

BASEBALL

Mercury.

NO. 5. FEBRUARY 1974.

FEMBA 1st. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The Federacion Mundial de Beisbol Aficionado which was formed in September 1973 staged its first world tournament in the period 22nd. November to 5th. December.

Eleven countries competed. Nicaragua was selected as the host country, but in order to create additional interest, the neighbouring countries of Honduras and Costa Rica also hosted some games. Honduras v. Costa Rica was the opening game of the series at Granada, Nicaragua. Honduras then returned home to play the remainder of its games at Tegucigalpa. Costa Rica returned to its homeland and played its other games at San Jose. Both cities are less than an hour's flight from the centres in Nicaragua. These centres were Masaya, Granada, Leon, and Chinandega. These four centres shared 37 games approximately equally.

Game Results. U.S.A.-West Germany 4-0 / U.S.A.-Canada 8-1 / U.S.A.-Taiwan 4-2 / U.S.A.-Colombia 7-1 / U.S.A.-Costa Rica 9-0 / U.S.A.-Guatemala 4-0 / U.S.A.-Honduras 8-0 / U.S.A.-Mexico 4-0 / U.S.A.-Nicaragua 1-0 / U.S.A.-Puerto Rico 7-0 // Nicaragua-West Germany 6-1 / Nicaragua-Canada 5-0 / Nicaragua-Colombia 2-0 / Nicaragua-Costa Rica 4-1 / Nicaragua-Guatemala 2-0 / Nicaragua-Honduras 7-0 / Nicaragua-Mexico 2-1 / Nicaragua-Puerto Rico 2-0 // Puerto Rico-West Germany 1-0 / Puerto Rico-Canada 11-4 / Puerto Rico-Taiwan 6-2 / Puerto Rico-Colombia 5-2 / Puerto Rico-Costa Rica 6-3 / Puerto Rico-Guatemala 8-5 / Puerto Rico-Honduras 14-5 / Puerto Rico-Mexico 2-1 / Taiwan-West Germany 5-0 / Taiwan-Canada 10-0 / Taiwan-Costa Rica 7-1 / Taiwan-Guatemala 2-0 / Taiwan-Honduras 10-0 / Taiwan-Mexico 7-2 / Taiwan-Nicaragua 5-0 // Colombia-West Germany 10-0 / Colombia-Canada 5-4 / Colombia-Taiwan 9-3 / Colombia-Costa Rica 7-0 / Colombia-Guatemala 3-0 / Colombia-Honduras 8-3 / Colombia-Mexico 5-0 // Canada-West Germany 5-1 / Canada-Costa Rica 2-0 / Canada-Guatemala 6-0 / Canada-Mexico 6-0 // Honduras-West Germany 9-2 / Honduras-Canada 6-5 / Honduras-Guatemala 16-9 / Honduras-Mexico 2-0 // Costa Rica-West Germany 3-1 / Costa Rica-Honduras 1-0 / Costa Rica-Mexico 4-2 // Guatemala-West Germany 4-2 / Guatemala-Costa Rica 9-2 / Guatemala-Mexico 1-0 // Mexico-West Germany 3-1.

Final Standings. 1. U.S.A. 10-0, 1.000/ 2. Nicaragua and Puerto Rico 8-2, .800 / 4. Taiwan and Colombia 7-3, .700/ 6. Canada and Honduras 4-6, .400/ 8. Costa Rica and Guatemala 3-7, .300/ 10. Mexico 1-9, .100/ 11. West Germany 0-10, .000.

Ron Fraser, who guided the Netherlands to a European title in July, coached the U.S.A. to its first ever world amateur title. Speaking about the tournament, Ron Fraser said, "It was the greatest experience of my life." Again he described the scenes at the game between the U.S.A. and Nicaragua, as follows, "We got to the ballpark Tuesday at 5.30 for a 7.30 game and it was filled. It only holds 17,000 people, but there were 22,000 fans squeezed in there. There were another 6,000 people outside the stadium who couldn't get in, but stayed the whole game and listened to it on the radio. They were yelling outside the stadium and shooting off fireworks. Inside, there were 22,000 people screaming just for a pop-up, it was amazing."

