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BRITISH COLUMBIA BASEBALL UMPIRE'S ASSOCIATION

Hey Blue! Newsletter

BCBUA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

The BCBUA Annual General Meeting will be held at 11am on Sunday November 25, 2012 at Holiday Inn, 10720 Cambie Road Richmond. Elections for Area Directors in zones 2, 4, 6, and 8 will take place. Annual BCBUA Awards will be presented and committee reports submitted. There will also be an update presented on a number of initiatives

taken in the past year, an update on Superclinic, and the National program.

Our first Ron Boutang Umpire Scholarship winner will be announced. Come out and take part in the Annual General Meeting and be an active part of your association!

BANNER YEAR FOR BCBUA OFFICIALS

Following the Baseball Canada National Championships, and recent successes of our umpires at 3 International tournaments, it is safe to say that BC is back on the map as far as having top notch officials in our stables.

Rob Allan of Maple Ridge received the Semi Final Plate assignment at the Pan Am games in Mexico last fall, Rhonda Pauls of Abbotsford followed that up with her selection to the International Friendship Exhibition in Cuba known as the Triangle Series. By all ac-



Mark Bodwell, Kris Hartley, Rob Allan, Will Hunter, Steve Boutang;
BC Crew at Baseball Canada Senior Men's Championships 2012

counts, she was the top rated umpire at the event. And in August, Kelly Hunter and Steve Boutang worked at the Women's World Cup of Baseball in Edmonton. Both had solid tournaments.

This year's National Cham-

pionships proved to be another opportunity for BC umpires to showcase their talents.

Boutang followed up his World Cup with a Gold Medal Plate effort at the Sr. Men's Nationals in Prince

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 1-4 ... Baseball Canada Annual General Meeting – Quebec City, PQ
November 24 – BCBUA Board of Directors Meeting – Richmond, BC
November 25 – BCBUA Annual General Meeting – Richmond, BC
January 31-February 3 – Baseball Canada Caravan – Surrey, BC
February 9-10 – BCBUA Superclinic – Surrey, BC
March 28-31 (tentative) – National Umpires Clinic – Kamloops, BC



We're really pleased with many successes in 2012, and especially the way we've been able to work with our partners in the sport.

2012 was the first full year under the leadership of provincial umpire supervisor Steve Boutang. Steve has brought his trademark energy and enthusiasm to his role, and he's been moving our education and development efforts forward. He's worked with a team of our senior umpires to get umpires at all levels better instruction, with more and better clinics, with more and better mentoring and evaluations, and with more effective use of our website as a key communications tool. All of this makes content more effective, and consistent across the province and with Baseball Canada leadership.

Provincial tournaments are one of the more visible areas where we've made improvements. Our provincials' chair (and Association Secretary) George Smith has coordinated a good mix of developing and experienced umpires at the different tournaments that BCBUA allocates. We've increased the number of supervisors and assistant supervisors at those tournaments. They've provided more of the evaluations, constructive feedback and mentoring that are so effective in improving technique and confidence in developing umpires.

Our links with organizations have been very constructive, and BCBUA is enormously appreciative of the cooperation extended by BC Minor and other organizations, particularly the local associations. We really can't be successful without each other!

As you know, we recently amended most of our contracts between BCBUA and associations. While the

changes weren't major, I want to recognize the collaborative way we all worked to use them mostly as a blueprint for cooperation and clarity in getting the right results at each tournament.

We acknowledge and thank BC Minor and Baseball BC for the financial support provided for officiating in different ways. While some involves BCBUA directly, we see the benefits in so many other ways when players and coaches, as well as officials themselves, see strong support for officiating as an integral part of the game. A key to this is making sure that umpires attend a clinic each year, where they can refresh and develop their knowledge and technique, and interact with other officials.

One indicator of our success this year has been the national and international assignments for BC umpires. We've had more assignments this year, and a really good set of evaluations of performance at those levels. This speaks partly to the umpires themselves and their achievements, but also very much to the education and development opportunities that our system in BC is providing. We can only produce top umpires at this level if we have good, competent umpiring and development at all the levels that lead up to nationals. And that makes for better ball for everyone!

We are looking forward to more initiatives next year. Steve and his team are developing those plans, which will include for example a Baseball Canada caravan for instructors. We are also looking forward to linking our February SuperClinic with the BC Minor 50th anniversary event.

SMITH IS RICHMOND OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

BCBUA Secretary George Smith was recently awarded the Official of the Year at the Richmond Civic Awards. Smith has been involved in a volunteer capacity for numerous organizations over the past 15 years in the area, including several associations and sports as an official.



(Continued from page 1)

George. Mark Bodwell was the first base umpire in the Gold Medal game and the Plate umpire in the Semi Final. Will Hunter and Kris Hartley also had strong showings. Bodwell also earned his International Endorsement and is now eligible for selection to International Events, joining Boutang, Allan, and Troy Carmont from BC on the Endorsed list. Rob Allan



earned a promotion to Lead Supervisor for his work as an Assistant Supervisor at this event.

History was made at the Men's Nationals when all four field umpires, plus the Game Supervisor were from the same province. This was the first time in history at a Baseball Canada event that this has happened. Congrats to Kris Hartley (plate), Will Hunter (1st), Mark Bodwell (2nd) and Steve Boutang (3rd) plus Rob

Allan (Supervisor) for going down in the history books!

Chet Masse of Victoria was the 3rd base umpire in the Gold Medal game at the Jr. Nationals in Quebec while Fabian Poulin earned 3rd base in the Bronze medal game at the Canada Cup in London Ontario. Don Violette was selected as the plate umpire for the semi final at Midget in Quebec City while Brad Woolf made a strong impression as

well earning a base assignment in the semi.

At Bantams, newcomer Jason Nazaroff received the Bronze Medal Plate assignment in his first National.

And at Peewees in Saskatoon, Rhonda Pauls was named the Plate umpire for the Semi Final game, while Bill MacMillan and George Smith earned first base assignments on the Gold and Bronze Medal crews.

