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BRIGHTON AND HOVE COUNCIL EVENTS DEPARTMENT for their considerable support of the event, financially and in kind.

THE BASEBALLSOFTBALLUK STAFF for organising this event: Jenny Fromer, John Boyd, Tim Stride, Jaime Grubb, Mark McClintock, Donald Morris-Vincent, John Lee, Ian Smyth, Tom Gillespie and Stephan Rapaglia.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL and PLAY BALL! WITH **FRUBES** for providing the Roadshow.

THE ABUA-G8, BRIAN HOLLAND and CLIVE MAUDE for providing officials for the event.

BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION EXECUTIVE BOARD.

TED GERARD THESINGH for being the Technical Director of the event.

FIVE for their coverage of the event.

ANDREW CANDY for designing and producing the programme for the last two years.



**BRITISH BASEBALL'S
FINAL
4**

2004

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MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

PROCEEDS TO BRITISH BASEBALL

WELCOME

TO BRITISH BASEBALL'S 2004 FINAL 4 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP.

2004 has been another momentous year for baseball in the UK. At the start of the year, the AGM in Manchester confirmed a new Constitution for the British Baseball Federation (BBF) and a new Board which graciously asked me to act as President. The new Board is hopefully the most proactive we have seen in some time and is certainly one which welcomes feedback and input from all areas of the sport. During the weekend, feel free to stop and speak to any of the Board Members, President or Secretary who will have Black BBF t-shirts on.

During 2004, the BBF's managing agents, BaseballSoftballUK added some significant positions to its staff. In January, BSUK employed an Operations Manager, Tim Stride, and in April Bob Fromer, who has been the CEO of BSUK since its inception in 2000, stepped back to a part-time position that will include managing BSUK's communications and conducting grant research. Bob will also be heading up the Modernisation Programme on behalf of BSUK and the Board and I would like to express our thanks for Bob's extraordinary efforts so far, and for the undoubted contribution Bob will continue to bring to the sport. Also in the spring, BSUK appointed a Performance Director for Baseball, Stephan Rapaglia, who accepted the dual responsibility of developing the domestic game and acting as Head Coach of the Great Britain national team.

But back to the weekend! The heart of the Championships this year is again the National League Final 4. This year, the National League North enjoyed its inaugural season, and the league winner, Liverpool Trojans, have been awarded a place in the National League Final 4. Like last year, the National League Final 4 will use a page playoff system. Saturday's first game is between the top two teams from the National League South – Windsor Bears and London Warriors. The winner makes the final, the loser will get a second chance to reach the final by playing the winner of Saturday's second game between Croydon Pirates (3rd in NL South) and Liverpool Trojans (NL North Champions).

The second tier event, the Premier Division Final 4, features Cambridge Monarchs – who again won the Premier Division South – and Essex Arrows, who came through the southern playoffs. Representing the north, National League North second and third respectively, Menwith Hill Patriots and Stars Baseball Club will be seeking glory.

On Sunday morning, the second National League finalist will be decided and the finals of both competitions will be held on Sunday afternoon; the very best of luck to all involved.

As well as this weekend's activities, the whole Final 4 Series of events has been extended through to mid-September, including the Youth Final 4 on 11–12 September at Manchester's ground, and the new Division 1 Final 4 on the 18–19 September at Halton.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS OF BRITISH BASEBALL

1890	Preston North End
1892	Middlesbrough
1893	Thespian London
1894	Thespian London
1895	Derby
1896	Wallsend-On-Tyne
1897	Derby
1898	Derby
1899	Nottingham Forest
1906	Tottenham Hotspur
1907	Clapton Orient
1908	Tottenham Hotspur
1909	Clapton Orient
1910	Brentford
1911	Leyton
1934	Hatfield Liverpool
1935	New London
1936	White City London
1937	Hull
1938	Rochdale Greys
1939	Halifax
1948	Liverpool Robins
1949	Hornsey Red Sox
1950	Burtonwood Bees
1951	Burtonwood Bees
1959	Thames Board Mills
1960	Thames Board Mills
1961	Liverpool Tigers
1962	Liverpool Tigers
1963	East Hull Aces
1964	Hull Aces
1965	Hull Aces
1966	Stretford Saints
1967	Liverpool Yankees
1968	Hull Aces
1969	Watford-Sun Rockets
1970	Hull Royals
1971	Liverpool Tigers
1972	Hull Aces
1973	Burtonwood Yanks
1974	Nottingham Lions
1975	Liverpool Tigers
1976	Liverpool Trojans
1977	Golders Green Sox
1978	Liverpool Trojans
1979	Golders Green Sox
1980	Liverpool Trojans
1981	London Warriors
1982	London Warriors
1983	Cobham Yankees
1984	Croydon Blue Jays
1985	Hull Mets
1986	Cobham Yankees
1987	Cobham Yankees
1988	Cobham Yankees
1989	London Warriors
1990	Enfield Spartans
1991	Enfield Spartans
1992	Leeds City Royals
1993	Humberside Mets
1994	Humberside Mets
1995	Humberside Mets
1996	Menwith Hill Patriots
1997	London Warriors
1998	Menwith Hill Patriots
1999	Brighton Buccaneers
2000	London Warriors
2001	Brighton Buccaneers
2002	Brighton Buccaneers
2003	Windsor Bears

