



# Hey Blue! Online

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the BCBUA!*

## LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR LORNE RAYMOND

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- BCBUA receives special guest
- Awards Winners
- Membership hits record high
- Directors Reports
- Gearheads!

Penticton's Lorne Raymond has been recognized for his many years of contributions towards umpires in the BCBUA.

Raymond was presented Life Membership in the association by Provincial Supervisor and friend Steve Boutang at the AGM in Kelowna in October.

The long time umpire has served the BCBUA in the roles of Assistant Area Rep and Area Rep for the South Okanagan Zone as well as the BCBUA Vice President and Treasurer positions.

Additionally, Raymond has served on and off as the Penticton Minor Baseball Umpire in Chief over the years.

a debt of gratitude to him for his work" said Supervisor Boutang.

"I've never met anyone who ever said a negative thing about him.... Other than the fact he cheers for the Maple Leafs of course"



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## SUPERCLINIC HEADS TO ABBOTSFORD IN 2019

For the first time, the BCBUA will head to Abbotsford for the bi-annual Superclinic.

This year's event will run January 26-27 and will be held at Eugene Reimer Middle School.

The cost for the event will be

\$125 per person plus your association dues of \$50 for a Grand Total of \$175. Lunch and snacks will be provided throughout the event.

As per usual, the clinic will be an all-day affair on the Saturday and run until about 3pm on the Sunday.

Some of the topics we'll be covering are: Game Management, field drills, cage work, and rules knowledge.

All of your favourite BCBUA instructors will be there!

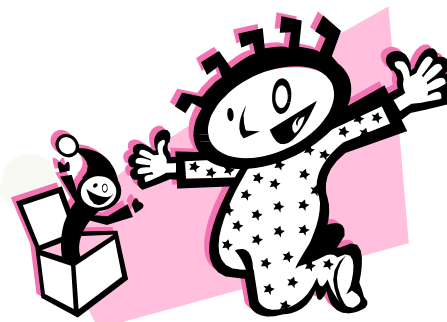
Register early to ensure you get your spot in Superclinic 2019! Check the website for details.

## BC TO HOST CARAVAN IN JANUARY

Baseball Canada Caravan—the National Training workshop—will be taking place in Abbotsford in January.

Master Course Conductor Ron Shewchuk from Manitoba will again lead the clinic as he did the previous 2 times BC has hosted. Master Course Conductors Rocky Nickel of Moose Jaw and Steve Boutang will assist along with Sr Course Conductor Rhonda Pauls.

12 umpires from around British Columbia will take part in learning the basics of teaching level 1 and 2 clinics and will go through class and gym sessions. Each of the candidates will receive tips and pointers for 4 days.



*“Baseball is 90 percent physical. . . . The other half is mental” - Yogi Berra*

## NATIONAL CLINIC DATES SET FOR KAMLOOPS

The 11th annual National Umpire Clinic will take place in Kamloops April 11-14 as announced previously by Supervisor Steve Boutang. It's expected that 50 + umpires will be registered which includes the 40 current National umpires. Guest instructors will include Jon Oko, Andrew Higgins, Ron Shewchuk and Ed Quinlan.

Registration and Special Invites will go out in the New Year. As per usual, National umpires must participate in either Thursday and Friday or the Saturday and Sunday sessions. Special Invitees will be required to attend Friday-Sunday.

The National clinic combines class work, field drills, and Game action with debriefs and tips to work on as a “spring training” experience for high level umpires.



Ray Carter Cup umpires including Supervisor Rhonda Pauls, and umpires Mike Green & Gord McFarlane

## UMPIRE ACADEMY READIES FOR 5TH YEAR



The 5th Annual Umpire Academy prepares to invade Kamloops April 4-7. Twelve of the top young umpires in the province will work with BC's top instructors in the areas of rules, field work, and live game

action. The Academy was revived 4 years ago after a long hiatus and has proven to be the most important stepping stone for young umpires as they develop into level 3 umpires. This past year 4 graduates attained their level 4 status.



## 2018 BCBUA AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Howard Chapman Sr Umpire of the Year—Sean Sullivan (Victoria)

Female Umpire of the Year—Kelly Hunter (Cranbrook)

Doug Hudlin Distinguished Service—Gord Hanley (Aldergrove)

Ian Lamplugh Top Prospect Award—Matt Hicketts (Kamloops)

George Connelly Builder's Award—Chuck Croll (Burnaby)

Bill Murphy Most Improved Umpire Award—Chris Penner (Kamloops)

Chuck Blaikie Outstanding Contribution Award—Rick Antoniak (N. Delta)

Richard Christie Award for the Unsung Hero—Ted Williams (Port Moody)

Abe Shapiro Mentorship Award—Shawn Bird (Maple Ridge)

Don Hass Award—Most Inspirational National Umpire—Shawn Schaeffer



## BCBUA'S OLDEST LIVING MEMBER

At the AGM in Kelowna, the BCBUA Board was privileged and honoured to have received a special guest at our proceedings.

91 year old Sig Ottenbreit attended our AGM, told a few stories and a funny joke, but mostly just took in the afternoon as the BCBUA went through its business. He was happy to see former field colleague Lorne Raymond receive Life Membership, and he was pleased to see that the BCBUA membership is stronger than ever before.

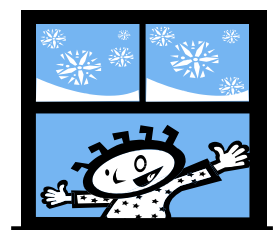
Ottenbreit was awarded Life Membership in the BCBUA in 1990 after his retirement from active umpiring (1950-1989) and in recognition for his decade of involvement on the board as the "1st Director" representing the province's umpires residing outside of the Lower Mainland. Certainly things have changed over the years.

At the time of his recognition, he was only the 4th person to have received Life Membership in the association. Raymond is the 21st.

In the 80's Sig was the only clinician in the Interior, so if you umpired in the Okanagan, Kootenays, or Kamloops, you certainly had a clinic taught by Sig Ottenbreit.

A school teacher by trade, Sig was great with young people and a real professional on the field. He umpired many high profile tournaments in the Province, the Grand Forks International, and was the first Okanagan umpire in the Baseball Canada National program.

Ottenbreit still lives at home in Kelowna with his wife Mildred as they have been married over 70 years. Thank you Sig for attending our meeting, but mostly for your years and years of contributions to this association and to baseball in the Okanagan.



*"There are only 2 seasons. . . . Winter and Baseball" - Bill Veeck*

# BCBUA Jr. Umpire Winners

Area 1 – Vancouver Island South – **Ethan Dippie**

Area 2 – Vancouver Island North – **Matthias Smith**

Area 3 – Lower Mainland East – **Matthew White**

Area 4 – Lower Mainland West – **Cyrus Chen**

Area 5 – Lower Mainland South – **Nicholas Goyer**

Area 6 – Thompson - **Carter Noble**

Area 7 – Okanagan – **Kyle Sheenan**

Area 8 – Kootenays – **Zack McAdams**

Area 9 – Northern BC - **Lucas Langevin**



## BCBUA HOLDS AGM IN KELOWNA

The BCBUA held its Annual General Meeting in the Okanagan city of Kelowna on the last weekend of October. This was the first time the event had been in Kelowna in about 15 years. A number of items of important business were transacted, not the least of which was the vote on the Amendment to our operating bylaws required by the Society Act. In short, a review of our bylaws were required in order for the BCBUA to remain legally registered as a Society within BC and remain eligible for Grants among other things.

Incoming Secretary Les Maerov, a lawyer by trade, spent a number of hours reviewing the current bylaws and making minor amendments to them so that this document was current according to Society Act Standards.

The motion was passed unanimously by the membership in attendance.

Further, it was noted, that the Board of Directors indicated that they would be reviewing these bylaws further to bring our association into more current practices. This exercise will be done over the next 11 months and then the 30 day notice will be given to the membership on any changes that are proposed.

In other significant news from the AGM, Secretary Phil Bourgeois stepped down after a 2 year term. The board and President Sean Sullivan thanked Bourgeois for his outstanding work as secretary and in doing a diligent role in the position. Bourgeois, who is also the Pacific Coast Baseball Umpires Association President, was given a warm reception by those in attendance.