Pauls, Kelly Hunter, and Boutang also attended the Women's Nationals in Spruce Grove Alberta in July. Rhonda was selected as the Plate umpire for the Gold Medal Game, and Hunter the Bronze Plate Umpire. Boutang was a working assistant supervisor. Congratulations to all of our umpires. Each and every one of them are to be commended for outstanding performances this summer.

2012 LEVEL 3 REPORT LEVEL 3 TRILOGY BOOK FOUR ☺



Bill MacMillan calling Balls and Strikes at Baseball Canada Pee-Western Championships in Saskatoon August 2012

As 2012 AD (Any Dominoe's) slides from autumn into winter we are treated to the spectacle of Eager Beaver, intrepid investigative reporter for Hey Blue!, aimlessly striding purposefully up and down Main Street in Anytown searching for a subject for his next award winning contribution to Hey Blue! Magazine.

Could he do a piece on the effect of

global warming on the baseball season? Should he find out if the juiced baseballs really do shatter maple bats? Or should he just make something up and add a few big words to dazzle folks?

"Hmmm...I wonder...ummmph! What's this" says E.B. as he comes to a halt with his nose stuffed firmly up

(Continued on page 7 "Level 3")

PAULS AND SMITH ACCLAIMED!

Vice President Rhonda Pauls and Secretary George Smith have been acclaimed to their respective board positions for the next 2 years. Pauls enters her second term as Vice President and Smith begins his 4th term in office.

Both were acclaimed as part of the new bylaws which require people running for Table Officer Positions (President, Vice-

President, Secretary, Treasurer) to be nominated by a set deadline prior to the AGM (September 1). As no nominations were received, and Pauls and Smith both indicated a willingness to stand again, they were acclaimed.

The following Area Director positions are up for election at the AGM this year.

Area 2 – Vancouver Island North – Incumbant – NICK MOORE

Area 4 – Lower Mainland West – Incumbant – DON HASS

Area 6 – Thompson Okanagan – Incumbant – KRIS HARTLEY

Area 8 – Kootenays – Incumbant – BILL MACMILLAN

FLYING THE COUPE

Congratulations to four of our long standing BCBUA umpires and Board members who recently retired from their day jobs as civil servants within various government departments.

Lorne Raymond, assistant Area Director for Okanagan South, recently retired after working 35 years at different positions for the City of Penticton and the Municipality of West Kelowna. Lorne started in the banking business in Penticton and after a few years took on an accounting role within the City of Penticton where he worked for many, many years before concluding his final 4 years of his working career in West Kelowna. In Penticton, Lorne had a great email address. It began with the word "Collector".

Corporal Ralph Jolley, former Area Director for Okanagan South, completed a stellar 35 year career with the RCMP in April. Ralph's work was vast within the force as he worked many different details in cities up north, and the Okanagan, finishing his last 5 years as a corporal in West Kelowna. Ralph missed work so much that he signed on with the RCMP as a part time constable in June and is back on the job. Our community is safer because of it.

Bill MacMillan retired from the BC Ambulance Service in April after 38 years of service, most of which were spent in Trail. Bill graduated from the first ever BC Paramedic's course in 1974 and was 5th in the province in seniority at the end of his career. Bill started his career in Vancouver and said his most famous "customer" was former Vancouver Millionaire Stanley Cup Champion Fred "Cyclone" Taylor, whom he transported to St Pauls hospital shortly before Taylor passed away in 1979.

Bill also missed saving people's lives so much that he signed on as a part timer following retirement and is now happily double-dipping....and helping save the lives of the citizens of Trail.

Finally, our President John Berry retired in June after 40 years of service to the Federal Government and specifically the Agricultural Industry in BC. John served most of the last 35 years as the Regional Director General for Agri Food and Agriculture Canada in the BC Region, the province's top post for Civil Servants. At his retirement ceremony in June (a who's who of MLA's and Agriculture executives in BC), childhood friend and former MLA John Van Dongen remarked that there were 2 reasons that John worked for 40 years... either he really liked serving the farmers and agriculture industry in BC, or he didn't have a basic concept of math (in reference to the fact that John's pension was maxed out after 35 years of service and he had been working the last 5 years for salary only.)

In truth, it was John's love of Agriculture and Service to the Public that kept him working as everyone attested to.

John received many gifts and congratulations, notably a signed and framed letter from Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who thanked him for his dedicated service to Canadians.

Many of our members retire each year, but it is a rarity when 4 of our long standing umpires, board members, and public servants all retire in the same short time period. We all owe you gentlemen a debt of gratitude for your professional contributions to the Citizens of BC. We were all the better for it.

NATIONAL CLINIC RETURNS TO KAMLOOPS IN 2013!

The National Umpires Clinic will return to our long-time host city of Kamloops for our annual evaluation weekend. All National umpires are encouraged to attend and only those attending will be considered for travelling assignments in 2013. The tentative date is March 28-31. Registration for this event will begin in the New Year. Cost is yet to be determined.

There will be a limited number of Special Invitations extended next year and these will be determined by the National Umpires Committee on a selection basis.

Please contact Supervisor Steve Boutang by email if you wish to be considered.

NATIONAL SUPERVISOR HONORED



*Baseball Canada Supervisor of
Officials Corrie Davis*

Baseball Canada Supervisor of Umpires Corrie Davis has been selected as this year's recipient of the Male Sports Official of the Year.

Davis was presented with his award at the Sports Officials of Canada Annual Award Dinner in Saskatoon in late September.

Former Supervisor Don Gilbert was also awarded the Allen G. Rae Builder's Award for his significant contributions to the Baseball Canada Umpire's program for 11 years.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE *By Rhonda Pauls – Vice President/Discipline Chair*

This year was a quiet year for umpires in regards to discipline issues. There were a total of 3 incidents brought to the attention of the discipline committee. Only one of the complaints, upon completion of an investigation, required formal suspension of game privileges for a period of time. The other two instances did warrant follow up in the form of educational conversations with the umpires involved. Although formal sanctions were not recorded in the permanent files for these two umpires, the

committee takes seriously all conduct allegations that reflect poorly on individual members or the organization, and due attention was given to both. One of these conversations is still in process.

