

# BRIT BALL

The Official Voice of the British Baseball Federation

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# BRIT



# BALL

The Official Voice of the British Baseball Federation

Issue 44

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January / February 1998

## '98 SPRING TRAINING

The Definitive Baseball Weekend  
April 3,4,5, Cranfield University

Don't you love it when you pull off a play that makes you the hero of the day? How about when you connect with a fastball so sweetly you don't even feel it? Or that impossible lunging grab where you actually come up with the ball?

***Why don't you allow yourself to enjoy that feeling more often?***

A little extra practice, a little more skill development and a little extra knowledge can greatly enhance your enjoyment of baseball, and make those plays a reality every game.

**It couldn't be simpler with '98 Spring Training!**

*(Continued on page 4)*

**'98 SPRING TRAINING is for**

PLAYERS	to prepare
COACHES	to learn
UMPIRES	to be right
YOUTH	to be the future

## In this issue

**98 Spring Training**  
***Coaching Tips***  
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***Youth Clinics***



**BRING YOUR TEAM - TEN PLAYERS OR MORE - AND YOU GET A 10% DISCOUNT ON THE SPRING TRAINING FEE!**

'98 Spring Training is the ideal opportunity to prepare you and your team for the coming season.

**An exceptional course leader**

Vince Garcia will lead the weekend's activities. Vince is the BBF's new Director of Game Development and a former Major League Baseball envoy. His ability to communicate the game, develop skills and motivate people within a fun and enjoyable atmosphere is unrivalled.

**Practical instruction**

Vince will be joined by coaches from PONY Baseball (USA), Italy (Europe's No 1 playing nation), and the National team coaching

**BBF ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER**  
An ideal opportunity to meet up with your baseball colleagues in a relaxed and entertaining environment. This popular event will include the '98 Spring Training auction, raffle and the BBF and Coors Baseball League awards. Not to be missed.

staff. All the course instructors will run sessions that involve both coaches and players encouraging everyone to:

- > reinforce basic fundamentals
- > discover new drills
- > analyse game situations
- > develop advanced skills
- > expand baseball knowledge
- > enjoy the game

**Activities to suit everyone**

'98 Spring Training will not only feature practical instruction for senior baseball players. PONY (USA) will be sending a youth coach to run the HARDBALL SKILZ camp for youth players. Also, there's the annual BBF

**MIB MEN IN BLUE**  
UK top umpires, CEB qualified Frank Scherer and Ted Thesingh, will dictate terms again with this very successful umpire's workshop. Give yourself the confidence to know you have made the RIGHT calls this season.

**Please return your completed form and money to:**  
**'98 Spring Training**  
**British Baseball Federation**  
**P O Box 45**  
**Hessle**  
**HU13 0YQ**

Awards Dinner and the Coors Baseball League All-Stars '98 game.

**HARDBALL SKILZ**  
Youth camp  
A fund Weekend's activities: drills, skills and games. For youth players who want the edge. Let your fastball do the talking and your bat rule the fences.

**All-STARS '98**  
On Saturday afternoon watch the north battle the south as the season kicks off with a touch of class. The game features the best players from around the country.



**Please put me on the roster for the following session:**

Baseball £23.00  Umpiring £10.00  Hardball Skilz £20.00

Name

Address   
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Tame Name (if applicable)

I enclose the following sum on money

98 Spring Training Fee	£
Annual Dinner (Sat evening) per person £17.50	£
Accommodation (Bed and Breakfast Single en-suite £36.50) Double en-suite £49.50	£
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	<b>£</b>

## 1998 ELITE COACHES PROGRAM

The "Elite Coaches Program" is off and running. The program is designed to give top coaches, and those that aspire to be top coaches, a forum for discussion, thus providing an avenue to advance their baseball knowledge.

All National team coaches will be heavily encouraged to participate. In addition, the agenda will provide continued education for the British Baseball Federation "Coach Certificate" program.

The locations and schedule for this year are as follows;

### North

3rd Monday of each month at the BBF Head Office (Hessle).

16 February  
16 March  
20 April  
18 May  
15 June  
20 July  
17 August  
21 September

### South

4th Monday of each month at the MLBI Office (London).

