

BASEBALL

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INTERCONTINENTAL CUP.

The first Intercontinental Cup tournament was held in Italy from 1st. to 9th. September, and was a great success. The Italian Baseball and Softball Federation certainly earned a feather in the cap for this effort, undoubtedly achieved great publicity for baseball within Italy, for their own organisation in world baseball, and indirectly gave a lift to baseball in other European Countries. The indirect benefit arising from the fact that two countries, Japan and Taiwan, having arranged to visit Italy for the tournament played games in countries which did not compete for the Cup.

Final standings. 1. Japan 6 - 1, .857 : 2. Puerto Rico 5 - 2, .714 : 3. U.S.A. 5 - 2, .714 : 4. Nicaragua 4 - 3, .571 : 5. Canada 4 - 3, .571 : 6. Italy 3 - 4, .489 : 7. Taiwan 1 - 6, .143 : 8. Argentina 0 - 7, .000.

Results. Japan - Taiwan 10 - 1. Japan - Puerto Rico 1 - 0. Japan - Argentina 25 - 0. Japan - Italy 11 - 5. Japan - Nicaragua 10 - 0. Japan - Canada 1 - 0. Puerto Rico - Argentina 12 - 0. Puerto Rico - Italy 7 - 3. Puerto Rico - Taiwan 5 - 3. Puerto Rico - Nicaragua 4 - 2. Puerto Rico - U.S.A. 9 - 2. U.S.A. - Canada 6 - 1. U.S.A. - Argentina 10 - 0. U.S.A. - Nicaragua 13 - 0. U.S.A. - Taiwan 5 - 2. U.S.A. - Japan 1 - 0. Nicaragua - Italy 4 - 1. Nicaragua - Canada 10 - 9. Nicaragua - Argentina 5 - 2. Nicaragua - Taiwan 4 - 1. Canada - Taiwan 7 - 6. Canada - Puerto Rico 5 - 3. Canada - Argentina 12 - 3. Canada - Italy 7 - 6. Italy - Taiwan 7 - 5. Italy - U.S.A. 6 - 5. Italy - Argentina 7 - 2. Taiwan - Argentina 13 - 0.

An official opening ceremony took place at the Acqua Acetosa Field in Rome, and games were played at Bologna, Parma, and Casalecchio di Reno. The outstanding player of the tournament was Nestor Morales (Puerto Rico) who won five individual trophies. He was home-run king, best hitter, most valuable player, most runs batted in, and led in slugging percentage. Kojiro Ikegaya (Japan) was the best pitcher, Robert De Meo (U.S.A.) was the best catcher. Best infielder was Toru Ugayama (Japan), best outfielder was Doug Simon (Canada). Hiroshi Naito (Japan) led in stolen bases. Japan won the trophy for the best disciplined team. Shortstop Vincenzo Luciani won the trophy for Italian MVP.

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MERSEYSIDE 1973 by Norman Wells.

1973 has been a year of some success and optimism, we have had a very good season in all respects.

The League consisted of six teams, Burtonwood Yanks, NALGO Tigers, Stretford Saints, Liverpool Trojans, Otis Dynamos, and Garringtons Dodgers.

The schedule was completed with the following results.

	Won	Lost	Tied	Pts.
Burtonwood Yanks	8	1	1	17
Garringtons Dodgers	5	3	2	12
Liverpool Trojans	5	4	1	11
Stretford Saints	5	5	0	10
NALGO Tigers	4	4	2	10
Otis Dynamos	0	10	0	0

British Amateur Baseball Federation National Cup.

Burtonwood Yanks beat Hull Aces 23 - 2.

Lancashire Cup. Stretford Saints beat Liverpool Trojans 6 - 0.

Artco Trophy. Stretford Saints beat NALGO Tigers 16 - 3.

Robertson Trophy. Burtonwood Yanks beat NALGO Tigers 4 - 2.

Anglo-American Association Trophy. Won by Burtonwood Yanks, runners-up Thames Board Mills Raiders.

Orford Trophy. Garringtons Dodgers beat Burtonwood Yanks 5 - 2.

In addition to the league and trophy games, we had two Merseyside v. Humberside games with each side winning away from home. We also had a game between a B.A.B.F. selected England team and the U.S. Army, the game was played at Burtonwood before a very large crowd, England winning 10 - 5.

The Anglo-American Association Trophy is a new award, for which we intend to compete annually.

1973 Individual Awards. Player of the Year. - Henry Ziegler (Burtonwood). Pitcher of the Year. - Don Hems (Burtonwood). Home Run Award. - Don Hems (Burtonwood). Most Improved Young Player. - Steve Thompson (Trojans). Rookie Award 1973. - Steve Rigby (Southport). Merit Award. - Otis Dynamos Club.

We have received tremendous help from all at the U.S. Army base at Burtonwood, including the use of the diamond, we were and are, very grateful for this assistance.

We were also glad to see that Garringtons, Bromsgrove survived a bad period, and now have an excellent team renamed "Dodgers", looking very smart in the newest of new uniforms. I believe Bill Casey deserves all credit for his hard work in keeping the side alive.