Even though 2 of the 3 complaints brought forward did not meet the criteria for more formal action to be imposed (as outlined above), it is the position of the discipline committee that consequences for any form of misconduct (intentional or not) should be for

the betterment of the umpire and the organization and not be solely punitive in nature. That having been said, ongoing education, dialog and mentorship opportunities for our umpires around handling situations and appropriate interactions between partner groups and fans will continue to be a focus at our clinics, on field, and in the resources the BCBUA provides for its members in the coming year.

FUNDS RAISED FOR KIDSPORT

Approximately \$2500 was raised for the Kidsport BC Chapter at the annual Valley Of Champions baseball tournament in Kelowna in July. Area Director Darcy Rysz and Rhonda Pauls co-ordinated the event from the BCBUA standpoint along with local volunteers.

Rysz was able to procure a number of memorabilia items for the silent

auction. Plus 44 umpires donated a game fee towards the cause. All umpires who donated a game fee received a bright yellow t-shirt which they wore in place of their regular game jersey for the day.

Kidsport has committed to using all baseball related donations towards baseball projects in the host communities.

Additionally, Kris Hartley has set up a team webpage on the Kidsport Site where BCBUA donations can be made and we encourage you all to contribute what you can prior to the end of tax season.

Kidsport is the Charity of Choice for Baseball Canada.

I'm a pretty happy guy these days..... why, you may ask? It's because I am beaming with happiness and pride over the year of officiating, and in particular from our National program umpires.

Four of our umpires worked home plate in Bronze or Gold Medal games at various National Championships this year. I don't ever recall that happening. All of our umpires received positive reports about their performance. I have to admit that I expected that part, but it was nice to hear anyway.

Sure we lost a few of our National members in the past few years, but we have gained so many more. We have a total of 29 fully qualified members at level 4A or above, 8 more level 4B's who are awaiting their first assignment, and 13 more who have passed one of the two components of the qualifications and who have paid membership dues to Baseball Canada in 2012. That's also more interest than we've ever had in this program.

Since last year there have been 4 of our BCBUA umpires who have represented Canada at International events. I don't recall that ever happening either.

And if anyone thinks this year is an anomaly, think again. I can guarantee you that we will see this kind of result at National championships for a long time to come. Why, again you may ask? It's because our province has embarked on a new path. A path towards Education, Evaluation, and Improvement. It is unmistakable. It has caught the attention of the rest of the country. I can hear them talking at National tournaments and meetings about "who are these new guys in BC?",

"Where did he come from?", "I've never seen this guy before!", and the like. And the reason they are talking is because our National umpires are doing great work out there. And they are going to get better.

Our National clinic is an envy of most provinces across the country. We had guests from other provinces at this past year's clinic because they wanted to see what we were doing that was so successful. And that style of clinic will continue... not only because it is a major stepping stone towards getting an umpire into the National program, but because it teaches them to excel.

Evaluation of umpires will continue to be a major priority, not only at the clinic, but during the season. More evaluations will be conducted during the season with all umpires, including Nationally rated officials. And this will lead to Improvement so long as the umpire is willing to enact the things that are being asked of him or her.

I guarantee that with improvement, we will have success - as individuals and as a group.

Our future is brighter than it has ever been. We have some top prospects in this province that don't exist in other areas of Canada. And the crop of youngsters



Steve Boutang at GFI 2011
Picture by Donna Thibeault,
Cover Design by Vicom Design,
Grand Forks BC: used by permission

who are just getting into the program, or on the verge of getting into the program, gives us a glimpse into the future that I will be pleased to hand over to the next Supervisor - whenever that takes place.

I am proud of and happy for all of our National umpires this year. You did this province well, and I thank you for your hard work and dedication to self-improvement. You've set a great example for the rest of us to follow.

I have said it once, and I'll say it again.... The rest of the country may not know who are our umpires are today, but they sure will 5 years from now.

(Level 3 continued from page 3)

the...armpit..... of a fellow pedestrian.

"Why if it isn't the Level 3 Coordinator" gushes E.B.

"Hello Mr. Beaver", grunts the Level 3 Coordinator "mind if you take your nose out of my ...armpit?"

"Well isn't this just the very thing" E.B. says to L3C "I was just wondering what to make up for this issue of Hey Blue! And here I bump into you. You don't suppose that this was meant to be, do you? Do you have any pearls of wisdom for my ever interested readers?"

"Since you ask, Mr. Beaver, it just so happens that I have just left a virtual meeting this very month with some of our Big Thinkers and I might have some news, but it is a BIG secret. So you can't tell anyone but your readers. Is that a deal?" the L3C winked at E.B.

E.B. rushed to get out his new Eye Pad so he would have someplace to put his note book while he listened. "Fire away" said he when he was ready.

"In 2012" said the L3C "we had a new high of 110 evaluations done by, also

a new high, 26 different evaluators. While this is excellent participation by our Senior Umpires, not all of them are actually qualified Evaluators. This is one of those things that is good news/bad news and one we didn't really think all the way through last year when we required all the Nationals and National hopefuls to do some evaluations. We got lots of quantity but the quality was spotty."

"How do you fix that?" E.B. wondered.

"Simply change the focus from examination to education" explained the L3C. "We will still ask for 2 from each National umpire every year but now we will ask for mentorships and short form teaching sessions from those who are not certified evaluators. This leaves it more open for our folks to go to the more junior games like Pee Wee, Mosquito and Tadpole and help these young kids get off on the right track in their umpiring career. We feel that if the youngsters have more support and input from the oldsters then they are more likely to stick around and grow as officials and mature as adults."

"But what about those that still need evaluations for level 3 or 4? Where

do they go?"

"That won't change, E.B. They can still contact me and we will arrange for an evaluation to be carried out."

"If you change the focus from examination to education does that now mean nobody has to write the written exam anymore?"

"Not at all!" the L3C was quick to clarify "Level 3 written exams must still be completed each year and submitted to me. That has not changed!"

"So the message really hasn't changed over the years", mused E.B. "Education is still the path to excellence!"

"Exactly" replied the L3C.

"Thank you for talking to me today Mr. L3C and I am sorry if I bruised your...armpit."

"You are welcome Eager and have a good winter. See you next spring!"