23 February  
23 March  
27 April  
25 May  
22 June  
27 July  
24 August  
28 September

Sessions will begin at 7.00pm.

Topics for discussion are now being formulated. Should you have any area of particular interest, please feel free to contact me through head office. We will make every attempt to accommodate your request. All coaches will be encouraged to be proactive in conversation, exercises, and projects.

Please register your interest in this program by completing the following form. For more information, or directions to either venue phone Head Office on 01482 643551.

I wish to take part in the "Elite Coaches Program".

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Baseball Team: \_\_\_\_\_

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## COMMUNITY GRANTS

By Vince Garcia  
Director of Game  
Development

If the money does not go in your pockets, it will go in to someone else's. I have nightmares that groups are getting £500 community grants for bowls or badminton.

Unfortunately for us baseball enthusiasts, these nightmares are a reality. Nearly all don't attempt getting a grant because they don't understand just how easy it is to apply. Most say, "We'll never get the thing anyway." It is just as effortless to make a phone

call to the local borough council and have the form sent to you. The likelihood of getting the grant should be left to the people that process them. The same people that refuse to apply, because they feel that they are unlikely to get the grants, are the same people that buy weekly lotto tickets.

Understandable that no one likes to hear the word, "No" but you only get out of it the effort that you put into it. If you put no effort into it, I guarantee that you will get nothing in return. I'll also guarantee you that you'll be walking past some really well equipped badminton clubs. Your new batch of equipment, or money for minibus hire might only be a phone call away.

Good luck. First step in luck is giving it a go.



# BBF FAN CLUB

[HTTP://WWW.BBF.ORG](http://www.bbf.org)



## Youth Membership Includes:

Membership Card  
 'Slider' Newsletter six times a year  
 Baseball Bat Pen  
 Discounts on BBF Merchandise  
 Discount at Baseball Events  
 Sticker

**Annual Fee £7.50**

## Adult Membership Includes:

Membership Card  
 Annual Subscription to Brit-Ball  
 Baseball Bat Pen  
 Discounts on BBF Merchandise  
 Discounts at Baseball Events  
 Car Sticker

**Annual Fee £15.00**

The BBF Fan Club is your opportunity to keep in touch with what's happening in British Baseball.  
 To join the Fan Club, please send a cheque payable to the British Baseball Federation to:

British Baseball Federation Fan Club  
 PO Box 45  
 Hessle  
 HU13 0YQ

TEL: 01482 643551 FAX: 01482 640224

## HIT IT WHERE IT CAME FROM!!



Drive the ball to centre! Hit it back through the box! Hit it where it came from! What is the reasoning behind these catch phrases? What are the benefits to using the middle of the field as your hitting focal point?

First, let us simplify hitting a bit. To hit means to make contact. Now, just making contact usually won't win you many games. So let's improve on the contact. We'll have to if we intend to win a game or two. Ideally you would

**Hit it  
back  
through  
the box!**

want to be able to hit the ball with good force and to hit it on a line. You would also want to utilise the whole of the field in doing this. Pitches that are in line with the inside, centre and outside parts of the plate should be pulled, hit up the middle and to the opposite field. This should give you the best opportunity to get a hit and to do it consistently. You'll also find that your hand position and contact area (relative to home plate) should vary according to the location of the pitch. The

inside pitch you would hit in front of your body. The pitch down the middle you would want to hit slightly out in front and the pitch on the outer half of the plate you would want to let get deep and hit in line with the front to back of your hips. When you try to hit the ball up the middle you stay away from extremes. A hitter that hits only to one field usually dominates only one section of the plate, the inside or outside half. This usually makes the opposite half of the plate a weakness for the hitter. Don't think pitchers don't realise this. Using the game plan of hitting up the middle allows you to adjust to any pitch.

If you use this game plan, and your players buy into it, you should see a big difference. Just make sure you have a good screen in front of your batting practice pitcher and watch your lips!!!

