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Community

# The Cobbler

Project COBB's e-newsletter – produced for  
the Society for American Baseball Research



Chronicling of  
British Baseball

October–December 2012 | Issue 3

## Welcome

Planning is already well underway for the 2013 season of British baseball, but, as promised in the previous issue of *The Cobbler*, a reflection will be provided here on the major domestic and international events that brought 2012 to a close. This brief issue then concludes with news of the publication's future in 2013 and beyond.

## 2012 in review

On the domestic side, the Harlow Nationals repeated as national champions, getting the better of the Herts Falcons by 2–0 in a potential three-game series from within the double-elimination event. The London Mets and Southampton Mustangs were earlier casualties. The Nationals' star slugger Jarrod Pretorius was named Most Valuable Hitter for the National Baseball League's regular season and team-mate Roberto Almanzar, who was unbeaten on the mound, scooped Most Valuable Pitcher honours.

Internationally, Great Britain had a disappointing, but not disastrous, dual campaign in Europe. In the European Championship the team finished 11th out of 12 nations, which means that the team will have to win their way back into the

next main event at an interim qualifying tournament. One main positive from the event in the Netherlands was defeating Russia in the final game, propelled by a line-up with a good representation of domestic-based players. In other games, the country had fielded nines comprising chiefly, or exclusively, overseas-based players. This is a strong sign that the domestic league still has a long way to go in its journey of development.

Following on from the Dutch tournament, the team travelled to Regensburg – a beautiful medieval city in Germany – to compete in one of the four pools in the inaugural qualifying stage of the World Baseball Classic (introduced with the event's expansion from 16 to 28 nations). Reinforcements came by way of a host of players with experience in the minor leagues. Among them were hot prospects Chris Reed and Michael Roth, although both were on strict pitch limits for the tournament (50 pitches [or three innings] and 65 pitches [or four innings], respectively). The pair kept Great Britain shoulder-to-shoulder with Canada (whose numbers included Larry Walker as hitting coach) for six innings in the opening game of the double-elimination event, but the bullpen allowed the maple-leaf nation to

run away with the game in the seventh. Great Britain's only win came in their next game, a comfortable besting of the Czech Republic, behind a dominant pitching performance from southpaw Jacob Esch.

Sadly for Great Britain, elimination came in the next game with a mercy-rule defeat by Germany, who were then heavily defeated by Canada in the final game. Thus, the North Americans reclaimed a spot in the field for 2013's main event.

## 2013 and beyond

In this preliminary year of *The Cobbler*, which has seen three issues published, different content types have been experimented with, all with a view to establishing the best format for 2013 and hopefully beyond. The first year proper will see the publication fall into the same pattern as the *Baseball Research Journal*, with the hope that a twice-yearly frequency will allow the collection of a greater wealth of materials prior to publication. An April issue will reflect on historical discoveries during the off-season and gaze forward for the season to come. An October issue will then tie everything together from the year just gone.