SUPERCLINIC WELCOMES MLB SUPERVISOR LARRY YOUNG

Provincial Supervisor Steve Boutang is pleased to announce that Major League Baseball Supervisor, and former MLB Umpire, Larry Young will be the special Guest Instructor at the bi-annual Superclinic. The clinic will be held February 9-10 in Surrey. Cost is yet to be determined and registration will be opened at the Annual General Meeting. Check the BCBUA Website for updates and registration form – which must be completed online and submitted to George Smith or handed to him in person at the AGM. Registration will be first come and first served. This year's clinic will feature additional high level instruction from many of BC's top instructors. Other guest instructors have yet to confirm their attendance but there will undoubtedly be a top notch lineup.

The weekend will coincide with BC Minor Baseball's 50th anniversary Celebrations. BCBUA Thanks BC Minor for their assistance in hosting this year's Superclinic!



JOYCE SAVES LIFE

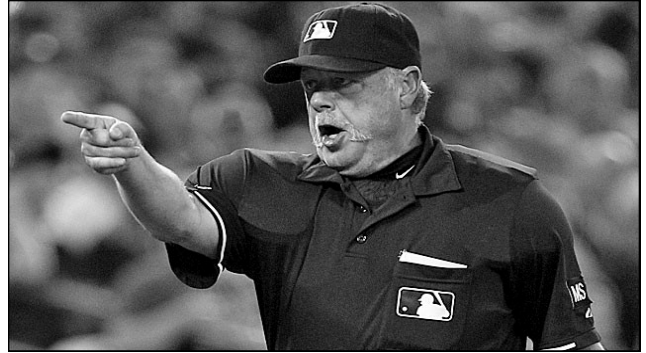
Our old friend Jim Joyce is getting a lot of kudos these days, and not for his usual outstanding job on the field. We all know Jim as a great guy from the time he taught at our Superclinic in 2005. But this story certainly takes the cake.

Joyce, a big league umpire for 24 years, was walking into the umpire's dressing room in Phoenix before a game in late August when he noticed a Diamondback employee struggling to breathe. Soon the employee, Jayne Powers, went into Cardiac Arrest.

Joyce began CPR, and was later assisted by a Diamondback bench player who was a former firefighter.

The woman was taken by ambulance to hospital where she later regained consciousness. Dr's say that the immediate assistance provided by Joyce saved the woman's life.

Following the incident, Joyce worked his regular assignment behind home plate.



RHONDA PAULS IN CUBA...

BCBUA Vice President Rhonda Pauls was selected by Baseball Canada to represent us at the International Friendship Series in Cuba known as the Triangle Series. The series featured National women's squads from Canada, Cuba, and Venezuela. While it was not a tournament, Rhonda was described as being the top plate umpire at the event.

Look for the Interview with Rhonda later in this newsletter.



SCHOLARSHIP WINNER TO BE ANNOUNCED AT AGM!

The first recipient of the Ron Boutang Memorial Umpire Scholarship will be announced at the BCBUA Annual General Meeting. 6 applications were received for the inaugural award, which will see an umpire receive a significant scholarship to attend professional umpire school in the States this winter.

In related news, John Berry and Steve Boutang continue to work towards establishing a foundation for the scholarship which will allow for tax receipts to be issued for qualifying donations. A successful application would open up a more significant revenue stream from corporate and private donations.

SECRETARY'S REPORT *By George Smith - Secretary*

There are a total of 1336 members registered in the BCBUA this year. A total of 49 people registered in the Baseball Canada program this season, some of which are listed as level 3 members because they have not yet qualified in all areas to be a full level 4A umpire.

CLINIC CONTENT UPDATE

As you all know, Baseball Canada is in the process of producing a new educational model for provinces to use to train umpires. This product is called Long Term Officials Development.

There will be a more standardized approach taken to umpire training in both methodology and deliverance, and a new way of evaluating competency at each level prior to an umpire moving up within the ranks.

At this stage, the only substantial update that can be

delivered is that the project is still moving forward, and more information will be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Baseball Canada Umpires Committee in Quebec City in November.

The 3 man and 4 man system manuals have been updated and will be available to view on the Baseball Canada website. There are a few minor changes and the manuals are more comprehensive with situations

BASEBALL CANADA CARAVAN IN SURREY!

Provincial Supervisor Steve Boutang is pleased to announce that Baseball Canada Caravan will be hosted by British Columbia in 2013. The 4 day clinician training event will take place in Surrey from January 31-February

3. This is the 3rd Caravan that BC has hosted, following events in 1993 and 2007.

Boutang will handpick 8 of our current BCBUA instructors to attend the training.

TREASURER'S REPORT *by Fabian Poulin*

The 2012 season saw increases in a couple areas of revenue while the other areas stayed the same or decreased. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for our expenses. A number of expenses increased while the others stayed the same or decreased. Overall, the association is down approximately \$2500.00 from last year at this time. On the other hand, we have started a few projects that will only improve the quality of the umpires we put on the field. We currently have over \$40,000 in the bank and are in a good financial position for the start of next season with several new projects on the horizon.

BASEBALL CANADA UMPIRE



Mitchell Petersen of Delta was named the Baseball Canada Umpire of the week for the last week of May. Petersen, a new member of the National program, is in his 6th year of umpiring. He

was the BC Nominee for Umpire of the week, which he earned by being ranked the number 1 plate umpire for the Bantam division of the National clinic in April.

DID YOU KNOW?

Former MLB umpire Ron Barnes, who attended the Grand Forks International this year was the Crew Chief of Ian Lamplugh when they worked in the Pacific Coast League together. Barnes worked the most minor league professional games as an umpire in Minor League History at over 1000. Barnes and Lamplugh worked the AAA finals in 2002 between Edmonton Trappers and Salt Lake City Buzz.

2012 KOOTENAYS AREA REPORT *Bill MacMillan*

2012 was an interesting year for us in the Kootenays. We held several clinics in assorted locations and had an increased number of attendees throughout the region.

Late in the clinic season we were approached by the Castlegar Coach Coordinator to put on a rules session and umpire management clinic for them. Unfortunately we didn't have time to get it all together before the season got in the way. However, we are looking forward to getting it done in 2013. If any of you out there are interested in setting something up for your local coaches please give us a call and let's do it!