**HIT IT WHERE  
IT CAME  
FROM!**

## OBITUARY

**It is with great sadness that I report the death of Derek Phillips, on Friday 23rd January 1998 aged 68.**

I first met Derek in 1952, when I joined the Mitcham Royals as a youngster. Derek was an outfielder for the Royals, then playing in the Western League. He was always a great inspiration to the younger players, with his flamboyant character and quick wit. Over the next 20 years Derek played for the Leatherhead Mapleleaves, Twickenham Cardinals, Richmond Red Sox and Sutton Braves, towards the latter part of his playing days he turned to managing the Suttton Braves and then umpiring. A successful businessman, he spent a lot of time overseas and in fact lived in the States for a few years where he became an ardent Boston Red Sox fan.

In 1987, Derek was suddenly and without warning, struck down by a virus, which left him paralysed from the waist downwards and partially paralysed in the arms. He spent much time in and out of hospital, during which time it was discovered he also had diabetes.

In 1988 the Old Timers Baseball Club was founded and Derek was instrumental in getting players for the Club and writing up its constitution,

he was a real asset to me at this time. Once the team was up and running, he was elected to be its Manager which he did for the next eight years. This post also involved him in Committee work, where his input was tremendous. His real forte though was delivering the address at the Club's Annual Presentation Dinner, which he did every year with great gusto, skill and wit.

Despite being wheelchair bound, Derek never once complained about his condition and bore his illness with great courage, which earned him enormous respect amongst the Old Timers and our many opponents over the last ten years. Derek had many other interests outside of Baseball, so was many things to many people, but for me he was a courageous human being whom I was privileged to share the great game of baseball with.

I'm sure those of you that knew him would wish to join the Old Timers in conveying our sympathy to his wife Marj, their two children Nigel and Paula and their four grandchildren.

**GOODBYE OLD TIMER,  
YOU'LL BE IN OUR FIELD  
OF DREAMS .....**

**Compiled by  
Barry Mayfield  
and Jean Crook**

Louisville Slugger **TPX**



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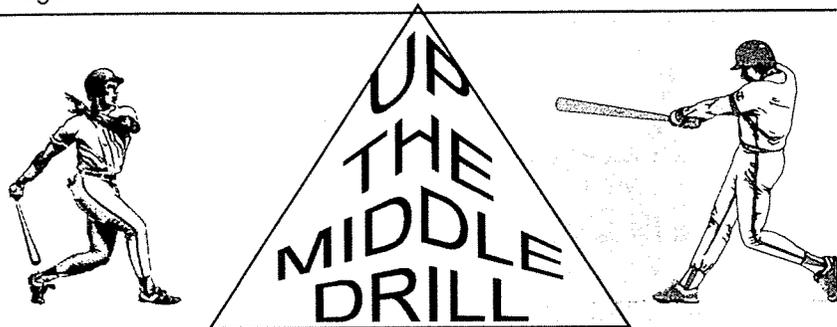
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### By Vince Garcia Director of Game Development

One of my favourite drills in hitting is the "Back up the middle drill." The object of this drill is to hit a ball hard off a tee and hit a target. The target could be a pitching screen, utility screen, backstop, netting or anything else that you think would be all right to beat up a bit. You can also use this drill indoors by using tennis balls, wiffle balls or incrediballs. Heck, you could set up a trash bin if you wanted.

On the field you could use 2nd base as your target. Make sure the target is at least 30 feet from the hitter. Most hitting drills utilise a target that

is very close. The benefits of backing the target up are that you see if the player is pulling off the ball (pulling it, usually by turning the hands over too quickly) and if they are hitting the ball on a line (top hand finger nails should be facing the sky at the moment of contact). When the target is right up on top of you it makes just about every ball hit look like it was well struck.

This is not an easy drill and takes some getting used to. Give it some time and you won't be disappointed. It also is a very competitive drill and requires good concentration. Incorporate this drill along with having the hitter focus on hitting the ball back up the middle and you're in business. Keep hitting that target.

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and leave the rest to us.

## IMPROVE YOUR GAME

The baseball season is fast approaching and now is the time to improve your skills and knowledge of the game, and recruit a few new players and coaches to your club. Obviously with all newcomers to the game they require some coaching on the fundamentals. The following two courses provide an excellent forum for this:

### Youth Managers Awards

The Youth Manager Award is aimed at anyone involved in teaching or coaching youth baseball. It focuses on child development and learning as well as practice organisation, skills and drills. It is also an excellent introduction to baseball for parents and / or other volunteers and older players wishing to assist in the running of a team. It will even be good for parents who only watch. A good overview of the game can be obtained and people can go on to more advanced courses later as they wish.

