

The Southern Division					
	Played	Won	Lost	Tied	Pts
U.S. Navy Lions	14	13	1	0	26
Mormon Elders	14	13	1	0	26
Middlesex Athletics	14	10	4	0	20
Richmond Knights	14	6	8	0	12
Ruislip Venturers	14	6	8	0	12
Sutton Braves	14	4	10	0	8
Middlesex Bees	14	2	11	1	5
Enfield Dodgers	14	1	12	1	3

The U.S. Navy met the Mormon Elders in a play-off game to decide the championship of the Southern Division. U.S. Navy won a very exciting game by 6 - 5 (11 innings). The game although full of thrills was marred by numerous errors, unlike the previous meeting between the two clubs which Navy won 2 - 1.

Judging by the total scores for and against each club in the National League and the Southern Division it would appear that the Southern Division is not so well balanced as the National League, mainly it must be added because of the inclusion of the two American teams in the Southern Division.

Mormon Elders, Ruislip Venturers, and Sutton Braves were additions to the number of teams turning out correctly uniformed, Braves in particular were very attractively clad. Middlesex Bees, thanks to new sweat shirts, sox, caps, and trimmings, looked very much smarter than last season; but unfortunately due to lack of playing strength Bees often included guest players who turned out in any uniforms they chanced to possess. This largely offset the real effort that the club had made to improve their presentation. An encouraging omen for Bees was the relatively successful period they enjoyed during the latter stages of the season.

Enfield Dodgers had difficulty at times in raising a full team and this undoubtedly is why they finished in last place in the Southern Division, quite a contrast to 1964 when they finished top of the First Division (North) of the S.B.A.

A number of improvements were made at the Rose Hill Ground, Sutton, including chain-link fencing extensions from the outer edges of the backstop net, on-deck circles, a score-board, and, thanks largely to the publicity work of Bert Baker, more spectators. All in all the Southern Division of the National League enjoyed a reasonably successful initial season.



BASEBALL

Courier

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ONE HIT AND ONE PITCH by John Varnam.

Bouquets, bouquets, and even more bouquets, bouquets for anyone even remotely connected with Britain's first baseball international, be they Dutch, British, or American.

One hour and forty minutes of the greatest baseball I've ever seen. Great from every angle, promotion, presentation, and playing. I could have watched it for 24 hours and 40 minutes. What a difference a stadium environment makes!

The enthusiasm of all the players was a joy to behold. No sooner had I jotted down the 'runs, hits, errors, and left ons', than the next innings was under way. Great Britain (plus guests) 1, and a very kindergartenish looking Holland 3. Oh! How all British baseball enthusiasts must have envied this slick, smooth team of kids. For kids is what they were, and slick and smooth is how they played it.

Pitching duels can be dull, but not this O'Neil - Dom affair. O'Neil was the master until the eighth, and deep down I thought even then that the young Continentals with men on second and third could not produce the power to break him down. With one away it was obviously a squeeze-play situation. Twice Pols squared off to bunt, both times watching a strike thump into catcher Parker's mitt. This was a big "out" for Stretford Wally. Unfortunately for him though, the next batter, van der Ster, smashed a hit, perfect in any league, a grounder

through the right side. The ball couldn't have been placed better by remote control. It must have been more than manager Urbanus could have hoped for. Two runs came across and the game was practically lost for Gt. Britain.

The final K.O. punch came for the home side with one pitch from Rudi Dom. If ever one pitch sealed a ball game it was Dom's second strike to Rocky Collins in the bottom of the eighth. Holland led 2 - 1, one away, O'Neil edged off third, Dom stretched, reared, kicked and threw Collins a "nothing" pitch, change-up, call it what you will. Collins was 5 seconds in front of it, the strike plopped over the plate. The sheer nerve of such a pitch in that situation put the final nail into the coffin for Britain as far as I was concerned.

The momentum carried the youthful Nederlanders on to victory, Mollmann scoring the third run in the last innings, on an error, a balk, a stolen base, and a Texas-league single.

I did a round trip of a meagre 250 miles to see the game, I will go 2,500 miles every day to see games like this, please, please give me more.

Finally, a word about the game's MVP award. Dom was the winning pitcher. He got two walks and a hit at bat, and scored one of the runs. No disrespect to Wally O'Neil, but just how did young Rudi miss the vote?

There follows a more prosaic account of the international game for which we are indebted to "Honkbal Nieuws" the official periodical of the Royal Dutch Baseball Association.

NETHERLANDS' YOUTH CREATE GOOD IMPRESSION IN BRITAIN

The Dutch Youth baseball team have left a very favourable impression behind them in Britain. The trip to Alconbury and London saw the team win twice, but what is more important both games were well played. On Saturday afternoon the U.S.A.F. Alconbury Spartans were beaten 5 - 2, and on Sunday afternoon we defeated Gt. Britain by 3 - 1.