The lion's share of the set up and instructing this year was done by the Assistant Area Rep Jason Nazaroff and for this I thank him very much.

We hosted the BC Little League Major Provincials in Trail in 2012 and several umpires from the Lower Mainland came up for the week. It was a pleasure working with new folks and learning new ways to do things.

I hope everyone had a good year and we will see you at the AGM or sometime next year.

AREA REPORT AREA 3 *Rob Allan*

Well, we had another great year in Area 3 (Lower mainland East). We ran clinics in Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows, and Port Coquitlam/Port Moody/Coquitlam with good attendance at all of them. Thanks to all the area UIC making sure we had separate level 1 and level 2 clinics. The change of splitting the level 1/2 clinics into separate level 1 and level 2 clinics over the last couple years has been very beneficial to our members as this allowed us to cater to the level of the umpires at the clinic.

As for the National Program we had 2 umpires in our area

umpire at National Championships. Rhonda Pauls from Abbotsford umpired at both the Peewee and Sr Woman's Nationals, while Don Violette from Coquitlam umpired in the Midget Nationals. Both did very well, so congratulations to them both. Rhonda was also selected to go to Cuba to umpire in the Woman's Friendship series. Way to go to both Rhonda and Don.

Well, have a good off season, but remember that the off season is the best time to dust off that rule book and make sure you are refreshed on the rules so that you are ready to go next spring.

AREA REPORT AREA 4 *Don Hass*

It has been a busy and exciting year for AREA 4 – Particularly Richmond. On the BC Day weekend they hosted a very successful Bantam AAA Provincials. The following week we were hosts to the Pee Wee AAA event. Both weekends were extremely hot, the ball was good and the officiating was better. New West also annually hosts the BC Minor Junior playoffs. The BCBUA Clinics were well attended in the spring with, Richmond, Burnaby, and the Sunshine Coast hosting both Level 1 & 2 clinics.

Canadian Umpire Crew including our own Steve Boutang 9(on the extreme right) and Kelly Hunter (to the left of Steve) at the recent World Women's International Championship held in Edmonton this past summer. Baseball Canada's National Supervisor of officials Corrie Davis was the Umpire Supervisor for this prestigious tournament, picture in the middle here.



INTERVIEW WITH ROB ALLAN...

Editor Steve Boutang sat down with umpire Rob Allan to discuss the Pan Am Games in Mexico...

S.B. - What was the experience of umpiring in the Pan Am games like?

R.A. - *Umpiring at the Pan Am games was a great experience. The Pan Am Games is the 2nd biggest sporting event behind only the summer Olympics. So it was great to not only be a part of the baseball at the Pan Am games but to know that the baseball was only a small part of such a giant event was very cool.*

S.B. - Tell us about the city of Guadalajara

R.A. - *Well I only made it to Guadalajara one day as the baseball was actually in a small city called Lagos De Moreno about 2 hours east of Guadalajara. On the day we went to Guadalajara was our day off before the playoff round (our rain day). Originally most of the umpires were supposed to come, so they arranged a bus to take us leaving at 8 AM on that day. Well because we had that day off, we had a few extra pops the night before, and when the bus showed up the next morning, only 4 of us were awake and ready to go. We tried waking up a couple other guys but they nicely told us to buzz off. So the 4 of us (USA umpire, Dominican Republic umpire, Panama Umpire, and myself) got on this giant bus to Guadalajara. We went to the athletes village, then the main stadium where we watched part of a soccer game, then watched the end of the final of the softball gold medal game, then watched some of the gymnastics which was located right next to the softball stadium, and then went to Burger King for dinner before heading back to Lagos De Moreno. Guadalajara from what I saw of it is huge. I think population of Guadalajara is about 4 million people*

As for Lagos De Moreno(population about 80,000 people), it was great there. It was a small city that had many beautiful churches, and the people were very friendly. The only time I got into trouble was when I took a photo of one of the many military personnel guarding the downtown core with machine guns. One of the military guys came over to me because he did not like me taking photos. It seemed like he wanted to take my camera but I pretended I didn't understand. He then checked my games credentials and then left me alone.

It was nice because baseball was the only event in town, everyone knew why we're here and who we were. When the American umpire and I roamed the streets together though, we did get some strange looks, as we did not really fit in and were about a foot taller than anyone else.

S.B. - What was it like working games involving Mexico?

R. A. - *I umpired 3 games involving Mexico. The first one was opening night Mexico vs Panama and I was on the plate. Panama lead 1-0 going into the bottom of the 8th and then Mexico scored a run to tie it 1-1 and the sellout crowd of about 8000*



fans erupted like I have never heard in my life. People were dancing and singing and using their noise makers to cheer. The only other times it got that close to being that noisy was when I rung up one of the Mexican batters out on Strike 3. They had lots of opportunity to do that too as I rung up 6 Mexican batters throughout the game. I was glad that they had a giant screen between the main stadium and the field that would not allow fans to throw things on the field because I am sure I would have got hit by some flying object otherwise as they booed and screamed at me on every strike out. They would also do some cheer that I am sure was directed towards me but it was in Spanish so I was not sure what they were saying. I knew it was directed towards me as they only yelled it after they got an umpires call that they did not like.

The next game I had with Mexico was when Mexico played the USA and I was at first base. This game was probably the most intense game I have ever been a part of. First of all the teams don't like each other and the fans seemed to have a real hate for team USA. We had issues during the game where fans were throwing drinks through the screen into the USA dugout. We had to stop the game and get security to protect the dugout. They brought 1 security guard to help out. Only one, yet there were hundreds of armed soldiers and police men in the stadium, they gave us 1 rental cop that did not know what he was doing.

