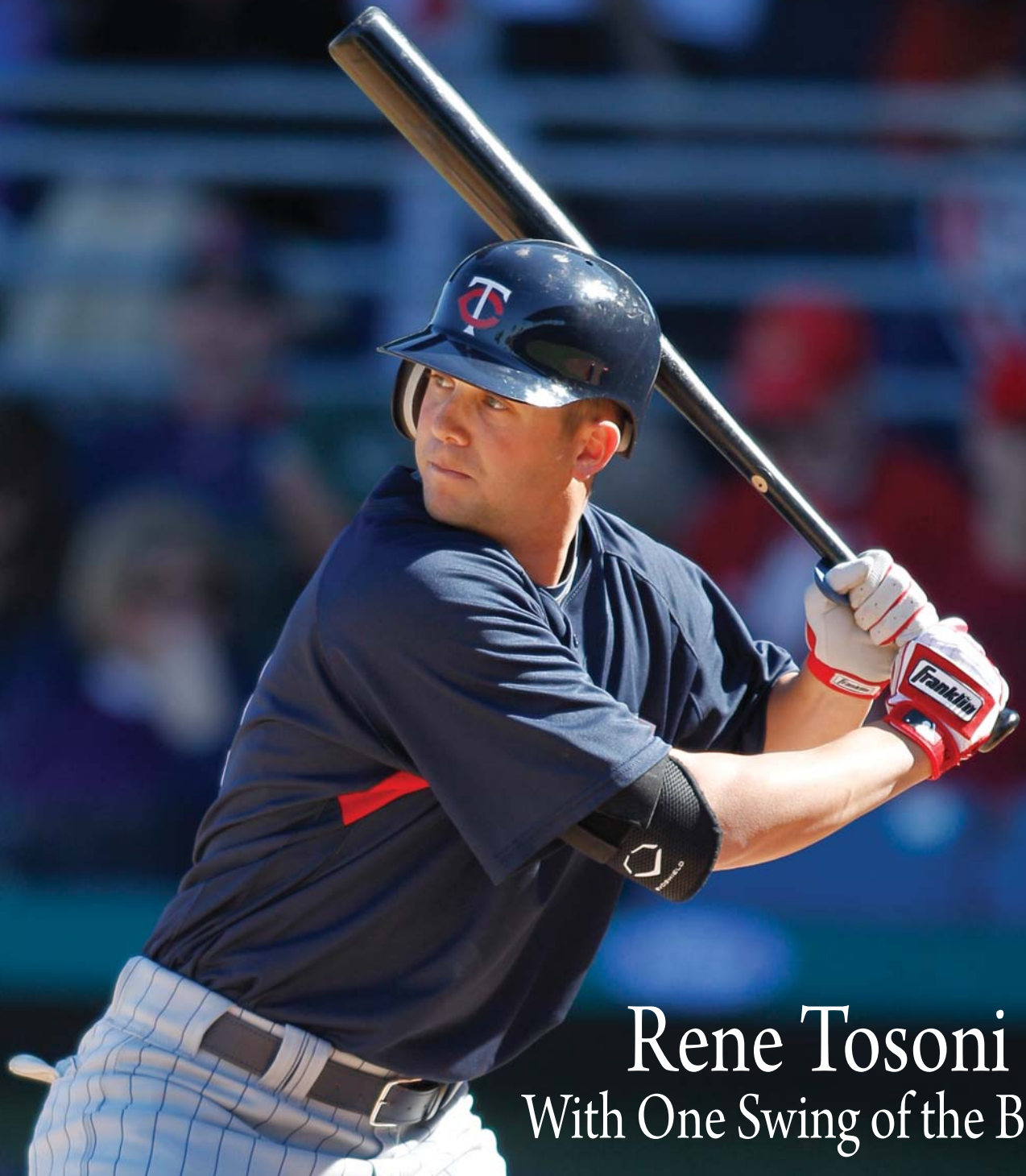


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BC Baseball

Issue 8 '10

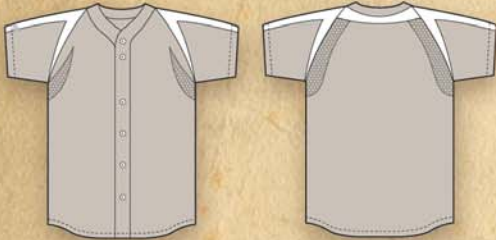


Rene Tosoni
With One Swing of the Bat....

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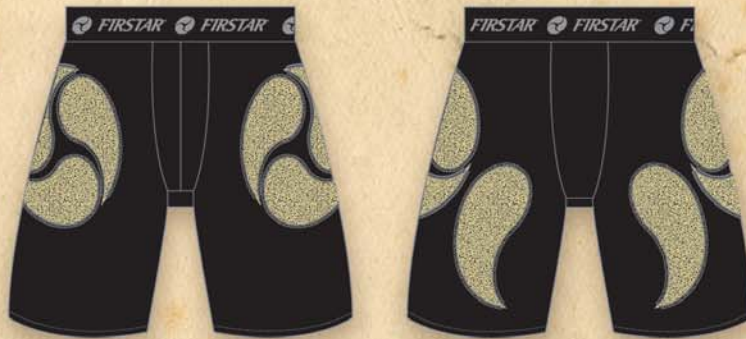


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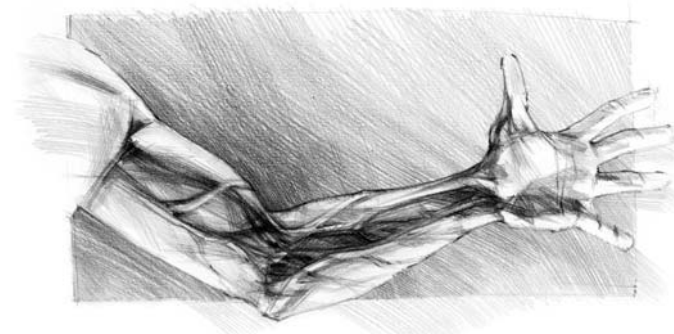
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Building Better Athletes

Jake Elder

Observing high school level baseball player's in British Columbia over the last eight years, it has become more and more apparent that the number of athletic, muscular frames on the playing field is diminishing. Instead, the player's today, as a whole, are leaner and weaker than ever, despite the majority of them wanting to increase their muscle mass and get stronger. At the high school level in British Columbia, the players don't have a chance to do so and they wonder why. Coaches and the player's themselves, need to adjust their philosophy on player development for this trend to change.

The first major flaw in the system is the fact that too much emphasis is placed on skill development and nowhere near enough on enhancing the



physiological components of the player. What is not clear to these coaches and players is that in order to improve strength and increases muscle mass, these qualities actually have to be emphasized and worked on. It does a player no good to

have all the tools from a technical side without having the body to power the tools. Balancing out the time spent working on a player's swing and strength development in a weight-room, should go hand in hand. Coaches and players constantly make statements such as, "wait till he fills out" and "when he gets a little stronger, look out." If coaches began to address how important this balance is and allotted time throughout the week for player's to work on these qualities, then the player's themselves may be able to understand how important it is to spend a little less time on skill development and a little more time developing their bodies.

Getting stronger, more powerful, more agile and faster helps to improve not only a player's technical ability, but drastically decreases their chance for injury. Every repetition of throwing a ball, taking a swing, or fielding a ground ball, places a tremendous amount of stress and trauma on the body. Being in better physical shape allows the player to handle and recover from these stresses more effectively, thus improving their durability and consistency in playing performance.

The second major flaw in the system is for the players and coaches who do try to implement forms of strength training and conditioning in their program, having little or no idea how to effectively do so. Conditioning drills become strictly long distance running with the occasional set of ten

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Building Better Athletes

Jake Elder

sprints and strength routines become no more than copying the “Derek Jeter” on-line program, or following a routine in a Muscle-Fitness magazine. Programs have to be organized, structured and tailored to the individual’s needs. That does not mean that they have to be complicated, in fact it is the exact opposite. A program that is simple and easy to monitor will allow for consistent tracking of progress and lead to measurable results. Coaches and players that do try to implement forms of physical conditioning in training may have the right intentions, but the wrong program can ruin a player’s development.



It is frustrating and tiring to constantly see baseball player’s in this province with great swings and loose arms, but no strength, no muscle mass and repeatedly getting injured. In an age where strength and conditioning has become such an integral part of college and professional sport, why not make it an integral part of high school baseball and all ages for that matter in British Columbia. The facts on this issue are un-deniable and have been proven time and time again that strength and conditioning training, combined with proper skill development, allow the athlete to reach their full potential. Too often players with great talent here fly under the radar because they cannot compete physically with the competition. Now is the time for change.



This problem can be rectified by having coaches and players seek out professionals in the field of strength and conditioning, to help implement programs that are not only organized and structured, but effective. Associations should bring in guest speakers

to address these issues and information should be available to both the coaches and players. Baseball clinics and indoor facilities around the province spend little if any time bringing in the right people to work on strength and conditioning as part of their skill development. Instead, for example, they spend all their time trying to fix a problem with a swing that may be more of a physical problem that has never been addressed, than a technical one.



Meet the Author Jake Elder

- Bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology · Univ. of Minnesota
- Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist
- Former Pro Ball Player with Arizona Diamondbacks

Email: ndbj30@hotmail.com

He's No Dummy

By Katie Ruskey

Gallaudet University to Name Baseball Field in Honour of William "Dummy" Hoy.



On Sunday, April 8, 2001 Gallaudet University dedicated its baseball field in honor of William "Dummy" Hoy who played professional baseball from 1886 to 1902 and who is credited with inventing the hand signals used by umpires.

Hoy, who was deafened at the age of 2 and attended the Ohio School for the Deaf, played for the Cincinnati Reds and the Washington Senators. He asked the umpires to raise their right arm to signify a strike and left arm to signify a ball.

In 1961, at the age of 99, Hoy threw out the ceremonial first pitch to open the World Series between the Cincinnati Reds and New York Yankees. Two months later on December 15, Hoy passed away.

Photos Courtesy: *Library of Congress Prints & Photographs • Benjamin K. Edwards Collection*

And At The Plate Is...

Imagine yourself being up to bat. Fans are screaming your name, up on their feet cheering and chanting. You're in the zone. You can't hear any of it. You've got your head in the game. You think you're tuned out to the sound because you're focused? Not in this case. You can't hear it because you're Deaf.

Few people talk now days about a "flyhawk" baseball player, William Ellsworth Hoy, nicknamed "Dummy" Hoy. "Dummy" Hoy was the first Deaf-mute baseball player to hit the major leagues. One might ask, "Would baseball be the same without his silent but strong influence?"

Deaf Doesn't Mean Dumb

William "Dummy" Hoy was born in 1862 in

Cincinnati, Ohio. At age 2, William became ill with spinal meningitis, which stripped him of his hearing. Becoming Deaf to many people would be considered a set back. But not Hoy. William had a passion for baseball. He practiced every day, pitching a ball against a brick wall, spending many hours alone. Other children in the neighborhood often wouldn't let him play because he was Deaf. Hoy finally made his breakthrough when he was discovered playing in a home town amateur league game in 1886. Hoy was recruited by several baseball teams in his younger days. However as soon as the managers realized he was Deaf, they were reluctant to have Hoy on their team. They thought that being Deaf meant he was stupid or dumb. It was actually quite the opposite.

During "Dummy" Hoy's rookie year (1888), he

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He's No Dummy

By Katie Ruskey

Continued.....page 7

topped the record books with 88 stolen bases. This far surpassed major baseball icons such as Babe Ruth who only stole 10 bases his rookie year. Hoy also holds the record for throwing three baserunners out at home plate all the way from the outfield in one game! There are only two other baseball players in history who have achieved this record. Even though Hoy set records and was well known for being a "flyhawk" (an amazing outfielder) his superstar status was not always the case.

Ball or Strike?

In the 1800's, umpires did not move their arms or use hand signals to call strikes and balls. They used only their voices by yelling the call and count. This put Hoy at a distinct disadvantage at bat. Not knowing the calls and the count, Hoy asked his coaches to raise their right hand for a strike and their left hand for a ball. But while Hoy was busy looking towards the dug out for the signal, pitchers used this to their own advantage. They started fast pitching at Hoy, leaving minimal time between pitches, ultimately leaving Hoy with several missed opportunities at bat. "Dummy's" low .219 batting average led him to become frustrated. Rethinking his strategies, he asked his coaches to stand on the third base line and give the signals. This would enable Hoy to more easily see the signal from the corner of his eye and be ready for the next pitch. This improved Hoy's batting average phenomenally. Hoy's highest average topped off at .318 in 1898.

Umpires considered the hand signs and eventually adopted the idea of hand signals for strike, ball, out, safe, and steal. These hand signals enabled players all over the field to know what was going on at the plate. In addition to players, it allowed for fans to see the calls being made from far away, too.

Your Pockets are "Outta" Here!

Have you ever wondered why modern day baseball uniforms do not have pockets? During one game, Hoy hit a fly ball deep into the outfield. The outfielder fumbled with the ball in the air before it fell directly into the bottom of his uniform pocket! The umpire called "Dummy" Hoy out. His team mates and managers protested the call, leading the umpires and players to a large dispute

of "out" or "safe." The league did however back up a call of no more chest pockets in baseball uniforms.

"Dummy" or "Smarty"

Even without the ability to hear, William "Dummy" Hoy made a loud and lasting appearance in the early years of baseball. In my book, his nickname needs a little change up. William "Smarty" Hoy looks more like a home run to me.

Editors Note:

Deaf athletes take part in a variety of sports. Here are is a list just to name a few...

1. "Dummy" Taylor- baseball (trying to copy "Dummy" Hoy)
2. Curtis Pride- baseball
3. Kenny Walker- football
4. James Burke- boxing
5. Lance Allred- basketball (currently of the Cleveland Cavaliers)
6. Terrence Parkin- Olympic swimmer medalist
7. Shelly Beattie- body building



BC's Rob Fitch Named to Little League Int. Advisory Board



BC's Rob Fitch has been a force in BC Little League for over 22 years and has been acknowledged as such being named as the Canadian Representative to the Little League International Advisory Board.