At the Crystal Palace F.C. ground (Selhurst Park) 1,500 spectators saw a skilful and thrilling game between Gt. Britain and the Netherlands' Youth team. The Netherlands batted in the following order, Stroker, 2b; Pols, ss; van der Star, cf; Jelsma, rf; Mollmann, lf, substituted by van 't Klooster in the 9th; Augustinus, c; Van Ewijk, lb; Slaap, 3b; and Dom, p. We

were only able to gain the upper hand in the closing stages of the game after trailing 1 - 0 from the second innings.

Gt. Britain had taken the lead when Gordon had scored as a result of his own double, followed by an error by first baseman Van Ewijk which allowed Barrass to get on base, Mahoney then got an infield hit to drive in Gordon. The Netherlands' Youth strove to wrest this advantage from the British team, but O'Neil was pitching magnificently, in spite of being put into a tight spot by his catcher on at least one occasion. (Editor's note, Britain used two catchers, the second being F. Parker (Hull), the first was I believe J. Thomas (Liverpool Tigers); and the criticism in this report which described the catcher as the weakest link in the British team may have applied either to one of these players or to both of them).

In the eighth innings the Netherlands scored, when, after Slaap struck-out, Rudi Dom got a base on balls, advancing to second on an error by the British catcher. Dom advanced to third when Stroker got an infield hit. Stroker stole second. A single by van der Star followed and pushed across two runs.

The final tally came in the ninth, an error by the second baseman permitted van 't Klooster to reach first safely and also advance to second. He then scored on a line-drive by Jan van Ewijk.

Rudi Dom was the winning pitcher with six strike-outs, one base on balls, and four hits. O'Neil's totals were eleven strike-outs, two bases on balls, five hits. The Netherlands made two errors, Gt. Britain six.

BELGIUM v. NETHERLANDS

On the same day that Gt. Britain faced the Netherlands' Youth team, Belgium met the full Netherlands' international squad at the ground of the Berchem Baseball Club, Antwerp. The Netherlands won by a score of 11 - 1.

The countries have been meeting since 1933 but with the remarkable improvement in Dutch baseball which has taken place since the Second World War much of the interest has vanished from the Netherlands v. Belgium games; indeed after the 43 - 5 debacle in 1960, the Netherlands decided to discontinue full international fixtures with Belgium but were later persuaded to resume the series.

EUROPEAN CUP FINAL

On Saturday, July 24, at Nettuno, the home club Simmenthal watched by 3,000 fans beat Sparta 4 - 2 in the final of the

European Cup.

It was a well deserved triumph for the Italian club, as although out-hit by the Dutch club 7 to 6, better defensive play enabled them to prevail. The winning pitcher was Giulio Glorioso, for many years Italy's first choice pitcher for the national team; the losing pitcher was Rudi Dom. Simmenthal were strengthened by three American players.

Faraone scored in the second innings as a result of a mix-up on the part of Sparta. Then followed a disastrous incident, a throw got past the catcher Augustinus, who apparently then lost track of the ball, while he sought to retrieve it Glorioso and Monaco jubilantly crossed the plate to put their club 3 runs ahead.

Sparta scored once in the third, and again in the fourth. Lauri scored the fourth run for Simmenthal in the seventh.

After the Chairman of the European Baseball Federation, Prince de Borghese, presented the cup, the winners received a lengthy ovation enlivened by fireworks. Sparta received warm applause as they left the primitive baseball-field.

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FLASHBACK

Baseball, the highly developed descendant of the old English game known in different parts of Britain as rounders, feeder, or base-ball, was played for the first time in Britain according to rules which we should consider authentic at Edge-hill, Liverpool, on the evening of Thursday, July 30th, 1874, when the Philadelphia Athletics defeated the Boston Red Stockings by 14 - 11.

March 1889, the Chicago White Stockings and All-America toured the British Isles.

August 1895, the Boston Amateur Club (U.S.A.) made a short tour in England. Among the games they played were two against Derby, champions of England.

MERSEYSIDE MISCELLANY by Hal Kenyon.

The surprise of the season was the failure of Stretford Saints, champions of the Northern National League, to gain any honours whatsoever in the Merseyside League.

The Mormon Yankees took the League championship and the Artco Trophy, whilst the lowly Tigers snatched the Lancashire Cup from the Saints giving them an 11 - 4 drubbing into the bargain. Saints' tactics were undoubtedly affected by their reluctance to pitch Iron Man O'Neil who was required for duty by the Great Britain team the following day. Windross started for the Saints and rapidly got into trouble as the Tigers slammed him for a ton of runs in the opening stages. Saints were compelled to bring on O'Neil to pitch to the Tigers' "Murderers Row" comprising King, Thomas, Kenyon, and Edgar. O'Neil did not fare much better, so Windross returned only to be again replaced by O'Neil. No matter how the Saints tried it was just "one of those days".