FINAL STANDINGS

NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Windsor Bears	22	7	255	98	.759	-
London Warriors	17	13	167	151	.552	5.5
Croydon Pirates*	14	16	228	223	.467	8.5
Brighton Buccaneers	14	16	177	179	.467	8.5
Bracknell Blazers	12	16	185	234	.429	9.5
Richmond Flames	8	19	124	251	.296	13

NATIONAL LEAGUE NORTH	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Liverpool Trojans	18	4	224	87	.818	-
Menwith Hill Patriots	15	7	181	103	.682	3
The Stars Baseball Club	13	7	172	144	.650	4
Edinburgh Diamond Devils	10	12	167	198	.455	8
Hull Baseball Club	8	14	153	180	.364	10
Manchester Eagles	0	20	38	223	.000	17

PREMIER DIVISION SOUTH	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Cambridge Monarchs	20	1	341	60	.952	-
Oxford Kings	15	6	222	198	.714	5
Essex Arrows	12	9	202	193	.571	8
Sidewinders	12	9	263	200	.571	8
Shropshire Panthers	11	10	238	270	.524	9
Richmond Knights	7	14	222	281	.333	13
Brighton Buccaneers 2	6	15	180	226	.286	14
Milton Keynes Bucks	1	20	105	345	.048	19

DIVISION 1 NORTH (CURRENT)	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Sheffield Bladerunners	21	0	355	85	1.000	-
Halton Jaguars	13	4	252	167	.765	6
Manchester A's	11	8	235	203	.579	9
Barnsley Strikers	10	8	205	186	.556	9.5
Strathclyde Falcons	10	11	217	209	.476	11
The Stars B	5	12	116	243	.294	14
CMB Bolton Brewers	2	14	156	292	.125	16.5
Hull Baseball Club 2	1	16	100	251	.059	18

DIVISION 1 SOUTH-BLUE	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Windsor Royals	10	2	223	115	.833	-
Bournemouth Sharks	10	2	230	115	.833	-
Cheddar Rockies	9	2	200	137	.818	0.5
Southampton Mustangs	5	7	147	195	.417	5
Croydon Pirates 3	3	9	148	237	.250	7
Guildford Mavericks	2	9	136	212	.182	7.5
Richmond Dragons	2	10	128	201	.167	8

DIVISION 1 SOUTH-RED	W	L	F	A	W%	GB
Herts Falcons	13	1	254	106	.929	-
Croydon Pirates 2	11	3	244	108	.786	2
Haverling	10	4	206	93	.714	3
Marston Green Maple Leafs	9	5	204	129	.643	4
Essex Arrows 2	6	8	132	270	.429	7
Brentwood Stags	5	9	137	246	.357	8
Shropshire Pumas	1	13	28	133	.071	12
Sibley Vikings	1	13	31	151	.071	12

*Croydon qualified by winning the head-to-head record in games against Brighton during the season

THE WEEKEND'S EVENTS

PREMIER DIVISION TEAMS

KEY PLAYERS

ERIC BAXTER

The shortstop/pitcher from Oklahoma pitched in nine games this year and finished with a 7-1 record, pitching four complete games. His bat and glove were exceptional.

KEVIN ROBERTS

The Californian infielder has been the Monarchs' leadoff man in 2004, and played shortstop, second and third bases. He also played and pitched in a couple of games. Kevin's ability to get on base and score was tough to match by anyone in the league.

JASON LAMBERT

The catcher from California is the emotional leader of the team. He caught 15 games this season and only allowed three stolen bases. His blocking ability is unmatched by anyone in the league.