For the future - well, we hope to have the same teams next year, with the addition of a team at Southport, and with our financial side looking a little healthier we are looking towards 1974 with optimism.

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RIFT IN WORLD BASEBALL

Trouble, which had been brewing in the affairs of FIBA for some time, came to a head on the occasion of the Intercontinental Cup tournament already mentioned. At the last FIBA Congress which took place at Curacao dissension developed, leading to one faction, headed apparently by Nicaragua and Italy, determined to challenge the established order. The Intercontinental Cup tournament was not sanctioned by FIBA, and a few weeks before the date of the tournament, Juan Isa (Netherlands Antilles), president of FIBA, wrote to those countries intending to compete in Italy that they would be punished if they played in defiance of the FIBA ruling.

At the conclusion of the tournament in Italy, seven of the competing countries decided to organise a new world federation. The seven countries setting up the new body were Argentina, Canada, Italy, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, and the U.S.A. The new federation is styled Federacion Mundial de Beisbol Aficionado (FEMBA). Other countries which have joined FEMBA include Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Australia, and South Africa. Countries which are considering the question of their becoming members are Holland, Japan, Peru, Columbia, The Philippines, and South Korea.

Officers elected were, President, William Fehring (U.S.A.), Vice-President, Carlos Garcia (Nicaragua), European Vice-President, Bruno Beneck (Italy), Asian Vice-President, Charles Parsons (Philippines), North American Vice-President, Jean-Robert Nolet (Canada), African Vice-President, Arthur Berezowsky (South Africa). The secretariat will be headed by Sergio Baroni (Italy).

FIBA had already arranged for the World Amateur Championships to be held in Cuba from 25th. November until 10th. December. FEMBA has arranged its World Championship for Managua, Nicaragua from 8th. to 23rd. November.

One problem facing FEMBA in its bid to oust FIBA is that FIBA is recognised by the International Olympic Committee. If, as the spokesman for Cuba alleges, politics has been the cause of this disruption, it is conceivable that the I.O.C. could sever any connection with baseball.

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

Another club was formed at Brook Farm in 1956, Barnet Panthers which entered the Western Amateur Baseball League. However as De Havilland and Edgeware, after first amalgamating, had folded, only two teams remained in the area. Both migrated to Barnet in 1958. That year also saw the reunion of the two London leagues, in an organisation named the Southern Baseball Association. The S.B.A. had twenty teams playing in three divisions, (Senior, First, and Second).

The Athletics did not compete during the 1961 season. The Panthers were taken over by Dave Richards and moved to Hackney Marshes, where they played under the name of "Dodgers". The Athletics returned to baseball and Barnet the following season, winning both the First Division championship and cup competitions. The club however lost the Barnet ground due in the main to baseball becoming an attraction to the spectators of Barnet Cricket Club during the tea interval. The cricket club took their collection box around during the interval and brought

pressure to bear when they found that their collections were affected. The Athletics then migrated to Enfield.

At Enfield, the Athletics were joined by the Dodgers, and during 1963 while playing for the Athletics I started coaching some youngsters, and formed the Athletics' "B" team, which entered the league the following season. During 1964 and 1965, two fields were in use at Enfield, but this was too good to last. For some reason, which I have never found out even to the present day, the Enfield Council suddenly stopped all evening practice sessions which are an essential for a club trying to introduce new blood to the game. As the council refused to allow evening practice in spite of the club's offer to pay full match fees, the "B" team became a section of the Quinta Youth Club at Barnet, and with high hopes of attracting membership from that club started playing at the Grange Playing Fields.

These hopes proved illusory, the initial reaction being favourable, but the old problem of travelling distances killed the interest of the majority of recruits. In 1967 the Athletics folded, and during 1968 the Dodgers also went out of existence.

1969 was the last year of North London baseball. Barnet had played a number of softball games during the previous summer with the Sun Printers Sports Club, and were invited to become members, this was done and under the name of Sun-Rockets the club won the National Baseball League Cup. This proved to be a one season club, and due to internal politics in the parent club, plus the fact that the bulk of the members lived in West London, the baseball club moved to Northolt.

The situation at the present time is that baseball has disappeared from North London. In spite of an attempt by myself in 1972 to re-introduce the game with a "casual" team, the Nondescripts, I can see little chance of the game returning. When I look at the decline in the number of teams in both the London area, and in the country as a whole, I can see little future for baseball in England.

The figures speak for themselves, this season there were six clubs in the South (Thames Board Mills, Croydon Bluejays, Sutton Braves, Southend Aces, Crawley Giants, and Brighton Jets) playing in one league.

Ten years ago there were sixteen teams and two divisions.

Twenty years ago there were twenty-six and two leagues, one with two divisions.

One of our problems is the difference of standard of the remaining clubs, and of course the distance separating their grounds. Both factors, particularly the travel will always remain the biggest obstacle to recruitment.

North London Baseball Clubs Championship Records.

