since that time can be attributed to this recognition and to the support of leading IOC officials.

As AINBA continues to move forward and strengthen its policies and procedures it must always be guided by the regulations of the IOC as its mother organisation. But there are times when AINBA

might better itself by even going one step beyond IOC regulations.

In my opinion, both AINBA and our continental confederations could probably see greater growth by what I might term an "IOC Plus" regulation.

I refer to the agreement worked out by President Samaranch which resulted in the continuation of Taiwan in international Olympic competition using their Olympic flag, anthem and emblem in all Olympic participation.

We've already taken action that requires the Taiwan Baseball Association to abide by these same standards when competing in all AINBA competitions. They are to play under the name Taiwan and in all activities to use the flag, emblem and anthem of either their Olympic organisation or their baseball association.

Where does the "Plus" come in? I believe there is one more step that AINBA should take at this time to not only assist in the situation above, but even more to move amateur sports one step further away from the arena of politics.

Let's start with the IOC rule, but add a regulation for all of AINBA that would have us use only the AINBA flag and the flag of the host country in AINBA tournaments. In the place of the other countries' flags, each team would carry at the front of its delegation a traditional white sign bearing the name of the country. In this small way we would bring greater equality to all of our member federations.

As AINBA administrators we are called on to act in a way that will contribute to the advancement of baseball throughout the whole world. The goal of our organisation is baseball promotion, not the promotion of nationalism. If we can bring more members into our "AINBA family" by leaving our flags at home, then so be it.

Let's take the very wise judgement of President Samaranch and the IOC officials as they worked it out for the Olympic Games, move it one step further in what I have chosen to call "IOC Plus" and together see AINBA serve the whole world.

The above item was written by Robert E. Smith, President of AINBA; and has been re-published from "World Baseball", the news-sheet of AINBA.

#### BASEBALL IN CHINA.

Baseball continues to grow in popularity in the People's Republic of China. National baseball association president Wei Ming estimates 30,000 Chinese enjoy playing the game, with approximately 2,500 training and competing on a regular basis.

That number may seem small in a population the size of China's, but baseball has a solid base for growth in the country. Not only are teams sent out into international competition, but several centres of higher learning specializing in physical education include baseball in their programmes, thus developing the skilled players and coaches on which the sport can be built.

The national sports federation held a major conference in 1981 to study baseball training and competitive systems in the United States, Japan, Latin America, and Europe.

Since 1977, several groups of Chinese coaches have gone to other countries to view baseball development at first hand. Recognised coaches from the United States and Japan have been invited to train and teach Chinese players.

The Chinese baseball association says that their players and coaches have benefitted greatly from this interchange, which is helping them in their efforts to introduce baseball to a wider segment of their population.