Rob started his Little League journey in North Vancouver. He coached his first Tee Ball game in 1987 and by 1995 had been elected as the North Vancouver District 5 Administrator. He was there when Lynn Valley represented Canada at the Little League World Series in 1993 lead by the first female coach in Little League history, Kathy Barnard.

He moved to Little Mountain to fill the District Administrator role with the passing of Mr. Wayne Smith. It is a position he has held until this past summer.

'It was a surprise and an honour to be invited. I accepted with great pleasure. Everyone needs to support a community program and being a part of something great. I'm a strong believer in the Little League program and continued as an advocate over 13 years after my own children finished playing ball at age 15.'

Rob is eager to participate on the Advisory Board, to review issues of concern or interest to the Little League program as a whole and offer input. 'I want to ensure my information is correct before passing along an opinion to the Board. I believe we all see children's safety as a priority and we will all do our best to ensure the Little League program remains strong.'

'It's a new challenge. Regardless of association – everyone has a right to play baseball. Win or lose it's a whole life experience. It's about lifetime friends.'

Congratulations Rob!

CHRISTIAN J. STEWART PHOTOGRAPHY

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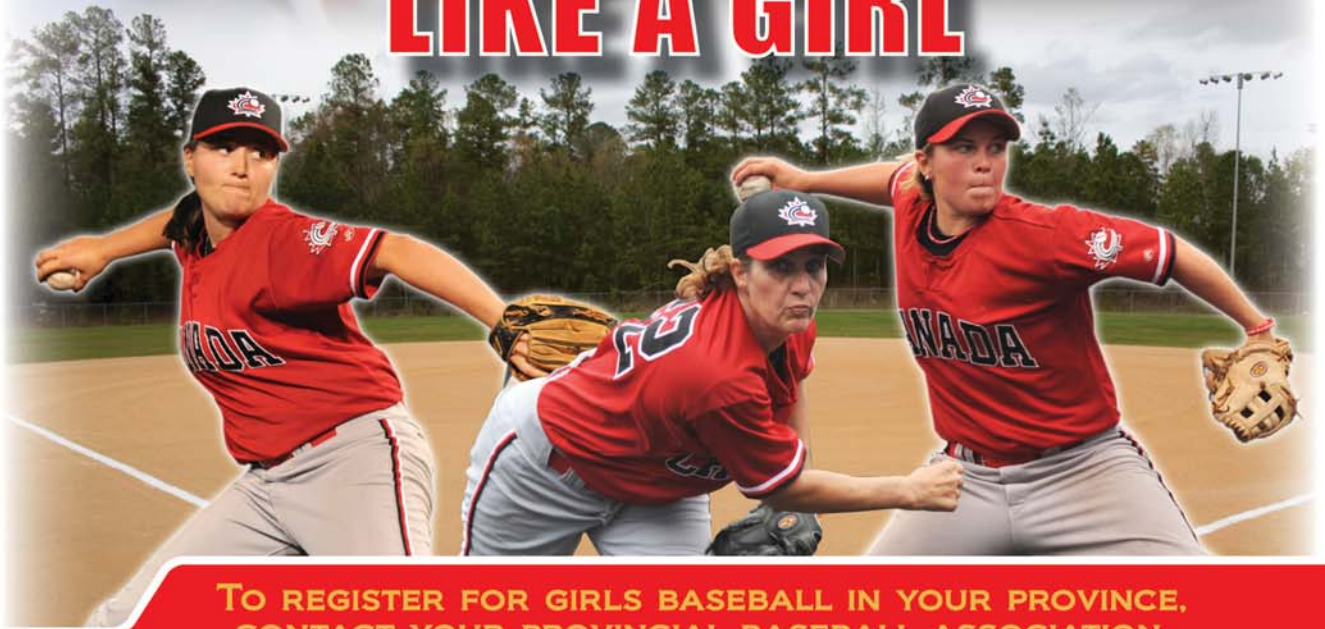


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Girls Baseball in British Columbia

Girls Baseball in B.C. started in 1999 under the guidance of the late Rob Arnold. The make up of the teams in the early years consisted mainly of softball players as there were not a lot of girls playing baseball in the late 1990's early 2000.

Jumping forward to Quebec City in 2007 the Bantam and Pee Wee teams still comprised mainly of softball players. In the fall of 2007 a Girls Committee through Baseball B.C. and with Frank Garnett, Vice-President of Baseball B.C. as the chair set up and they started to change the face of the National teams giving priority to the girls who were playing baseball over the girls from softball. Novel concept.....the game is baseball after all. In 2008 the two teams were made up of all baseball players.

In the fall of 2007 Baseball Canada cancelled the Pee Wee National Invitation tournament, thus making it harder to register and retain the girls as they now really had nothing to play for at the end of their house season. The B.C. committee was determined that they would still have a tournament with some National flair. With the help of David

Laing and Baseball B.C., teams from Quebec and Alberta attended an "Invitational" tournament in B.C. in early August 2008. Also, included in the tournament were the Okanagan Halos (Kelowna) and Team B.C. (formed with girls from Vancouver Island and the lower mainland. All teams were relatively competitive with B.C. meeting Quebec in the final game. Quebec won gold again. This pairing has long been a polite rivalry over the years. Meanwhile at the Bantam Nationals in Quebec the girls also played in the final game against Quebec with the results being B.C. taking the gold for the first time. No longer the bridesmaids.

The 2009 Nationals were held in North York, Ontario. The teams in our Pool were Nova Scotia and Ontario. The first game saw us defeat Nova Scotia 10 – 0. Our second game saw BC go down to defeat by Ontario with a score of 9 – 4. Losing the game meant the team would have to keep winning their games the following day to be able to reach the medal round and it put us in a tie breaker game with Alberta on Saturday morning which we

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**PeeWee Girls 2nd Annual Invitational Championship
Team Quebec - Gold Team BC - Silver**

Girls Baseball in British Columbia

Continued.....page 11

won 10 – 0 advancing to the next round against Ontario where the team was victorious in a hard fought 9 – 7 win assuring us a spot in the gold medal game. We then faced Quebec in a meaningless game giving the coaches the chance to play all the non-starters the majority of the game. We jumped out to an early lead and then battle back and forth until the team won 13 – 9. Sunday saw a very exciting game between Ontario and Saskatchewan. Ontario had an early 6 – 0 lead when Saskatchewan starting chipping away and finally broke the game open and finished with an 11 – 8 victory giving them the bronze medal. In the gold medal game we once again faced Quebec. Quebec started with a 2 run lead and we answered back with 2. They again put 2 runs up and we answered back with 3. In the top of the 6th Quebec put up 3 which unfortunately we failed to answer back and the game ended with a 7 – 5 victory for Quebec.



Kelowna Halos

We hold four Skills development camps (formerly ID camps) during the early summer to identify the girls who will be named to the Bantam and Pee Wee teams. This year's Pee Wee team consisted of girls from the lower mainland, Vancouver Island, the Okanagan and the Kootneys, so the interest in girls playing baseball is there. However it is an uphill battle trying to contact the girls, even locating them, we have very little or no success with the local association executives getting the information to the girls. We are however, through their registrations trying to build a data base giving us direct access to the girls. It is important to have this access so that we can notify the girls directly

with the dates and locations of the development camps and any other pertinent dates and information they may need without relying on the local associations. For not it is all done by word of mouth. In future years we would also like to resurrect our Midget program, if we can keep the girls that long.

In the fall of 2009, the committee began looking at many different ways to attract and keep the girls in the baseball program. One thought had been to form regionally based teams, combining two, three or maybe four associations together to form one team in each of the age groups. This would be done as most associations on their own do not have enough girls to form teams at any single age group. This would give us a base to start having them play games against each other. One thing to keep in mind is that most of these girls play in mixed leagues with the boys and in no way do we want to disrupt these teams. The house teams would have priority and we would look at utilizing the weekends for the girls.

One important factor that is missing at the moment is the lack of people willing to coach....or maybe just like the girls, we cannot find them. Over the years Al Forman has been instrumental in running the ID camps and coaching mainly the Pee Wee team. The last couple of years he has coached the Bantam team as well.

Ideally we would like to have an all girls league for those wishing to continue playing baseball rather than softball. Pipe dream? Maybe.....but all good things start with a dream, an idea, a thought and people willing to put in their time and effort into making that dream a reality.



Photos courtesy Garrett James

Richmond City Baseball Association to Host Bantam Girls National Baseball Championship August 26 • 30, 2010



Richmond City Baseball Association (RCBA) has been chosen to host Baseball Canada's Bantam Girls National Baseball Championship, August 26 • 30, 2010.

The tournament, featuring Provincial championship teams from across Canada, will be played at Richmond's Brighthouse Park. Baseball Canada's Bantam Division includes girls 16 and under.

"RCBA is honoured to be chosen to host this prestigious tournament showcasing such talented players." says RCBA president, Pat Weatherill. "Baseball fans from around Metro Vancouver are in for a treat as we look forward to some great baseball!"

The high level of competition at past Baseball Canada tournaments, including 2009's Bantam

Girls Tournament in Toronto, ON, attracted large crowds.

"Of course an event like this can only happen with the involvement of dedicated volunteers and community sponsors. Stay tuned for more information about these opportunities," added Weatherill.

Formed in 2008, RCBA is a merger of the former Richmond and West Richmond Baseball Associations. A member of BC Minor Baseball, RCBA focuses on developing youth baseball skills and sportsmanship in a fun, inclusive learning environment.

Media Contacts:

Patrick Weatherill • President

Richmond City Baseball Association

Phone: 604 • 813 • 4711

Email: pess.rmd@shaw.ca

Dave Brenbaum • Vice-President

Richmond City Baseball Association

Phone: 604 • 219 • 1397

Email: dberenbaum@shaw.ca

For more information about volunteer or sponsorship opportunities, contact:

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Women's Baseball Taking Strides into the Future

On Sunday May 3, 2009 women's sports took another step forward, as the first baseball game in over 100 years played entirely by college-eligible women student-athletes, assembled from over ten New England colleges and universities, was held at Springfield College in Springfield, MA.

Historians believed it to be the first all-women's college baseball game since a game between Georgia College and Alabama College in March of 1900.

Dubbed "The Friendship Game," over 25 players from at least 12 New England colleges...Salem State College, Stonehill, Bates, MIT, Central Connecticut State University, Boston University, Tufts, Brown, Daniel Webster, University of Massachusetts, the University of New Haven and Springfield College participated.

The game was played on a regulation diamond, followed all NCAA baseball rules, and lasted seven innings.

The game was organized by Justine Siegal, who serves as associate head coach with Springfield College's junior varsity men's team and is the only female coach in collegiate baseball. Siegal has long term vision with "The Friendship Game" being the first step of many to come.

In a newspaper article written by Dick Baker, Siegal talked about her vision.

"My goal is to start college baseball for women," she said.

Siegal, 34, said she's been playing baseball for nearly 30 years. She runs an organization called "Baseball for All", and has played and coached baseball on five continents.

"We have 250,000 girls playing baseball in this country alone, and we want to give them a place to keep playing. Baseball is a game for all." Siegal said. "Most of them quit because they don't have a place to play, not because they don't want to play anymore."

Siegal believes 'given the opportunity, many young women would continue playing recreationally and competitively in high school and as adults, not just in the United States, but around the world.'

The short-term goal would be for schools regionally to start a club program, which Springfield College is in the process of doing, and then eventually go varsity.

One of the goals of the game was to inspire players to take that idea back to their schools. Colleges represented included Tufts, Salem State, Boston University, the University of New Haven, Daniel Webster, UMass, Mount Ida, Brown, and SC.

Continued.....page 15



Baseball Canada Black Team • Gold Medal
Women's 2009 International Invitational

Women's Baseball Taking Strides into the Future

Continued.....page 14

Currently, over 30 nations worldwide offer some level of baseball for women in addition to the United States and include Asia, Oceania, Africa, North, South and Central America and parts of Europe. The number of girls and women playing baseball at some level globally is thought to be close to 500,000, with interest growing every year.

In 2009 Sandra Monteiro of Portugal became the first female president of a baseball federation when she was elected as head of the Portuguese Baseball Federation.

March '09, 16-year-old Eri Yoshida became the first woman to appear in a Japanese professional game, striking out the first batter she faced, and touching off a storm of interest in girls baseball in Japan, where the game is already offered on the high school and collegiate levels.

Korea announced the government was putting more funds into growing its baseball programs for both boys and girls, and no less than eight nations placed bids to host the 2010 Women's Baseball World Cup.

In Bayonne, New Jersey, 12-year-old Mackenzie Brown threw a perfect game...the first by a girl in Little League...and received national attention in the United States.

In August '09 at the Little League World BC's own Katie Reyes (Hastings Community LL) became the first female ballplayer to drive in the winning score of a LLWS game. Katie is the 14th female player to play in the Little League World Series.

At the Women's International Invitational Series in Granby, QC July 16 – 19, 2009, Baseball Canada walked away gold and silver. Baseball Canada divided their women's national team prospects into Teams Black and Red and easily crushed the competition from Japan and the United States.

Canada Black came out on top against Canada Red in the gold medal game.

This year saw the first ever Women's baseball rankings released by the International Baseball Federation (IBAF).

The initial Women's World Rankings are based solely upon results from past IBAF Baseball World Cups. While the logic behind the women's rankings is similar to that of the men's - only IBAF sanctioned or recognised tournaments featuring a lineup exclusively of national teams (no club teams or semi-professional teams) will be considered - one main difference is that they will be inclusive of the three most recent IBAF

Continued.....page 16



Baseball Canada Red Team • Silver Medal
Women's 2009 International Invitational

Women's Baseball Taking Strides into the Future

Women's Baseball World Cups (men's include two at the most). Points for these events will be weighed based on the most recent World Cup finishes, with the 2008 World Cup receiving the most points, 2006 the next most and 2004 the least.