National Cups.	1949. Hornsey Red Sox.	Baseball Association.
	1969. Watford Sun-Rockets.	National League.
Association	1949. Hornsey Red Sox.	Southern Counties.
Cups.	1950. Hornsey Red Sox.	Southern Counties.
	1956. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern Counties.
League Cups.	1949. Hornsey Red Sox.	London East League.
	1950. Hornsey Red Sox.	South Eastern League.
	1951. Hornsey Braves.	South Eastern League.
League Titles.	1962. Barnet Athletics.	Southern League (Intermediate).
	1949. Hornsey Red Sox.	London East League (I).
	1955. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern League (Senior).
	1962. Barnet Athletics.	Southern League (Intermediate).
Metropolitan	1957. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern League.
Cup.		
Invitation.	1954. DeHavilland Comets.	South Eastern League.
	North London Baseball Clubs Runners-up.	
National Cup.	1950. Hornsey Red Sox.	Baseball Association.
Association	1951. Hornsey Braves.	South Eastern Counties.
League Cups.	1956. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern League.
	1957. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern League.
League Titles.	1952. North London Bears.	South Eastern League (II).
	1960. Barnet Panthers.	Southern League (II).
Metropolitan.	1955. Hornsey Athletics.	South Eastern Counties.
Invitation.	1959. Barnet Panthers.	Southern League.

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STATESIDE NEWS by Norman Sutherland.

Tainan City (Taiwan) won its third consecutive Little League World Series by routing Tucson 12 - 0. Huang Ching-Huy struck-out 16 for his team's third straight no-hitter.

Following the victory of Tainan City, several team managers and Little League

volunteer administrators lodged objections alleging that the winners had violated age eligibility, district size and practice time regulations.

Taiwan's Consul-General in New York denied all these accusations.

Commissioner Bowie Kuhn announced that major league baseball attendance passed the 30 million mark for the first time in history during the 1973 season. Paid attendance was 30,045,788, the previous record was 29,193,417 set in 1971. The American League drew a record total of 13,438,661, breaking its previous record of 12,134,745 established in 1969. The National League outdrew the American League for the 12th consecutive season, drawing 16,607,127. Seventeen clubs topped the one million mark in attendance headed by the Los Angeles Dodgers with 2,136,192.

American League		National League	
Team	Attendance	Team	Attendance
Baltimore	960,335	Atlanta	800,655
Boston	1,481,024	Chicago	1,351,705
California	1,058,206	Cincinnati	2,017,601
Chicago	1,316,527	Houston	1,324,857
Cleveland	605,027	Los Angeles	2,136,192
Detroit	1,724,146	Montreal	1,246,863
Kansas City	1,345,341	Philadelphia	1,475,934
Milwaukee	1,092,158	Pittsburgh	1,320,913
Minnesota	907,499	St. Louis	1,574,012
New York	1,262,067	New York	1,912,390
Oakland	1,000,181	San Diego	611,812
Texas	686,150	San Francisco	834,193

FINAL STANDINGS.

American League			National League		
East			East		
Baltimore	97-65	.599	New York	82-79	.509
Boston	89-73	.549	St. Louis	81-81	.500
Detroit	85-77	.525	Pittsburgh	80-82	.494
New York	80-82	.494	Montreal	79-83	.488
Milwaukee	74-88	.457	Chicago	77-84	.478
Cleveland	71-91	.438	Philadelphia	71-91	.438
West			West		
Oakland	94-68	.580	Cincinnati	99-63	.611
Kan. City	88-74	.543	Los Angeles	95-66	.590
Minnesota	81-81	.500	San Francisco	88-74	.543
California	79-83	.488	Houston	82-80	.506
Chicago	77-85	.475	Atlanta	76-85	.472
Texas	57-105	.352	San Diego	60-102	.370

Hank Aaron needs only one more home run to tie Babe Ruth's career record of 714. The Atlanta Braves outfielder batted .301 with 40 home runs and 96 RBI. No other 39-year-old baseball player ever hit 40 major league homers before.

Aaron, who already holds the major league record for extra base hits (1,393) and total bases (6,424), needs 76 more RBI to tie Ruth for that record; needs 69 more games and 141 more at bats to tie Ty Cobb for the lead in those categories; and needs only seven more hits to move past Tris Speaker, who has 3,515 into third place on the all-time list.

Aaron played in only 120 games, coming to bat a total of 464 times, including walks, and there was speculation he might have broken Ruth's record this year if he had played more.

However Aaron believes that if he had played more he would have hit fewer home runs. At 39 years of age a player needs to pace himself, and it not able to play every day.

The Braves open their 1974 season with a three-game series at San Francisco, then return to Atlanta. Aaron intends to play all three games against the Giants, but would prefer to hit home runs 714 and 715 in Atlanta. Actually, he has not hit a home run in San Francisco for about three years.

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The next issue of Baseball Mercury will appear in February. The subscription for four issues is 25p. Subscriptions and any items which readers wish to send for inclusion in future issues should be sent to :- William Morgan, 89, Sterndale Road, London, W14 0HX.