

### EUROPEAN NOTES

The civic authorities of Milan have constructed a 5,000 seat baseball park for this year's European Championships.

Real Madrid won the Spanish Championship for 1963, beating Pirates in the final series 2 games to 0; scores were 13 - 12 and 9 - 6. Hard on the heels of this victory, Real Madrid's eighth National title since the Spanish Federation was organised in 1944, the club shocked Spanish baseball circles by declaring that the baseball section would no longer function. The reason given was that a policy of financial retrenchment made it imperative that those sections which were not self-supporting should be abandoned. Other sports to be axed were basketball, volleyball and gymnastics.

The juvenile championship of Spain was won by Picadero J.C.

1963 saw yet another increase in the total of players registered with the Spanish Federation, numbers having grown from 642 in 1961 to 827 last season. Even more striking is the growth of Prebeisbol, this, a baseball programme for boys and a purely Spanish venture, was introduced in 1962. In that year 248 boys were playing, in 1963 this figure increased to 1,173.

The Royal Dutch Baseball Association are leaving nothing to chance in preparing for the VIIIth. European Baseball Championships. Central training for the national team commenced on Saturday, 18th January. Each Saturday from that date until 28th March the selected group of players will train for four hours in the police headquarters gymnasium at Amsterdam. Commencing in April the training will move out of doors, when the group will be split into two teams. Training will take place on Tuesday evenings at Haarlem, and on Wednesday evenings at Amsterdam. The two teams will play a number of games against each other. Later, numerous games are planned against strong U.S. service teams. The group which emerges from this rigorous programme will spend six days in training at a U.S. base in West Germany immediately prior to the opening of the Championships at Milan.

It is proposed that the arrangements for future European Cup competitions should be altered. In 1963 the competition was staged on a knock-out basis. In order to give each club a chance of at least one home game, it will probably be played in two pools; the two pool winners meeting in the final.



# BASEBALL

## Courier

NO. 7. FEBRUARY 1964.

### HULL PRESS RELEASE from Don Smallwood.

During the fog, ice, and miserable dark evenings it seems a far cry to the opening of another baseball season; but once the New Year has arrived, the start is soon upon us. Activity here in Hull has been very slight, and judging by the scarce attendance at a recent league meeting, it appears that many of our baseball friends must hibernate during the winter.

The Hull League has a major change in officials for 1964. Mr. E. Jacklin has had to resign from the chairmanship due to pressure of business. Mr. W. Burton is now our chairman. During his term of office Mr. Jacklin worked very hard to further the game in this area. I am confident that I represent the feeling of all Hull baseball folk when I say, "Thank you, Mr. Jacklin". I am very pleased to learn that Mr. Jacklin will continue his association with the Hull League as he has accepted the office of vice-chairman, so that we shall still have the benefit of his suggestions and advice.

Our new chairman, Mr. Burton, is greatly admired by both players and supporters; known affectionately as "Pop", I feel sure that everyone will do their utmost to ensure the success of his term of office.

Mr. H. McAvan continues as Hon. Secretary, and Mr. K. Clappison as Hon. Treasurer.

The major item discussed at recent league meetings has been the future of the British Baseball Federation. Mr. McAvan the present secretary of the B.B.F. is attempting to discover the opinions of other areas regarding their joining the B.B.F.

After ascertaining the views of the other areas, Mr. McAvan will arrange for the annual general meeting at which one of two alternative courses will be followed. If other areas show an interest in the continued existence of the B.B.F., then we shall have to set-to and clear up all the problems that have arisen during the past two seasons. If other areas do not express an interest in the B.B.F., then the possibility of winding-up the organisation will be discussed. The latter alternative is a sorry prospect when one thinks of the time and effort which went into the preparation of the B.B.F.'s constitution. However, the B.B.F. has staggered from one crisis to another since its formation, and due to this unhappy history, even with a completely new administration, many still view the Federation with suspicion.

E. Martin, secretary of Blackburn Buccaneers, was greatly surprised at the response produced by an appeal for ball-players displayed at the Blackburn Aircraft plant. No fewer than twenty-four prospective players answered the appeal, and training sessions were held until well after the close of the Hull League's season. Ted Martin deserves this sort of tonic, he certainly works for the progress of baseball.

East Hull Aces will not be competing in Hull League fixtures in 1964. Aces have been members of the Hull League since 1948, but with the formation of the National League, East Hull have decided to re-organise, and will run a team in the Hull League under the name of Kingston Accs. Kingston Aces will have the accent on youth, while the more seasoned players will be bidding for National League honours as East Hull Aces. We decided on this change of policy because so many teams in the past have slipped from the peaks and even folded-up due to their players growing old together. Aces hope that this new policy will solve this problem by developing young players and thus ensuring our success in the future.

---

BASEBALL ORIENTAL by John Varnam.