During that game I had 3 extremely close plays at 1st which I think I guessed right on all of them, and then the Venezuelan plate umpire ejected one of the US batters. Well this batter and some of his coaches started to go crazy on the plate umpire, so I came running in got the player and the extra coaches away from my plate guy so he could have a discussion with the US manager alone about the ejection. The other 4 umpires in the game just watched from far away. Mexico ended up winning that game 3-2 and the place went crazy. I was thinking that it might be a new national holiday marking that day. That night we went to leave the stadium and most people had not left yet. They were partying and celebrating in the parking lot. I think our bus got mistaken to be the team USA bus as people

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Editor Steve Boutang visited with Rhonda Pauls after she returned from the Triangle Series (International Friendship Series) which took place in Havana, Cuba in June.

S.B. - What was the best part about the event?

R. P. - I would have to say the best part of the Cuba event was getting to work the dish at Estadio LatinoAmericano. This is their best stadium where their professional ball is played in Havana. The stadium is beautiful...but such a contrast to much of its surroundings. The Cuban people really take pride in this venue. I think it seats about 50,000 people. Working games in a stadium like that is hard to describe...surreal in some ways but something I will never forget.

S.B. - What was the weather like?

R.P. - The weather was hot. STINKING HOT...and humid. You could have a shower in the morning...and your hair would still be wet hours later. On the field you had to carry a towel everywhere with you...to mop yourself constantly. I could feel sweat running down my legs all the time. It was crazy. You just couldn't drink enough either.

S.B. - Describe the stadiums you umpired in?

R.P. - The first stadium where team Canada played 3 games was called Ciudad Deportiva. It was fairly large, but the grounds were poorly kept in comparison to the other stadium. It would have seated over ten thousand I would say. There were lots of kids around the outside of the fence here...they watched through the chain link...and when we came out they were desperate for us to give them anything...food, water...baseballs. It was hard because you never had enough for all of them. The second stadium was Latino Americano.

S.B. -What fun activities did you do away from the field?

R.P. - I will have to say the beaches were amazing...where we stayed was walking distance from the beach. The white sand was gorgeous but very hot to walk on...and the water was beautiful blue and quite warm. We usually didn't play until the afternoon, so we could go to the beach in the morning.

We also spent a full day in Havana site seeing. THAT was interesting. Myself and Karine D'Aoust- the other Canadian umpire - went in a taxi together. The city is architecturally a masterpiece...but the country has not had any money to maintain infrastructure in decades...so the combination of poor living conditions of the people and the dilapidation of most of the buildings was heartbreaking. The coolest place we went to was a bar called El Floridita. It was painted inside kind of like the Sistine Chapel - absolutely amazing, and had a bronze statue of author Ernest Hemmingway in the corner of the bar. Apparently this was one of his favorite haunts.

The other really cool thing we did was go to the Canadian Embassy for dinner along with the Canadian and Cuban National teams. I got to meet Matthew Levin the Ambassador, and was able to gift him with a Team BC hat to wear with his Team Canada jersey that Andre La Chance gave him from the team. Dinner was the best meal we ate in Cuba, and we all sat with Cuban players and used translators and charades to talk to each other. It was a great night.

S.B. - You gave away some items from Canada. Tell us about that.

R.P. - Baseball BC was most gracious in giving me hats and shirts for all the umpires I would be working with

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along with some other items for discretionary gifting. The Cuban umpires were very excited to receive these things from us. I also collected and was given many baseballs, gloves and assorted baseball equipment for youth, and baseball cards. Being able to give this equipment away to kids who would never see such things rivaled my best experience there on the field. There would be kids – young and old – playing scrub in fields...parking lots or even the streets outside the stadiums, but between a dozen or more of them they might have one ratty old glove and a stringy baseball. On one occasion after one of our games, I walked up to a 15 year old boy playing with friends in the street and handed him a good quality Mizuno fielder's glove with a brand new baseball in it. I was not prepared for the reaction I got. The game stopped because he was yelling...and all the kids came running over to see...then they shouted out dibs on who would be next to use it...after passing it around of course and checking it out. They immediately used the new ball, but were very careful not to let it hit the ground and scuff it. I thought they were going to hoist me in the air they were so grateful. This was just ONE of the instances I had...I would have to say it was most humbling to return home and know how much we have that we take for granted after that experience.



International Umpire Crew IBAF Women's World
Championship Edmonton 2012

Kelly Hunter, Corrie Davis and Steve Boutang at
Telus Field at the 2012 IBAF Women's World
Baseball Championships



STUMP THE UMP

So this situation actually occurred this past summer at a Provincial Championship. I'm not going to tell you which one as the umpires in that game got the call right, but it took them awhile to discuss it amongst themselves and eventually the protest committee. Here's the situation; runners at 1st and 3rd, 1 out. Batter bunts the ball down the first baseline. Instead of allowing the run to score and taking the sure out at 1st base the 1st baseman throws home to try and prevent the runner from 3rd from scoring. Meanwhile the batter-runner stops about 5 feet from the plate up the 1st baseline and allows himself to be hit with the thrown ball. So there are several possible calls to make on this play, one of them is really a non-call in that the umpires should call nothing and allow the play to happen as is. Other calls would be call the batter-runner out for abandoning his attempt to go to 1st. Another might be to call the B-R out for deliberate interference and also call out R3. The correct answer will be in the next issue of Hey Blue!

FUN FACTS

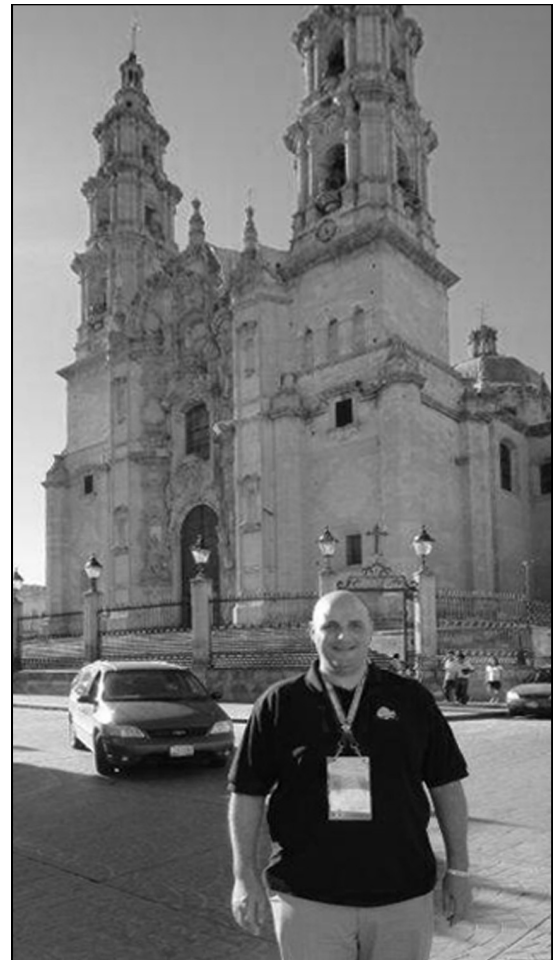
At the time of this writing, there were 3 perfect games pitched in the Major Leagues in 2012. Phil Humber of the White Sox, Matt Cain of the Giants, and Felix Hernandez of the Mariners. The first perfect game in the history of baseball was June 12, 1880 by John Lee Richmond, some 35 years after the first game recorded in the history of the sport. There have been 23 total perfect games in baseball history.