CAMBRIDGE MONARCHS

GROUND: RAF FELTWELL

TEAM UPDATE

There has been organised baseball in Cambridge since the 1980s. Much of the current club is made up of US servicemen stationed in the Cambridge area, though a number of British players have appeared on the roster. The more experienced players enjoy passing on the techniques to newcomers. In the London Tournament, where domestic and foreign league clubs and national sides participate, the Monarchs posted a 4-1 record, losing to the National League Croydon Pirates in a great final. Cambridge have aspirations for the National League and are planning a second team to include more up and coming British players.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Cambridge coasted to the Premier Division Final 4 this year, winning the Premier Division South title with a 20-1 record. Until the last weekend of the season, Monarchs were looking good to go the season unbeaten, taking a 19-0 record into the final games. However, by their own description, a very poorly played game against Essex Arrows saw them lose by one run in the first game of a double header. They bettered 2003's high score rate by averaging 16-3 per game, totaling 341 runs (31 homeruns) scored in the regular season. Last year they bowed out in the semis of the Premier Division F4, and will hope to avoid any further blips.

KEY PLAYERS

NEIL SELVESTER

Scottish born and bred, has never played outside the UK. May never have ever been outside the UK. Neil has been involved with the club since its birth and began this year as catcher, returning to shortstop. Neil is the team leader on the field, and models himself on Derek Jeter.

COLIN SMITH

Scottish born first baseman, but having spent time growing up in Australia, Colin joined the Stars winter 2003/2004. He has led the team in home runs and most other offensive categories and also pitched one game, earning a win over Liverpool Trojans. His talent has not gone unnoticed as he was called up to play for the GB squad in July in Germany.

DAVID SHORTRIDGE

17 year-old 'Shorty' joined the Stars during winter 2003/2004 from youth baseball in Renfrewshire. The intention was that he would catch for the Stars B team but he was called up to the first team when Neil Selvester moved to shortstop. Still learning, but he has not let the team down behind the plate.

STARS BASEBALL CLUB

FORMED: 2001 GROUND: LANARK RACE COURSE

TEAM UPDATE

Formally the Glasgow Stars, the club modified its name when it moved home field ahead of this season. A combination of home grown youth (male and female) and adopted sons, the Stars run two teams, one in the National League North and one in Division 1 North. Fifteen year-old Allyson Docherty is the only female playing in the northern leagues, if not the whole of the BBF Leagues. She plays second base for the Stars B team but has played one game for the first team. Placed in the northern top flight when the old Northern Conference was updated for 2004, the Stars have enjoyed their best year so far, after just missing the northern playoffs last season.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Arising from the wind-swept plains of Lanarkshire, like William Wallace many centuries before, the Stars are rallying their forces and packing their kit for the their first trip to the Final 4. The improved season performance has been based on strengthening the depth of the squad. As several first-team players have been out with injuries, the younger members of the club have stepped up, gained experience, and proved themselves. They'll be something of an unknown quantity when they make the long journey southwards.

KEY PLAYERS

KERRY WILSHERE

Veteran centre fielder with a record stretching back through British baseball history. Once a member of the legendary Golders Green Sox he has patrolled the Essex outfield for seventeen years. His powerful hitting and speedy base-running make him the teams' spark plug.

DAVE SHAER

Dave joined the Arrows at the age of fourteen - when he had hair! Capable of playing several positions, lefty Dave now guards first base. His understanding of the game, gained during a spell as manager, helps to augment his soft hands and superb natural hitting ability.

SHANE WODZYNSKI

Another long serving Arrow, Shane has just the right mixture of agility and bloody-minded insanity that every third-sacker needs. His strong throwing arm is complemented by great speed around the bases and an aggressive batting style.