The complete IBAF Women's World Rankings are listed below:

1. Japan (180.00)
2. United States (160.00)
3. Canada (140.00)
4. Australia (100.00)
5. Chinese Taipei (80.00)
6. Korea (30.00)
7. Hong Kong (23.40)
8. Cuba (20.10)
9. India (20.00)

Baseball Canada has sanctioned the development of women's baseball and has a national selection

process for the women's Team Canada. The Canadian Women's National Team participated in the 2001, 2002 and 2004 Women's World Series and the 2004 and 2006 Women's World Cups.

Canada won the Bronze Medals in the 2004 and 2006 Women's World Cups and took the Silver Medal in 2008.

At the 2009 Baseball Canada's Invitational Women's Tournament, Baseball Canada divided their women's national team prospects into Teams Black and Red. The Canadian teams easily crushed the competition from Japan and the United States in tournament play to meet in the Championship game.

Here in BC, the Bantam Girls Select Teams have been strong, taking gold against Quebec in the 2008 Nationals. In 2009 BC once again faced off against Quebec in the final, this time taking home the silver.

The 2010 Senior Women's Invitational will be held in North York, Ontario.

Photos courtesy Baseball Canada

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North Langley Bombers Team won their first ever at the Cal Ripken Major/70' World Series down in Aberdeen, Maryland August 13 – 23 '09.



The team had a great time and played twice on Cal Sr's Yard (see 2nd photo). This field is a mini replica of Camden Yards in Baltimore, Maryland (Home of the Baltimore Orioles). This division plays on 70' base paths and allows lead offs, pick offs and running to 1st on a dropped 3rd strike... Real baseball for 12 year olds!

The facility was absolutely amazing. The big brick building was our hotel and it had baseball memorabilia in all the rooms and in the front lobby. The opening ceremonies had a skills competition and fireworks. Cal Ripken met with each team prior to their first game and gave them a little talk and signed autographs.

The international pool included Australia, Canada, Dominican Republic, Japan, Korea and Mexico. Based on chatting with the other teams (the best we could) what we understand is that Canada was a club team that went down but all of these teams are truly international teams.

For example, Australia held tryouts all across the country and of 100 kids from Perth that tried out, 2 made the team! Needless to say, the competition was very impressive! Some teams did have some

smaller players but on average the international players were very large and had no trouble getting home runs that cleared the 265 foot fence by a country mile! But despite the obvious size and strength differences Canadian defense did very well and our off speed pitchers actually gave their offense some difficulty at times. Our best game was against Australia where we finished with 3 vs. their 8 runs. Even our game

against Japan which on paper sounds like a blowout (0-15) was actually a very good game. We celebrated the fact that they did not have a monster inning that we had trouble getting out of and our runners were on base but just couldn't quite get home!

It was a fantastic event just to be able to watch, people from all over the area were there as spectators. The complex had 5 beautiful playing fields (all replicas of their MLB twins, Yankee, Memorial, Fenway, Camden & Wrigley) plus there were 4 practice fields and a batting cage system!!!!

Participating in this event was truly a great achievement for the team. It takes great courage to face international teams, get the outs and compete to the best of your ability against players that appear to be able to eat you for breakfast :) and have a great time doing it.



Meet the North Langley Bombers!

Coaches: Rob Hayes • Andrew McGregor • Phil De Bulnes

Pitchers: Kyle Starinieri & Co...including Drey • Trevor A • Ethan • Calvin • Bryce

Catcher: Logan Smith • Sean Donnelly

1st Base: Bryce Derton • Kyle Starinieri

2nd Base: Ethan Kano • McGregor

Short Stop: Trevor Andrews

3rd Base: Dalton Hayes • Cory Brown

Center Field: Trevor Whiton

Left Field: Drey Bombardier • Bailey Parsons

Right Field: Calvin Stewart

Injured Player: Jadon Cohee (arm)



For a complete listing of
2010 Babe Ruth
Provincial • Regional • World Series Tournaments

www.bcbaberuth.com



Around the Horn.....

A Baseball BC Update • Spring 2010

Despite enormous cuts to the provincial government funding of our sport during the last year, Baseball BC is very much looking forward to the 2010 season.

While it has certainly been difficult for everyone involved in our sport to adjust and manage the financial issues brought forward by the reduction in Direct Access Gaming Grants, it is the promise of another summer that brings a smile to the faces of our game.

2010 is shaping up to be a banner year for the membership of Baseball BC with a couple of national events scheduled to take place in our province this year.

The 2010 Baseball Canada Bantam Girls National Championship is scheduled to take place in Richmond between August 25th and August 29th at Brighthouse Park. The host association, Richmond City Baseball, led by President Pat Weatherill, is working tremendously hard to make this 2010 Girls Event one for the ages for both participants and fans from across Canada.

Please visit: Richmond City Baseball website at www.rcba.goalline.ca or Baseball Canada Championship website: www.baseball.ca/bantamgirls.

Baseball BC is also preparing to host the Baseball Canada family at the annual Fall Convention this coming November 4th through to November 7th at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel in Richmond. The weekend meetings will bring the baseball people from across the land together to attend meetings, participate in workshops and celebrate our game at the Baseball Canada / Baseball BC Awards banquet on the Saturday night. Visit the Baseball BC webpage at www.baseball.bc.ca



throughout the summer for updates on the Baseball Canada convention.

While we look forward to the national stage coming to BC, we would be remiss in not talking about our in province programming for the 2010 season...

Baseball BC Coaching Opportunities:

Baseball BC is now accepting applications for posting with our High performance program for the 2010 season. Visit www.baseball.bc.ca for links to the application form.

High Performance: The Baseball BC High Performance program is beginning to take shape for the 2010 season as Regional ID sessions, the Provincial Camp, The Baseball Canada Cup and the Pacific Northwest Championships are all being planned for. Details are being posted on our webpage at www.baseball.bc.ca as they are finalized.

Girls Baseball: The Baseball BC Girls Committee is very excited about the fact BC will play host to the National Championships this August. It will allow us to enter both the Provincial Team along with the Host team, ensuring we are able to have more of our female athletes participate at this level of play. Plans are also under way to schedule and host Girls Identification and Skill Development sessions around the province. Details are being posted on our webpage at www.baseball.bc.ca as they are finalized.

Rally Cap: The Baseball Canada initiation program is again being offered in communities across BC and a record number of local associations are offering this program to their youngest athletes. Feedback from associations like Ridge Meadows Minor Baseball, who have adopted the program, is tremendous and quotes like "it is the best thing we have ever done for that age group" are starting to be shared. Ridge Meadows can also claim a huge registration increase from the implementation of this program. Details are available at www.baseball.bc.ca/rallycap.

Winterball: Winterball Kits are now in 79 Elementary Schools across the province for the 2010 school year and to date we can claim that over 300 separate schools in BC have been given a Kits for their students. Winterball is a great way for schools to introduce children to the game of Base-

Continued.....page 19

Around the Horn.....

A Baseball BC Update • Spring 2010

Continued.....page 18

-ball and comes complete with lesson plans for the teachers. For more information on this program please visit our webpage:

www.baseball.bc.ca/winterball .

NCCP: The 2010 season is now upon us and the Coach Certification is in full swing. Both Regional and Provincial Coach Modules are being scheduled throughout the province in conjunction with local associations. For more detail on the NCCP, please visit our webpage:

www.baseball.bc.ca/nccp .

BC Games: The BC Summer Games are scheduled to occur in July in Langley and Baseball BC is in the process of naming Coaches and Zone Reps for this year's event. The 15U tournament is made up of Zone All Star teams from around BC. More details on tryouts will be posted as they are finalized on our webpage at www.baseball.bc.ca .

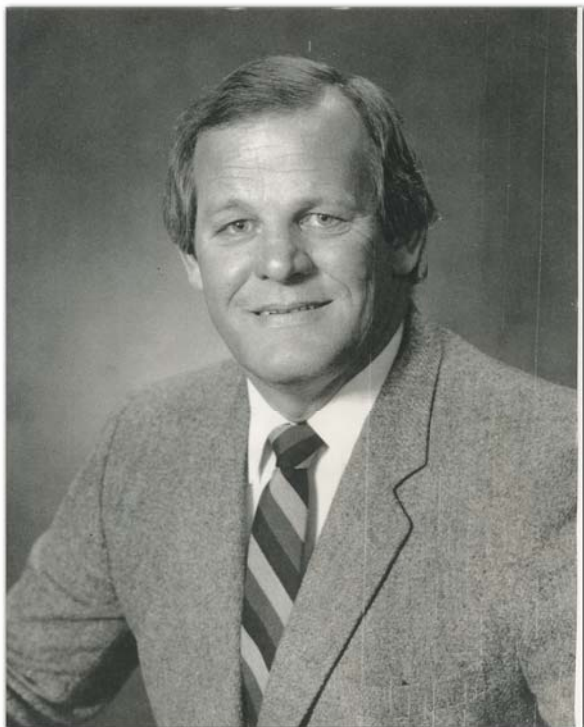
Summer Camps: Baseball BC will again partner with UBC Baseball and the company Last Rapps Baseball to offer Summer Camps to communities across the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. The schedule is just being finalized and will be posted on our webpage:

www.baseball.bc.ca/camps shortly.

Baseball BC is the recognized Provincial Sport Organization for the sport of Baseball in the province and currently holds a membership of over 33,000 people. Member Organizations are BC Minor Baseball, Little League BC, Babe Ruth BC, BC Premier Baseball Association, Junior Baseball Association of BC, BC Senior Baseball Association and the BC Baseball Umpires Association. A dedicated and committed Board oversees the operation of the association and our offices are currently in the City of Surrey. For further information on any of our programs or services, please visit our webpage at www.baseball.bc.ca or contact executive director David Laing at 604-586-3312.

My Father and His Passion for Sports

A true story 35 years ago from Thunder Bay by Dave Roulston



Ken Roulston

My father impressed in me and my siblings a love for sport, whether it was playing catch in the front yard, taking us to the hockey game, building a backyard rink, or simply knocking off a Sunday afternoon in the living room watching football.

Like some fathers, he could sometimes approach our athletic endeavors a little too critically.

When I was six or seven or thereabouts he made me switch from throwing a baseball left handed to right handed. Shortly thereafter my mother asked him why he would do such a thing and he earnestly replied, 'Lefty's can't turn a double play.'

In recent years there has been immense controversy of drugs in sports and records being broken and the legitimacy of these records; baseball and its players the infamous frontrunners on this topic.

This topic reminded me of an event that happened in our living room in Thunder Bay Ontario in 1974.

My Father and His Passion for Sports

A true story 35 years ago from Thunder Bay by Dave Roulston

Continued.....page 19

Hammering Hank Aaron needed one more home run to eclipse Babe Ruth's record of 714. The American network had a special television broadcast to show the Atlanta Braves game and by chance a historic moment. My father had big plans for this night.

To give framework to the kind of sports fan my father was, his one room rural schoolhouse allowed him to come to school with a radio during World Series time.

So watching this was going to be ultimate nirvana for a lifelong sports fan, and being the wonderful father he was he wanted me to share in this moment. In fact he encouraged me to invite my friends, which I did.

I can remember him sitting in his Lazyboy with his Diet Pepsi, smoking his Kool cigarettes hardly able to contain his excitement. This was going to be an event to remember.

I, on the other hand, apparently had other plans; I suppose I was acting smart to impress my other 7-8 year old friends who had gathered in the living room.

You see, my friends and I had occasionally done this unauthorized mimicry of my father while he watched sports.

He would take a sip of his Diet Pepsi, we would feign taking a sip of an imaginary pop. He would take a drag on his cigarette, us three little kids pretend to take a drag on a cigarette, our theatrics practiced and complete with furrowed brow on inhale. Of course in retrospect, I can see how this would be totally unnerving for my father. This would lead to him looking over and saying, 'Drop it son.' to which was my cue to pretend to pick something up and drop it; my friends would snort in suppressed laughter. On this particular

occasion I had done it one too many times and was sent to my room.

Sometime later my father came to the room and said, 'C'mon son, Hank Aaron's coming up to bat.'

Midway through his invitation for me to come back I hear squeaky little voices squealing, 'He did it! He did it... he hit a home run... Hank Aaron did it!!' My father and I standing face to face in the bedroom, in a split second I saw all the stages of grief flash through this big Irishman's eyes. He raced off to the living room, I followed; my friends were dancing below a big cloud of cigarette smoke that clung to our living room ceiling. On the television, Hank Aaron was fighting through a sea of frenzied fans, trying to make his way to home plate and history.

In today's generation, clouds of cigarette smoke generally do not cling to living room ceilings across the country, but clouds do dog the credibility of home run records being broken.

I don't care about that, but I do hope when home run records are broken in the future the man of the day takes a mighty swing and hits it far and as close to heaven as possible so that those who missed the last one get a close look.

Dave Roulston spent two years as an Assistant Coach for WHL Prince George Cougars and spent the summer working at the Shaughnessy Golf Club in Vancouver.

He caught as many Vancouver Canadians games as he could at Nat Bailey.

He also spent a year with the now defunct Calgary Cannons of the Pacific Coast League when owned by the Parker family.

'I love baseball and know BC is the hotbed and wish you continued success!.'

Sincerely, Dave Roulston



'Douglas College Offers 'New' Coaching Degree!



Douglas College Sport Science Department now offers a 4-year degree, Bachelor of Physical Education and Coaching (BPEC) in New Westminster and Coquitlam B.C.

The degree, which began in 2007, trains students in Kinesiology, Physical Education, and Coaching in preparation for a career in school or community Coaching and Physical Education teaching in schools. The degree emphasis is on developing reflective practitioners with very strong coaching and teaching methodologies.

Highlights of the Douglas College Bachelor of Physical Education & Coaching Degree:

- Fieldwork placements allow for professional development in "real world" settings and networking in the community. 120 hours of Fieldwork, at approved mentor school/community sites, will be spread throughout every semester of the degree program, requiring students to develop their leadership skills while observing, assisting, leading in sport training/competitions, physical education classes and classroom experiences.
- Leadership skills maximized through a minimum of 6 skill analysis activity courses are required. The activity courses will include a focus on delivery, planning and assessment which will develop leadership skills within BPEC students and to create a positive environment for the athletes they are working with.
- Each BPEC graduate will complete a 'Certification Profile' by completing selected community and industry certifications that are integrated within the academic degree. Students are also required to begin development of their community networks by attending local and/or provincial conferences.
- Sport and education 'themes' have been integrated into all degree courses to allow for

current, up-to-date training on the critical issues that exist for today's children in the school system, i.e.: diversity, special education, gender equity, leadership, nutrition, teaching & learning, sport-specific technologies, critical thinking, personal and social responsibility and creating an optimal sport experience.