Les Maerov was the only person who was nominated and he accepted the 2 year term.

Vice President Rhonda Pauls was nominated to return as Vice President and she was acclaimed also.

Area Directors were elected as well in Vancouver Island North. Brad Jones was returned to his position. In Area 4, Mike Yamaguchi did not seek re-election. Sean Weatherhill was nominated and acclaimed. In Area 6, Mark Wright has moved to Alberta for school and the board wished Mark well. Kamloops umpire Brody LaFrance was nominated and accepted the post as he was also acclaimed.

Area 7 was handed the resignation of Darcy Rysz part way through his term. Rysz had been a long time area rep and Central Okanagan Baseball Umpire Association Umpire in Chief. We all thank Darcy for his leadership and hard work over many years in that role. Kelowna umpire Kevin Burk was nominated and acclaimed to finish Rysz's term.

In Area 8, Bill MacMillan tried hard to vacate his post but nobody was willing to take it on, so the old coot ( J ) was acclaimed to his 58<sup>th</sup> term... Actually, its only his 15<sup>th</sup> term as Area Rep. MacMillan is the senior member of the board having joined in 1988.

Besides elections, all the area directors and committee chairs gave reports, many of which can be found in this issue.

## FROM THE OVAL OFFICE – PRESIDENT’S REPORT

On behalf of BC Baseball Umpire Association (BCBUA) Executive, I want to thank you for all of your efforts in the 2018 season. We have set new records for the number of members, 1632 Provincially carded umpires, and the number of Provincial Championships and Wildcard Playoffs we officiated, 27 that resulted in 80+ assignments.

We continue to grow our mentorship and grass roots programs. We have generated a lot of interest amongst our partner organizations around this and are working on new opportunities in 2019. You will continue to see more of our national/senior umpires in the lower levels working with our young up and coming umpires.

The BCBUA has committed significant efforts in the past four years developing our instructor cadre through Caravan, which is led by Baseball Canada. The goal of Caravan is to develop successful Course Conductors with the appropriate skills to instruct at provincial umpire clinics utilizing specific pedagogical skills required in both the classroom and during the on-field portions. We have another Caravan planned for January 2019, which will further grow our instructor cadre as the demand for clinics continues to grow. We put on 78 clinics in 2018 that trained 1356 umpires.

We have renewed our efforts with our HeyBlue! Online newsletter. Feedback has been very positive and we will continue to try and maintain this fun and informative way of engaging with our members and partner associations. If you have ideas for the newsletter please email [president@bcbua.ca](mailto:president@bcbua.ca)

2018 presented some challenges as well. We continued to be subject to poor on field behavior by players, coaches and parents. This resulted in some serious incidents that required lengthy suspensions to the offenders. Over the winter your executive will be working with our partner associations to engage in meaningful discussions to increase discipline for this behavior.

I would be remiss without speaking about the tremendous growth we have seen in umpiring in this province. The commitment this executive has made to education, mentorship and grassroots development has generated outstanding results. More people are getting into and staying with umpiring. We have realized outstanding feedback from our provincial partner associations, who are seeing a stronger on field product. As well we have witnessed outstanding success at the National and International level. We continue to have the flagship National Clinic that is the envy of the rest of the country.

We are committed to building on the momentum generated over the past four or five years. We are always looking for motivated umpires willing to volunteer your time, so if you are please contact any of our executive and we will get you engaged.

Sincerely

Sean Sullivan

President

BC Baseball Umpires Association



## SECRETARY AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Below are some statistical highlights from the 2018 season for our association:

### Registration

We attained a new high of 1632 members in 2018. This was an increase of 141 members over 2017.

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
<b>Members</b>	1632	1491	1456	1315	1323
<b>+/- Prev. Year</b>	+141	+35	+141	-8	+122

	# of Members		2018	2017
<b>Level 1 Regular (13+)</b>	525	<b>Area 1 – Vancouver Island South</b>	208	185
<b>Level 1 Youth</b>	568	<b>Area 2 – Vancouver Island North</b>	134	121
<b>Level 2 Current</b>	295	<b>Area 3 – Lower Mainland East</b>	254	239
<b>Level 2 Not-Current</b>	159	<b>Area 4 – Lower Mainland West</b>	254	247
<b>Level 3+ Current</b>	52	<b>Area 5 – Lower Mainland South</b>	389	333
<b>Level 3+ Not-Current</b>	26	<b>Area 6 – Thompson</b>	64	78
<b>Life Members</b>	6	<b>Area 7 – Okanagan South</b>	180	173
<b>Inactive Members</b>	1	<b>Area 8 – Kootenays</b>	92	83
		<b>Area 9 – Northern BC</b>	56	69
<b>Total Paid</b>	1632			

Note that while I cannot break down the specific levels of membership year-over-year; I can tell you that 918 of the 1491 individuals registered in 2017 renewed their membership for 2018 – meaning that 62% of the umpires registered in 2017 returned in 2018.

This is an increase of 5% over the number of individuals who returned from 2016 (824 of 1456)

We are still facing challenges with associations in certain areas not using carded umpires. There are entire associations where geographically there are only a handful of registered umpires which does not make sense. I don't think it is egregious to think that BCBUA should have 2,000 members annually if all areas of the province were compliant in using carded officials on their games. BC Minor has asked us to identify which associations are non-compliant in this area and hopefully we will do a better job of identifying these associations in 2019.

### Exams

Since 2016, all Level 1 and Level 2 exams come with unlimited attempts in order to guide the student to look up their incorrect answers and re-attempt the exam until a successful pass. Level 3 is unchanged.

	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>Incomplete</b>
<b>Level 1 – 2018</b>	561	843	469
<b>Level 1 – 2017</b>	532	768	297
<b>Level 1 – 2016</b>	445	794	229
<b>Level 2 – 2018</b>	356	841	345
<b>Level 2 – 2017</b>	332	922	264
<b>Level 2 – 2016</b>	298	640	266
<b>Level 2 – 2015</b>	213	154	35
<b>Level 2 – 2014</b>	158	280	46
<b>Level 3 – 2018</b>	69	38	51
<b>Level 3 – 2017</b>	73	26	64
<b>Level 3 – 2016</b>	61	26	31
<b>Level 3 – 2015</b>	34	23	24
<b>Level 3 – 2014</b>	28	45	29

The good news is that more people are writing (and passing) the various exams than in previous years, with the exception of Level 3 which is slightly down in 2018.

### Ejections

Total Ejections increased substantially in 2018. There were a variety of reasons for this jump in numbers, and the reasons vary quite substantially depending on each group.

In the case of BC (Minor) Baseball, although the actual ejection total was only up marginally, it is highly concerning that the content of those ejections which are reported is getting more and more extreme. Under the old classification system, I would wager that more than half of the ejections in BC Minor would be classified as either “Offensive” or “Very Offensive”.

	<b>Total Ejections</b>
<b>2018</b>	257
<b>2017</b>	208
<b>2016</b>	185
<b>2015</b>	235
<b>2014</b>	282
<b>2013</b>	146

## **SUPERCLINIC 2019 - January 26 + 27 in Abbotsford**

Finally, on the not-so-pleasant front, we need our members to be aware and in some cases change their behaviours around ejections. Here are a number of things to consider:

Ejection reports need to be submitted promptly. Preferably the same day, or the next day at the **absolute latest**. I can't tell you how many times I've heard "I would love to suspend the guy but the umpire couldn't be bothered to report it for a week so it must not be that serious" as an excuse. You've literally screwed the next set of umpires who has that individual for a game by not reporting the ejection promptly as the individual probably would be suspended.

If you fill out a paper copy of an ejection report at a Tournament or Provincial, you **must** file the report online as well otherwise BCBUA will not be aware of the ejection. Also, when filling the report out online don't change facts between what is reported on paper and what you're submitting online. It tends to anger the league and makes umpires look like they're misreporting the facts.