ESSEX ARROWS

FORMED: 1983 GROUND: TOWNMEAD, WALTHAM ABBEY

TEAM UPDATE

Essex Arrows, formerly the Waltham Abbey Arrows, were founded in 1983 by Louis Courtney. Phil Chesterton took over as manager in 1984 and with a lot of hard work, practice and dedication from all the team members, the Essex Arrows climbed up to the BBF Premier Division South, winning it in 1994 and 2001. From November 1999 until this season, the club was managed by David Shaer, who has been playing with the Arrows since 1985. For 2004, Phil Chesterton was at the helm again, fresh from leading the Essex Arrows Pony team (Under-16) to becoming 2003 National Champions. With two adult teams, a successful youth scheme and one of the finest fields in the country, Essex have great plans for the future. This year they were awarded a £5000 Awards for All Grant towards their development.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Manager Phil Chesterton explains that in terms of the Essex Arrows' development plan, they are a year ahead of themselves, having battled brilliantly to take the long route to the Premier Division Final 4. This was meant to happen next year, and has caught him somewhat off guard. Going into the last weekend of the regular season, Arrows required a win off the hitherto unbeaten Cambridge Monarchs to qualify for the playoffs. They achieved this, but then faced two more games to reach the Final 4. An 11-7 victory over Sidewinders and 14-3 win at Oxford Kings achieved this. Phil commented that he picked three key players under protest as it's been a true team effort in which every player has contributed equally.

KEY PLAYERS

MICK SHANKS

An outstanding pitcher and second baseman who, week in, week out, just came to play. Mick is the quiet leader on the team.

PETE HAMANN

Pete stepped up for the team and assumed the leadership role when Patriots were having some team problems. He is a good baseball person who plays many positions and works for the team concept.

JARED BUDENSKI

One of those players every team must have, never misses practice, never complains and can play any position when called upon. He has done everything a manager asks.

MENWITH HILL PATRIOTS

GROUND: MENWITH HILL PARK

TEAM UPDATE

The Patriots, from the US base at Menwith Hill, Yorkshire, had a tough time in the original National League last season, having to undertake numerous long journeys south. However, with the move back to a northern league in 2004, Menwith have returned to the winning form of the 2002 season which got them to the top league in the first place. The team have enjoyed this season, Manager Ray Brownlie commenting that the team spirit and contributions from every player are "what makes my job so rewarding... this is truly a team sport".

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

After starting the 2004 season with three defeats, Patriots got into a groove, winning 14 straight to rocket up to the summit of the National League North. At one point it seemed Menwith Hill would be making a triumphant return to playing with the NL South clubs in the National League Final 4. Their good form coincided with that of Liverpool Trojans so, from mid-season, the two have been in close contention for the league title, with a key double header between the two on 15 August. With Liverpool leading the league by one game and with Trojans' last games against bottom club Manchester, Menwith really needed to sweep the double header. The games were split, effectively ending Patriots' bid for the title and sending them into the Premier Division Final 4. They've dipped a little in form recently, losing four of the last five - including two to the Stars - but still have a good chance to finish with a Championship.

SCHEDULE OF PLAY

SATURDAY

MAIN DIAMOND

9.30am Windsor Bears Pre-game
9.40am London Warriors Pre-game
9.50am Game Presentations
10.00am NL Game 2
London Warriors @ Windsor Bears (7 innings)
12.30pm Croydon Pirates Pre-game
12.40pm Liverpool Trojans Pre-game
12.50pm Game Presentations
1.00pm NL Game 1
Liverpool Trojans @ Croydon Pirates (7 innings)
Pre-games dependant on finish of Game 2
4.00pm Cambridge Monarchs Pre-game
4.10pm The Stars Pre-game
4.20pm Game Presentations
4.30pm PREMIER DIVISION Semi-final 1
The Stars @ Cambridge Monarchs (9 innings)

SECOND DIAMOND

4.00pm Menwith Hill Patriots Pre-game
4.10pm Essex Arrows Pre-game
4.20pm Game Presentations
4.30pm PREMIER DIVISION Semi-final 2
Essex Arrows @ Menwith Hill Patriots (9 innings)

SUNDAY

MAIN DIAMOND

9.00am Home Pre-game
9.10am Visiting Pre-game
9.20am Game Presentations
9.30am NL Game 3 (Winner G1 @ Loser G2) (7 innings)
11.45pm Home Pre-game
11.50pm Visiting Pre-game
11.55pm Game Presentations
12.00pm PREMIER DIVISION Final (9 innings)
2.40pm Home Pre-game
2.50pm Visiting Pre-game
3.00pm Game Presentations
3.30pm NL WG3 @ WG2 (FINAL) (9 innings)