Individual leaders. Hitting, Luis Gaviria (Colombia) .432/ Gaviria also led in hits with 19./ Homeruns, Rene Acevedo (Puerto Rico) 3/ Acevedo also led in RBI with 11./ Runs scored, Orlando Gonzales (U.S.A.) 12/ Stolen bases Hsie Ming-Yung (Taiwan) 11./ Most effective pitcher, Dick Wortham (U.S.A.) E.R.A. .000. Wortham pitched 27 scoreless innings./ Doubles, Julio Cuarezma (Nicaragua) 4./ Triples, Hsie Ming-Yung (Taiwan) 2./ Slugging percentage, Luis Gaviria (Colombia) .614.

All-Star selection. 1st. base, Luis Gaviria (Colombia): 2nd. base, Gersan Jarquin (Nicaragua): 3rd. base, Jim Hacker (U.S.A.): short-stop, Wayne Krenchiki (U.S.A.): left-field, Jorge Cordero (Guatemala): centre-field, Jose Corpas (Colombia): right-field, Hsie Ming-Yung (Taiwan): catcher, Danny Goodwin (U.S.A.): right-hand pitcher, Julio Juarez (Nicaragua): left-hand pitcher, Dick Wortham (U.S.A.): designated hitter, Pedro Selva (Nicaragua).

For information in this item thanks are due to Mr. Carlos Garcia, President of the Nicaraguan Amateur Baseball Federation, and to Norman Sutherland.

* * * * *

1973 ON HUMBERSIDE by Doreen Megson.

In 1973 we organised a Major League for clubs associated with the British Amateur Baseball Federation. Hull Aces, Hull Royals, Nottingham Lions, Stretford Saints, and Liverpool Tigers entered this league; but unfortunately Stretford and Liverpool withdrew before the competition began. Hull Aces were Major League champions.

Details. Major League Champions, Hull Aces 4-0, 8pts. 2nd. Hull Royals 2-2, 4pts. 3rd. Nottingham Lions 0-4, 0pts.

Top pitcher, Pete Darnell (Aces) ERA 1.33 : Top batter, Ron Ellerington (Aces) .533 : Home runs, Alfonso Aldercoa (Royals) 2.

A Hull League operated with four clubs in membership.

Standings. Hull League Champions, Hull Mustangs 4-2, 8pts. : 2nd. Hull Aces and Hull Royals both with 3-3, 6pts. : 4th. Nottingham Lions 2-4, 4pts.

Top pitcher, Pete Darnell (Aces) ERA 1.44 : Top batter, Phil Haldershaw (Royals) .421 : Home runs, Alfonso Aldercoa and Pete Darnell with one apiece.

Yorkshire Cup. One game was held over to 1974, having been cancelled due to bad weather. Positions at present. 1. Hull Royals 3-1, 6pts : 2. Hull Aces 2-1, 4pts : 3. Hull Mustangs 0-3, 0pts.

An Intermediate League was formed, this was restricted to new players and games were played on a friendly basis. We had one excellent afternoon of ball-playing when we invited all Intermediate League teams plus any newcomers interested in trying the game to turn out. As a result of an appeal in the press, a number of guys turned out, who have since expressed an intention of joining local clubs.

We are concentrating our efforts on fostering the game. We are having a social evening shortly. Then prior to the start of the season we are staging a Baseball Forum, open to anyone who cares to attend and enter into discussion of methods of advancing the sport. We are also planning to start a fund-raising scheme so that we can send a team to Spain in 1975 to compete in the European Championships. It is also planned to form a Humberside team which will train together and be available for any inter-city games.

There is an excellent set-up for boys here with the Yorkshire Babe Ruth League. Several persons devote a great deal of time to coaching these boys who are aged from 11 to 15. Baseball is not played in the local schools, but Hull Royals may have made a break-through in this respect. Some of the lads went to school on the other side of the city, and the school now has 17 boys aged 13 to 14 starting the game. They played a couple of friendly games versus Yorkshire BRL teams, and performed quite well.

The Humberside committee consists of the following, Chairman - Clive Megson, Hon. Treasurer - Red Holmes, Secretary - Doreen Megson, Publicity Officer - Don Smallwood, Schools Baseball Liaison Officer - Bob Thrower.