Don't editorialize in ejection reports. Only report the facts. Comments such as "The team was clearly not good enough to play in this tournament" or "The quality of the PBL has really gone down in recent years" are subjective comments that anger leagues and administrators. Imagine if they said "Well we must have got the leftover umpires because all the good ones were unavailable" about you and how you would feel if you heard something like that.

It's probably a bad idea to post about your ejections on social media. You never know who might be reading and nothing good can come of it.

BC (Minor) Baseball and Baseball BC are different associations. Try to choose the correct one if at all possible! (hint: Baseball BC has no league play)

## Clinics

The clinics which were run were as follows:

	# of Clinics Offered	# of Participants	
Level 1	40	709	
Level 2	34	554	
Level 3	2	37	
Level 4/5	1	46	
	# of Members	# of Participants	Clinic Participation Rate
Totals	1632	1346	82.48%
Others	# of Clinics Offered	# of Participants	
BCBUA Umpire Academy	1	10	





**Matt Lowndes (far left) prepares to make the call at a T12 game at Rogers Center in Toronto**

## Treasurer's Report/Financials

Financials released by BCBUA Treasurer Rick Antoniak reveal a rosy picture for the BCBUA. In the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, the BCBUA broke even on the profit and loss end of the business. Coupled with a \$30,000 injection from Baseball BC for program support, the year end totals reveal a positive balance of \$29,477.00.

Overall this leaves the BCBUA in a positive financial cash position of approximately \$59,278.00 according to figures released at the AGM.

This is positive news because the association has invested a great deal of capital towards clinician training in the past 5 years which has depleted our reserves somewhat. Additionally there will be a large expenditure to host Caravan in January this coming year.

In addition, the BCBUA was able to save quite a sum in National travel the past few years as BC hosted the Sr Men's tournament in Victoria for the past 2 years. 8 umpires were able to take part in this high level event and it didn't cost our association much for the valuable experience it provided.

In 2019 Cloverdale will host the Pee wee Western Nationals and this will give us another opportunity to get 3 or 4 more umpires a crack at a National championship for very little financial output.

In conclusion, Treasurer Antoniak noted that the BCBUA Board set a budget at the start of the 2017-2018 fiscal year and stuck to it, which has permitted us to remain on solid financial ground for the years to come.

If any member wishes to see the Financial Report, please contact BCBUA directly for these documents.

## EDUCATION REPORT – Rhonda Pauls Chair

2018 L1/L2 Clinics- 74 in total Island, LM and Int/North

To say that our Instructor supply and clinic budget was stretched to achieve this would be an understatement – but we did it.

2018 Mentorship

I would like to thank Gord McFarlane, Brad Jones and Mark Wright for being leaders and role models in Mentoring in this province. They have all taken a “chunk” of the geography and helped associations with the implementation of this best practice program. I would also like to thank Sean Weatherill for the work he has done travelling to the interior to mentor and support grassroots youth umpires. Without these kinds of people our program would not be nearly so strong or successful.

Grassroots BCBUA PAID – 105 to 3 associations with another 60+ were paid by the associations themselves. We have more work to do to grow this area of development, but now with more secured funding we can continue this work. Our greatest challenge continues to be the work force – human resourcing – of this program. Which is why we need it in the first place!

Many other associations (Maple Ridge, Kamloops, Abby etc) have now gotten on board with internal funding of this program. We are encouraged by this as it gives us more money to play with to support other associations who DO NOT have the means to subsidize their own.

Projects done around mentor training on the Island and some local Tournament mentorship support was subsidized by the budget and has been going well.

We went “on line” this year for our grassroots feedback forms in the same format as we have used our Development Forms for higher level feedback, and with the help of one of our UIC’s (thank you Jim VanMeer of Abbotsford) we have developed and piloted a “phone app” for UIC’s to use with their approved mentors if they wish to use this option going forward. All these things improve our access to tracking and provide significant cost savings to us in not having expensive 3-part print materials.

2018 Advanced L3 Clinics- 2 were held, Nanaimo and Kamloops

2018 Umpire Academy- our 4<sup>th</sup> annual event was a success with 10 participants in Kamloops. 2 participants (that were 2<sup>nd</sup> year) received their full L3. 6 of these participants will get a chance to participate again as we are seeing a strong correlation between this targeted youth identification and development, and their advancement through the L3 program and preps those with the aptitude for entry to the National Program

On-going projects and things coming up this year –

2019 will be a Super Clinic year in the LM. It will take place In Abbotsford January 26 and 27<sup>th</sup>. Stay tuned for more info.

We will again hold an Umpire Academy in Kamloops the weekend before/after the National Clinic with 12 identified up and comers.

2019 will be an “Offense” year for L1/L2 clinics with a focus on Game management

We are planning our first ever “joint clinic” with Baseball BC in one of our more rural associations. Our goal is to pilot a coach’s clinic in conjunction with L1/L2 umpire clinics and cost share the travel, instruction and accommodation of instructors.

Resources –

Updating of our L1/L2 workbooks and PPT’s to meet new rules and interpretations. Will have more helpful

teaching tips for our instructors

Development of an Instructor feedback rubric for the ongoing learning and development of our Caravan grads.

A comprehensive published Gym Drills and instruction manual for all L1/L2 Instructors. Draft of this was used last year based on the recommended BBC/Caravan curriculum, and now the Ed Cttee has formatted this into a top notch resource for this year – thank you Brad Jones for your desk top publishing expertise and all your time.

Revision of our “coaches clinic outline” in light of some requests for support in this area

The development of a UIC Manual. We created a UIC/Mentorship consortium a couple years ago with some goals.

Once our mentorship-training manual and resources were established we have started working on resources and training for UIC's.

#### Caravan

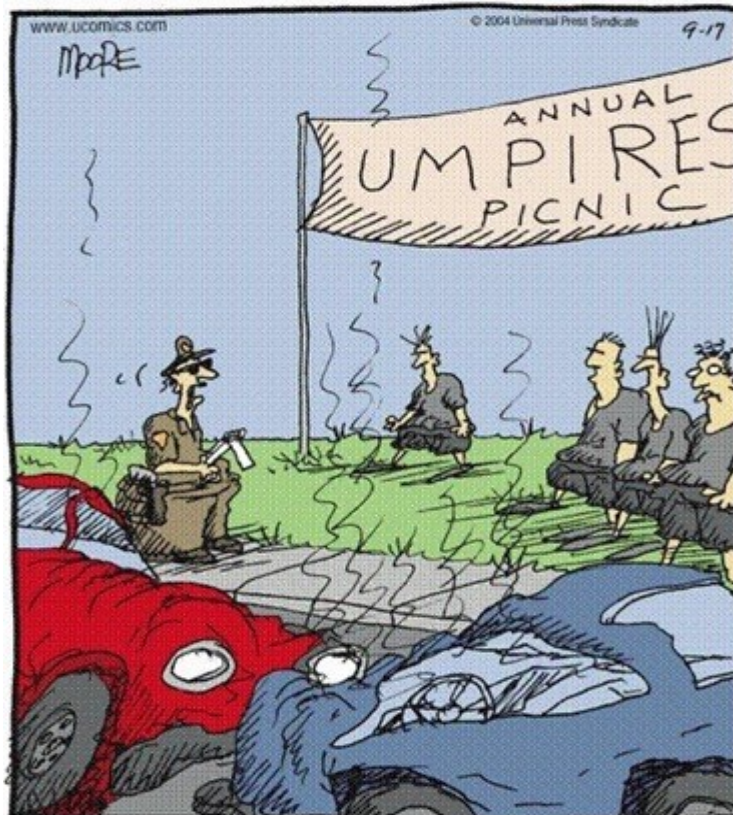
We will host in Abbotsford again this year with funding we received from Baseball BC last year to ensure we continued with another 12 Instructors. We are in need of enough qualified bodies to cover the ever-increasing number of clinics we are asked to put on each year.

#### UIC Clinic

We are looking to facilitate a day of training and resource introduction to as many UIC's in the province as we can this year.

The Ed Committee has asked for a budget for this project to ensure we have the means to provide a valuable learning opportunity for our UIC's.