The Youth Manager award will consist of elements covering basic techniques:

- Basic coaching techniques
- the coaching of children
- umpiring
- scoring

The course commences at 10.00am and finishes at 4.00pm. The cost of the course also includes a certificate, and the £5 fee is redeemable against registration as a coach, umpire or scorer for the 1998 season.

This is a great way to obtain an officially recognised qualification, which will only serve to help your club. By educating ourselves, we will be in a better position to put the needs and aspirations of the kids first.

### Youth Player Clinic

The Youth Player Clinic is aimed at all youth players (up to Pony upper age level). The clinic will deal with basic techniques, with the emphasis being on enjoyment through learning and getting better.

The course commences at 10.00am and finishes at 4.00pm and costs £5.00

This course is being run in conjunction with the Youth Managers Award to enable both players and parents to enjoy a baseball filled day.

To book on either course, please complete the form on the following pages.

## YOUTH PLAYER CLINIC

Dates:

**Saturday 7 March  
Aberdeen**

Please state below which clinic you would like to attend.

**Sunday 8 March  
Dundee**

If you would like to host a clinic in your area, please call BBF Head Office for further details and availability of tutors.

**Sunday 15 March  
Hessle**



I would like to participate in the following Youth Player Clinic:		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Venue</b>	
Name:		
Address:		
		Postcode:
Tel No:	Nationality:	Date of Birth:
Baseball Team: (If applicable)		
<b>I enclose £5 registration fee for the course</b>		
<b>All cheques should be made payable to the British Baseball Federation</b>		

Please return this form to:  
BBF Youth Player Clinic  
British Baseball Federation, P O Box 45,  
Hessle, East Yorkshire, HU13 0YQ



**Our latest technology  
didn't improve just the  
Franklin line-up this off-season...**



# YOUTH MANAGERS AWARD

Dates:  
Saturday 7 March  
Aberdeen

Sunday 8 March  
Dundee

Sunday 15 March  
Hessle

Please state  
below which  
clinic you  
would like to  
attend.



If you would  
like to host a clinic in your area,  
please call BBF Head Office for  
further details and availability of  
tutors.

I would like to participate in the following Youth Managers Award:

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Venue</b>	
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Address:</b>			
		<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel No:</b>	<b>Nationality:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
<b>Baseball Team: (If applicable)</b>			
<b>I enclose £5 registration fee for the course</b>			
<b>All cheques should be made payable to the British Baseball Federation</b>			

Please return this form to: BBF Youth Player Clinic  
British Baseball Federation, P O Box 45, Hessle, East  
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## 1998 BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION HANDBOOK

Contains all the contact details and fixtures for the 1998 season. An excellent buy for any intrepid baseball fan.

To purchase a copy (to be published mid March 1998) please return the form below along with a cheque for £5.00 made payable to the British Baseball Federation.

Please ensure I receive a copy of the 1998 British Baseball Federation Handbook. I enclose my cheque for £5 (cheques made payable to the British Baseball Federation).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to  
BBF, PO Box 45, Hessle  
East Yorkshire, HU13 0YQ

## BRIT-BALL

The Official Voice  
of the  
British Baseball  
Federation

Why not have your own copy mailed directly to you each month, to keep up to date with all the news and views on British Baseball.

Please ensure I receive a copy of Brit-Ball each month. I enclose my cheque for £11 UK annual subscription, £18 overseas (cheques made payable to the British Baseball Federation).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

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# BASEBALLS

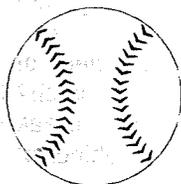
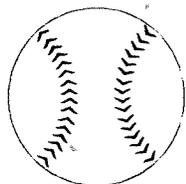
From the 1998 season onwards the Franklin 1570D will become the official baseball of the British Baseball Federation. Cost to teams will be £36 per dozen including postage and packing. Please allow at least one week for delivery. Send your cheque (payable to the British Baseball Federation) for your required quantity to:

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**East Yorkshire**

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## PLAYING CATCH THE RIGHT WAY

**By Vince Garcia**  
**Director of Game Development**

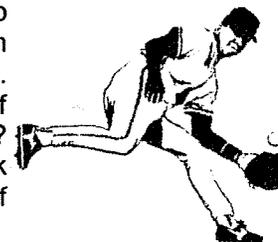
Show me a player that plays lazy catch and I'll show you a lazy player. Show me a team that plays lazy catch and I'll show you a team that has a tough time on defence. How many of you really pay attention to how you play catch before a game? That seems funny to me that one of the first things you do to get ready for a game is usually taken very lightly by both players and coaches. Not so funny when you make twelve errors in a game and give your opponents twelve extra outs. Playing catch sets the tone for practices and games.

The incorrect way to play catch (90% of teams play incorrect catch) is to catch strictly with the glove. Most players just go through the motions when playing catch. Usually players don't fight to get in position to catch the ball in the centre half of their body. Then they wind up as if pitching with nobody on base. What is object of playing catch? First, let's break down the object of

practice. The object of practice is to prepare you for a game. This preparation includes drills that are repetitive. In turn this builds muscle memory (doing things without thinking about it). If you are preparing for a game, what would be the correct way to play catch? Here are the rules;

- Move your feet (fight to get in front of the ball)
- Exaggerate looking the ball into your glove (keep your eye on the ball)
- Put yourself in a good position to throw the ball and do it quickly

By moving your feet, you increase your range and have less balls going off your fingertips. You also have a better opportunity to look the ball in since the ball is in front of you when you catch it. When you look the ball into your glove you eliminate the most senseless mistake in sports. Keep your eye on the ball sounds simple but you really do have to make a conscious effort to do it. By putting yourself in a good position to throw



the ball you improve your accuracy since you have your feet under you and you are throwing in a balanced position. By emphasising quickness you increase the number of throws, increase aerobic training, overall body fitness and create game rhythm in your training.

Now good catch doesn't guarantee you that you will win but it does increase the odds. Increasing your odds of success is what practice is all about. Practice does not make perfect. Yep, I said it. You read that correctly. **PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!!!** Why be a Skoda when you can be a Jaguar? All it takes is a little more effort and a conscious attempt to do things correctly. The choice is always yours. Remember that the next time your team commits 12 errors in a game and you lose by three runs. Move your feet, fight to get in front of the ball, look it in and get rid of it as quick as you can but under control. Doing this in practice and pre game warm ups will make a difference. What are you waiting for?

## THE SINGLE MOST DIFFICULT THING TO DO IN SPORT

The greatest hitter of all time once said that, "Hitting is the single most difficult thing to do in sport." If this is true, we as hitters need to do all we can to put the odds in our favour. There are approximately ten absolutes to hitting a baseball. The most important one of these ingredients is "seeing the ball." You can't hit what you can't see. Although it seems easy enough to do, most hitters really don't make an honest effort to see the ball. The best of hitters realise the importance of seeing the ball better and you can often see them putting in extra time to work on it. One of the first steps you can use to help see the ball better is to open your face up to the pitcher a little bit more. You can also try to see the ball out of the pitcher's hand. The biggest mistake after this is that hitters will pull their heads off the ball just before making contact. This is the most common mistake made by hitters yet usually it is the last place they will look to make an adjustment. You will see much improvement as a hitter if you key on keeping your head down in the hitting zone after contact. Really try to make a super effort of this during drills and your normal batting practice. The more you apply this in practice, the more likely you will be to do it correctly in a game. Remember, the most important ingredient in the recipe to hitting a baseball is to keep your head down in the hitting zone.

## BECOME A COORS BASEBALL FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER AND WIN A BASEBALL TRIP OF ALIFETIME TO SEE YOUR FAVOURITE MLB TEAM

Major League Baseball International presents the Coors Baseball Festival again in four city centres this summer and is on the lookout for volunteers. For every day that a volunteer works they will receive an entry into the exclusive volunteer competition to the States. The lucky winner will get to take a friend or partner off to the USA to watch their favourite MLB team, enjoying the view from the best seats in the stands.