* * * * *

FIBA 21st. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The Federacion Internacional de Beisbol Aficionado held its 21st. world tournament in Cuba from 25th. November to 9th. December, 1973. The entrants were obviously fewer than for the 20th. tournament as so many countries have withdrawn from FIBA in order to join FEMBA. There were eight competing countries, and once again Cuba was in a class above the other teams. Cuba set a new record for FIBA tournaments by playing its first 110 innings without conceding a run; and gained its 13th. World Championship without losing a game in the tournament.

Final placings. 1. Cuba 14-0, 1.000/ 2. Puerto Rico 10-3, .769/ 3. Venezuela 10-4, .714/ 4. Dominican Republic 7-6, .538/ 5. Panama 6-8, .429/ 6. Mexico 5-9, .357/ 7. Netherland Antilles 3-11, .214/ 8. Holland 0-14, .000.

* * * * *

Comments by Roger Panaye.

I have read with great interest your November issue of "Baseball Mercury", in particular "Rift in World Baseball". However it seems to me that you have heard only the Cuban side of the story.

When I read that some federations "challenged the established order", this seemed like a hoax to me, because "order" is something that FIBA has never known.

You will understand that when countries like Japan, U.S.A., and Europe (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Sweden) decided to have a new international body established, this is not just "politics".

FIBA was never more than a Caribbean affair with Cuba as chief spokesman. When a couple of years ago many federations joined FIBA in order to have baseball recognised as an Olympic sport, nothing was done to make FIBA a real World Federation. On the contrary, the Caribbean FIBA-leaders kept to their policy of dominating the others and administration was almost non-existent.

As for the argument that FIBA is recognised by the I.O.C., we have written proof that FIBA no longer appears on the list of international federations recognised by the I.O.C.

The newly established FEMBA leaves the door open to everybody and it is evident that more can be obtained with democracy and friendship.

This is only a short review of the situation and I would be most pleased if you could mention the facts in your next "Baseball Mercury". If you want me to, I can always send you a more detailed story.

* * * * *

The above letter was received from Roger C. Panaye, Secretary-General of the European Amateur Baseball Confederation. A more detailed account of the events leading-up to the formation of FEMBA will be published in the next issue of "Baseball Mercury".

* * * * *

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

The subscription for four issues is 25p.

* * * * *

BELGIUM 1973.

Belgium returned to an earlier format for its 1973 competition, following some seasons when its first division consisted of nine or ten teams, it was decided that for 1973, a reversion to the system which prevailed from 1966 to 1969 would be made.

The 1972 positions were used when considering the formation of two divisions A and B. There had been some discussion of splitting the 10 clubs competing in 1972 into two divisions of equal strength with a play-off system between the two divisional winners, but eventually it was decided that the A division should contain the five strongest clubs and the B division the other five.

Final placings.

	Played	Won	Lost	Pct.
A Division				
Luchtbal	16	13	3	.813
Bell Pioneers	16	8	8	.500
Deurne Spartans	16	8	8	.500
Braschaatse	16	7	9	.438
Berchem Stars	16	4	12	.250
B Division				
Rizla Eagles	12	10	2	.833
General Motors	12	8	4	.667
Borgerhout Squirrels	12	4	8	.333
Antwerp Cats	12	2	10	.167

For Luchtbal this was their thirteenth Belgian title. Brasschaatse nicknamed the Charlie Brown's set the pace in the early stages of the competition winning a game against each of its four rivals. However, when Brasschaates met Deurne Spartans for the second time its run of success was ended. Spartans winning 6 - 0, while Spartans pitcher Eddy Regnier pitched a no-hit shut-out.

Luchtbal clinched the title in the fourth meeting with Brasschaatse, the game was attended by Jan Hartog, who has seldom seen such a one sided game. The score was 5 - 0, which does not appear too lop-sided, but Luchtbal pitcher Arthur Weyenberg had 21 strike-out victims.

In 1974 a new club will probably compete in the Belgian League, Linkeroever Baseball Club was formed some months ago. The Deurne Spartans battery of Eddy Regnier and Eddy van Mol is expected to appear in the Linkeroever team this coming season.