Baseball BC is again on board with assisting us in the development of resources by allocating staff time to BCBUA work as they are able



**"Now let me get this straight. This accident occurred right in front of your eyes, but *no one* saw what happened?"**



## DISCIPLINE REPORT – By Rhonda Pauls - Chair

2018 was a good season for umpire conduct. For the first time in the last 7 years of my role as Discipline Chair, there were no founded allegations of umpire misconduct reported to us by any partner group. We had a lot of “education” around issues, but no discipline was issued. I have to say – this is a big deal.

I received 3 complaints over the course of the season, but all three were related to umpire performance – not conduct, and I was able to have discussions with individuals around the difference between those two things. As always, where possible the AR is brought in or a competent UIC, to follow up with mentorship or guidance of individuals who may be struggling. Being a “terrible umpire” will never constitute misconduct, but where umpires are clearly struggling either on-field or with rules, we do our best to support their learning going forward.

Our biggest issue this year was with coaching conduct, not umpires. I spent some time talking to YOUNG officials who were the victims of these coaching misconducts, to ensure that they knew we stood behind them with our ZERO tolerance position, and that we would follow up with the offending organizations to ensure these matters were attended to. It is really important for our young officials to know that we track these things and follow up with them, as many of them are rural associations where the kids don’t know we are involved in these things.

The other area around umpire conduct that continues to be a challenge for us is in how we as umpires treat each other, and on occasion represent our larger body (BCBUA) off field. We have had numerous opportunities to work with umpires on how these issues affect both their credibility with their colleagues as well as reflect on the rest of with partner organizations.

Last year I indicated some things we would work on for this year, they are as follows:

- A review of our Code of Conduct to ensure that use of social media is clearly identified as part of the expectation. Our committee will be advising us on how this matter is being addressed by other sport organizations as a point of reference for us and bring a recommendation for approval going forward.

- The board struck a committee to review and make recommendations for improvement. This will be complete for the start of our 2019 season.

- Ensuring that our members know that perception is often reality when it comes to our conduct and choice of words. We will continue to teach our members about how to relate to coaches and players in a professional and credible manner.

- In addition to many individual conversations that took place, the education committee decided that for this clinic season we would have a FOCUS on game management and conflict resolution strategies for both on and off-field conduct.

- We also need to talk more about how important our conduct is when we are in situations representing the BCBUA. What being an “ambassador” looks like. There are many ways to build



build rapport with others in the baseball community when we are off field – and similarly we have the same opportunities to discredit or diminish the quality of our relationships.

Situations also arose this year that led us to acknowledge that we have no real referral process or resources for our members who are struggling with some of the pressure/emotional/mental health issues that arise for officials. We will work with Baseball BC to establish at very least a starting point for our members who would like to seek help in learning to cope with these things.

Sadly I have no real advancement of this issue to report, other than that we have recognized the need here, and the lack of resources to support it. I have spoken with Baseball BC about this and they (Dave Laing) will be investigating how we can bring awareness and find help for this issue with our governing bodies going forward.



Victoria's Chet Masse (right) was assigned 3<sup>rd</sup> base on the Gold Medal Game at the U18 Nationals





BCBUA Umpires Matt Lowndes (plate umpire) and Scott Eckardt (right) pose for a group photo with T12 host and MLB Hall of Famer Roberto Alomar



BCBUA Umpires Craig Burt (back row 2nd from left), next to Gary Webber, and Mark Penner (tallest) at Peeewe Western Nationals

# GEARHEADS

By Brad Jones

As the season comes to an end the last event of the season is the storing of your gear for the winter.

The way you store your gear during the off-season is important to the maintenance and upkeep of your gear because it sustains the integrity of your gear in keeping you safe and looking fine on the field.

The worst thing to happen is next season grabbing your bag for your first game of the year, opening the bag at the diamond and being hit by a stench of unclean gear put away without being properly cleaned or stored during the winter.

If you think that you can just take the bag with your gear in it and throw it into the basement until next spring, then get ready to face the consequence of cutting the life span of your gear, never ridding the stains and odours from those double-headers in 30 degrees on those July weekends.

So, what is fall cleaning for an umpire? Well it starts with taking all your gear out of your bag.

Never store your gear in the bag. Take a tote or a large box and use it to store your gear, separating your pants and shirts and hanging them in your closet. Clean your bag with some cleaner and a shammy, wiping your bag of all the dirt and dust. Make sure to dump all the rocks and sand that has found its way into the compartments and if appropriate, collapse it into a storable shape. Place it on a shelf in a storage area that is dry and at room temperature.

The garage is probably not the best place to store your bag or your gear. With the dampness and cold of winter, storage in an outside location makes your gear susceptible to mold, mildew and rust.

Now you have your gear out of the bag, it is time to do your fall cleaning.

Wash your pants and shirts for one last time and hang them on hangers. Place the hangers in a non-transparent garment bag and hang them in your closet. If you have ring around the collar on your shirts, try some shampoo and an old toothbrush to scrub the collar before washing. Make sure to hang your pants to the crease.

Now time to wash your caps and socks. Take a laundry detergent for delicate wear and soak your caps in the solution one at a time unless you have more than one cap rack. As it is hard to find Woolite for hand washing, use a no rinse delicate wash soap (Eucalan works good) and soak the caps in the solution, scrubbing the areas that are stained by those hot days of July.

Wrap the cap into an old towel and place the cap into a plastic cap rack (cost around \$10) for it to dry. Use the cap rack or a cap case to store your lids for the winter.

Use the water from the caps to now give your socks a good soak before putting them away for the winter. Once left soaking, wring out the socks and throw them into the drier with your other umpire clothes. While you are doing the caps and socks, start a load of laundry with your pants, shirts, underwear, compression gear, ball bags and towels. The socks will go into the drier with this load.

While you are doing all of this, use the nice weather of September to air out your chest protector and shin guards before putting them away for the winter. Hang the gear on pant hangers, using the clips if necessary and place them outside to hang in the fresh late summer air. Do this for two to three days to ensure the gear loses the stale odour from the hot summer. An air freshener of water and essential oils (I use grapefruit) is an additional option to eliminating the odour of your gear.

Last order of business is making sure to properly clean, treat and polish your plate and base shoes before sliding them into bags or boxes.

To do this, start by using a coarse horse brush or scrub sponge pad, to clean the soles and uppers of any dirt or dust. While scrubbing bubbles (SB) is a nice quick cleaner, it does do some damage over the long haul to your shoes uppers. Try using the SB on the soles of your shoes, while using a leather or general shoe cleaner on the shoes uppers. Use a soft soap on any parts of the shoes that are not real or synthetic leather.

If your uppers are real leather, use a leather treatment like Dubbin or mink oil to treat your shoes before giving them one last application of polish. Use a soft horse-hair brush and shoe shammy to shine up the polish and leave your shoes looking spiffy for the next season.

With all your gear ready, place your shin guards, shoes and chest protector into the tote, with your caps, belts, socks, undershirts, compression gear and mask over top. Place the tote in a storage place that is room temperature and dry.

Over the winter, casually look for zippered pouches and bags for separating your gear, it will help you with organizing your gear next season and keep your gear separate in the tote during the winter.

# DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

## Area 1 Report—Vancouver Island South

It was another busy year of baseball on South Vancouver Island. There were 208 registered umpires from Sidney to Ladysmith and all points in between this year, an increase of 27 members over 2017.

In Area 1 we were able to run 7 clinics which were hosted by Duncan Minor Baseball, Ladysmith Minor Baseball and the Greater Victoria Baseball Association where we trained 149 students at levels 1 and 2. In 2018, we also had the opportunity to hold an advanced clinic on the island hosted by Nanaimo Minor Baseball. The clinic was held over two days and 18 students attended from all over the province. We were also excited to get back to two regions in Area 1 this year that hadn't hosted clinics in 2017, Ladysmith and Westshore. I would like to thank all the instructors that took the time to help with clinics this year, without your willingness to support the association with growing great umpires we would not be able to continue to increase our numbers in Area 1. We are always in need of more umpires, especially at the Bantam level and above so please keep your eyes on the website in February and March of 2019 for clinic dates and times and pass this on to anyone you know that might be interested in being on the baseball field and earning some money over the spring and summer months.