A few weeks later Saints revenged themselves in a league tussle with Tigers who only managed to notch two runs against almost twenty by the Stretford boys. The final league placings were 1. Mormon Yankees, 2. Stretford Saints, 3. Liverpool Aces, 4. Liverpool Tigers, 5. Trojans, 6. Cubs.

It was indeed heartening to see the Cubs holding on despite the punishment handed out to them. It certainly takes enthusiasm for a bunch of youngsters to turn up week after week knowing that their chances of winning are slim. The Trojans re-formed after many years absence from the League acquitted themselves well, and with youth on their side they could be one of the leading teams within a few years.

Norman Wells was awarded our League Merit Trophy for his work in re-creating the Trojans, he played for the club and is the virtual back bone of it. Wally O'Neil won the Player of the Year Trophy.

Liverpool Aces competing in the National League for the first time found that they had insufficient strength, particularly in their pitching staff, to make much impression in either League, finishing in third place in both leagues. The signing of Gil Robertson, ex-Tigers' pitcher, half way through the season gave added support to Alan Williams in National League fixtures, but unfortunately Robertson was not available for Merseyside League Games.

The Merseyside League Committee is well satisfied with the progress made this year, and looks forward to the 1966 season.

DUBLIN'S FIRST BASEBALL GAME by C. Butterworth.

Next Saturday, August 21st, Dublin Home Farm will play a Baseball game against Waterford in the field at Grantstown, kindly lent to the Waterford Club by Mr. John Collins. The game will commence at 3 p.m. with the pre-game drills and practices which are a special feature of Baseball, starting at 2 p.m.

This is a return game as Waterford were beaten in Dublin by Home Farm last Saturday. It was a close and hard contest with good pitching and fielding on both sides. Waterford picked up a run in the first inning and Dublin tied it up in the second. Three scoreless innings followed, each side struggling vainly to push over another run, and it was obvious that the game would be a low scoring one as the two pitchers were in complete control of the batters.

However, in the last half of the sixth innings Home Farm forged two runs around a tremendous blast by Noel Diemel deep into centre field. Waterford showed that their relay technique was working well by getting the ball back to the infield in time to limit him to a three base hit, otherwise he would certainly have scored an "inside the park" home run. That made the score, Dublin 3, Waterford 1.

In the top half of the seventh and last inning Waterford made a valiant effort at a rally, getting the tying runs on base. They squeezed one runner in to make the score 3 to 2 but the threat petered out when the last batter went down swinging for the last out.

There were many good, and even brilliant, fielding plays, one of the best being made by Henry Russell, the Waterford catcher, with a runner coming in from third base Henry took the throw and then courageously blocked the plate with his body. The runner took off on a hard slide, trying to take Henry out of there, but he stood firm under the impact and tagged the runner out.

This was the first Baseball game ever played in Dublin, according to the Home Farm athletic authorities. Softball has been played in the city by U.S. service men and some schools, but the classical American hardball game, which dates back to before the Civil War in 1861, has not been seen before.

Anyone interested in coming out to the game at Grantstown next Saturday will see greatly improved Baseball. The Waterford

Club, under Manager Bill Barry, has made much progress this year and the Dublin Home Farm team is tough. It should be an exciting game because Waterford is looking for revenge and Home Farm think they should have won more decisively last Saturday.

(Editor. Clive Butterworth has pioneered baseball in Ireland, and I hope in a future issue that he will give us an account of just how he started the game in Waterford. Incidentally, this was not the first ever display of baseball in Dublin. The Chicago White Stockings and All-America Tour of the British Isles in 1889 ended with a game at Dublin on 27th March, All-America winning by a score of 4 - 3).

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

A full account of these championships will appear in the next issue. The Netherlands won the European title for the seventh consecutive time. Below is a very compressed set of statistics of the tournament.

	W.	L.	F.	A.	HR.	HITTING PCT.
The Netherlands	4	0	57	0	6	.404
Italy	3	1	53	26	4	.303
West Germany	2	2	18	21	1	.229
Spain	1	3	28	43	5	.233
Sweden	0	4	7	73	0	.156

At the time of writing the National League play-off game between Stretford and U.S. Navy had not yet taken place, the final National League Divisional standings are shown.

The National League

	Played	Won	Lost	Pts
Stretford Saints	12	11	1	22
Hull Aces	12	9	3	18
Liverpool Aces	12	7	5	14
Austin Bombers (Birmingham)	12	6	6	12
Garringtons (Bromsgrove)	12	6	6	12
Nottingham Athletics	12	3	9	6
Nottingham Saints	12	0	12	0