John van Acker, former chairman of the Belgian Baseball Federation, and also former chairman of Belgian champions Luchtbal, has died at the age of 68. John van Acker was for many years the leading figure in Belgian baseball.

* * * * *

A RECOLLECTION OF SCOTTISH BASEBALL (1957-60) by Norman Sutherland.

Although baseball had been played in Scotland at various periods in history, dating back to the 1890's and again later in the mid 1930's, when I first became interested in the sport it was only played by the two U.S. bases in Scotland. There in the mid 1950's I first saw a live game, and along with others set about learning as much as I could.

With the help of U.S. servicemen, and surprisingly the press, we started to recruit players and coaches. Playing sites proved no real problem, as cricket is not as popular in Scotland as it is in England, and fields etc., are not in use during the summer. As a matter of fact city officials and groundsmen were more happy to help baseball than cricket, Scotland obviously would rather be invaded by an American sport than an English one!

Games between U.S. Service teams drew good crowds in Edinburgh, Leith, and Glasgow. They were well reported and public interest grew. By late 1957 a league was planned, and after good feature articles in the Scottish Daily Mail, Weekly News, Glasgow Times, and Edinburgh Despatch, enough players, coaches, and money for equipment was found. The first games played in the 1958 season were played at Meadowbank Stadium, then a speedway arena, now an athletics stadium. The Scottish press have little to cover in the summer and faithfully reported all our games, scores, and fixtures.

As could be expected the U.S. Service teams dominated the League in the early days. The League, known as The Scottish Baseball League, reached a high of five teams. To my knowledge no Scottish club ever played outside of its own country. To be honest I was probably the best informed person in the League, and I was always a bit confused as to what was going on in England. From various people I heard "their" stories. Due to this we never gave much thought to making a British League, as we were never sure who "ran" the English game. Our eyes were always fixed on Europe and the progress being made on the Continent. We hoped to join the European League, but to my knowledge, and due to the fact that I left for the U.S.A. in 1961, I have no record of Scotland doing so.

Of interest might be that no club was ever in the red financially - due to the sale of "Soccer" number tickets etc. Grants were given all Scots teams for equipment from Scottish Associations in the U.S. and Canada.

Perhaps I shall always recall the 1960 season, as it was the League's third. Kirknewton Flyers (U.S.A.F.) had won it all in 1958 and 1959. Under Canadian coach Eddie Corbert, the Edinburgh Clansmen, for whom I played 1st. base and acted as Secretary, won the 12 game Championship with a record of 10 - 2. Kirknewton came second with 9 - 3, and Edinburgh Giants third, 4 - 8 (Giants were a better team than the record indicates), Glasgow Warriors were fourth, 1 - 11. The U.S. Navy team on the Clyde dropped out during the season. The Scottish born players quickly took to the sport and reached a high level, much to the surprise of the U.S. teams.

The Clansmen for their efforts received a scroll from the Edinburgh city fathers, along with a cocktail party in the city chambers.

I left Scotland in early 1961 for America, and lost touch with the teams and sport there. To my knowledge no league programme again took place, although games were continued. This was unfortunate as much progress had been made in three years.

* * * * *

MISCELLANY.

The Yomiuri Giants won the 1973 Japanese Championship beating Nankai Hawks 5 - 1 in the fifth game of the Japan Series, taking the Series 4 games to 1. 37,671 watched the final game.

The 1973 Holland Series was won by Sparta (Rotterdam) which swept the first three games of a "best of five" series against Raak Nicols (Haarlem). This was the Rotterdammers eighth title in eleven seasons.

Following the Intercontinental Cup Tournament in Italy in September last year, Japan played West Germany at Mannheim where a baseball field was opened. Japan beat West Germany 11 - 3 on the "Roberto Clemente Field" as the site has been named.

At that time also, Taiwan visited Belgium, beating Belgium 10 - 1.

A European Professional League has been projected, to commence in 1975 details will be given in the next issue of "Baseball Mercury".

The French champions PUC, made a three week visit to Canada last summer.

Wes Parker, former Los Angeles Dodger star, has signed a one year contract with Nankai Hawks of Osaka. He has taxes and all-expenses paid arrangement with the Japanese club, and will receive 85,000 dollars clear

* * * * *