MLB Umpire visits BC

Former Big League Umpire Ron Barnes of Vacaville California attended the famous 32nd annual Grand Forks International tournament earlier this summer. Barnes, with nearly 500 games in the majors, was a special guest of the tournament and worked 13 games over 6 days alongside some of BC's best umpires. Barnes commented that it was one of the finest tournaments he had ever been to, and that the officiating was outstanding in BC.



So when was the last time that you went to umpire a baseball game and had to be escorted by armed guards. This was just one of the many things that Rob Allan had to adjust to when he travelled to Mexico to umpire at the recent Pan American games. But with that experience behind him he also got to see some amazing sites such as the 17th century church. Not only that he got to umpire some great ball games while at the tournament. Read all about it on the following page interview.





started throwing things at our bus, and giving us inappropriate hand gestures. I was thinking to myself this would have been the only time I wished our bus said umpires on it as they probably would have let us pass without incident.

The 3rd game that I had Mexico was in the Bronze medal

game and I started at 2nd base. The rule is that if the plate umpire gets injured, that the 1st base umpire comes in to the game to take over. So they told us only the plate and the 1st base umpire need to bring plate gear. So during the bronze medal game the plate umpire from Venezuela was not feeling well and was taken to hospital during the game. So this meant the 1st base umpire from Puerto Rico had to come in and suit up and be the plate guy, and I got shifted to first. The LF line umpire went to 3rd and the RF line guy got the rest of the game off as we switched to 4 man. Well the problem with this is the Puerto Rico umpire had broken his finger earlier in the tourney, and so here is a guy with a broken finger now going behind the plate to finish the game. I am thinking I sure hope he does not get hit in the finger for 2 reasons. First of all it would really hurt, and for 2nd I was now the backup guy being at first and I did not have any gear with me. So if he went down, I am not sure what we would have done to complete the game. Luckily for both of us he did not get hit and was able to finish the game. I am thinking in hind sight that we probably should not have had the backup plate guy be the guy with the broken finger

S.B. - Tell us about USA vs Cuba on the International stage.

R.A. - USA vs Cuba in baseball is the biggest game of the tourney no matter where they are in the tournament. I was very pleased to get the assignment as the plate umpire on the semi-final between USA and Cuba. I was told by Corrie Davis that only 4 Canadian umpires in history have ever got the plate between USA and Cuba. Usually in this game Cuba lobbies for a Latin American umpire in this game and they usually get it. Cuba had seen me umpire at the World Baseball Challenge in Prince George earlier that year, and I don't think they were big fans of mine. So I am guessing that they were not happy to see a North American umpire at first and then double unhappy to see it was this guy they had seen before in Prince George on the plate. During the game I had some Cuban batters smile at me and say Prince George, and I nodded and they smiled again. Also on the Cuban team was their long time veteran catcher Ariel Pestano. Ariel is a different type of catcher. He is known as a colourful player that gets into heated discussions with both umpires and his pitchers. He speaks really good English except for when you are giving him crap, and then he pretends not to understand you and says he speaks no English. I had a close play in the 2nd inning at the plate that went against Cuba, and Ariel started to go crazy. I yelled at him to

settle down and not get ejected, and he did over time. From that point on his body language towards me was bad. He started holding pitches on me even on pitches that were not very close to the strike zone. I think the Cuban manager thought I was squeezing the strike zone because Ariel was showing me up, so in the 4th inning he brought in his backup catcher and things went a lot smoother from that point on. Cuba was losing this game 12-2 early in the game, but then Cuba started coming back a couple runs at a time. They like to swing the bat and they swing the bat hard. The game ended up 12-10 USA over Cuba, which meant that this would be the first time since 1967 that Cuba did not win Gold at the Pan Am games. This game has been and probably will be the biggest game I ever umpire in my entire umpiring career

S.B. - Anything you will remember specifically about this trip that was memorable or funny?

R.A. - I think the most memorable thing at the Pan Am games was the amount of security, and the number of guys with machine guns. Even from getting off the plane in Mexico and having guys with dogs and machine guys on the tarmac, to getting on the Bus to go to my hotel and having the bus, with just me and the driver on the bus and having an armoured police escort all the way. Then getting to our hotel and having more armed men guarding our hotel 24 hours a day. Then having to go through metal detectors just to get into our hotel. Then again getting armed police escorts to and from the field not even stopping for red lights as police blocked intersections to let us through. Then getting to the ball park and seeing hundreds of police and military there all armed with machine guns, and then going through 2 sets of metal detectors to get to our change room. Even during the games at times they would have a military helicopter fly around the stadium just outside the light standards and about as high as the lights. The helicopter was so close you could clearly see the guy holding the side machine gun as he flew around. Nothing like the pressure of concentrating on the game while this helicopter is flying around.



On the funny side, one of the Cuban umpires was Cesar Valdez who was umpiring an exhibition game in 1999 between Cuba and the Baltimore Orioles in Baltimore when an anti-Castro protester came onto the field. Cesar body slammed the protester to the ground and started punching the protester. When Cesar got home to Cuba he was a National hero, and Castro bought him a house and car, and him and his family has been taken care of ever since. See photo:

The other very interesting thing about Cesar is that he does not umpire the plate with any shin guards. Now that is crazy!