Area 1 hosted two provincial tournaments this year. The BC Summer Games were hosted in Duncan and Ladysmith, July 20-22 and were supervised by Sean Sullivan and Scott Eckardt. Congratulations to the umpires that were selected to work the tournament, Jeremy Allen and Shaun Sharpe from Area 1 and Craig Bernes, Austen Hack, Matthias Smith, Brad Smith, Brad Jones and Jesse Ferguson from Area 2, rounding out an all island crew. The Senior Men's championship was hosted by the Victoria Mavericks at Lambrick Park and was supervised by Steve Boutang. Congratulations to those umpires selected to work this tournament, Scott Eckardt, Jared Roberts, Chet Masse, Sean Sullivan and Jon Hollett all members of Area 1 as well as Rhonda Pauls and Phil Bourgeois. The application to work provincials is posted each May and I encourage all members to apply.

For the second year in a row Victoria hosted the Senior Men's National Championships at Royal Athletic Park. Three BC umpires were selected to work this tournament including one from Area 1. Congratulations to Sean Sullivan, Phil Bourgeois, and Mark Bodwell, as well as supervisor Rob Allen. You all represented our association well.

Finally, I want to thank all Area 1 umpires for all the hard work they put in this year on the field and wish everyone a good winter. Hope to see you all back on the field in 2019.

Scott Eckardt

Area 1 Rep

## Area 2 Report – North Island

2018 was a pivotal year in umpire development on the North Island with many stepping stones being set towards nurturing umpires through training and on-field opportunities and spotlighting their improved performance on the diamond.

The year started with the North Island hosting a level 3 clinic in Nanaimo. With instructors Scott Eckardt and Chet Masse at the helm, the clinic was a great opportunity for many umpires, especially younger umpires, to access a high-level clinic that can be inaccessible due to ferries and long-distance travel.

Later in the spring, Cloverdale's Gord McFarlane kindly came over to cover clinics in Campbell River and Comox as well as leading a group of seasoned umpires interested in mentorship of young umpires. The meeting was a focal point for the year by bringing together a group of about 10 umpires to talk about and commit to supporting newer and younger umpires in their growth and dedication to the game.



Gord's support and work through the weekend was greatly appreciated and the results of his time could be seen in the hard work and enthusiasm of younger umpires during the season. As a consequence, progress was made in the mentoring of umpires in Oceanside and Comox this season with hopes that this will expand to other Associations in the new year.

The highlight of the summer was the selection of six North Island umpires to officiate the BC Games in Cowichan. Three grizzled veterans, Craig Bernes, Brad Smith and Brad Jones, along with three young guns, Matthias Smith, Austen Hack and Jesse Ferguson, represented the North Island proudly with Craig and Matty pulling gold medal assignments. Special kudos and thanks have to go to Scott Eckardt and Sean Sullivan, who supervised the Games and shared priceless feedback to the crews that sprouted noticeable consequences to the quality of umpiring later in the summer.

Two other sets of appreciation and acknowledgement have to go to South Island's Jon Hollett and Chet Masse for their contribution and mentorship of umpires throughout the year. Jon is a calm presence who gives a lot of his time to North Island that probably goes under-recognized. Chet is a catalyst with his stories and insights to the building of the collaborative community in the North Island, both as an instructor in the classroom and colleague at the field.

In other positive developments, Jon McDowell stepped forward to take on the umpire-in-chief position in the Alberni Valley. He joins Jason Vance, Craig Bernes and Brad Jones as leaders for growing young umpires in the area.

This year in the North Island highlighted the paramount factor to ensuring our Association and umpiring in the Province continues to flourish and prosper. Newer and younger umpires will continue to infuse their enthusiasm and optimism for the future when older and experienced umpires continue to give back to everyone's learning through their experience and commitment. When everyone is open to each other and learning, the consequence can only be positive for our Association.

Brad Jones –  
Area 2 Rep



**The crew for the Bantam A Provincial final in Nanaimo for B.C. Minor Baseball.  
Left to right: Brad Smith, Comox Valley; Jason Vance, Nanaimo and Brad Jones, Oceanside.**

## Area 3 – Lower Mainland East

Hello everyone, Hope you had a Good year. Area 3 Lower mainland east had a Great year. There was a total of 254, up from 239 in 2017 Umpires Registered in Area 3 this year

Everything started well with 10 successful Level 1 and Level 2 Clinics. We had a total of 115 level 1 umpires take clinics and a total of 119 level 2 take clinics. This was down a little from last year but everyone had a great time and learned a lot. We had 304 Area 3 umpires take the on line exam tests and had 208 Pass. We can do a better job at the testing, but glad to see it is getting done.

This year under the, Guidance of the Provisional Supervisor we Continued the program that had Level 4 umpires do 5 mentorships each at Local Associations and that went well. Thanks to all that helped out. Again this year I want to thank Rhonda Pauls and Gord McFarlane for all there great work on the Mentorship program. Umpiring in BC is getting better and better because of all the hard work.

During the year, Area 3 had 23 Tournament at the 7 Associations with all Umpires gaining experience from top to Bottom for all umpires rate ball being played.

Area 3 hosted 8 Provincial Championships where 42 Area 3 umpires provided their skills to make all very successful.

We had 4 umpires Receive National assignments Mike Green, Mark Penner, Craig Burt, and Gary Webber, and 2 Umpires Received National Supervisors assignments Rhonda Pauls and from Abbotsford and Rob Allan From Maple Ridge. We had 1 Gold Medal Assignment at a National and that went to Mark Penner. Great Job Mark, I know it won't be your last one.

A Special thanks goes to Ted Williams for his 25 years of Umpiring for Area 3. This was his last year and he has announced his retirement. I would also like to thank Ted for his time and skills, as he designed and developed the new Tournament Supervisor handbook that our supervisors in BCBUA are now using. Thanks Ted for all your work.

All in all it was a Great year.

Gary Webber  
Area 3 Rep

## Area 4 – Lower Mainland West

We had continued success in Area 4 with regard to membership in 2018 – there was a slight uptick from 241 registered members in 2017 to 254 registered members in 2018. With the growth of baseball at the minor levels, we anticipate continuing growth in our membership base for years to come.

Once again, baseball associations within Area 4 hosted a variety of provincial championships hosted by BC Baseball and Baseball BC. The levels and crews of the tournaments ranged from grassroots level umpires working their first provincial tournament in Richmond at the 13U A level, to experienced umpires working BC Baseball's 18U AAA championship in Burnaby or the inaugural Baseball BC Senior AA provincial championship hosted by the North Shore. And of course, Richmond hosted another well-run John Main Classic which helped BCBUA identify some talented up-and-coming young umpires. Big thanks to Shawn Bird for taking the lead supervising role in the John Main Classic.

On the national front, the following umpires from Area 4 made appearances at Baseball Canada National Championships this past summer:

Phil Bourgeois – Senior Men's National

Corey Klein – Canada Cup

Corey received the gold medal plate assignment at his National Championship, which comes to a surprise to absolutely no one that knows him. Well deserved, Mr. Klein!

On the administrative side of the association, Les Maerov has been acclaimed as secretary of the BCBUA, taking over from Phil Bourgeois. Phil has done tremendous work as secretary since taking over for George Smith in 2016 (not to mention other involvements in baseball) and I am confident that Les will continue right where Phil left off given his professional background and many years of involvement within PCBUA as president and secretary.

Thanks, everyone. Have a happy and healthy offseason!

Michael Yamaguchi—Outgoing Area 4 Rep



## Area 5— Lower Mainland South

My first year as an Area Rep and started by making contact with local association umpire-in-chiefs for clinics in the early part of the year. My goal for the next year will be to ensure that associations work hard in providing a classroom / gymnasium setting that is of appropriate size to facilitate learning. This may require associations to get together and combine financial resources to get a school area on a weekend instead of the local batting cage.

