



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS NEWSLETTER

(Volume 41, No. 3, March 26, 2002)

Barry on Baseball

NCBWA President's Message by Barry Allen

Greetings from Oklahoma City and what a marvelous facility the Southwestern Bell Bricktown Ballpark really turned out to be. As a long-time baseball fan, I have seen more than 200 professional stadiums in my travels and this has to be one of, if not the finest, Triple-A facility in the country. Although I do think Victory Field in Indianapolis, Ind., the home of the NCAA headquarters, is right up there. Bricktown Ballpark has hosted the Big 12 post-season tournament in the past and after my visit today, I can certainly see why.

Let me first of thank you all for your participation in our organization and encourage you to solicit members for the NCBWA. If you just take them to our website, ncbwa.com, which has been excellently designed by Ted Gangi, you can see some of the things we are doing to promote our national pasttime at the collegiate level. Again, thank you.

The first two months of the 2002 season have been exciting and I would be remiss if I did not mention the work of former Alabama assistant coach Mitch Gaspard and his Northwestern State Demons. NSU is 20-3 and ranked among the nation's elite (they first appeared in our poll three weeks ago and the others are now figuring the Demons out). At one point NSU won 16 straight games, their longest winning streak since Jim Wells (now at Alabama and owner of three CWS trips) posted a 20-game winning streak (his first 20 games as a D-I head coach, I might add) in 1990. NSU has always been a hotbed for baseball, as Wells (Alabama), Dave Van Horn (Nebraska) and John Cohen (Florida asst. coach) all cut their teeth there.

Many teams are playing well, putting big numbers in the first two months. With all the home runs, no hitters, perfect games and excitement, the conference races are unfolding and should be some of the best in recent memory.

If you have not had a chance to check out your local college team, I urge you to do so soon. You will be glad you did.

Until next time...

Barry Allen
2002 NCBWA President
University of Alabama
205-348-6084

NCBWA National Hitters, Pitchers of the Week

Feb. 5—Hitter: Chad Corona, OF, San Diego State; Pitcher: Ryan Schroyer, P, Arizona State

Feb. 12—Hitter: Shaun Larkin, 2B, Cal State Northridge; Pitcher: Phillip Aragon, Nicholls State

Feb. 19—Hitter: Ryan Schade, SS, Western Carolina; Pitcher: Jared Theodorakos, Baylor

Feb. 26—Hitter: Jesse Crain, SS, Houston; Co-Pitchers: Shane Komine, Nebraska; Joe Linde, Eastern Michigan.

Mar. 5—Hitter: Jeff Cook, OF, Southern Mississippi; Pitcher: Eric Brandon, Auburn

Mar. 12—Hitter: Mike Arbinger, OF, Ohio; Co-Pitchers: Joseph Blanton, Kentucky; Matt Hamer, The Citadel

Mar. 19—Hitter: Khalil Greene, Clemson; Pitcher: Brad Halsey, Texas

Mar. 26—Hitter: Shane Costa, Cal State Fullerton; Brad Sullivan, Houston

2002 Dick Howser Award Nomination Process Outlined

For the fourth year in succession, the NCBWA and the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce are starting the process for nomination and awarding of the 16th annual Dick Howser Trophy. This nomination process will also determine the NCBWA All-American Team and Regional Players of the Year.

Nominations will be accepted either by faxing or emailing candidates to: (214-753-0145; Attn: Bo Carter) or email: bo@big12sports.com.

Deadline for receiving the first set of nominations in Sunday, Apr. 14. Write-in candidates may be submitted at each position on any of the three ballots. The first ballot will be emailed on Thursday, Apr. 18, with deadline for voting on Apr. 27. A second ballot with semifinalists for the Howser Trophy and NCBWA All-America team will be emailed on Thursday, May 9, with a May 17 return deadline. Final balloting will be on Thursday, May 30, with a return deadline of June 6. Please check subsequent NCBWA Newsletters and with various Conference offices or the NCBWA for additional data or deadlines.

The winner's name is inscribed on the permanent trophy, a bronze bust of Howser permanently displayed at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, home of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays and the 1999 NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four. Both the winner and his school receive a special trophy to keep.