Student Testimonial:

BPEC student Bruce Biro. Originally from Deep Bay, BC on Vancouver Island is in his 2nd year of the BPEC program (Elementary Stream) and plays on the Douglas College Royals Baseball Team as an Outfielder, with this being his second year on the team. Last year Bruce successfully completed his two Fieldwork placements with Teacher Scott McComb at Forsyth Road Elementary and this year he is working as an assistant coach with mentor Alex Klenman and the Fraser Valley Chiefs Baseball Team. Bruce also worked during the summer as an instructor and coach at Big League Experience Baseball Camp in Oliver, BC. Bruce comments on his enjoyment of BPEC Faculty's challenge to student to find practical applications of the sport science theory into their coaching and teaching. "In the BPEC program, everything is hands on from in class assignments, lab activities, interactive group work and discussions and in the community with our Fieldwork. Everything we learn at Douglas College can be directly applied to our community Fieldwork."

For Information:

www.douglas.bc.ca

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Sliding Home

When Posting your Face are You Closing the Book on your Future?

Daryl Meyers

application comment laws consent data personal responsible collect permission

Facebook, My Space, YouTube, MMS, SMS, email, texting, sexting, and the list goes on. Technology and social networking by youth is the one of the fastest growing industries as more than 55 % of youth, aged 12-17 have profiles posted on social networking sites (SNS) and over 50% carry cell phones. Stats also report that the average teen sends and receives over 1742 texts a month. Teens are attracted to technology as they provide a way for them to be accepted, respected, included and connected. It allows teens to be social in the privacy of their own home and share their life with their friends. So where's the problem in that? When does the sending and sharing of photos, messages, and the posts from the weekend party go from the privacy of the home to being news for the world to see? When does posting your face close the book on your future?

Technology in today's world is a playground without parental supervision. Teens are able to have hundreds of friends who their parents have never met. They read things, watch things and talk about things like never before. One of the main attractions of cell phones, email and SNS is building a friends list and of course the more you have the better. Most of the people on these lists are not really friends at all and many have never met half of the people they have listed as friends. So where's the problem in that? Suddenly, that "friend's only" stuff is open to the public. Teens begin to treat the people on their friends' list just like their normal friends. They chat to them, show them photos, share details of their lives... all the things friends do with each other. The result is they become too comfortable. Before you know it they send text messages or emails with derogatory comments about someone, they take that risqué photo post it on their site, send it via cell phone, or they are tagged in an activity that they would not want their parents to see.

Although technology doesn't create new behaviours it may certainly exploit them. The days of calling someone on the phone and telling them what you really think is a thing of the past. Now, with the aid of technology, we can just text messages, post on a wall, email or use some other form of communication to get our point across. The difference between the phone call and the technology driven message is that one is private. People, especially teens, forget that everything they post online or sent as a text message is like a traveling postcard. There is nothing about social networking that is private. Bullying and harassment on the internet and with cell phones has increased dramatically and while saying something in person is

hard to prove, saying something via technology always leaves a trail.

What happens when shared information becomes that postcard? Not only are teens using technology to connect and seek out information but adults are using it as well. This would include employers, coaches, recruiters and others whose first step in finding out what a potential student/athlete/employee might be like, is to "Google" , "Facebook" or "MySpace" them. With the click of a mouse photos and post about the potential candidate are instantly on the screen. With a bit more digging other personal information can be obtained. What happens when the text you send dissing the coach, finds it way to their cell phone? What about that risqué photo sent to your boyfriend? What about the pictures of the beer bong party? What about the picture of you sharing some pot with friends? Michael Phelps was suspended for 3 months and lost millions of dollars of endorsements when his bong smoking cell phone picture showed up on the internet. Numerous students and athletes have lost their scholarships or potential scholarship opportunities resulting from sending inappropriate texts or posting, what to them, were harmless pictures online. Videos posted on YouTube have led police, schools and others to lay charges and suspend students for outlandish activities. Fancy being sued for libel? How about initiating a police inquiry or an investigation by the board of your educational establishment? It could happen, if you say or post the wrong things. Teens need to take a step back and think about just what they're posting, texting, sexting or filming. It'll probably be too late for a number of people, and it'll take a lot more 'victims' before most users actually start heeding these warnings. The hard facts are technology is not going away and teens will gravitate towards it more and more as it consumes their lives. So talk to your teens about safe and appropriate use in order to keep the book on their future wide open. OMG PIR BRB TTYL BFF.

Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another.
Napoleon Hill

Daryl Meyers has a passion for working with children, youth and families and assists them in discovering their potential.

Phone: 250.809.4202 Email: dragonflypond@shaw.ca

An Umpire's Umpire

Penny Berkenstock



The music is lively and a little too loud but it hints of the energy about to arrive on the field.

Fabian Poulin waits in the umpire's den as the white jerseys of the home team and the dark of the visitors warm up catches and throws nonchalantly getting out the pre-game fitters at Ser-auxman Stadium in

Nanaimo. The umpires feeling the same excitement compose their thoughts away from the crowd until the time comes for them to step out on the field which signals the game is about to begin.

The two standing strong at the plate, mirror each other in their professional garb, awaiting the coaches deposit of line-up cards. Then a quick conference to lay down any ground rules that are best ironed out at the plate before the play begins.

The home team takes the field and the balls fly from hand to glove. Base umpire takes his position in the field near first base while Fabian remains near the screen and the pitcher throws moderate heat to the plate. He slips into position even before the batter arrives to practice following the line of the ball into the glove.

"Ball in!" Is the call and it is "show time!"

The trick in this show is to let the teams be the stars on the stage and even though he is in every play of the game, fade into the scenery without too many ripples. After 28 years on the job, this level 5, international umpire has a good handle on the process by which he has control of the game like a river's silent under current - not really being seen but his actions can make a difference in the direction the water takes. He flows along quietly, always at the ready, until a particular bend in the flow releases his strength to maintain an orderly path.

The heat of the 25-degree day causes him to sweat but his sturdy, confident, stance depicts him cool as a cucumber.

The batter watches the pitch into the glove and the

call of strike three chases him back to the dugout to find his glove as the inning changes sides. Fabian reaches for the bottle of Gatorade, which will slow the degree of dehydration and keep him sharp.

The next play brings a questionable call by the base ump at first. The crowd groans its disagreement. Control isn't easy when the fans show doubt. The mental game is most difficult if he waivers. He remains firm in his convictions and calls the play as unbiased as an imperfect human can remain while lending support to his partner.

When asked about mistakes, Fabian is the first to admit he has made a few but when it happens, you must acknowledge imperfection, forget about it and move on. If you keep thinking about it you will make more. Never try to cover up your mistake by making a call to even it up.

A piece of advice Fabian offers to all up and coming umpires that would like to improve is to find a mentor, (someone that you can work with) go out to all the clinics and watch the umpires doing higher calibre games. When you are umpiring if you know you did your best you will be able to walk away with your head up.

The game can be broken by an attitude of a team that feels your abilities are less than adequate. However, last game when they were winning they thought you were fabulous! How quickly the tone can change. When the umpire makes a mistake it is like he is under a microscope and over a loud speaker. He has a whole stadium full of judges who are quick to yell, should the call not be to their liking. It is a perplexing question to ask why we applaud the player's good efforts and console their shortcomings and yet boo the umpire's mistakes?

The role of the umpire is to keep the play fair for both teams. It would be a much easier job if the teams weren't apt to try and gain an unfair advantage.

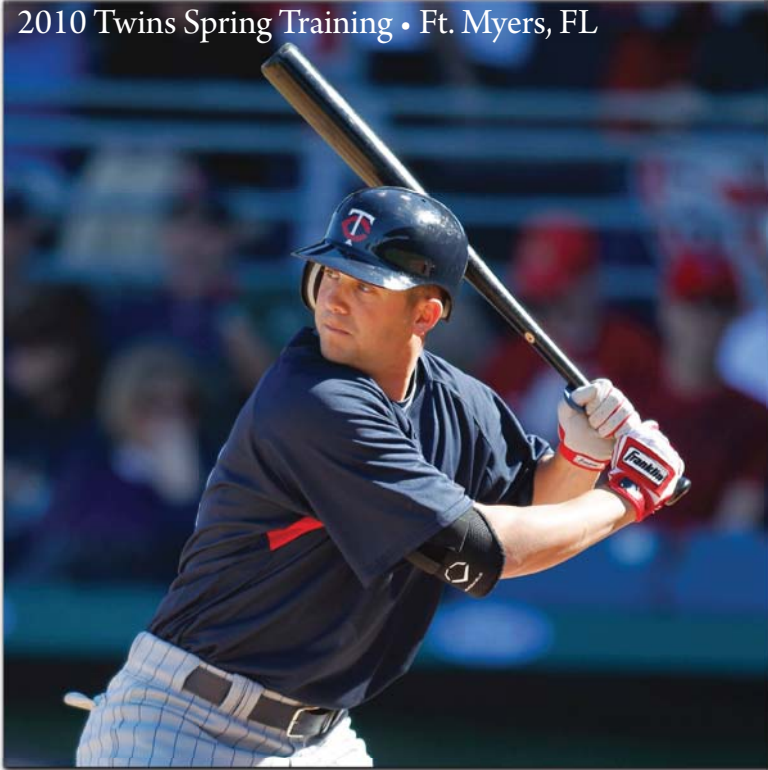
It takes a strong personality to stand up to the abuse dished up by many and still remain firm in your conviction. When asked "Does facing the abuse get any easier?" Fabian simply replies "No!"

So then, what has kept him umpiring all these years in spite of the negative? Fabian will tell you that the best part is to do a game well and at the end have both teams congratulate you. He loves the game and has enjoyed traveling to 8 national tournaments and countless provincials to have what he calls "the best seat in the house"!

Rene Tosoni

With One Swing of the Bat...

2010 Twins Spring Training • Ft. Myers, FL



Game and it wound up being shortened to seven innings just to get it in. Tosoni and fellow Canadians Brett Lawrie of the Milwaukee Brewers, Nick Weglarz of the Cleveland Indians and Tyson Gillies, then of the Seattle Mariners but now with the Philadelphia Phillies after the Cliff Lee trade, spent the rain delay playing cards and watching golf.

When the game did start, he was on the bench, itching to get a chance to play.

“In the top of the seventh, there were two out and a runner on second and Lincoln was throwing 94 or 95 (miles per hour),” recalls the Toronto-born but Port Coquitlam-raised Tosoni.

Anxious for some action, the former Coquitlam Red jumped up when sent to pinch hit. “Coach said, ‘Go cash in that run,’” he says.

Rene Tosoni’s baseball career didn’t change in one swing of the bat, it just seems that way to some.

Fact is, the Minnesota Twins prospect was having a nice 2009 season with the double-A New Britain Rock Cats of the Eastern League when the organization sent him to the Futures Game at Busch Stadium in St. Louis as part of all-star festivities.

That’s where he broke a 5-5 tie in the top of the seventh inning with an RBI double off Pittsburgh Pirates prospect Brad Lincoln sending the World squad to a 7-5 victory.

Tosoni was named game MVP and baseball people took note of the player that was a 36th-round pick out of Chipola College in 2005.

“Definitely,” says the 23-year-old on if he’s noticed a bit more notoriety. “I was not really a nobody but now more people know of me.”

The moment almost didn’t happen in the first place. Rain threatened to wash out the Futures

Tosoni says he loves first-pitch fastballs but decided to take one and watched a meaty heater split the plate. Fortunately, he got another fastball on the inner half and lined it off the first baseman’s glove to score the run. He went to right field after but didn’t see any plays.

“Being out there on the field was crazy,” he says. “There were so many structures around like the big (Gateway) Arch.”

Tosoni finished up with New Britain hitting .271 with 15 home runs and 71 RBI. That production, and his showing in the Futures Game, got him an invite to the exclusive Arizona Fall League where teams send many of their top minor leaguers. Suiing up for the Mesa Solar Sox, Tosoni was used as a leadoff man which he didn’t particularly enjoy.

“Not very well,” says the 6-foot, 195-pounder, assessing his fall performance. “I was leading off every game and I’m not a leadoff hitter. I usually hit

Continued.....page 25

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third with New Britain, I like hitting two or three, six or seven. Those are comfortable spots.”

His first at bat produced a home run but he wound up with a .218 average.

But there was more good news in store in '09 in the form of a early Christmas present from the Twins. Going through paperwork on Christmas Eve, Tosoni's girlfriend's mom noticed a sheet saying he needed to book a first-class ticket to spring training. That meant just one thing: he was getting the invite to big league camp.

In order to get ready, Tosoni moved to Arizona in early January and stayed with another lefty Canadian slugger and Premier Baseball League product – none other than 2006 American League MVP Justin Morneau. He says the North Delta Blue Jays grad makes hitting look easy.

“It just seems like everything is so simple. He says, ‘Don't think too much and don't try to do too much.’ He has no special approach.”

Now at Twins camp in Fort Myers, Tosoni's locker is next to Joe Mauer's, Morneau's and Jim Thome's. He's now seeing a lot of the organization's coaches and instructors for the first time since the Futures Game.

“I haven't seen many people till now,” he says. “They've all congratulated me, said they always thought highly of me. I guess the Twins like me.”

Seems a safe assumption.



2010 Twins Spring Training • Ft. Myers, FL

Rene Tosoni Photos courtesy Bruce Kluckhohn All rights reserved

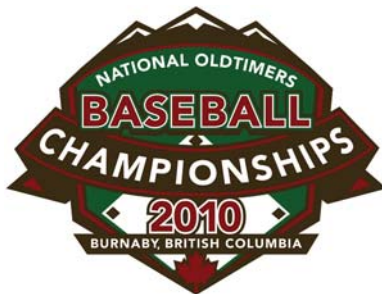
Play Ball!