Anybody who can tell the difference between an elephant and a grain of rice will know that baseball is the national game of the U.S.A. Not so many people will know however that "the glorified rounders game" is also the national game of Japan, despite the Japs at the moment going absolutely overboard for golf. The major leagues take quite an interest in Japanese ball, and several teams have toured the islands.

The structure of Japanese pro. ball is based on the American system of two major leagues of comparatively equal strength. The two leagues, the Pacific and the Central, have six teams each. The Pacific has three teams in Osaka, two in Tokyo, and one in Fukuoka. The Central consists of three clubs in Tokyo, and one each in the cities of Osaka, Nagoya, and Hiroshima. Each team is permitted to sign three foreign players, the majority of the foreign players come from Hawaii, and are of Japanese descent, but several former major league ball players have found it worth their while to sign contracts with Japanese clubs. Because of the tremendous popularity of the game in Japan, coupled with the fact that the Japanese clubs are operated largely as public relation outfits by large business concerns, salaries in Japan for star ball players approach American major-league salaries, and this despite the fact that the standard of play is admitted by Japanese baseball men to be only on a par with AAA ball in the States. There seems little prospect therefore of Japan ever being a recruiting field for the American major leagues. At the end of the season, as in the U.S.A., the champions of each league meet in a best of seven series to decide the Championship of Japan.

The Japanese equipment that I have seen is of a very high standard. American manufacturers are worried by this competition. One team here in the Midlands is kitted-out almost completely with Japanese gloves, supplied through the pitcher, who is I believe Japanese. It goes without saying that this equipment is extremely keenly priced, compared to other kit of the same, or even of inferior quality.

With the swing towards baseball throughout the world it should not be long before the International Olympic Committee at last admits baseball to its long list of sports. The sooner the better for my liking. An action of this nature could set off the spark in England that could lead the masses to see the light, if you'll pardon the pun.

---

SPOTLIGHT ON STRETFORD SAINTS by Andy Parkes.

The Saints won the championship of the National League in its inaugural season with a record of ten wins and no defeats. The Saints also won the National Baseball Congress Commissioner's Trophy by defeating Liverpool Tigers in the final, 18 - 8. This trophy competition which was introduced to British Baseball for the

first time in 1963 carries for the winning club the additional honour of being recognised by the National Baseball Congress of America as British baseball champions.

The club enjoyed one of its most successful seasons since its formation in 1947. Undefeated in ten National League contexts, we had two close games with the runners-up Bromsgrove, 5 - 3 and 11 - 10. Hull Aces ran us to 8 - 6 in one game but went down 15 - 5 in the second encounter. We beat Coventry in one game by 75 - 3! Is this a record score for a British club?

Our triumph in the N.B.C. Trophy competition was particularly satisfying as we beat Mormon Yankees in the semi-final. We beat the Mormons 7 - 0 on a no-hitter pitched by Australian Ian Glover, who plays professional cricket. The Mormons protested the game, claiming that Glover was not eligible to play in this competition. They were upheld by the Commissioner, and we had to replay the game. We won the replay 12 - 5 without the aid of Glover; manager Wally O'Neil pitching this game. Saints overpowered Liverpool Tigers 18 - 8 in the final, John Collins hitting a grand-slam homer in the first inning.

We finished with 17 wins and 4 losses. In the Merseyside League we were well out of first place, mainly because of games forfeited due to fixture mix-ups. Saints were the only club to defeat the powerful Mormon missionaries, which we did twice, but they beat us in both of our league meetings. Unfortunately, we only played Liverpool Aces, who finished second in the Merseyside League, on one occasion, losing 10 - 3.

Stand-out performers on the club were pitchers Wally O'Neil (9 - 3) and Bob Dawson (3 - 0). Bob Dawson also had 49 base-hits, tops on the team, for a batting average of .475. Catcher John Collins won the club batting championship with .482, and hit seven home-runs in what was his first full season with the Saints. Outfielder Alan Frost hit .414, and Wally O'Neil .388. O'Neil also hit four homers.

Saints are a young side, most of our players being in their early twenties, and we should develop into a very formidable team during the next few seasons.

We have a new Hon. Secretary, David A. Thomas, 16 Rostherne Road, Sale, Cheshire. Would other club secretaries please take note of this change?

#### AN APOLOGY TO SUBSCRIBERS

Subscribers may have wondered at the delay in receiving the February issue of Baseball Courier. The explanation is that the editor has had to travel to the London area in connection with his employment, and for some weeks has been living out of a suitcase. I shall probably be in London during the near future, and have already written to a number of those baseball men who have been so co-operative in supplying news and articles in the past. These correspondents will be informed of any changes in my temporary addresses. Subscribers, and any other writers can still contact me by writing to 11 Heath Street, Riverside, Cardiff. Mail is re-directed from this address without delay.

---

BASEBALL COURIER is published six times a year. The next issue will appear on May 4th. Copy for the next number must be received by 20th April. The annual subscription to BASEBALL COURIER is 4/-, P.O.'s. should be made payable to W.T. Morgan, and should be sent to 11 Heath Street, Riverside, Cardiff.