The St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce has had over 100 years of community service since its founding in 1899. The organization has long been a vital force in the baseball affairs of the city, both in spring training and during the pursuit of a major league baseball franchise for the Tampa Bay area, and continues its solid role in the 21st Century.

NCBWA membership includes writers, broadcasters and publicists. Designed to promote and publicize college baseball, it is the sport's only college media-related organization, founded in 1962.

The Howser Trophy was created in 1987, shortly after Howser's death. 1987-98 winners were selected by the American Baseball Coaches Association.

Previous winners of the Howser Trophy are Mike Fiore, Miami, 1987; Robin Ventura, Oklahoma State, 1988; Scott Bryant, Texas, 1989; Alex Fernandez, Miami-Dade Community College South, 1990; Frank Rodriguez, Howard College (Texas), 1991; Brooks Kieschnick, Texas, 1992 and 1993; Jason Varitek, Georgia Tech, 1994; Todd Helton, Tennessee, 1995; Kris Benson, Clemson, 1996; J.D. Drew, Florida State, 1997; Eddy Furniss, LSU, 1998; Jason Jennings, Baylor, 1999; and Mark Teixeira, Georgia Tech, 2000; Mark Prior, Southern California, 2001.

For further information about the Howser Trophy, please contact: David Feaster, Chair, Dick Howser Trophy Committee, 1717 73rd Circle, NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33702, (727) 388-1000.

2002 Dick Howser Trophy or NCBWA All-America Team Nomination Form

| Pos. | Name, School | Class | BA | AB | R | H | HR | RBI |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
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| | | | | | | | | |

| Name, School (L/R) | Class | W-L | ERA | G | IP | H | BB | SO | SV |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
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Please Fax (214-753-0145) or email (bo@big12sports.com) – Attn: Bo Carter if faxing...Thanks!

Division II and Division III Postseason Awards

Information regarding postseason awards for the Division II and Division III levels will be forthcoming in the next NCBWA newsletter. Steve Marovich of Carthage College will once again be coordinating the Division III Regional Players of the Year and he will provide additional information on that process as the season progresses. John Arenberg of Emory University is going to help coordinate a process for the first Division II Regional Players of the Year and/or D-II All-America team. John would like to add Division II and III National Players of the Week beginning next season, so if you are at a D-II or D-III school and would like to help with that process, please contact John (404-727-6553, jarenbe@emory.edu)

“Officially,” They Never Batted!

(From Blair Cash, MRD, George Fox U.) When the George Fox University Bruins scored seven runs in the 6th inning of their 8-3 first-game win over the Eastern Oregon Mountaineers on Mar. 2, it had to be one of the strangest rallies in college baseball history. The Bruins got only one hit in the inning, and the first eight hitters all had unofficial at-bats! Ryan Dearing led off the bizarre frame with a hit-by-pitch. Jake Johnson laid down a sacrifice bunt that first baseman Noah Scott fielded and threw late to second for a fielder's choice. Travis Maffey also sacrificed, and Dearing scored the go-ahead run when pitcher Kelly Hood threw Maffey's bunt late and wildly to third. Rick Sutton relieved Hood, walked Greg Dombek intentionally to load the bases, then walked Kevin Tucker, Stephen Donohue, and Paul Gramenz unintentionally to force in three runs. Michael Windle came on to pitch and gave up a sacrifice fly to Eric Bell, followed by the only hit of the inning, a two-run single by Kyle Langeliers.

Gary Ward Reaches 1,000 Wins, Sun Belt Coaches Hitting Milestones

New Mexico State head baseball coach Gary Ward became the 24th NCAA Division I skipper to win 1,000 baseball games in his four-year college career when he picked up the win on Mar. 14 as NMSU beat Eastern Michigan 17-8 in Las Cruces. Ward is the second winningest active coach in NCAA Division I at 1,000-343-1 in 20-plus seasons at the senior level. Ward also has another 240 wins as the head coach at Yavapai Junior College in Arizona. He is one of several Sun Belt head coaches to reach or be closing in on major victory milestones this season:

Arkansas State's Bill Bethea is closing in on #300. He had 295 wins going into through Mar. 15 while Florida International's Danny Price notched his 900th collegiate win in mid-March. Louisiana-Lafayette skipper Tony Robichaux hit Ward's halfway mark of 500 on March 2 against Texas-Pan American and has picked up 259 wins in Lafayette. Middle Tennessee head coach Steve Peterson hit the 450-win mark on March 5 at Lipscomb. He also topped the 600-win mark this season when his wins from Roane State Community College are added to the mix. South Alabama's Steve Kittrell is three quarters of the way to Ward's mark after having picked up win No. 750 on Feb. 10 against Mississippi Valley State. On March 13 against Mississippi State, he picked up his 725th win as the head coach of the Jaguars. Western Kentucky head coach Joel Murrie reached career win No. 700 in mid-March. Just so UALR's Brian Rhees and UNO's Randy Bush won't feel left out, Rhees recorded his 200th win on May 16, 2001, in the first round of the Sun Belt Championship Tournament and had 115 wins as the skipper of the Trojans to start the '02 season. Bush, in only his third season as a collegiate head coach, picked up career win No. 70 on March 12 when the Privateers beat Eastern Illinois in the Big Easy.

2001 Howser Trophy Winner Prior One of Five Finalists for Sullivan Award

The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) announced on March 12 the names of the five finalists for the 72nd Annual AAU James E. Sullivan Memorial Award, which recognizes the top amateur athlete in the nation. Natalie Coughlin (swimming), Michelle Kwan (skating), **Mark Prior (baseball)**, Sean Townsend (gymnastics), and Alan Webb (track and field) were selected based on their qualities of leadership, character, sportsmanship and the ideals of amateurism in the year 2001.

The recipient will be formally announced at the award's new presentation site The New York Athletic Club on April 9, 2002. "These individuals exemplify the best amateur athletes in all of sport with their commitment to sportsmanship, community, and education," said AAU President Bobby Dodd. "The AAU represents 34 sports from the grass roots to the national level, and they are the role models for our athletes to follow. It will be hard to announce one recipient on April 9."

The 2001 AAU James E. Sullivan Memorial Award finalists include (with brief bios):

- Mark Prior, USA Baseball's 2001 Dick Howser Trophy and Golden Spikes Award winner, is currently vying for a spot in the starting rotation for the Chicago Cubs organization. He joins J.D Drew, Pat Burrell and 1987 winner Jim Abbott as only the fourth baseball player to be a finalist.

- Natalie Coughlin, who currently swims for University of California, could be only the tenth swimmer to receive the award. Over a five-day span, she won nine events, broke two world records, two American records, and six meet records in butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle.

Michelle Kwan, who recently captured the bronze medal at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake, could be only the second figure skater to hold the honor of top amateur athlete. Dick Button won in 1949. Kwan's accomplishments in 2001 include her fourth career and second consecutive World Ladies Figure Skating title.

· Sean Townsend, the 2001 World Champion in Parallel Bars, helped his team capture the USA's first ever Silver Medal at the 2001 World Championships. He has the chance to be only the second gymnast to hold the honor as Kurt Thomas was honored in 1979.

· Alan Webb made history at the new Balance Games by becoming the first American High School athlete to run an indoor mile in under four minutes (3:59.86). He would join an impressive roster of 34 track super stars that have received the AAU Sullivan Award.

Considered the "Oscar" of sports awards, the AAU James E. Sullivan Award has been presented to prominent athletes of our time including last year's recipient Rulon Gardner. Others include: Chamique Holdsclaw (1998), Peyton Manning (1997), William "Bill" Bradley (1965), Dan Jansen (1994), Janet Evans (1989), Jim Abbott (1987), Jackie Joyner-Kersey (1986), Greg Louganis (1984), the late Florence Griffith-Joyner (1988) and the first recipient the late, great golfer Robert Jones.

The AAU James E. Sullivan Memorial Award has been presented annually by the AAU since 1930 as a salute to founder and past president of the AAU, and a pioneer in amateur sports, James E. Sullivan. "The AAU was founded in the clubhouse of the New York Athletic Club," said Al Green, President of the New York Athletic Club, "so it is only fitting that we move the presentation of the most prestigious amateur sports award back to the place where national amateur athletic competition began. The NYAC is extremely proud to be a part of the award."