SECOND DIAMOND

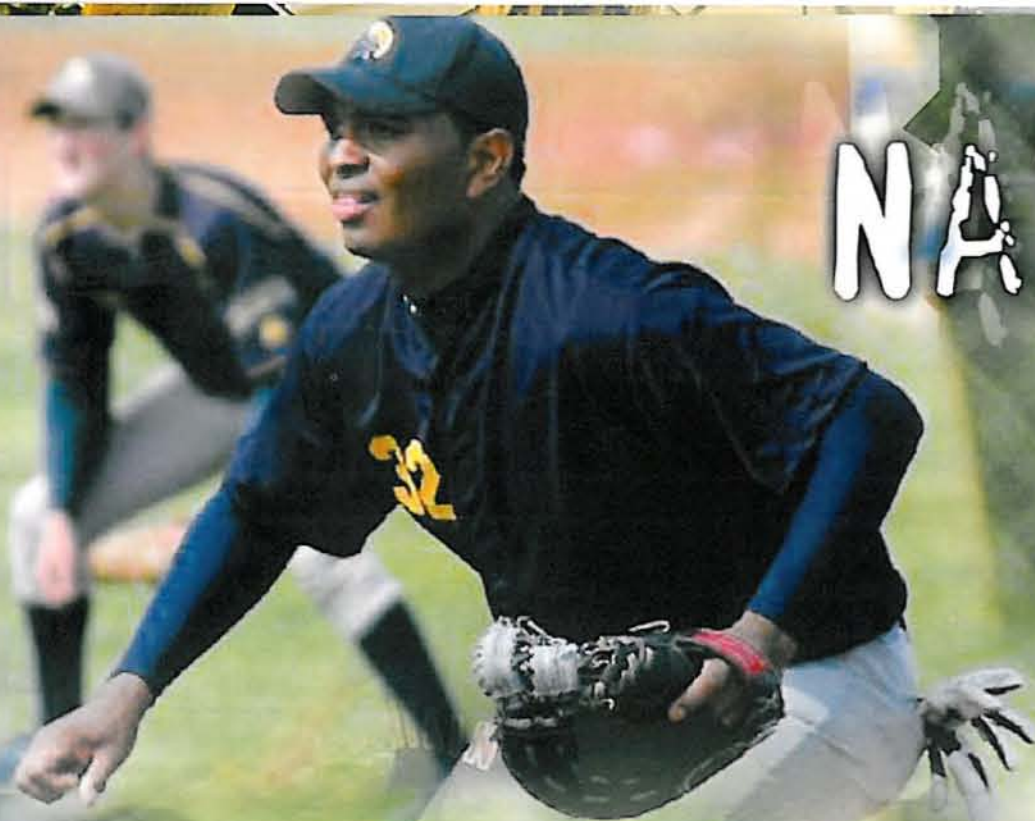
9.30am PREMIER DIVISION 3rd/4th Place (7 innings)
12.00pm Division 1 Playoff
Croydon Pirates 3 @ Windsor Bears 2 (9 innings)

COACHING: This year, BSUK is planning two short coaching clinics on Saturday and Sunday, open to everyone. Run by Ian Smyth, Director of Coach Education, and Stephan Rapaglia, Performance Director, each will run for around 10-15 minutes. It is likely Saturday's will be held after the afternoon NL Game and Sunday's prior to the NL Final during the pre-game preparation.

Times may be brought forward or put back depending on previous games.

Apart from NL Final, pre-game drills will only be allowed if time permits. If there is a reduced time for pre-game drills, it will be divided equally between the two competing teams.

NATIONAL LEAGUE



LIVERPOOL TROJANS

FORMED: 1946 GROUND: BOOTLE STADIUM

KEY PLAYERS

MARTIN GODSALL

The British pitcher is solid as a rock and has added two new pitches to his arsenal, a knuckleball and split fingered fastball.

MIKE WAISOME

The US pitcher has been outstanding on the mound, with awesome power at bat.