BC Baseball

www.playballbc.com

2010 Canadian Oldtimers Baseball Nationals Come to BC

The Metro Vancouver Organizing Committee along with Tourism Burnaby are very excited to present the Canadian National Oldtimers Baseball Federation's (CNOBF) 18th annual tournament over the B.C. Day long weekend in 2010.



have a pretty good idea of where we want to be and I think we'll be OK," said LMBA commissioner Dan Taylor, who is a member of the four-person planning committee including PoCo men's league's Mike Willcox, Tourism Burnaby's Mike Romas and Howie Snyder that put the successful bid together.

Beginning with the opening ceremonies on Friday, July 30, 2010 through to the championship games in the afternoon of Monday, August 2, teams from all over Canada will be competing for national championship status at parks throughout the Metro Vancouver area.

This is the first time in its history, the CNOBF tournament will be hosted in the province of British Columbia.

"I am glad to see B.C. in the fold and they are to be commended for stepping forth to host next year's event," said National Federation President Paul Carruthers in a press release.

"Having been to four Canadian tournaments, I

Over six hundred ball players will descend on baseball fields in the Lower Mainland. We are expecting a total of forty teams to participate in the three different age groupings resulting in Canadian champions for players 35 and over, 44 and over and 50 and over. Games will be played throughout Metro Vancouver on baseball fields in Burnaby, New Westminster, Surrey and the Tri-cities area.

If you would like to get involved through sponsorship or with volunteer positions, contact:

Dan Taylor: Imba@telus.net

Howie Snyder: howie.snyder@burnaby.bc

www.cnobf2010.com



**2009 MSBL World Series Champions • Team BC
35 & Over • Mountain Division**

Photo Philana Wan

Marty Lehn

Daniel Chalcraft

Even when the baseball season is over and the kids have put away their gloves, bats, and cleats for the winter, Western Canadian scout for the Milwaukee Brewers Marty Lehn is always focused on baseball.

At the age of 13, baseball became more than just a hobby for Marty Lehn when a coach told him about a Major League Baseball camp in Oliver and he was introduced to Dale Parker, former owner of the Okanagan Major League Baseball camp, “[he] took me under his wing and life in the baseball world began” said Lehn. Since that time, whether it was playing baseball with his friends at Springer Park in Burnaby, putting on the Canadian uniform at the 1999 Pan American Games in Winnipeg, the Olympic Games in Athens, or working as the Western Canadian Scout for the Milwaukee Brewers, baseball has become paramount in his life.

Growing up in a family of German descent, soccer was the sport, and initially his aim was to become a professional player. In this, he was encouraged and supported by his father and uncle since they had both played the game so it was natural for them to spend time together on the soccer pitch. However, as Lehn got older he had more success in baseball, so that is where his attention turned. His passion, love and excitement for the sport grew and from his high-school in British Columbia he progressed to playing collegiate baseball at Southeastern Louisiana University on a baseball

scholarship as a second base/shortstop with the hopes of playing professional. That dream ended as unfortunately he had to cut off his aspirations of



playing further due to a knee injury and perhaps, as Marty suggests, “a lack of talent”.

“Talent stopped my dreams”, said Lehn. “I thought if given the opportunity I might have proved the decision makers wrong, however it wasn’t to be. It was disappointing, but that disappointment was short lived as I was able to find another way to stay in the game through coaching.” Also, Lehn has got educational knowledge as well as savvy baseball smarts receiving a master’s of exercise science at Southeastern Louisiana University.

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Marty Lehn

Daniel Chalcraft

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In 1991, Lehn started working with the 18 and under Canadian National junior team as a guest coach and then an assistant coach in 1993. Further, he has been an assistant coach with Baseball Canada's National Senior team since 1994. Lehn was named Canadian coach of the Year in 1998 and in 1997 was named British Columbia coach of the Year. He has been a guest coach of the Toronto Blue Jays and Chicago White Sox organizations. He became head coach of the Canadian National Team in the year 2000 and 2001 and he was responsible for trying to help Canada compete for a top spot at the America Qualifying tournament in Panama during November 2000 and is still associated, as he says, and tries to help out and do what he can.

At the international level, he has been in a prominent role for the Canadian Olympic Baseball team either assuming the head coach or assistant coach position having participated at two World Qualifier tournaments where the team got a silver medal, he has been to three World Championships, three Olympic qualifiers where Canada got one silver and two bronze medals, the 1999 Pan American Games and the 2004 Olympic Games.



Frank Robinson • Marty Lehn • Sandy Alomar

He felt honoured to represent Canada and wear the Canadian colours on the International and Canadian baseball stage as he helped the young players to develop their skills and prepare them to

play at the Major League level. Having had the honor of working with top Canadian baseball players such as Justin Morneau, Ryan Dempster, Eric Gagne, Aaron Guiel, Jeff Zimmerman and Jason Bay was a thrill, said Lehn.

He describes the Olympic Games as an "unbelievable" experience. "Putting on the uniform and wearing our countries colours was probably the greatest thrill, [and] the opening ceremonies in Athens, Greece was an experience that will never be forgotten. However the most breath-taking event in my career come in 1999 at the Pan Am Games, in Winnipeg, when we entered the stadium and there were 50,000 people cheering for Team Canada. Something about being at home on our soil and being Canadian" said Lehn. In 1999, he was the assistant coach of Team Canada at the Pan American Games in Winnipeg that ended up with their first-ever bronze medal at the tournament.

However his journey in baseball didn't end with the Canadian National baseball program. Lehn got involved with the Milwaukee Brewers organization when his good friend Brandon Newell, a scout with the Brewers in Washington State, put his name forward for a position in Western Canada. They needed a Western Canadian scout, or more precisely, another pair of eyes to identify talent.

Lehn was contacted and offered the position, a challenge that he readily accepted. He felt it would be a natural fit due to his annual baseball training camp, the Big League Experience, which makes him accessible to the better up-and-coming talent in the region.

"Being able to identify talent in this area, and hopefully able to push some Canadian talent into professional baseball, eventually major league baseball, seems to appeal to me" said Lehn. Doug Melvin and Gord Ash, two of Milwaukee's top men, are both from Canada and he stated that over the past seven year's they are an organization that has drafted and signed more Canadian players than any other organization in baseball.

According to Baseball America's top 30 prospects listed compiled in 2008 by Tom Haudricourt of the

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Marty Lehn

Daniel Chalcraft

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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Brett Lawrie was rated number two. "Lawrie is one of five Canucks on the top 30 list, which is a credit to Brewers' scouts Marty Lehn and Jay Lapp, not to mention general manager Doug Melvin and assistant GM Gord Ash," said Bob Elliott of the Toronto Star in the article, which appeared in a Wisconsin newspaper. The five players are second-baseman Lawrie, third-baseman Taylor Green, Comox, B.C. who is ranked 20 on the list, right-handed pitcher John Axford, Port Dover, Ont who is ranked 23, Alex Periard the right-handed pitcher from St. Eustache Que coming in at 25 and right-handed pitcher Nick Bucci, Sarnia, Ont ranked 29 on the list. "No one does a better job scouting Canada than the Brewers," said Elliott.

"Their seven-year run as being the most active club drafting Canadians ended this June when the Jays selected nine Canadians. However, the Jays only signed Jonathan Fernandez (Toronto, Ont.) the son of former Jays shortstop Tony Fernandez, allowing left-handed pitcher (LHP) James Paxton (Ladner, BC), who went 37th over-all to go back to Kentucky University and allowing LHP Jake Eliopoulos (Newmarket, Ont.) to head off to Chipola College Indians. Both will be eligible to be drafted next June. Among Brewers farmhands, only all-world shortstop Alcides Escobar ranks ahead of Lawrie on the prospect list." said Elliott in his piece.

In the top 30 prospects list, Haudricourt believed the future would be bright for the Langley resident saying "Lawrie will get to the big leagues quicker now than he would have as a catcher, but some scouts think he's destined for an outfield corner. He has a potent bat that should profile at just about any position. Lawrie jumped to Double-A Huntsville last summer to prepare for the World Cup. Lawrie has switched to second base and will start the 2010 season playing for the AA Hunstville Stars in the Southern League.

Lehn feels that due to the confidence that Milwaukee organization has in scouting Canadian talent it makes his job here in Canada very satisfying.

"I am another set of eyes that believes in the talent north of the 49th who has no problem sitting down in the board room and flaunting our talent. Hopefully this gets a few more Canadians in professional baseball uniforms," said Lehn.

In 1997, Lehn set up a baseball camp called Big League Experience in Oliver and there has the opportunity to get out of the office, turn back the clock and have some fun on the field playing the game he loves. While there, he hopes to educate and develop young players so that doors may open for the ones that want it bad enough. The baseball camp formerly known as the Okanagan Major League Baseball camp is the longest residential withstanding camp in North America having been operating since 1960.

At the provincial level, Lehn's involvement with baseball in British Columbia has been extensive having acted as a coach for Team British Columbia at a number of National tournaments since 1989 and his teams have accumulated four gold medals and three silver medals.

If asked to choose the number one sport in Canada most Canadians would pick hockey, but in Lehn's heart always there is a love and desire for baseball. Lehn, and his wife Hilary moved to White Rock in 2000 to enjoy the peacefulness and tranquility of the seaside community and started a new chapter in their lives with the addition to the family of a baby girl. But baseball still dominates his time, as he needs to constantly be around the baseball diamonds of Western Canada evaluating the talent of young baseball players. The Canadian baseball circle is a very close fraternity, and sharing some great moments on the field internationally as well as individually with some of the players, he feels to have been extremely fortunate. He has made recruiting and scouting young Canadian baseball players a major part of his daily operations and he hopes through his efforts, baseball will grow greatly in Canada over the years.



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Metal or Wood?

Injuries to young pitchers and infielders from hard-hit balls off a metal bat have fueled a longstanding debate about whether metal bats are too potent.

It was in 1974, the NCAA set the standard for amateur baseball by legalizing the use of metal bats. Ask any junior college coach why they don't use wood – the answer is the same – 'we will make the transition if and when the NCAA moves to wood'.



Reasons cited for the move to metal at all levels were cost factor. Supposedly metal bats lasted longer and didn't break. However, a high end specification regulated bat can cost up to \$400.00. Sure, they don't break at the handle, but they tend to crack in colder weather and if they get dented, the bat is finished. All bat companies have the same disclaimer: 'Aluminum bats are not guaranteed against denting, bending, breaking, worn finishes or worn rubber grips.'

Stephen D. Keener, president of Little League Baseball since 1994, defended aluminum bat usage. The ease of swinging metal bats, which are lighter than wood models, encourages participation in youth baseball. Aluminum bats have a bigger 'sweet spot' giving kids a greater potential to make contact with the ball. More hitting – more fun.

He believes safety is not an issue.

The following statement can be found on Little League International's website: 'Little League Baseball has always advocated that local leagues and individuals may choose wood or non-wood bats for use in our program.'

Little League supports the right of a local Little League to implement a wood-only rule, and we support any league's right to make that choice for its local community. Some prefer the game played with wood bats, and that's fine as well. But Little League International does not accept the premise that the game will be safer if played exclusively with wood, simply because there are no facts – none at all – to support that premise.

As a result, any individual or league choosing a wood-only option must understand that the choice is not being made because of any factual data or scientific information.'

Little League volunteers already know that participation in Little League is made safer by Little League rules, regulations and policies. Little League's safety record is second to none, as less than 1 percent of all participants annually in Little League require medical treatment of any kind as the result of an injury in a practice or game.'

Dave Hudgens, Assistant Director of Player Development and Hitting Coordinator / Oakland Athletics shares his opinion on metal bats. 'Every kid today uses an aluminum bat. Through the years, the aluminum bat has developed to be a high tech, light weight, lethal weapon, with which kids really have a tremendous amount of success.'

Recently I read an ad that sang the praises of the "large sweet spot" on the aluminum bat. What the ad doesn't tell you is that this large sweet spot could keep you from maximizing your success as a hitter. The aluminum bat increases the habit of creating a "long swing".

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Metal or Wood?

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One of the reasons most kids today have a "long swing" is the muscle memory they've developed through the years of using an aluminum bat. Years of using an aluminum bat, create a "sweeping motion" in most kid's swings, which causes them to actually drag the barrel of the bat through the strike zone. When you sweep the bat through the strike zone, you are incorrectly training your hands to take the wrong path to the ball. The "wrong path" to the ball. You do not want to incorporate any of these bad habits into your swing!

The bat industry and Little League have recently fought off legislative battles in six states to ban metal bats for safety reasons. New York City has successfully banned the use of metal bats in high school, North Dakota has followed suit and a bill has just been put forth in Chicago to ban the use of metal in youth organizations.

It's only the beginning.

Critics of metal bats point to growing evidence that indicates otherwise. They say the bats are unsafe for pitchers particularly, who have less than half a second to react to line drives, and particularly for the three million plus children ages 7 to 13 that play in Little League, Babe Ruth, Dixie, Pony and other leagues. The batter stands about 46 feet from the pitcher, and some hitters are big and talented enough to do a lot of damage.

Current discussions may see mandates that pitchers and infielders wear chest protectors which bat companies are intending to manufacture, directly influenced by the controversial issue of balls coming off metal bats.

So, who and what determine if a metal bat is safe and why all the controversy?

The standard measurement of a metal bat is the Bat Speed Exit Ratio (BSER) which is meant to compensate and result in a ball leaving a metal bat

at no greater a velocity than it would from a good wooden bat. The BSER correlates to the all important question and reason for the test standards: Available Pitcher Reaction Time (APRT). Simply stated the APRT represents the time it takes for the ball to reach the pitcher's mound after it leaves the bat. Experts say the fastest batted ball a college level pitcher can defend against is about 97mph. Translation: Less than four tenths of a second.

Ninety-seven mph also is the fastest a ball can be hit by a certified bat in the lab test.

So what about on the field?

It turns out nobody has officially tested balls hit by aluminum bats in game conditions under the high school level and therefore reasonable to conclude, that the lab tests could be misleading or at the very least open for discussion. It is also reasonable to assume that a high school or college level player has obviously developed their fundamental fielding skills or they would not be playing at that level!