The year started out slowly with rain at the beginning of the year, but quickly moved into clear weather for the majority of the remainder of the season. Big thanks to local assignors that worked hard to ensure our umpires had the opportunity to put their skills to use. For our umpires, it is imperative that you realize how important it is to keep a good relationship with your assignor (s). They are the ones that dole out the assignments – and by keeping them informed as to your availability and making things as easy as possible for them, will likely move you into a favourable position for being assigned.

The associations in area 5 continue to step up and assist both BC (Minor) Baseball and Baseball BC with Championships in the summer months. Provincial Tournaments were held in Langley, White Rock, Tsawwassen, Ladner and Cloverdale, with local umpires in some of the areas getting a chance to work these higher level games.

In Cloverdale, with Gord McFarlane as the UIC, and being one of BCBUA's Grassroots Program Co-ordinators, their program continues to improve. Cloverdale has a number of their umpires moving through to the Advanced Clinics, and Gord travelled to Oshawa on a National Assignment at the Bantam level this year.

I believe that BC Minor's re-introduction of rule 13.11 has helped our younger umpires. Just because that rule limits the interaction between coaches and umpires, it does not take away the need for umpires to get acquainted with the rule book and Baseball Canada's 2-Umpire Mechanics manual. Umpires should spend the off-season going through both the documents and start early in preparing for next year.

In the future I will endeavor to work a little more closely with the UIC's in our area and be available as the link between them and their umpires, and the BCBUA executive. I will also work with the local associations to encourage them to be involved with the BCBUA's Grassroots Mentorship Program.

I encourage all umpires to continue learning, so that they build on their experiences from previous years, and to be involved with a mentor to aid in their development.

John Pentland

Area 5 Rep

## Area 6 - Thompson

It was another good year for the umpires of Area 6. Numbers held roughly steady with 64 registered umpires compared to 69 registered in 2017. Five Level 1 and 2 clinics were held between Kamloops and Salmon Arm. Kamloops also hosted a Level 3 clinic this year with numerous umpires from Area 6 attending and improving their umpire knowledge.

Kamloops once again hosted the BCBUA Umpire Academy, with local umpires Chris Penner and Austin Johansen attending and both did extremely well. Kamloops also played host once again to the BCBUA Level 4/5 clinic with local umpires Matt Hicketts, Mark Wright, Brody LaFrance and Chris Penner all attending. Congratulations to Brody LaFrance who passed his Level 4 evaluation.

On the mentorship front numerous young umpires were mentored through the national umpire mentorship program, as well as at the Kamloops Canada Day Tournament. Thank you to Sean Weatherhill and Chris Connelly for organizing the mentors as well as their own mentoring and to all the mentors for a great weekend.

It was a down year on the provincials and westerns front as after a busy few years of hosting, there were no provincials or westerns in Area 6. There were however a few Area 6 umpires who were lucky enough to travel to other parts of the province to participate in provincials. On the national's front, one Area 6 umpire was fortunate enough to be selected as Mark Wright was selected to work the 18U National Championship in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

2019 will bring change to Area 6 as current Area Rep Mark Wright has moved away. Brody LaFrance was elected as the new AR.

With a successful 2018 coming to a close, it is time to look forward to 2019 which will hopefully be filled with more success and exciting new developments for Area 6.

Mark Wright—Outgoing Area 6 Rep

## Area 7 - Okanagan

Well Area 7 – Okanagan has had one exceptionally busy season with numerous tournaments, clinics and mentorships along with and a huge transition in its overall organization, so where to begin?

Our Area 7 Representative and COBUA President, Darcy Rysz, has decided to step back, regroup and reorganize after nearly a decade of “doing it ALL”. We in the Okanagan cannot thank Darcy enough for his many accomplishment and the developments he initiated here through his “Lead by Example” personality and approach. Though not fully retiring from umpiring, Darcy will continue mentoring our young umpires, lead the Valley of Champions and the Annual Umpire Appreciation Night. Darcy has left huge shoes to fill (not literally, I think you’re only a size 8) but what he started will be continued. Thank you, Darcy for all you have accomplished.

With this news the Central Okanagan Baseball Umpire Association (COBUA) had to establish a new Board of Directors, all positions previously held solely by Darcy, including a new President Bruce Kristinson, Vice President Blaise Laveay, Secretary John Marchuk, Treasurer Steve Van Dam and Assignors for U11 Chuck Abney, U13 & U15AA Nick Birwistle, and U15AAA – U18AAA, CCBC & PBL Blaise Laveay. Meetings have already been held, a new set of By Laws implemented and preparation for the coming season is being addressed. This is a huge undertaking, but many enthusiastic volunteers have stepped up and are serving notice that what Darcy started will continue.

At the BCBUA AGM, hosted in Kelowna on October 27<sup>th</sup> Kevin Burk, that’s me, was asked, and acclaimed as the new Area 7 – Okanagan Representative. For those of you who do not know me, I’ve lived in the Central Okanagan since 2012 and upon retirement from the RCMP treated myself by attending the Wendelstadt Umpire School in Dayton Beach, Florida in January 2015. Since this time, I’ve had the good fortune of being mentored by many of the new COBUA Board of Directors and BCBUA Supervisors and continue to grow my skills in Baseball Canada’s National Program. As your new Area 7 Rep I have a lot to learn but will do everything I can to advance umpiring in the Central Okanagan. Now enough about me and onto our busy 2018 Season.

In April BCBUA sent 5 umpires to the Canadian Collegiate Baseball Conference (CCBC) Championships in Kamloops and 2 of those umpires were from Area 7, namely, Bruce Kristinson and Blaise Laveay. Congratulations on your selection to the CCBC Championship Bruce and Blaise, your continued levels of excellence were recognized and rewarded with this selection.

During the July 13<sup>th</sup> weekend Kelowna hosted the Annual Valley of Champions, with over 75 teams and about the same number of umpires, overseen by Darcy Rysz as UIC and Supervisor. Enough cannot be said about Darcy’s contribution to this tournament and to the numerous umpires who regularly attend Kelowna to give it their all. Without their dedication and effort, this tournament would not be what it is today, one of the biggest and best in the province.

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the COBUA’s hosted its Annual Umpire Appreciation Night in support of KidSport, raising in excess of \$1,500 in support of this amazing non-profit. It was also on this night that we said good-bye, good luck and Happy Retirement to our friend and mentor Gerry Higgins, who after 30+ years of calling balls & strikes, said it was time. Gerry’s infectious smile and laugh will be missed.

In early August 2018 Kelowna hosted not 1 but 2 Championship, including the PBL Provincials, also supervised by Darcy Rysz and umpired by Shawn Bird, Mike Green, Brad Woof and myself. A great weekend, with exciting baseball and fantastic weather. Thanks to the PBL Board for selecting Kelowna as their host city this year.

Also hosted this weekend was the BC Minor U13AAA Provincial Championship, supervised by Marc Wright. Again, a couple of Area 7 umpires were selected to participate, namely: Jack Curry (our Vernon UIC) and Bruce Kristinson (our new COBUA President). Congratulations gentlemen.

As you can see, Area 7 - Okanagan is a happening place with many opportunities for umpires, both young and old, to grow and develop. My first official duty as Area 7 Rep was to identify a young up & coming umpire for recognition of their efforts, development and potential and I could think of no one more deserving than Kyle Sheenan, West Kelowna. Keep up the great work Kyle and Congratulations.

Until next spring, be safe.

Kevin Burk

Area 9 Rep

## Area 8—The Kootenays

2018 was a good year for the BCBUA in the Kootenays. We identified several young umpires who have a good knowledge of the game and want feedback and experience. We were able to get them some travel time to the July tournament in Cranbrook. Everybody had a great experience and all want to go back next year. As a result of these guys travelling for the 1<sup>st</sup> time we now have some of the older members wanting to give it a try. This bodes well for Cranbrook as it was a struggle to get enough umpires for their tournament this year.

Trail hosted the Little League Majors Provincial Tournament in 2018 and as a result of the outstanding umpires we had on hand, the BC champions from Whalley went on to win the Canadians and do well in Williamsport. Our umpire crew was a good mix of old guys and older guys from Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and our usual local crew. Well Done to all!!

Our clinic numbers remained about the same as the previous years and we had no significant setbacks during the season. Looking forward to next year when we are scheduled to host the Senior Provincials and we eagerly await the return of the Grand Forks International Tournament.