CARLOS CRUZ

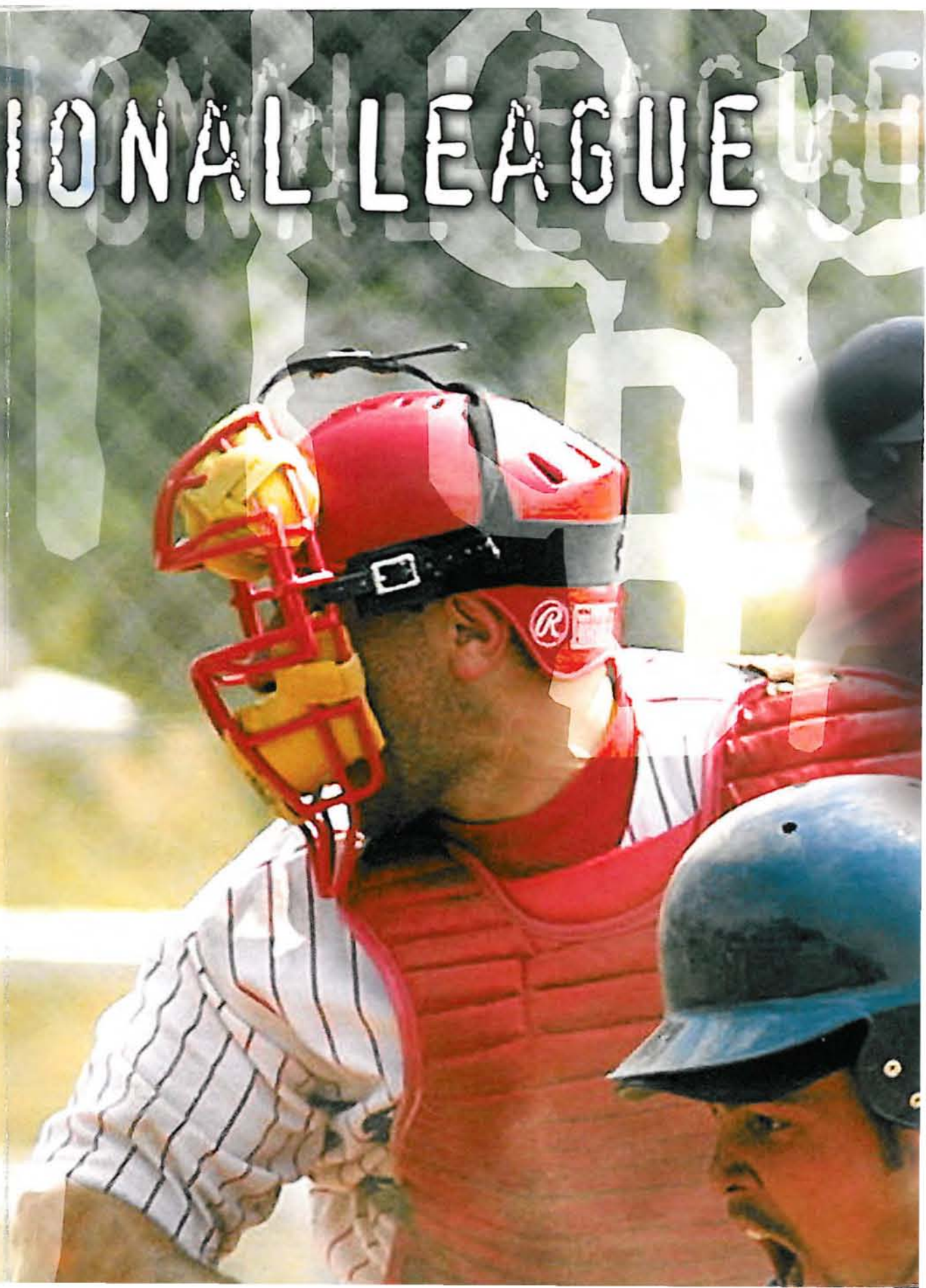
The American catcher has been superb behind the plate, with a rocket launcher for an arm, and bat speed you have to see to be believed.

TEAM UPDATE

The Liverpool Trojans Baseball Club is one of the oldest original surviving teams in the UK, established in 1946. The name is derived from a local beer brewed back then called Trojan. Norman Wells, a founding member who is still part of the club as Life Long President, returned from WWII and started watching the Professional Baseball League in Liverpool. After a night on the beer with his mates, Norman challenged the Liverpool Giants to a game. All the lads needed was a name and, as the barmaids from the local pub had already nicknamed them 'the Trojans', it seemed a fitting title. The present-day Trojans are run by the three Robbies: Manager Robbie Nesbitt and Coaches Robbie Alger and Robbie Orme.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

After coming second in 2003's Premier Division Final 4, Liverpool have stepped up to the next level, winning the National League North title to make the National League Final 4. It will be interesting to see how they fair against their southern counterparts but they have performed impressively in 2004, duelling with Menwith Hill in the second half of the league season. Mid-season, they won 12 in a row and went 8-2 in the last ten to hold onto first place.





KEY PLAYERS

CODY CAIN

The 'Volatile American' rejoined the club last year after a seven-year absence and picked up exactly where he left off. Always known as a strong hitter and catcher, he also brings years of pitching expertise to the team. His 1993 season pitching stats are the stuff of legend and are unlikely ever to be equalled - 13 games, 36 innings, 4 wins, 0 losses, 3 hits, 65 strikeouts, 2 runs, 0.000 ERA!