With 30 volunteers needed for each festival, and an opportunity to have as many as THIRTEEN entries into the competition, the odds couldn't be better. Whether you win or not, all volunteers will get T-shirts, caps, free food and drink and an opportunity to purchase a new piece of baseball equipment (a new bat, a new glove, a pair of cleats?) at wholesale price.

Call the BBF Head Office on 01482 643551 now to sign up as the places are limited.

If you're not able to be a volunteer make sure you come along anyway and enjoy all the



Coors Baseball Festival fun. This year the excitement of the big leagues returns to London and Manchester but rolls into Nottingham and Bristol for the first time.

Once again visitors will be able to try out their home-run swing in the Major League and Minor League batting cages, test their pitching speed and accuracy on the Pitcher's Mound and in the Strike Zone or watch the best action in the MLB video pavilion. And of course there will be tons of competitions on the mini baseball field and thousands of pounds worth of prizes to be won.

### Dates for your Diary

**July 2-5**  
London - Covent Garden

**July 9-11**  
Nottingham - Market Square

**July 16-18**  
Manchester - Piccadilly Gardens

**July 24-26**  
Bristol - Broadmead

## Thank You

On Sunday, December 7th the British Baseball Federation hosted their Annual General Meeting at Loughborough University. I would personally like to thank the 37 voting members in attendance, the guests and all members of the board and federation administrators. It is hoped that next year's event will run as smoothly as this years. Although the numbers could have been bigger, those in attendance provided ample questions and offered plenty of good advice. James put on a fantastic presentation on the proposed "National League." Ian Smyth provided plenty of hope for the future youth. Kevin Macadam supplied enough numbers to make any accountant think twice about the field they are in. El Presidente provided the needed leadership and doubled as a good referee when needed. Sharon Bonfield (I forgave her for accidentally drinking my juice), Gary Mortimer, Clive Maude and Ted Gerard-Thesingh also provided needed information and updates during the afternoon. Unfortunately, at the end of the evening I was asked to provide some words of wisdom. Surely I scared most everyone with my speech. After, several members were overheard saying, "Gosh, maybe it would be safer if we moved further away from Mr. Garcia."

One of the main areas that I talked



about at the AGM was club development. Although the youngsters are the future of this federation, adult clubs make up the majority of this organisation. You have my promise to give your adult clubs assistance.

Your federation, in direct response to a demand for action have brought me in as a tool. The people of this federation are begging for attention. Well, here I am. One hundred percent at your service. Those of you who have wanted greater growth for years and years cannot complain while I'm in this capacity. Not only can you contact me, regarding any subject, I'll also be actively travelling and communicating with your organisation to find out what I can do for you. I'll promise to be both proactive and accessible. All programs, and the structure of the federation, are being reviewed to make certain that all efforts and resources are being maximised.

You have my guarantee that I'll be in contact with your club to organise some sort of assistance. Although my intentions are to be proactive and initiate contact with clubs, don't be afraid to get in touch with me. My role, as Director of Game Development, includes anything that comes under the umbrella of baseball. What can I do for you?!

One last note, if you don't show up, you don't vote. There were 37 voting members at the AGM this year. It seems vital that if this federation is to

continue growing more will need to step forward with their support of their own programs. An attempt was made to streamline the AGM this year. Next year, even more of an effort will be made to answer questions ahead of time. This year's version lasted four and one half hours. It can only be in your clubs best interest to vote, and have a say, on the very items that will affect your club in the next year. Thank you to those that put in the effort this season. Your clubs surely will benefit.

Rounding third and heading for home,

Vince Garcia

Director of Game  
Development

Dear Brit-Ball

I have recently come across a baseball game toy which might be handy to keep the younger children happy while Dad plays baseball this season. This consists of a foot-operated device with a delayed-action spring mechanism which pumps up a ball to be swung at with an expandable baseball bat. Apart from the bat, two plastic balls are included as well as a tennis racket and two foam balls.

The set is available from  
Index Catalogue (page 554

in book) at £9.99 retail price. Judging by the illustration this looks a good buy as everything appear to be quite robust (hopefully at least!) and the bat has a wooden look about it to my mind. If it keeps the 4 years old and upwards in swinging mood this season it can't be bad, so it might be worth a try.