The Fabulous Forties

Coach [Paul Mainieri](#) of [Notre Dame](#) started the 2002 campaign with 641 wins at age 44. The successful Fighting Irish mentor hit the 600-win mark on in 2001 at the (getting younger every year for those 50 and better) age of 43. He is among a very elite group of youngest mentors to hit that mark in their early 40s. Arizona State's Pat Murphy is about to reach 600 at age 43 while serving as head coach at Notre Dame and his current assignment Arizona State. Oklahoma's Larry Cochell captured his 600th victory at age 44 in 1985 when Oral Roberts defeated Kansas State. Current winningest active coach Augie Garrido (1,347 triumphs through Mar. 25, 2002, and No. 2 all-time to Texas' Cliff Gustafson with 1,427 victories from 1968-96) reached the 600-win mark at age 45 in 1984 while legendary coach Ron Polk hit 600 at the age of 43 in 1987 while coaching at Mississippi State. That took even greater significance because the Southeastern Conference imposed a limit on regular-season baseball contests before the NCAA began its 56-game maximum in the 1980s.

Other Coaching Milestones, Etc.

Ohio State's Bob Todd won his 700th career game in a 10-0 win over Detroit in the second game of a doubleheader on Saturday, March 16....Miami (Fla.) had the Jim Morris National Championship Bobblehead on Mar. 23. The first 2,500 fans attending the UM-UCLA game received the doll...Davidson had two reasons to celebrate a 16-6 win over UNC-Greensboro on Mar. 20. It was the 1,000th all-time victory in DU baseball history, and senior Tim Frend broke the school career record for hits with his 238th safety during the triumph. Interestingly, the official scorer in the game was Davidson SID Rick Bender, who held the previous career hits' mark with 237....Auburn used a school-record nine pitchers that combined to no-hit UAB in a 9-2 win on March 19. Now there's something you don't see very often....And in the wild and wacky 2002 baseball world department: Loyola Marymount and San Francisco had to suspend their Mar. 24-25 game in the 10th inning on Mar. 24 because of darkness some five hours, 10 minutes into the West Coast Conference slugfest. San Francisco was leading 25-21 entering LMU's turn at the plate in the bottom of the 10th frame when lack of available light forced the then-46-run game into a second day of activity. The first 51 hits in the wild encounter were registered by the teams Sunday, and San Francisco rattled off six consecutive singles before the suspension from darkness occurred on Mar. 24. The game will be resumed on May 10 in San Francisco....a long time for LMU to ponder if they can come up with a four-run rally in the bottom of the 10th

Easton Signs New Agreement with USA Baseball

Easton Sports, the technology and innovation leader in the development of baseball and softball equipment, has entered into a four-year sponsorship agreement with USA Baseball (USAB) to become the "Official Shoe Supplier" of the organization, according to Mike Zlaket, vice president of Easton's baseball and softball division. "We have been involved with USA Baseball for years as an official supplier of products including bats and ball gloves, and we are eager to take our working relationship to the next level," said Zlaket. "USAB is a prominent organization that commands the utmost respect in the baseball industry. To have their top-notch amateur and Olympic athletes using our products is not only a great honor, but a testament to our brand." Under the terms of the new agreement, Easton Sports will have prominent exposure at the permanent USA Baseball National Team Training Center as well as at all USA Baseball National Team road games. Easton will also have a presence in all print materials and will have the right to use the USA Baseball logos and trademarks in advertising, packaging and promotions. In turn, Easton Sports will outfit the USA Baseball National Team spikes and coaches shoes.

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1962, the NCBWA is dedicated to the advancement of college baseball. Membership is open to writers, broadcasters and publicists of the sport. Members receive a membership card, directory, newsletter updates and official votes in the Howser Award Player of the Year, Regional Player of the Year and NCBWA All-America voting. The NCBWA also sponsors preseason All-American awards, publication and writing contests. Additionally, the organization has a website at www.ncbwa.com. For membership, send annual dues (\$15.00), along with mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail address information to Russell Anderson, NCBWA Treasurer, c/o Conference USA, 35 East Wacker Drive, Suite 650, Chicago, IL 60601.

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