SIMON POLE

Simon has led the league in hitting for most of his previous seven seasons and is a strong fielder, equally at home at shortstop or in centrefield. He is also considered by many to be one of the best pitchers in the country.

MAURIZIO MOSCA & CRAIG PERRY

Warriors' Alan Smith would also like to credit long-serving players Maurizio Mosca and Craig Perry. Maurizio has been with the Warriors for 10 seasons, mainly playing centrefield, but has also enjoyed many successful outings on the mound, tying hitters in knots with his classic left-handed bag of tricks. He can hit the ball with power to all parts of the field. Craig has been a stalwart for the Warriors for many years, as a catcher and at first base, and has been consistently one of the strongest hitters on the team. He has always been a 'big game' player and will relish the Final 4.

LONDON WARRIORS

FORMED: 1980 GROUND: FINSBURY PARK, LONDON

TEAM UPDATE

The Warriors are one of the longest established clubs in British baseball and are also one of the most successful, last crowned National Champions in 2000. However, since the inception of the National League in 2001, the Warriors have failed to make an impact at the finals level, despite winning the first two league titles.

In 2001, the Warriors formed an alliance with the London Meteors to create a franchise incorporating both baseball and softball at all levels, including strong Premier Division affiliates the Sidewinders. Among other things, this association provides high-level coaching to the well-established Meteor youth programme. Also, work continues on a project to create a first-class joint baseball/softball complex at Finsbury Park.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Last year, London were pipped to a Final 4 place by Croydon but in 2004 have rediscovered their usual form and finished the league season in second. A mixture of poor hitting and defence cost a number of losses in the early months, but the bats have come alive and the defence has tightened over the last few games so, says Alan Smith, "the Warriors approach the Final 4 with quiet confidence". Many may expect the opening game against reigning champs Windsor Bears to be a warmup for a final featuring the two. They split the 2004 season 3-3 against each other.



BRITISH BASEBALL'S 2004 FINAL 4 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



KEY PLAYERS

DENNIS GRUBB

Grubb, a new addition to the Bears this year, is the heart of this strong offensive line-up. He played for the New York Yankees AA team and has represented Australia. His power and bat control is unrivalled in the UK and has lead this team with his bat, his knowledge of the game and his impeccable charm.

DEAN STOKA

Last year, Stoka won both the League MVP and the Final 4 MVP awards with consistently dominant performances. In his second season, he's demonstrated the same level of dominance on the mound. A fierce competitor, this year he's made significant contributions in the field and has swung the bat very well. He is a vital link in Windsor's success.

RYAN KOBACK

Koback has dominated National League teams this year and is the other half of the dominant Windsor starting pitching staff. Big 'Un towers above the rest of the pitchers in the league and has had an outstanding first season with the Bears. He will be an incredibly tough pitcher to beat in the Final 4.

WINDSOR BEARS

FORMED: 1990 GROUND: WESTMORLAND PARK, BRACKNELL

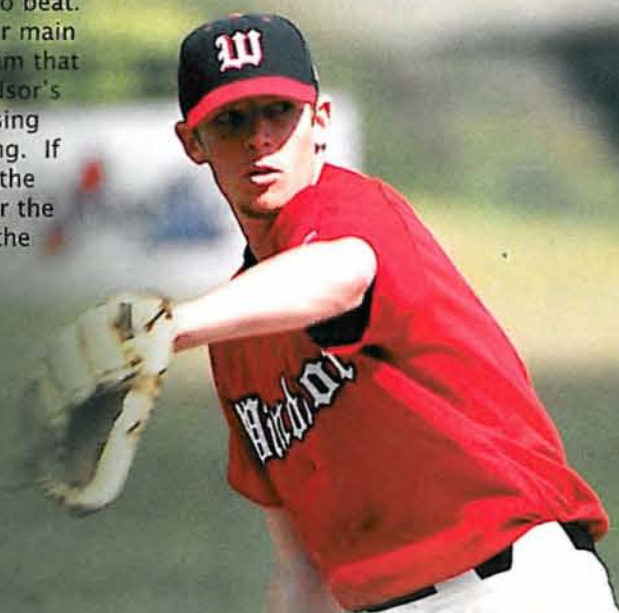
TEAM UPDATE

The Bears were built on the foundations of a successful junior programme. The senior team has been an emerging force over the last five seasons, finishing as runners up in three of those and winning the triple crown of European Club Champions, National League Champions and Final 4 Champions last year. This year, Windsor has rebuilt the team, adding AA (Yankees) player Dennis Grubb, Ryan Koback, Roddi Liebenberg, Phil Clark and Tim Kohls, while bringing up fresh young blood in Michael Clarke, Michael Maroudas, Thomas Minkkinen and Patrick Matias.