Canadian College Championships – Kamloops – May, 2012**Supervisor – Steve Boutang**

Umpires— Kris Hartley, Kail Ethier, Brad Woof, Brian Wainright, Kelly Hunter

BC Summer Games – White Rock – South Surrey, July, 2012**Supervisor – Rhonda Pauls: Assistants – Troy Carmont, George Smith**

Umpires – Rob Delage, Anton Cvitkovich, Mike Yamaguchi, Tim Delage, Matt Lahti, Rob Welsh, Cory Klein, Mitch Petersen, Ed Levinson, Arne Pederson, Keenan Bursey, Bert Brouwer, Gary Webber, Alex Sagert, Sean Weatherill, Kenny Colosie, George Smith

Senior Provincial – Prince George – Aug, 2012**Supervisor – Rob Allan working**

Umpires – Kris Hartley, Mark Bodwell, Brad Woof, Matt Lowndes, Terry Shaw, Andre Jean

Junior Provincial – Kelowna – July, 2012**Supervisor – John Berry**

Umpires – Clarence Bodden, Chuck Abney, Darcy Rysz, Kelly Hunter

Junior Premier – Whalley – Aug, 2012**Supervisor – Mark Bodwell**

Umpires – Les Maerov, Keenan Bursey, Cory Klein, Eddy Lang, Le Maerov, Gord McFarlane, Greg Teasdale

Premier – Nanaimo – Aug, 2012**Supervisor – Chet Masse**

Umpires – Erik Eriksson, Will Hunter, Nick Moore, Dan Rogers, Scott Eckardt, Chet Masse

BC Minor Junior Men's – New Westminster – Aug, 2012**Supervisor – George Smith**

Umpires – Rick Antoniak, Bill Keegan, Ron Wernicke, Jeremy Pauls, Sean Sullivan

Midget AAA – Chilliwack – Aug 2012**Supervisor – Bill MacMillan Assistant – George Smith**

Umpires – Bill MacMillan, George Smith, Fabian Poulin, Rhonda Pauls, Jeremy Pauls, Nilan Ritter

Midget AA – Prince George – July 2012**Supervisor – Jerry Tregaskis Assistant – George Smith**

Umpires – Jerry Tregaskis, George Smith, Rick Antoniak, Andre Jean, Jeremy Kral, Jeremy Pauls, Terry Shaw, Don Sytko, Ted Williams

Bantam AAA – Richmond – Aug 2012**Supervisor – Jerry Tregaskis Assistant – Don Violette**

Umpires – Ted Williams, Sean Weatherill, Howard Chapman, Rick Antoniak, Phil Bourgeois, Keith Neeley, Sean Sullivan, Mark Wright, Bruce Faulkner, Leo Gauthier, Don Sytko, Mitch Petersen, Curt Appleby,

PeeWee AAA – Richmond – Aug 2012**Supervisor – George Smith Assistant – Rhonda Pauls**

Umpires – Mike Yamaguchi, Luke Yam, David Wong, Rob Welsh, Gary Webber, Mitch Petersen, Rhonda Pauls, George Smith



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LAST CHRISTMAS OFFS



Top of the 1st...What is your favourite food?

Well I will eat almost anything but I would have to say my favourite food is soup. Yes I know it is strange, but it is true, I love soup.

Top of the 2nd...What is your favourite sports team?

For hockey it would be the Vancouver Canucks and for Baseball it would be the Chicago Cubs. Unfortunately neither team seems to be able to win the big prize. Damn you Steve Bartman and the Boston Bruins.

Bottom of the 3rd...Who is your favourite actor or actress?

I would have to say Tom Hanks as my favourite movie is Forest Gump.

Bottom of the 4th...What is the best part of Kamloops?

Well I would have to say MacArthur Island. It has to be one of the best sports complex that I have ever seen. Where else would you have multiple baseball, softball, football, and soccer fields as well as golf, hockey, curling, skateboarding, lawn bowling and bmx facility in one location. And of course Norbrock stadium where I have played high school football in, played minor baseball in and have umpired so many games in I can't even count. Many great memories. I grew up only a few minutes away from Mac-

Arthur Island and also went to high school right across the street at Norkam Secondary.

Top of the 5th...Day games or night games?

I like night games, as I am not a morning person so later in the day the better. Also the late game tends to be the feature game with bigger crowds, which means there are more people to yell at me when I make the wrong call J

Bottom of the 6th...If you could spend an hour of time with anyone in history, who would it be?

Terry Fox. He is a true Hero.

It's the 7th inning stretch.... What will you be reaching for? Beer, coffee, soda, other.

Diet Pepsi

Bottom of the 8th...Favourite ball park food?

At Safeco Field I like eating at the Intentional Wok right behind home plate. They have great stir fry. It is much better than eating the usual hotdogs. At Norbrock (Kamloops) or Citizen (Prince George) I like having the taco in a bag. I had way too many of those this year when I was in Prince George for the Senior Nationals.

Bottom of the 9th....Favourite tv show?

Two-and-a-Half Men, but not the new one. I like the old one with

Charlie Sheen.

It's a tie game!!! Let's go EXTRA INNINGS, with Rob Allan!

Top of the 10th...Your favourite MLB umpire?

All time I would have to say Ian Lamplugh. To have a BCBUA member make it all the way to the Major Leagues is amazing. I have always looked up to and idolized Ian, and even though I would rather see Ian still be in the Majors, it has been nice the last few years to work some games with him. You can learn a lot by just watching him work.

Current MLB umpire would be Jim Joyce, I got to meet Jim when he came to the Superclinic in Nanaimo a few years ago. He was great and is one of the best umpires in the Major Leagues. I also thought he handled the unfortunate situation with Armando Galarraga with a lot of class. I can't imagine how he felt and to come back and do the plate the next day showed tremendous courage.

Bottom of the 11th...If you could umpire in any MLB stadium which one would it be?

Wrigley Field. As much as I love some of the newer fields like Safeco and AT&T park, nothing beats Wrigley Field.

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