What about the youth who are still in the early developmental process?

The NCAA and Little League have announced stricter tests to tone down ever more powerful bats that have surpassed their promised goals of maintaining wood like performance. Essentially, these changes acknowledge metal bats do not perform the same as wood, despite previous assurances that they do.

The N.C.A.A., which banned the most powerful metal models in the 1990s, have instructed manufacturers to make high-tech bats behave more like wood bats by 2011, calling for adjustments to virtually all the bats now in play.

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Metal or Wood?

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In April 2008, USA Baseball, the nonprofit organization that governs amateur baseball, named a scientific advisory committee to consider new tests and performance standards for youth bats. Daniel A. Russell, a committee member and applied physics professor at Kettering University in Michigan, said bat experts had conducted extensive tests and field studies in college baseball and adult softball over the past 10 years, but that they just recently turned their attention to youth baseball.

So let's talk about wood bats now.

Safety issues: They break. But bats have always broke in the history of baseball – why is it any more dangerous now and why do the number of bats breaking seem to be on the rise – at least at the professional level?

Early on hickory was used by virtually every player – ash and maple were not yet developed.

Ash bats crack – maple explodes. In fact, the MLB has major concerns over maple bats and have implemented new rules effective immediately for the thirty two MLB sanctioned bat makers in an effort to dramatically reduce broken and shattered bats that have threatened players and fans sitting in the stands.

A primary component in the new certification process is that bats have an acceptable slope of grain. Tests conducted at the Baseball Research Center determined shattered bats often had a slope of grain that ran close to diagonal to the bat. Bats are strongest when the slope of grain runs as parallel as possible to the shape of the bat. James Sherwood, professor of mechanical engineering and Director of the Research Center predicts close to a 90% reduction in the number of bats breaking into multiple pieces. To view complete list of standards go to www.mlb.com

Another piece of the puzzle is bat handle size, as the years have passed, major leaguers have moved to a lighter bat and thinner handle – they like the grip. But it appears bats are breaking on inside pitches where the batter is effectively being jammed and connecting with the ball at the bats weakest point.

Maple and ash bats all break a certain way because of their unique characteristics. Ash tends to flake or chip in smaller chunks and do not propel through the air, while maple has a tendency to break into larger, jagged pieces that are propelled by the stored up energy of the bat.

Because the voids in wood are confined to certain areas, the growth planes are considered a weak area of the wood. When an ash bat hits an object, its cell walls would collapse, and produces the chipping and the flaking experienced with ash bats. The barrel begins to soften and small flaking pieces would begin to fall off the bat. It's a great indicator of the lessened density of the wood and its possibility of breakage and snapping while hitting.



Cracks form in both types of wood as a bat is used repeatedly to hit a ball. But the same pore structure that makes ash bats flake, also produces cracks along the channel of the bat. Meaning, it has a ways to go before a crack can materialize to actually crack a bat in half. Batters are able to see these cracks beforehand and exchange the bat before the process results in a breakage of the bat upon contact.

We have all seen a hitter take the barrel end of the bat and bounce it off the ground or the plate to see if they get vibrations out of the bat that will be a sure sign of it breaking. It's an early indicator for the batter that the bat is about to take its last swing, or break apart during the hitting process. That made the ash bat a lot safer and more predictable before danger could happen. But it also could happen multiple times during a game, and the cost of replacing a box of bats might have been the deciding factor in hitters looking for alternatives.

Maple on the other hand is considered ring diffuse, meaning its pores are more evenly distributed

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throughout the piece of wood. It makes the bat barrel more durable than any other part of the wood, and you do not get the cautionary flaking or chipping warning that ash bats give you before they break apart while hitting.

Because of the maple bats diffuse pores, cracks in the wood can grow in any number of directions. This could make them more apt to hide the cracks and breaks as they break out towards the barrel. That is the main reason that maple bats produce such a large chunk or shard when they finally do explode after cracking. As they do not flake or chip, there isn't a warning sign to the batter that his bat is cracking or might end up in the stands or in the infield barely missing an opposing player.

But can the change in breakage patterns be solely attributed to their cell difference and the size of their pores within the wood?

If you do not have a bat that is cut with the grain, you will have a weaker bat.

Maybe the batter hit the ball in a bad position causing the bat to break upon contact.

The bat comes into contact with the ball in a small area for only one thousandth of a second usually. The short time it takes to make that impact can send upwards of 5,000 pounds of force through the wood. A ball hit badly, or not within the area of the "sweet spot" of the bat, can send stinging sensations through your hands. It's also a visual sign from the bat that it is bending and vibrating to release the force without breaking in your hands. Economics? As we mentioned earlier, the best metal bat at high school age level, costs around \$350 - \$450.00 and even top end metal bats may not last for a season – either getting dented, cracked or lose their 'pop' so now the cost factor hits around \$600-900 a season.

Ash and maple wood bats range in price from \$45 to \$85. Even if a player went through 7 wood bats in a season, the cost factor is equivalent or less.

Quality composite wood bats, with a fiberglass reinforced handle, are significantly more durable than ash or maple and sometimes come with a guarantee. The best models cost approximately \$130-\$150 apiece.

With a grant from the National Federation of High Schools, the Illinois High School Athletics Association commissioned a study of wood bats versus metal during the 2007 season. Illinois State University's School of Kinesiology and Recreation conducted the research.

In 412 games played by 32 Illinois high school teams using wood bats, 368 of the bats broke, resulting in a bat-breakage rate of 28.3 per 1,000 at-bats or an average of 23.49 broken bats per team for the entire season.

They further concluded using metal bats there was an average of 8.77 hits per game compared to 6.5 hits in a wood game. Metal bat games lasted longer and there were more extra-base hits, at bats and runs scored in non-wood games. The increased number of hits directly due to the fact a metal bat has a larger 'sweet spot' and a bad hit executed through poor mechanics can pull off a substantial hit.

Injuries sustained were 5 over 4,682 at bats with non-wood versus 2 injuries with wood bats over 4,462 at bats. Of the seven injuries total, two resulted in missed playing time but were not caused by a bat. No injury from a batted ball required a player to lose playing time.

So have we answered the great debate on bat economics and safety issues? Doubtful. But maybe that's not the right question to be trying to answer.

Here's food for thought.

Baseball is no different than any other sport: injuries will occur. It is a risk a player assumes when signing up.

Until such a time that metal bats are studied in game conditions – the topic of metal bats seem redundant. No one has the definitive answer – so why waste the time and energy on a pointless discussion.

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Wood bats are wood bats. We know what they do and don't do— there is no question or grey area.

From an environmental standpoint, wood is a sustainable and renewable resource – maybe we don't do it that well – but the point remains the same. When the wood bat breaks, it will be recycled in some city's garden mulch program. How many aluminum bats are in city dumps for eternity.

For those who argue 'kids having fun and staying interested in the game' is the primary focus, is fair enough – but can they not learn that there is fun

and pride in achieving success at mastering the fundamental skills of the traditional game in a safe environment from qualified coaches?

Perhaps even more importantly, why are the millions of dollars running 'tests' on bats, not going into programs for the kids – programs like how to hit a ball with a wood bat so the game is 'still fun'. Or into developmental skills to learn proper field positioning, how to slide properly, proper throwing mechanics and into coaches clinics so they can teach these young kids proper fundamental skills and better mechanics to minimize injuries.

Maybe one day we'll know....



Now 15 years since its inception, we had an opportunity to speak with Clyde Inouye, Executive Director of the BC Premier

Baseball League, to reflect on those 15 years.

Q. Is the PBL now what you envisioned 15 years ago. Has the league's growth met or exceeded your expectations or goals?

A. Growth has exceeded our expectations. What started as the Island Premier Baseball League with 5 teams has now become the Premier Baseball Association. The association is the umbrella for 32 clubs: 6 colleges, 13 premier and 13 junior premier teams throughout the province.

Our focus has always been to develop players for the next level and provide players the opportunity to play the game at its highest level in the province. We have exceeded this goal. 90 to 95% of PBL graduates move on to play at the next level. The addition of the Canadian College Baseball Conference (CCBC), UBC and Douglas College, have provided additional venues for this to happen.

We have always focused on development and to support Canadian baseball; judging by the numbers of players in the CCBC/UBC/Douglas, our goal has been surpassed.

Q. Is there anything you might have differently?

A. Provided greater emphasis and support for programs in the interior. There needs to be 2 programs in the interior to provide players the opportunity to stay home to play. Kelowna has

done a tremendous job in 2009. The growth and strength of their program will continue and players will want to play in the Kelowna Athletics club. The addition of PBL Alumni to their coaching staff will also considerably strengthen the club's program.

Q. Where do you see the future taking into consideration: Popularity of baseball, availability of elite ball players in BC and how will economics play into kids playing in the league or the growth of the league.

A. Baseball will still need to compete for the top athletes with other sports. The success of our alumni has proven to players that the PBL can produce top athletes. This fact will continue to draw a certain percentage of athletes into baseball. However, to get more players into the game, baseball has to be sold and promoted at the younger levels through stable, solid programs and good coaching. The programs in Tee Ball and Tadpoles are the foundation of players for the PBL. The larger the numbers are at this level; the greater the possibility of producing elite level players.

Hopefully, economics will not prevent an athlete from playing; most programs have a support program in place to assist players with financial difficulties. No player should be prevented from playing because of their financial situation.

The growth of the league is probably at the point where the number of teams is maximized.

Q. What do you consider the greatest moment(s) during your time to date.

A. Greatest moment would be when the mainland

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teams committed to joining the Island Premier Baseball League (IPBL) and realizing that competition in BC was as good, or better than across the border. The 2002 draft also made history with the two first round draft picks from PBL players: Adam Loewen and Jeff Francis.

Q. Plans on a BCPBL home field for Championship games; have you found a 'home' and what do you need to achieve this facility.

A. *The PBL will continue to look for a field but is in the process of working with the Vancouver Canadians to run events at Nat Bailey .*

Q. Do you believe the coaching standards now compared to league conception have changed and in what ways.

A. *Coaching standards continue to improve as programs need to stay on top to retain players. The success of the PBL is reflective of the high standard of coaching now in place.*

Q. Does the PBL hold mandatory PBL specific coaching clinics/training seminars – anything that pertains to player development/training/protecting pitchers arms/injury prevention.

A. *The PBL is looking at putting on a Super Clinic for kids ages 6-12 in 2011 utilizing coaches from the PBL. The PBL is very cognizant of protecting pitchers arms in the PBL. During pre-season coaches have pitchers on a pitch count and during league play maximum pitch counts are in place.*

On Memorial weekend in May 2010, Parksville will host for the 16th year running, the BCPBL's Best of BC tournament. The tournament has grown in stature over the years. At last year's event, 10 MLB Clubs were represented by their scouting staff. Also attending were college recruiters from both sides of the border. Attendance is marked with anywhere from 1000 to 1500 people passing through the gates each day. The tournament also saw some new faces surface in tournament play. The Kelowna Club, who has not been out of the basement spot in their 5 years attending the tournament, took the Pool A division. Perhaps the largest upset went to the Langley Blaze in the chase for their 6th consecutive title but falling to the Coquitlam Reds ending their run.

The championship game saw the North Shore

Twins face the Victoria Mariners with the Twins coming out on top with a 5-1 victory.

In 2009, 30% of current BCPBL players moved on to play at a higher level of baseball – college/university and to the draft.

Although the 2009 draft was considered generally not as strong as in prior years by baseball insiders, 14 BC players were selected. That's five more than were chosen in the '08 draft.

All the players drafted, with the exception of Wagner, are graduates of the Premier Baseball League.

LHP James Paxton (North Delta Blue Jays, Blue Jays, 1st Round Comp A - 37th overall)

SS Wes Darvill (Langley Blaze, Cubs, 5)

OF Chad Stang (White Rock Tritons, Brewers, 8)

SS David Narodowski (North Delta Blue Jays, Diamondbacks, 15)

LHP Jon Hesketh (Langley Blaze, Mariners, 20)

SS Terrance Dayleg (Fraser Valley Chiefs, Marlins, 22)

RHP Michael Monster (Langley Blaze, Reds, 25)

RHP Colin Kleven (Langley Blaze, Phillies, 33)

RHP David Kington (Coquitlam Reds, Cardinals, 34)

RHP Paul Barton (Parksville Royals, Reds, 39)

RHP Rory Young (Langley Blaze, Astros, 39)

C/3B Brooklyn Foster (Langley Blaze, Diamondbacks, 43)

RHP Brandon Kaye (North Shore Twins, Blue Jays, 45)

RHP Burke Seifrit (White Rock Tritons, Blue Jays, 50)

At the 2009 BCPBL Awards Banquet top honours went to the following players:

Most Valuable Player	Zak Miller	Langley
Top Offensive Player	TJ Watson	Coquitlam
Top Pitcher	Allen Rimer	Vancouver
Rookie of the Year	Justin Atkins	FV
Golden Glove	Wes Darvill	Langley
Top Batter (BA).366	TJ Watson	Coquitlam
Top Achievement	Wes Darvill	Langley

Inouye is looking forward to the 2010 season. 'Four teams have been added this year. On the island, the Victoria Eagles have joined the PBL with both a senior and junior team. Both the Vancouver Cannons and the Kelowna Athletics

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have added junior teams. The 2010 season will also see ratifications to the catchment boundaries which I see as a positive. It will help to strengthen the recruiting area for Kelowna in particular.'

The BCPBL 2010 season gears up with the Langley Jamboree in March. An opportunity to get on the field and work it out prior to the regular season which begins the second week in April.

Abbotsford hosts its annual tournament end of April/early May with the Best of BC following on the May long weekend.

The Canadian College Baseball Conference (CCBC) regular season is slated to open Saturday, March 27th.

The CCBC is divided into the West and East divisions: West (Larry Walker division) includes Okanagan College, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Vancouver Island Baseball Institute and the East (Chris Reitsma division) Thompson Rivers University, University of Calgary and Prairie Baseball Academy.

The CCBC Championships will be held at Norbrock Stadium in Kamloops this year May 13th-15th.

We'd like to thank Clyde Inouye for sharing his thoughts with us.