Windsor has already had a successful season, winning the National League and becoming the first British team to defend an A-Pool place in the in the European Cupwinners-Cup A-Pool where they came fifth. The Bears were unbeaten in games when they were the home team this season.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Windsor had a point to prove this year - that last year was not a fluke. Rebuilding, they have become stronger and are undoubtedly the strongest offensive team in the National League. Add their defensive superiority and their pitching and this team has established themselves as a very difficult team to beat. But they struggled early against their main rivals, London, who has a strong team that could beat anyone on the day. Windsor's one weakness this year has been losing games by one run and self-imploding. If they can stay focused and maintain the awesome run production shown over the last month (77 runs in 6 games) of the season, they'll be unstoppable.





KEY PLAYERS

IAN BATES

From Calgary, this is the Canadian pitcher and infielder's first season for the Pirates. Leads the team pitchers with most games won, last count was 10, and has played in every game for the Pirates this season. Ian has also had a great season with the bat, and is up there with the league's homerun leaders.

JEFF McDONALD

The Canadian pitcher/second baseman came to the club in 2003 having played semi-pro for the Kitchener Panthers, Toronto. A strong left-handed hitter, Jeff is also high in the league's homerun leaders. This season he moved from outfield to second base and pitching. Pitched the winning game against Brighton which put Croydon in the Final 4.

RYSE DIXON

Australian pitcher/first baseman is in his first season for the club having come from Perth, where he played A-Grade baseball. With a batting average of .538, Ryse has been a reliable clutch hitter and also played solidly at first base. Dixon gives 100% in every situation and is a strong motivator.

CROYDON PIRATES

FORMED: 1981 GROUND: ROUND SHAW PLAYING FIELDS

TEAM UPDATE

Originally called the Croydon Borough Pirates, the team started in the old third division and played at Wandle Park in the centre of Croydon. By 1990 they had dropped the "Borough" from their name and in that year moved to their present ground at Roundshaw Playing Fields. The club moved up through the divisions until they became a premier division team in 1999. They were soon invited to play in the old Rawlings National League.

With two other teams in the organisation, the club is very keen to improve the skills of all their players across the organisation. They have hosted the very popular London Tournament for the last 11 years and have been winners on several occasions. This year they defeated the Cambridge Monarchs in the final. Since 1990 Pirates have been invited to attend the annual tournament of the Zuidvogels baseball club in Holland, winning the title three times and, this year, reaching the final.

ROUTE TO THE FINAL 4

Just like last year, the Pirates produced a thrilling climax to the regular season, winning four in a row and beating Brighton Buccaneers, 2003 Championship finalists, on the penultimate weekend to take the last qualifying place from them. Croydon had been out of the top three virtually all season but got themselves in a position where a sweep of the double header on Brighton's turf, and one more loss by fellow contenders Bracknell Blazers, would put Pirates into third. They won the first game against Bucs, which made the second game the decider. Said Pirates' Dave Ward, "This was the most tense game of the season in which a win for any of these two teams would mean a place in the Final 4." Pirates held their nerve for a 6-2 win. On the same day, Bracknell lost a game to Richmond, setting Croydon up for a Final 4 game against the NL North Champions, an interesting matchup as neither side will have much experience of the other.

TOURNAMENT UMPIRES

ABUA-Great Britain is pleased to announce the selection of the following individuals to umpire the 2004 Final 4 Tournament:

Roger Van Scoy (South) - Crew Chief; Darrin Muller (South); James Norman (South); Edward Edsall (South); Jacob Plieth (South); Tom Johnston (South)

Jacob Plieth will be working his seventh BBF final, having officiated at the 1997-99 and 2001-03 events, while Ed

Edsall, who umpired at all of the Final Four Tournaments between 2000 and 2003, will be working his fifth final. Darrin Muller will be umpiring his third event, having worked at the previous two. James Norman officiated at last year's tournament, while Roger Van Scoy and Tom Johnston will be working their first Final Four event.

Muller, Norman, Edsall and Plieth have additionally represented Great Britain at International level.

SCORING OFFICIALS:

BRIAN HOLLAND

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