Bill MacMillan  
Area 8 Rep



This photo appeared in the Trail Times featuring the umpire's entrance during the opening ceremonies of the Little League Provincials in Trail. The paper entitled it "The march of the Umpires".





**Chilliwack's Craig Burt mans the bases at his first National in Brandon Manitoba**



**New Area 7 Area Rep Kevin Burk of Kelowna readies to make the call at a WCL game.**

Baseball continues to grow in the North. Prince George and Quesnel both hosted level 1/2 clinics, where our numbers were steady compared to last season. In Prince George there were 34 umpires doing games this past season over Tadpole, Mosquito, Pee Wee and Bantam. These umpires did 173 games including tournaments in Bantam, Pee Wee, and Mosquito. A senior mentorship program was partially implemented as well, which saw 5 senior umpires watch and mentor 26 games. Plans are in place to continue to develop mentorship capacity and leadership. We are already looking forward to next season.

Matt Lowndes

Area 9 Rep

# PCBUA HONORS FOR WILLIAMS AND MAEROV

The Pacific Coast Baseball Umpires Association recently held their annual year end banquet. Although the fledgling alumni baseball game was cancelled due to rain, the group managed to make it indoors to a local alley for a bowling challenge which was won by Thomas Brock.

At the Banquet in Burnaby, attended by some 40 people, the association handed out their annual hardware.

Retiring umpire Ted Williams (left photo) was given the Abe Shapiro Mentorship Award. Son Kyle made the presentation to his dad. Williams retired at the end of this past season.

Former President Les Maerov (right photo) was presented Life Membership by current President Phil Bourgeois who noted that the association had advanced in leaps and bounds during Maerov's tenure as President.





## **L3C Trilogy Book 11**

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### **A Look at the Question... Baseball Canada or No?**

Hello everyone, Eager Beaver here. I have been hearing of some discussions amongst the Big Thinkers about Baseball Canada. Specifically, is the L3C still on board with the rest of the executive? Where is he and what is he doing? I have arranged an exclusive interview with the L3C (Level 3 Coordinator) in order to clear up these questions.

We met in a secret location just recently and this is how it went.

EB...Thank you for meeting with me. I have heard through the grapevine that you are unhappy with Baseball Canada (BBC). Is this true and if so, why?

L3C...Well Eager, I have spent a considerable amount of time over the last year thinking about a couple of experiences I had with some members of BBC in which I felt that I was treated poorly and unfairly. I was trying to decide if I wanted to continue my association with BBC or just back away and concentrate on things Provincial.

EB...What, exactly are we talking about here?

L3C...I don't want to get into specifics, I have missed enough sleep over these things as it is. I will say that one of these experiences involved training and the other involved a National tournament.

EB...Obviously you have reached a decision about this matter or I would not be here so.....?

L3C...Very astute of you EB. You are correct, I have reached a decision. Over the past year I have been contacted by various members of BBC trying to sort out what happened and to correct it. I have been counselled by personalities high up in both the BCBUA and BBC to give this stuff a think and maybe another chance. When people like Dudley Doright, Rona Mona and Stevey Boots work to try to keep me involved and from BBC, guys like Juan Skewedthots and Freddy the Q embrace my cause and do what they can to make things right, it's hard to remain the injured damsel in distress.

EB...What do you mean?

L3C...Well, Juan showed me that the 1<sup>st</sup> guy I was dealing with was not representational and was probably too enthusiastic to understand his own limitations. This resulted in a long drawn out affair that could (should ) have been accomplished in weeks not months or years. Juan got on the ball and got it all finished in a month or so and counselled me to give it all another chance.

EB...You said there were a couple of things....

L3C...I had a bad experience at a National Tournament last year that involved an over-reaction by the Bosses at the tournament that (I felt) tarnished my reputation with the Big Thinkers at home. When Freddy the Q heard about it he got right to work and acted on my behalf to get it all straightened out.

It took a while for me to admit that none of it would even have happened except for my big mouth and that I was as responsible for all of it as surely as they were. This was hard for me to admit to after a year long pout.

EB...What was the "AH HA" moment that brought you to that conclusion?

L3C...I was preparing the Level 3 Report for the Cabal of Big Thinkers and I noticed that some of the National Level Members were only doing the minimum to remain current so they could still travel. I thought about this and came to the conclusion that we (all of the Nationals) need to embrace the BBC Program and do everything we could to make it work or...step aside and let new blood take over.

EB...So what about you? What are you going to do?

L3C...After talking it over with my MUCH BETTER HALF (MBH) and Kool Kelly over the last few months I have decided to see how I can remain involved. I turned down a Supervision assignment last year cuz I just wasn't there yet. One of the jobs of a Supervisor is to promote the program and I was not prepared to do that then (still pouting). Now I am.

We (the BCBUA) are the envy of most of BBC because we have a very pro-active group of Deep Thinkers that produce things like our National Clinic and our Umpire Academy. Umpires come from Far And Wide to participate. We should be proud of all of this stuff and I am.

It is time for me and many others to....or get off the pot! Embrace our affiliation with BBC and make the whole Province....nay....the whole Country better. Teach the youngsters the right way to do things and then get out of their way and let them shine!!

EB...Holy Smokes...Where Do I Sign Up!!!!!!!!!!



# From the Chief's Desk-

## Provincial Supervisor Report

I am pleased to report to you following the Baseball Canada Fall Convention in our Nation's Capital. Representatives from all 10 provincial bodies attended the 4 day event where a multitude of workshops, meetings, social activities, and ceremonies took place.

From an Awards perspective, Newfoundland and Labrador umpire Dave (Bucky) Buckingham was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for his 40 plus years as an umpire and supervisor in that province. He is a legend, equally as much as Howard Chapman was here. And everyone was extremely happy for him.

Guillaume Smith-Desbiens, of Quebec, was selected as the Dick Willis Umpire of the Year.

Coach Cav Whitely (BC) from Douglas College was named Canada's Coach of the Year.

Nova Scotia was the Province of the Year.

In addition to the Baseball Canada Awards luncheon, the Women's National team held a fundraiser dinner to conclude the event. The event featured numerous awards for the women's club, and also featured special guest appearances by 2 women who played in the All American Girls Professional Baseball League. 91 year old Maybelle Blair and 85 year old Shirley Burkovich were on hand to answer questions and talk baseball, and of course pose for photos. These 2 gems were real characters.

Of course there are outside activities over the course of such a long weekend of meetings. This year's social activities included an evening at a local Axe Throwing club. Shawn Schaefer was able to make his way to the semi-finals before bowing out.

Easily the highlight of the non-baseball activities was the Remembrance Day Ceremony. Following an impressive parade and display of armed forces personnel, police agencies, first responders, and the ceremonial pipe band, many veterans of various armed conflicts walked or were wheeled out to the cenotaph. Many dignitaries placed wreaths, several tributes and speeches were read, and there was a CF18 flyby which rumbled inside the lungs of everyone in attendance. The Last Post was played and a 21 gun salute on Parliament Hill followed. It was a humble reminder of a sad time in the world where going to war was the outcome of tyranny and oppression which I hope we will never see again.

A stop at Parliament Hill for a walkabout on the grounds, and a stop at the National War Museum culminated our stay in the Nation's Capital. Everyone in this country should make an effort to see these sights in their lifetime.

I will report on the Umpire meetings which took place over a day and a half with the National Umpire Committee and all 10 Provincial Supervisors. These meetings were highly productive. The National Umpire Committee is well on its way to developing a much more inclusive approach for all umpires in Canada, regardless of level. And it's committed to working with each individual province to achieve both provincial and national goals in the process.

Each of the 6 portfolios shared reports on the items they are working on and I share them below in no particular order.

In the Operations Committee, chair Jon Oko reports that he is working on the Operations Manual updates and also will be updating the Awards pages and Rotation Manual once the High Performance committee is finished with the changes.

From the High Performance Committee, which I sit on, Andrew Higgins reports that Jon Oko will go to Brazil for the Pan Am Qualifier in January representing Canada.