Our efforts in the Okanagan have been to create a baseball program, not just a team that plays in the PBL. This year we finally have all the pieces in place to create this program. Our mandate is to manage a program separate from the local baseball associations. The program begins with players in Grade 8 with continuing development through Grade 12.



added Mike Wilson (former head coach of the PBL North Delta Blue Jays), Rob Bland, (University of Kentucky), Evan Bailey (University Utah) and Graham Johnson (Coppin State University), and have returning Coach Pablo Ramirez who played for the Venados in the Mexican Professional League.

To add to the program, major funding has been announced to upgrade Elks Stadium, current home field to the Kelowna Athletics and the Okanagan College Baseball clubs.

We will be managing a Bantam AAA (Grade 8-9), Junior Premier team (Grade 9-11) and Senior team, (Grade 10 -12).

The local associations have representatives on our board and will continue to have input in the development of the players.

The PBL Board has given us a boundary which includes such centers as Penticton, Kelowna, Revelstoke, Salmon Arm and Kamloops.

Our mandate is to provide an opportunity for young men in the Interior to develop their baseball skills on an Interior based team and hopefully take these skills to college programs within Canada and the USA.

Working within the 3 team structure, we have

The federal government and City of Kelowna announced major funding for immediate renovations to Elks Stadium. \$870,000 was inked for the stadium, located in downtown Kelowna. Plans include; a new lighting system, backstop, and roof for the grandstand. Also multiple stadium upgrades will be included in the package. Elks Stadium was constructed in the 1950's and has had modest upgrades over the last 50 years. Construction was scheduled to begin late fall, after fall ball schedules were complete.

The stadium is scheduled to be reopened with all upgrades completed by March, before OC opens their 2nd CCBC season.

Follow the BCPBL and the CCBC

www.bcpbl.com

PBL regular season schedules will be available at Prostock, Firststar and each Club's local community recreation centre or download a schedule from their website.

Pemberton Grizzlies Baseball: Grassroots Baseball

After living in the United States for the majority of his life, John Burleson returned to his BC roots in 2004 with his wife and young son to Pemberton, BC.

As John and his family settled into their new life, it occurred to John there wasn't much going on in the spring/summer months for baseball. To John it seemed sacrilegious – especially after growing up in the US for the better part of his life. 'Baseball in the southwest was a given – we were always playing sandlot, playing on the high school team, Little League – Connie Mack. It was a given you were playing ball. It was a bit of a shock to come here and find there was none. We decided where there is a need – fill it. There was a ball field behind the primary school and we thought they would be a great place to have a 5 week camp. So we pulled the kids together, sent out the information.'

The first baseball summer camp was held in 2006 – a grand total of 5 kids showed the first day. Very small beginnings. 'But we don't despise those early days of small beginnings'. By the end of the 5 week camp – 40 kids had hit the fields – for something to do – to learn the great game of baseball – to interact. 'We knew we had something by the end of those 5 weeks and we decided to go ahead and charter.'

After the success of the summer program, John went to the local high school Principal, hoping to be able to speak to students and encourage/invite them to participate in the baseball program. 'The Principal gave me 5 minutes at the next assembly. I didn't even talk about baseball – I talked about life.'

'Understand something – these kids had never played baseball. So the basic fundamentals of throwing, hitting and catching – all of those things had to be taught from ground zero. I'll never forget our first practice – last week of March – It was snowing! These kids were out in sweats, shorts and beat up tennis shoes and they were having a blast and it was an amazing experience – I'll never forget it. We had kids ages 5 right to 19.'

'The coaching staff was phenomenal simply by virtue that these parents, who stepped in to volunteer, did an incredible job. One of the guys who really helped me out was Take Fukada who grew up playing ball in Japan. And they know how to play a little bit of baseball in Japan. In that first year, Take came with me on the road 27 hours

every weekend to the city so these 15 year old kids could play a double header. The kids fought – they scratched – they clawed – they did everything they could to hang in there – but they just couldn't win a game. This game is 80% mental – you can have all the talent in the world physically – but baseball is a mental game. If you've never played before, it is very, very difficult to just pick it up and play it and be proficient in it. They were going up against kids who had played since age 5. So the odds against them were enormous. They have a special place in my heart – they never, ever gave up.'

John realizes it will take time to build a good baseball program starting from scratch. 'Some of the older kids had never played ball. We live in an area where there are great athletes – lots of individual activities – mountain biking, skiing, windsurfing – all of these outdoor extreme sports. But in baseball it comes down to what you know. There's a flow to the game. There's a rhythm to the game. These are things you only learn by experience or by doing it. In the first year these kids faced tremendous odds – they just never gave up on the game. And I think that's what the Pemberton Grizzly baseball program really is about –overcoming. When we first spoke to the kids from day one - ground zero, there were some core elements we wanted them to understand about this program. We wanted to teach these kids about overcoming adversity, about character – and that it matters. That being a good teammate is better than being the team MVP. We wanted to teach them a core value system that will not only help them when playing this great game, but will help to prepare them to be a successful person in life, in business, affecting their community.'

'You know there's no luggage rack on a hearse..... what you leave this world with is what you came in with. It's what you leave behind – no one is going to remember your toys - but they going to remember what you did to invest in making your little area – your little sphere of influence – better.'

Pemberton has just finished their third year and just starting to see the fruits of that – the 11/12 - 13/15 are starting to get it. They are becoming more competitive, playing better as a team – they understand the game better now. The future is extremely bright for them – John believes these two groups of kids will become a winning organization by the time they reach 17 years old.

Continued.....page 38

Pemberton Grizzlies Baseball: Grassroots Baseball

'I need to give some real thanks to some folks that have been here. I mentioned Take Fukada - Ron Fogarty, Dennis Powell, Dan McGuire, Corrine Graves - my right hand, Stan Kelly, Anne West, Judith McKenzie, Garth Phare, Mark Blundel, Home Hardware, Continental Log Homes, Frontier Pharmacy, RMOW, Ken Paynter of Whistler, Mike Fidoruk – Umpire in Chief, Will Van Spronsen – all of these people have contributed huge to our program. We couldn't have done it without them.'

In 2009, Pemberton chose organized the first 'Sea to Sky' Invitational Tournament which is really close to John's heart. 'It was designed for the kids who don't get to go to the provincials – they don't go to the All Star squads but they love the game of baseball and want to continue playing. We just couldn't find a tournament that catered to that type of kid so we decided to create our own. We went to Whistler, and Judith McKenzie who directs the field operations, has been enormously helpful – an amazing facilitator. The facilities at Whistler are world class and we've been able to have 2 very successful tournaments. Teams have come from all over the province – Quesnel, the Island, the Lower mainland. We look to have 22 teams this coming year in the 3 different age groups. We don't care what association the teams are involved with – it's about the love of the game. You know this is a great game, it teaches you a lot about life, right? I've always found that young people want to be a part of something that's bigger than them self. There are a lot of young people who simply love to play the game – they don't care if they don't make it to the Bigs.

This tournament is really designed for them – to come out and have fun playing. And, the other thing we did was customize this tournament so that it is a family experience. Whistler is a resort destination; it is one of the best. We designed the tournament so the teams play in the morning and then break so they can go mountain biking, zip trekking, hummer tours – whatever they want to do. And then they come back in the evening and play some more ball. It's been really successful – the families just love it.

It's not just about the individual ball player – it's about the family. And the family is obviously very important.'

Registrations have started and the tournament is slated for second weekend in July. The tournament kicks off with a Thursday night dinner and runs Friday to Sunday. Everything is wrapped up early Sunday afternoon.

Pemberton Baseball is growing and expanding. Whistler is now a part of the Pemberton ball program – and sponsors teams in Squamish. This year, the group is looking to create a 'Sea to Sky' League which encompasses all 3 communities.

'At the end of the day though, it's all about caring for these kids. And you know when you look at young people and you understand that they are our most precious national resource. That one day, when I'm an old guy and have grey hair and retain too much water, what I've invested in them is what they will invest in me. And so we have to figure out a way to reach these kids. Baseball is a great game – it's a great opportunity and vehicle in order to be able to reach and touch these kids lives and make them a little better and in turn make our life a little better.'

In concluding our interview, we asked John a moment that stands out for him over the past few years.

'One day the kids were on the field for practice. I was walking in the outfield past one young player who was smiling and kind of daydreaming at the same time. So I asked him, 'What are you smiling about?'

Without hesitation, the youth replied, 'It's the best day of my life.'

'How so?' I asked him.

'Because today I get to play baseball.'

That's what Pemberton baseball is about.

For more information on the Sea to Sky Invitational Tournament, contact:

John Burluson

Phone: 604 • 907 • 4474

www.pembertongrizzlies.com

Proposed BC Legacy Baseball Facility • Penticton, BC

As what happens in many communities, Penticton's baseball fields gave way to community development 4 years ago.

Fields were recreated in scattered locations throughout the city, but none the less, the baseball community felt the loss of their 'home'.

A seed of thought never left one individual from that time on, and thanks to the Penticton Indian Band, not only the future of amateur youth baseball in Penticton and the Okanagan Valley, but the province and country has brightened.

A proposal has been presented to the PIB to develop a BC Legacy Baseball Complex that will serve amateur youth baseball for generations to come.

Chief Jonathan Kruger, Clint Gabriel: Public Works and Recreation Portfolio and Administrator Greg Gabriel, on reviewing the proposal, have expressed interest in bringing the Complex to reality.

The concept is to facilitate a world class amateur youth baseball complex that will serve as a flagship facility in Canada and serve as a legacy facility to BC's baseball community.

The facility in its totality is designated as a zero tolerance, drug free zone including alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

Features of the facility include:

- 80 - 100 room housing with full size kitchen /dining area - cafeteria style, common room with recreational/leisure amenities (tv, pool table etc), administrative offices, laundry facilities, complex transportation. Housing will accommodate both Academy and visiting teams. The housing is for players/coach/complementary staff only.
- 6 full capacity diamonds with computerized lighting systems/scoreboards of which 2 fields will be feature diamonds.
- Grandstands on both feature diamonds.
- Media room/announcers booth.

- Clubhouses on both feature diamonds for home and visiting teams.

- Outdoor Pitching Bull pen/ batting cages.

- Full size on site concession kitchens.

- Retail space.

- First aid/physiotherapy room.

- Full size indoor training centre w/ indoor batting cages/pitching mounds.

- Umpires Clubhouse

User Groups:

- Youth Baseball/Softball Academy – Year round program

- Summer Camps/Tournaments

- NCCP Certification programs

- Umpires regional/provincial/national training conferences

- Select team identification/training camps

- National Championship Tournaments

- IBAF sanctioned international tournaments

- High profile international tournaments

- Coaches training/conferences

- Youth World Baseball Festival

This complex deems to be a stand alone, multi faceted facility in North America. Nowhere is there a baseball complex that incorporates so many perspectives from the year round Academy to tournaments and clinics for the baseball community as a whole.

Given the Okanagan Valley's semi arid desert climate, the area is often compared to parts of California and is conducive to year round baseball.

The city of Penticton is surrounded by two lakes, spectacular views, airport serviced and a welcoming and diverse community.

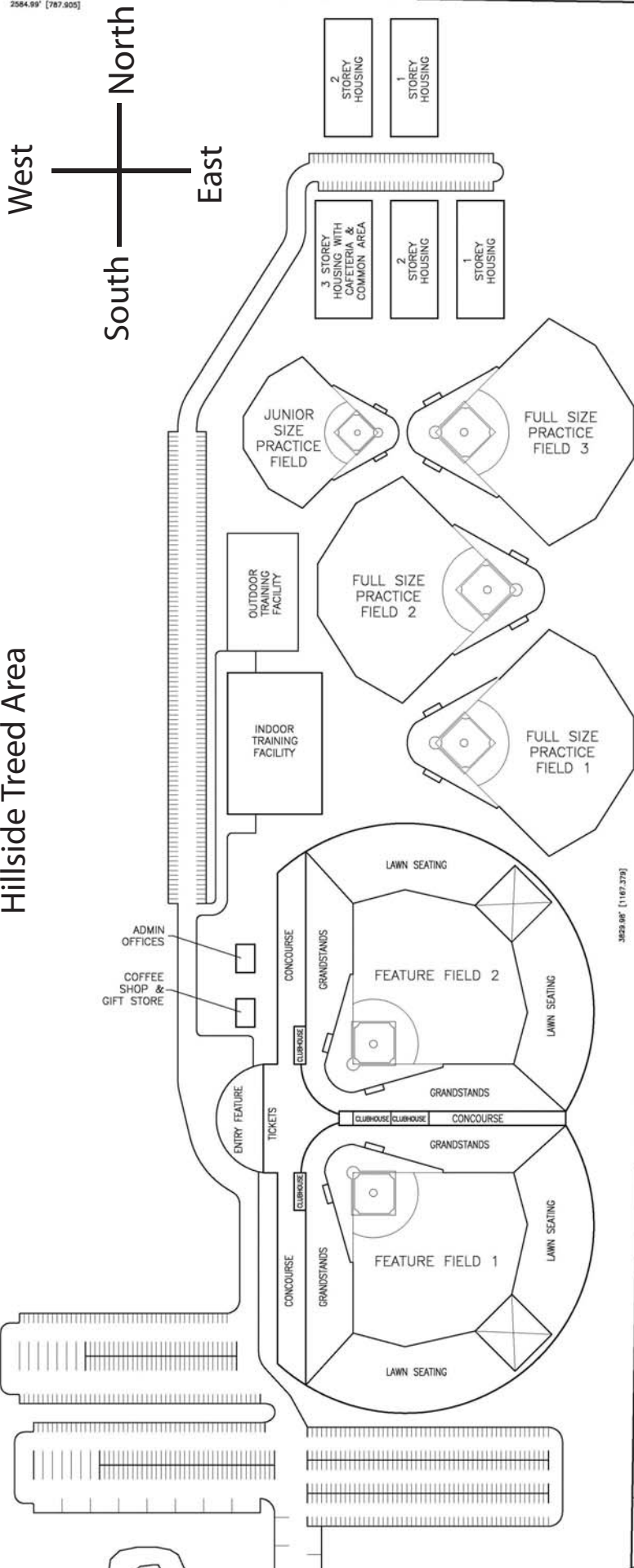
The proposed complex development is slated to break ground in the fall of 2010 and opening February of 2012.