---

BASEBALL COURIER is now in its second year of publication, and from now on as each number is issued a certain number of the initial subscriptions will be due for renewal. Will subscribers assist in keeping the expense of publishing this periodical as low as possible by sending renewed subscriptions without waiting for reminders? Most readers will have a reasonably close idea as to the month in which their subscription is due for renewal.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN BASEBALL

Baseball has been played in South Africa since 1895, having been introduced by Americans who were drawn to Johannesburg to help develop the gold-mining industry. The game has progressed and there are now twelve provinces playing baseball in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, the players number about 2,500.

The Wanderers Club in Johannesburg has been actively connected with baseball since 1902.

Baseball is mainly a summer game in South Africa, with the exception of the Transvaal, Eastern Transvaal and Natal where winter baseball is also played. The game in South Africa and Rhodesia is governed by the South African Baseball Board, which annually

appoints an Executive Committee of five members; the Board is affiliated to the National Baseball Congress of America.

Little League baseball played by boys in the 10 to 16 years age group is proving a great success.

In 1954/55 the South African Baseball Board sponsored a tour of South Africa and the Rhodesias by an All-American Amateur Baseball team. During the years that an Australian cricket team has toured South Africa, baseball games have been arranged between a South African team and the Australian cricketers many of whom are interstate baseballers in their own country.

Recently the South African Board has been in correspondence with the Royal Dutch Baseball Association with a view to arranging a tour of Holland by a representative South African team but no definite arrangements have yet been concluded. The Dutch authorities invited South Africa to send a team to the Haarlem Tournament in 1963, this was not possible, but South Africa may appear at Haarlem in 1965.

#### EUROPEAN CUP-FINAL

Picadero Jockey Club of Barcelona became the first winners of the European Cup by defeating Europhon of Milan 11 - 8. The Europhon team included seven Italian international players.

The game was played at Montjuich Field in Barcelona on 21st October before some 2,000 spectators. Chief umpire was Gerard van Klingeren of the Netherlands, who was assisted by two American umpires. The Italian team protested against the balls which the Spanish team intended to play with, these were of Spanish manufacture. Europhon gave six American balls to the umpire, but these had all been expended by the sixth inning and the Spanish balls had to be used. Europhon lodged an official protest with the European Baseball Federation regarding the use of what they claimed were not regulation balls.

Europhon had a left-handed American as starting pitcher. For six innings he looked as if he would be the winning pitcher, as Europhon led by scores of 4-0, 4-1, 4-3, and 7-3. However in the seventh inning the Spanish hitters got the measure of the American pitcher, Green, and pushed over six runs. In the eighth inning Europhon scored a single run, making it 9 - 8 in favour of Picadero J.C., who in their half of the eighth tallied twice to make the score 11 - 8.

The Conde de Chelcs, vice-president of the European Baseball Federation presented the cup to the victors.

#### SOUTHERN BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

##### 1963 Final Tables.

	Played	Won	Lost	Pts.
<b>PREMIER DIVISION</b>				
U.S. Navy	10	9	1	18
Ford Sports	8	6	2	12
Richmond Red Sox	9	6	3	12
Kodak	10	3	7	6
Thames Board Mills	9	3	6	6
Middlesex Athletics	10	1	9	2
<b>FIRST DIVISION</b>				
Richmond Knights	12	11	1	22
Essex Tigers	12	10	2	20
Beckenham Bluejays	12	8	4	16
Crawley Giants	12	6	6	12
Southend Aces	12	4	8	8
Enfield Dodgers	12	2	10	4
Crawley Beavers	12	1	11	2

#### BELGIAN REPORT

The Luchtbal Greys won the 1963 Belgian Championship; this was their fourth title, previous triumphs being 1950, 1956 and 1961. The Greys clinched the title by beating the runners-up G.M. Giants in the final meeting between the two clubs, the score was 12 - 3, but the Greys in effect won the title in the third inning with a nine run surge.

Jos Robijn was once again the Greys' and Belgium's leading pitcher, his victory in the game against the Giants made a career total of 84 wins out of 101 contests. He was selected "Pitcher of the Year" for the second successive season.

"Player of the Year" was Michel Cornelissen, shortstop of the Spartans, who went the whole season without once being struck-out. "Rookie of the Year" was Paul Verbaeys (Spartans).

The Second Division title was won by Spartans, and the Babe Ruth League winners were Luchtbal Greys.

First Division Positions. 1. Luchtbal Greys .875 : 2. G.M. Giants .813 : 3. Spartans .688 : 4. Beltelco Pioneers .688 : 5. Krak Eagles .500 : 6. Borgerhout Squirrels .375 : 7. Berchem Cristals .375 : 8. Brasschaat Red Lions .125 : 9. Kapellen .062.