He also reports that he would prefer that we move towards a 16 umpire Sr Men's tournament with 4 of those choices being people from the T12 list. 4 man system would be used at Sr if this happens.

T12 format will be changing going forward. The tournament is being reduced from a game perspective, and it may mean less umpires are needed. Stay tuned for more developments there.

He also reported that the committee continues work on the re-design of some of the pages from the 3 man manual that need to be changed to be in line with the new approved mechanics from last year.

On the International Selection Committee Andrew also provided the list of names eligible for 2019 tournament selection. The list has 16 names on it. Myself, Rob Allan, and Rhonda remain on the list of eligible umpires from BC. Sean Sullivan's name has been added to future T12 invites as a result of his outstanding performance at Sr Men's Nationals in Victoria this summer.

On the Caravan and Instructor Development Committee, Ron Shewchuk reported that the 2017 intake for Sr CC's has almost concluded and there were 10 people out of 16 who passed and are now eligible for BBC National supervisions including Bill Mac-Millan, Rhonda Pauls, and Sean Sullivan.

Rhonda Pauls was added as a committee member, so congratulations to her for that.

Ron did tremendous work to catch up the portfolio he inherited last year at this time.

From the Grass Roots committee, new chair Mark Jones reports that much work has been done to record teaching videos and synopsis, rules vlogs (blogs done on video), and other level 3 lesson plans, which will be uploaded into the new website that is being created for umpires on the BBC site. The level 3 study guide has been produced and will be available also.

It was noted that BC is the only province which DOES NOT use the National level 3 exam. We are also the only province now who has not registered our level 3 umpires on the Baseball Canada site, which they would like us to do asap and we will work to make this happen in BC.

This committee has really been performing since Mark took it over from Derrick Dubell.

Supervision Committee chair Ed Quinlan reported that there are now 66 qualified supervisors in Canada. This is an increase of 10 from 4 years ago when the SR Course Conductor Pathway was implemented. There are potentially 4 more graduates from the 2017 intake yet to come.

There will be 27 supervision spots for 2019.

Ed reported that there is still a lot of discontent amongst umpires who leave a National unhappy with their recommendation. And more umpires yet who have indicated that the term Emerging is degrading them and causing them dissatisfaction. The committee is looking at ways to alleviate this, which might include blowing the entire evaluation form out of the water and simply becoming a feedback form like we have and not giving any final recommendation of any kind... a follow up would later be held with the Provincial Supervisor as an fyi and guidance to him in making his decisions in the future.

The new committee called Communications is headed by Chris Wilhelm and he has made good progress on developing and implementing social media identities... facebook, Instagram, and twitter were all active this year. The big project for 2018-19 will be the development of an umpire website that will act as a database and repository of educational materials and supervisor's materials and forms. This is a huge task obviously and Chris will be co-ordinating this with the new Umpire Services co-ordinator who is dedicated to work for umpire related tasks 2 days a week in the Baseball Canada office. He (Michel) reports that a website can be up and operational in 6-8 months with the time that he has been allotted for this project.

From an Operation standpoint I just spoke about a website... From what it appears, the Umpire website at Baseball Canada will be re-designed so that it looks like the Coaches website. There will be individual tracking of all of our members that we register so that we can see what modules they have completed, where they stand in the program, and gives access to members only for educational materials, videos, vlogs, rules, and it has an ability to invoice provinces for memberships, as well as charge for other modules that are not part of the current level system educational plan as provided by Baseball Canada.

Naturally this costs money. Baseball Canada has paid for the staff, and now the umpire committee is being asked to contribute to a variety of things each year including the website creation, maintenance, the creation of educational materials and videos, etc. A participation fee was discussed which in essence is the same thing as a membership fee. Having said that, it likely won't be a voluntary situation – nor should it be. There is complete buy in from all but 1 province on this and we simply cannot sit around and wait for all of our future plans because of a solitary province who may refuse to contribute their share.



So all the provinces committed to providing funding starting April 1, 2020. This allows plenty of lead time for each province to determine how they will pay their share.

BC's share is not yet known and won't be until the February board meeting. Umpires should be well aware that there is likely to be a small increase in your provincial dues in order to be able to fulfil our requirements to Baseball Canada.

Finally, there was a Provincial Baseball Report ranking all the provinces in 6 categories (including umpiring). Nova Scotia was the Province of the Year. First time ever. BC Scored very high (third) in the Umpire Category.

I learned a lot of things from other provinces, as I always do when attending these things. It's not just a big party. Umpires are doing great in BC and we are the envy of most everyone... it is pointed out to me regularly by umpires and other delegates from other provinces. And I know we can do better, and we will.

All of which is Respectfully submitted,

Steve Boutang—Provincial Supervisor of Umpires



The Umpire Committee meets in Ottawa November 10, 2018





Umpire/Baseball BC delegate Shawn Schaefer throws a bullseye in the Axe Competition Semi.







**The Group of Baseball Canada delegates at the Axe Throwing Club**



**The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Ottawa's War Memorial.**



**From Left to Right: Steve Boutang, Rhonda Pauls, Ashton Liskie (MB), Dave Buckingham (NFLD), Ron Shewchuk (MB), Trevor Drury (SK), Blaine Gallant (NS), Brandon Strocki (AB)**





The Legend, Dave (Bucky) Buckingham is awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by Baseball Canada at the National Fall Convention in Ottawa. Buckingham played in 15 Nationals as a player before participating in 19 as an umpire or Supervisor. He also umpired at the Pan Am Games in Winnipeg in 1999.



**At the Women's National team fundraiser, Baseball Canada welcomed 2 former players from the All American Girls Professional Baseball League as special guests. These women entertained anyone who was interested in chatting.**

**Shirley Burkovich (left) is joined by Rhonda Pauls (center) and Maybelle Blair (right)**

**The movie "A League of their Own" was a true story based on the players and teams from this league. Burkovich was in the movie and had a line while the players were warming up at Wrigley Field. Blair wasn't in the movie, but the character "All the Way May" was a portrayal of Blair.**

**Today, these women travel the United States as they try to revive women's professional baseball and are attempting to raise funds to build a women's practice center in Illinois that would be for players and umpires.**





**BCBUA**

*British Columbia Baseball Umpires Association*

## **“Growing Great Umpires!”**

Les Macro—Secretary  
secretary@bcbua.ca  
604-716-5244

The first planning meeting was held at the Newton Inn in Surrey in fall 1974. At that time there was nothing there but empty fields. Baseball BC helped to organize the meeting, and George Connelly chaired the meeting. Those present were Howard Chapman, Doug Hudlin, Chuck Blaikie, Bill Murphy, Richard Christie, Leo Burns, Jamie Mould, Ed Janzten and Al Lewis. The first official meeting of the newly formed BC Baseball Umpires Association (BCBUA) was held in January of 1975. Doug Hudlin was elected as the first president, and Howard Chapman was appointed by Baseball BC to be the Supervisor of Officials for the province. The original membership fees were set at \$5.00, and the clinic cost was \$7.50 per person. The \$5.00 was our operating money and the \$7.50 went to Baseball BC. We used to average about 500 people attending clinics every year, and our membership was about 150-200. In 1981 we arranged with the then president of Baseball BC, Al Elliott, to combine the clinic and membership fees into one, with the total cost being \$10. Yes, a lot has changed over the years.

## **GROWING GREAT UMPIRES!**

### **FORMER UMPIRE PAULS NOW A C.O.**



Former Baseball Canada National program umpire Jeremy Pauls of Abbotsford BC recently graduated from the Western Canada Law Enforcement Academy in Hinton Alberta after a 6 month training course.

Pauls, 24, was a National umpire at age 18 and went on to work the Gold Medal Plate in his first Championship, Pee wee Western Canada Nationals in Spruce Grove Alberta.

In the photo, the Chief of the Academy, Daniel Boyco, presents Pauls with the Chief's Award as the Top Recruit in the 38 member class. Pauls is now back in the province as he takes up his first posting in Ft St John in the Conservation Officer Services of BC.

The BCBUA is proud of your accomplishment Jeremy and wish you well in your new career.