Yours faithfully  
Will Cosgrave

(Continued on page 28)

The  
**SLINGER** POLYBALL  
PITCHING MACHINE

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Dear Brit-Ball

On 20 December 1997 Vince Garcia (Director of Game Development) visited the Halton Polecats Baseball Club in Runcorn. During a fun-packed day Vince provided not only his unique sense of humour, but the richness of baseball knowledge and experience which makes him such a fine coach. As well as covering a Level 1 course, the components of the new 'Youth Mangers Award' were introduced. These are 'Child Protection', 'Children's Physiology', 'The Psychological Development of

Children', and 'Communicating with Young People'. These modules were prepared and delivered by Ronan A Dunne, who has had many years of training and professional experience in these areas.

A very enjoyable day was had by all, including some young players who came along to 'be coached'. The Halton Polecats want to thank Vince for his support and wish him well on the road ahead in his new job.

**Halton Polecats Baseball Club**

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## TORCH TROPHY TRUST

The Torch Trophy Trust was established in 1962 with the object of encouraging voluntary work for sport at club level throughout the United Kingdom. Governing Bodies each year are invited to nominate somebody to receive one of the Torch Trophies in recognition of outstanding work for their sport at club or local level.



Cadet Coach, a PHR Coordinator, and the work he does in organising local school teams.

In 1997 we nominated Paul Vernon of Bracknell Baseball Club for an award in recognition of the hard work he does, not only for his own club, but as the Southern Conference Youth Commissioner, a GB

He can be seen above being presented with his award by His Royal Highness the Duke of York at Simpsons (Piccadilly) in London. I am sure you will join us in congratulating Paul on his achievement

Does your local authority or regional sports council hold any awards ceremonies that we can nominate you or a member of your club for. Let us know what they are and why we should nominate you and we will do all we can to help you receive an award.



This is also an excellent way to promote the game and raise the profile of baseball. We have some excellent administrators, players and coaches who we should be proud of, and they should be recognised for their contribution to our sport. Let's start shouting about them!

## POSITION VACANT

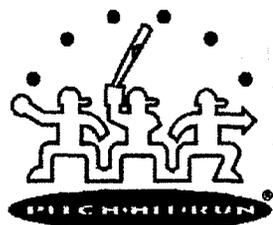
### Applications are invited for the position of Pitch, Hit and Run Administration Assistant.

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If you are interested in applying for the above position, please do so in writing, with a full CV to:

BBF Head Office,  
P O Box 45,  
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East Yorkshire,  
HU13 0YQ



# VISUALISE

At times visualisation is characterised as unnecessary. Some even refer to it as hocus pocus. Just something that some tribal witch doctor would prescribe to a wart infested individual. Greg Maddux (That ought to make Ronan Dunn happy) might agree to disagree on that. So would just about every professional athlete in the world. Why is it that so many at the top of their professions would utilise this great tool yet most at lower levels won't budge? It comes down to education. Those of you that are non believers have not taken the time to see what the benefits are or what is required of you and your athletes. Rather than try something that is foreign to them, they would instead stay with what they are comfortable with. This is understandable to some extent. However, comfort means nothing unless you have success. Some of the players that really object to visualisation are the ones that have trouble getting into the line-up. You'd think that a player who's butt was stuck to

the bench might try anything to get off of it. No, they just didn't feel comfortable trying it. Guess we all were comfortable the first time we swam in a pool, flew in a plane and jumped behind the steering wheel of a car. While some people are naturally comfortable at things, most of us normal folks need to have some success before we have some confidence. I'm talking about the kind of confidence that allows you to play at top level during the most pressure packed situations. To get there you need to follow the recipe of success.