For more information contact: Robyn Harden

Phone: 250-493-0363 **Email:** info@playballbc.com

www.playballbc.com

Hillside Treed Area



Okanagan Valley View Skaha Lake • Okanagan Lake

Playing with Perthes

Perthes disease is a degenerative condition of the hip that results from the cessation of blood flow to the ball-and-socket joint at the head of the femur. It affects roughly one in 20,000 people and can cause the hip joint to collapse leading to extreme pain and mobility limitations in sufferers.

But it's not stopping two young baseball players from excelling at the game they love. Isaac Hess, a left-handed pitcher, has managed to climb to the ranks of professional baseball despite repeated setbacks while catcher Andrew Tidswell has an eye on playing Canadian college baseball.

Hess, a Phoenix native, spent last season playing with the Victoria Seals and Calgary Vipers where he helped take the Snakes to the Golden Baseball League title.

He was seven when he found out he had Perthes (pronounced PER-thees). "I had a body cast for six weeks, had a pin put in for a year and then got it removed," recalls Hess, now 24. "I just thought it was a bump in the road. I was too young to realize it was going to be anything serious."

Always a good athlete, Hess played football and

basketball as well when he was young so after the body cast, he wasn't away from competition for long. By the time he was 19, he was pitching for South Mountain Community College in Arizona but his years of playing sports had caused cartilage damage to the hip joint in his left leg. His right leg had become stronger because he had compensated for so long and it was also two centimetres longer than his left.

But he plugged away, having grown accustomed to the pain. "It always just felt fine the next day (after a game). It wouldn't hurt when I was playing; after it loosened up, it was fine. It was tolerable and I just got used to it."

After South Mountain, Hess transferred to Washington State University but by that time Perthes was threatening to interrupt his goal of playing NCAA Div. I baseball, let alone playing professionally.

The 5-foot-11, 190-pound southpaw couldn't get medical clearance to play for the Cougars so he had hip replacement surgery and transferred to the University of Arizona. He rehabbed for a whole year getting ready for his final college season but again, Perthes got in the way. "I was good to go my senior year but they wouldn't clear me to play," says Hess.

It was the low point of his baseball career. "The toughest time was my senior year when they told me I couldn't play after rehabbing. When the doctor told me I couldn't play, it was pretty (crappy)."

Out of school options but still armed with a low-90s fastball and a wicked curveball, in March of 2007 he went to a Chicago White Sox tryout and opened some eyes. A scout liked what he saw and connected Hess with the Windy City Thunderbolts, an independent team in the Frontier League.



Isaac Hess

Photo courtesy Christian J. Stewart Photography
christianjstewart.zenfolio.com

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Playing with Perthes

He played a season there before getting traded to Victoria where he was a charter member of the expansion Seals. He proceeded to go 9-2 with a 3.86 ERA in 16 starts, ringing up 90 strikeouts before being dealt to Calgary. With the Vipers, he won two regular season games and made three starts in the playoffs as they beat the Tuscon Toros to win it all.

His hip no longer bothers him since the artificial joint was put in but Perthes reared its head again during the all-star break when a Boston Red Sox scout wanted to sign him, but he didn't pass their physical. He's not letting that deter him and hasn't written off his desire to play in the major leagues. "Definitely, whatever that highest level is going to be. Maybe I can play internationally or (in the major leagues)."

Hess has bought into a unique training program that includes yoga and pilates workouts. He concedes he might have gone easier on his leg when he was younger but believes the journey he's taken will serve him well. "I wish I was more educated in hindsight but the path I've taken so far has been awesome so I wouldn't change a thing."

Hess' story should serve as inspiration to 17-year-old Tidswell. Perthes cut into the Calgarian's playing time last season but he wants to rebound in a big in the season ahead as his team's everyday catcher. The 5-foot-11, 140-pound backstop was in Grade 2 when he was diagnosed. "We first really started to notice it when

I was limping a lot. I was on crutches for the next 18 months," he remembers.

Andrew Tidswell



For an athletic kid heavily involved in soccer, the bad news meant just one thing to him. "The only thing that struck me was my parents telling me and the doctors telling me I wouldn't be able to play sports. That kind of freaked me out because I was always an active kid. It makes you kind of angry but there's not much you can do."

The amount of running in soccer made it a tough sport to stick with and Tidswell's love of baseball took over soon after anyway and now, it's his lone sports focus.

Tidswell's right leg is the one affected but similarly to Hess, his legs are different lengths. He copes with the problem with an insole in his right shoe. "If I do a wall sit, you can tell (the difference) from the two knees (but) you don't notice it from walking."

Two years ago, Tidswell had a major setback when he fell on his hip and tore his labrum playing outdoor hockey. Up to that point, he had avoided surgery by doing lots of physiotherapy but he could not dodge the knife after the on-ice spill. But the procedure revealed a positive discovery.

"They thought with the last surgery the damage would be worse. The fear before I had surgery a year



Playing with Perthes

Continued.....page 42

ago (was) that I'd have to have a hip replacement." Again, Tidswell couldn't put any weight on his leg after the procedure. "I had to stay off it for six months and it's pretty drastic what muscle you can lose in that time. It's been a year since I've had surgery and I still notice a difference because my right was always my stronger side."

Tidswell has been courageous to stick with the physical demands of catching despite what experts have told him.

"That was the first thing the physiotherapist and the doctors told me was that I couldn't catch. At this point it's more of a pain threshold thing than a damage thing. I love catching and my goal for next season is to get back to catching full time."

He characterizes himself as a contact hitter who,



They came as favourites, and left as champions -- though not without a stunning loss and a lot of adversity.

The United States national team used an 8-1 victory over their German counterparts to capture first place in the 2009 Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline World Baseball Challenge, an event held for the first time at beautiful Prince George Citizen Field.

Left-handed pitcher Drew Pomeranz, a star at Ole Miss, threw seven innings of one-hit ball to keep the German bats at bay and prevent a second stunning loss to the rising European baseball nation. Germany handed the American side, one loaded with pitching talent and led on the field by star shortstop Christian Colon, a 6-3 defeat in the round-robin portion, marking the first time a

despite being a catcher, is a threat on the basepaths.

At Western Canada High School, he excels in "everything that doesn't have to do with math or science." He'd like to parlay his classroom and diamond skills into a college education in Canada though he's not pinning his entire future on it, noting the game is just as important to him for its social aspects.

"I definitely would love to play at the Canadian collegiate level but I wouldn't be crushed if I didn't get to that level. I've met a lot of friends and it's something I do for fun too."

If Hess and Tidswell ever cross paths down the road, they can exchange hip stories but no one will ever be able to say Perthes disease got the best of either of them.

German team has beaten the United States in international play.

The U.S. national team that played in Prince George is the same program that has produced current stars such as Dustin Pedroia, Aaron Hill and David Price -- and the same program that once cut Evan Longoria.

On the road to the WBC final, Germany also marked another first -- a win over the Canadian national team. Germany, which dropped a crucial extra-inning game to Canada on the path to the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games, denied the Canadians another shot at the U.S. in the final by beating Canada 4-2. Home runs by Ludwig Glaser and Mitch Franke, who hit a key homer in the sixth inning of the win over the U.S., provided the difference against a Canadian team that never got its offence running at full steam.

The tournament wasn't without its drama as steaming hot weather in Prince George boiled over on the field. The host Prince George Westcana Electric Axemen, on the strength of a three-run home run by Charlie Strandlund and strong starting pitching by Andrew Brock, beat Germany 8-4 on opening night. A few days later, benches cleared and ejections reined down after a hard slide into a blocked plate in a game between the Bahamas, a very young team from a

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2009 World Baseball Challenge....continued....page 43

developing nation, and Team B.C., a squad made up of the players that helped the province claim the national senior gold in 2008 -- and featuring former big league pitcher Aaron Myette.

in a playoff game, was named the tournament MVP.

World Baseball Challenge organizers have set a goal of hosting the event in Prince George every two years, and plans are already forming with hopes of an official announcement some time this fall. The United States, Canada, Germany and the host team would return, and other baseball powers have already asked about attending after hearing about the first-class operation that included using the University of Northern British Columbia as the base for residence and food services, and the brand-new \$32-million Northern Sport Centre facility that impressed all the participants.

Prince George is adding to its reputation for holding first-rate events -- in 2002, the city held the Canadian Senior Championship and that tournament is still remembered as one of Baseball Canada's best-run functions.

For more information on the World Baseball Challenge, visit www.worldbaseball.ca



Team Canada pitchers Jordan Rawlyk, Brandon Kaye and Matt Bannister combined to no-hit Bahamas, and Team Canada turned a triple play against the U.S. in a playoff game that will never be forgotten by the more than 3,000 spectators who saw American star Gerrit Cole, a former New York Yankees first-round selection, beat Canada 1-0 with a fastball hitting 99 miles-per-hour from start to finish. Benches cleared in that game after Canadian outfielder Nic Lendvov took out Colon at second base, breaking Colon's leg. Additional security had to be called in as the two teams, playing their hearts out for their flags, took the border rivalry to a new level.

German pitcher Tim Henkenjohan, a former Minnesota Twins prospect who recorded the win over the United States and dominated B.C.



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T'Birds Baseball 2010: Numbers and Young Talent Create Depth



"The more the merrier" was the mantra for the T-Birds this fall, as a total of 46 players reported to the 2009 fall training camp. With so many players at their disposal this season, the coaching staff has all their bases covered.

"Depth should not be an issue for us," said Assistant Coach Cav Whitely. "At the end of the day, no matter what, we'll always have a guy who can step in for us without much of a talent drop on the field."

This will be vital for the T-Birds, who suffered through injuries to various key players over the course of last season and lost an unusual number to academic ineligibility as well. To help counter the latter problem this season, the coaching staff has hired an academic specialist. While there isn't much that can be done to prevent the bad luck of injuries, the depth of 46 players will help to mitigate the consequences.

"The beauty of having this many guys is that we can go on when someone gets hurt," said Whitely. "They can spend proper time in physio; they won't have to play through it, and they can get healthy before they get back on the field."

With sheer numbers on their side this year, the coaching staff can relax—or can they?

"With 24 position players and 22 pitchers needing development, the coaches had to be extremely organized," explained Whitely. "We needed to have really good time management and a lot of preparation before practice and weekend games."

But it's safe to say that, in the coaches' minds, the effort is worth the benefits provided by such a large team—especially since the team already had several holes that they needed to fill even before the fall started, as they lost the heart of last year's batting order, graduating Ryan Pilgrim and Jon Syrnyk and losing Scott Webster to academic ineligibility. Whitely says that the team is still working to find which players will fill those holes, but for now, it seems that shortstop Sammie Starr along with newcomer Blake Carruthers (OF) will help in that area. Carruthers, who redshirted as a

freshman at Central Washington last year, is projected to be the new everyday centerfielder, replacing Syrnyk's prowess on defense and speed on the base paths.

Other incoming players who have the potential to immediately impact the offense are Andrew Firth, a true freshman infielder from Ontario, and Christian Jolley, a junior outfielder who transferred from Treasure Valley CC. Of Jolley, Whitely said, "He swung the bat really well in the fall, and we'll look to use his other tools: he's a fast left-handed hitter, and he's got a pretty good arm for his size."

But it's on the mound that you'll find, in Whitely's words, "the true strength" of the team for this coming spring.



"Anytime you have a staff that includes a healthy Mark Hardy, Shawn Hetherington, Matt Bannister, Eric Brown, Dan Britton-Foster and Taylor King, then you add to it incoming transfer Sheldon McDonald, who right now is projected into the rotation, you're going to have success there," said Whitely, noting that currently there are seven or eight pitchers with the potential to compete for a starting spot in the rotation.

Exciting additions to the staff are freshmen David Otterman and Cody Chartrand, the two strikeout leaders from the BC Premier league in 2009.

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T'Birds Baseball 2010: Numbers and Young Talent Create Depth

"David could be pretty good: he has the same stuff as Hardy did as a freshman." Along with transfers Jordan Herbison and Brandon Kaye (brother of Blue Jays starter Scott Richmond), the staff should be as solid as the 'Birds have ever had but with the depth they have been searching for.

The question for all of these young guys is whether or not they will develop to their potential and how quickly it will take them to get there.

"All of these incoming freshmen, because they're so talented, need to get a lot out of this year from the older guys," said Whitely. He noted that this applied in particular to Ryan Taylor and Keaton Briscoe, two freshmen middle infielders who are poised to take over after Alex White and Sammie Starr graduate this year. Whitely also mentioned Nick Senior and Andrew Madsen, two freshmen outfielders from BC, as players who have the potential to greatly impact the program in the near future—but it will depend on how much they develop this year.

And so the question remains, in Whitely's words: "How are you going to get our young guys enough innings in order to become who they're going to become? That's what the fall season was all about."

At the culmination of fall camp, the team split into two teams and played an intrasquad seven-game series, the stakes for which weren't merely

bragging rights: the losing team had to run 300,000 stairs and do hours of field work. That task fell on Team Black, who lost to Team Navy in six games. "[The result] was a surprise," said Whitely, "because most of Team Black were returners: there was only one freshman in that starting nine...That bodes well for the future."

That is not to say that the newcomers stole the spotlight in the fall. Returning players who had notable fall performances were Sean Pisarski, a sophomore outfielder, Greg Densem, who will take over the starting catching duties in his second year, Jordan Padriano, who missed last season due to academic ineligibility, and Bob Foerster, who will need to step in at first base this year.

Regardless of the concerns about who will play where and how to fill which holes, the verdict stands: one through 46, these guys are good.

"This is the most talented group overall, from player to player, that we've ever had," said Whitely.

Regular season play began Feb 10 against California and midway through the season, the T-Birds are now 16-3 on the year, 10-2 for conference games. UBC's next home action is on April 2, when they begin a four-game series against Corban College at Thunderbird Park.

Follow the 'Birds www.gothunderbirds.ca





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