Vince Garcia Recipe for Success;

1. See it first
2. Experience success in a practice situation
3. Experience success in a game rhythm atmosphere (scrimmage)
4. Take that success into a real game situation
5. Do it under pressure

Is it possible to go right to number five without

experiencing one through four? Yes, it is possible. Is it possible to swim after being thrown into the water? Yes, it is possible. Is it possible to fly without fear the first time you get into a plane? Yes, it is possible. Is it possible to get behind the wheel and drive a car without having had any practice? Yes, it is possible. Listen, in all sports you are trying to better the odds for yourself. Today's equipment is better than yesterdays. Today's athlete is more fit than yesterdays. Today's learning techniques are far better. Babe Ruth was a great player for his time but anyone that thinks that he comes anywhere near to Frank Thomas is kidding themselves. The only thing that Ruth visualised in his time was a hot dog and a beer. Two of the steps above are real experience. The other three steps are synthesising game experience. The first step is the most important. To visualise properly you need to do it in detail. You need to be able to see the whole picture. Close your eyes and see the pitcher approaching the mound. See the background. That could include, but not limited to, trees, home run fence, other fielders, uniforms, color of the grass, bases and maybe even a few umpires (make sure you

give them a nice pair of glasses). To truly synthesise a game situation you have to see the whole picture and go through your routine in detail and do it in real time. Go on, step into the box. Clank your bat on your spikes, spit, dig in, take your practice swings, see the pitcher go through his delivery, see the ball out of the hand and let one rip. Right back up through the middle. Have the ball nick the pitcher ear and go into centre field. Watch the runner from 2nd score the winning run as you round first. Put your arms up because you just won the championship game. People are going crazy. Fans are cheering. Your team mates are piling up on top of you. The celebration is just beginning. Now do it again and again. Take it to step to and you are one step closer to actually doing it.

This article will be continued in the next publication.

Happy Hunting,

**Vince Garcia**  
**Director of Game**  
**Development**

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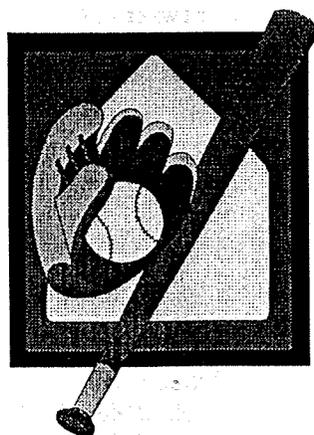
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## BBF MARKETPLACE

The following items are available from the BBF to help develop your club.

**Diamond Development** - contains details of who you can apply to for funding.

**Diamond Construction** - Full details on how to construct a baseball diamond.

**Introduction to the Game** - briefly explains the rules and what equipment is required.

**History of the Game** - a brief history of baseball in the UK.

**How to set up a Baseball Team** - How do you go about starting your own team - ideas for fund-raising, recruiting players, details of fees, where the BBF spend the money etc.

**Teeball** - an instructional leaflet on the game of teeball.

**Baseball Information Sheet** - ideal for people new to the game, it explains what the BBF is and what we can provide.

**Parent Information** - a leaflet designed for you to hand out to your junior players parents.

**Baseball Qualifications** - gives the aims and objectives of the coaching association and details on how to attain level A, AA and AAA qualifications.

**The Sporting News Official Baseball Rules** - 1997 Edition - only £1 per copy.

**BBF Baseball Camp Handbook** - Details of how to organise a baseball camp this summer. It full of ideas and available at a cost of £3.50.

**Inflatable Baseball Bats** - You've seen Atlanta Braves chop, now here's your chance to start a new trend and do the BBF Bash! These inflatables are the same length as a normal baseball bat - 32" and are approximately twice as thick. They are printed with a union jack design. £1 each

**Practice Organisation** - get your team in order, make them train like the professionals. This step by step guide takes you through a full training session, including stretching exercises, throwing and running drills, infield and outfield drills. Invaluable at a cost of only £1.

**BBF Caps** - Let people know that you belong to the British Baseball Federation. These caps are of an exceptional quality, embroidered with the BBF logo. Available in either white with a blue peak or red with a royal blue peak at a cost of £10.

**BBF Polo Shirts** - Again an excellent way to promote the British Baseball Federation. Available in red, royal blue, or white with the BBF logo on the left breast in sizes S, M, L or XL). An excellent price of £13.

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**BBF Line-up Pads** - Each pad contains twenty quadruple sets which will last you the season. At £4.25 a pad can you afford to be without?

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If you require more information on any of the above please contact:  
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