

LINE DRIVES THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS NEWSLETTER

(Volume 45, No. 3, Apr. 11, 2006)

The President's Message By NCBWA President Todd Lamb

Membership:

Well, we are right around the midway point to the season and 2006 is already full of stories. Never mind all the on-the field stuff, there have been a lot of newsworthy events. It all began with the approval of starting dates for practices and competition and the separate proposal of game reductions by the NCAA board of directors. Of course, then came the enforcement of the APR. Oh, and I guess we should not forget about the first ever college baseball video game.

On the field, it appears the race for Omaha is wide open this year. The NCBWA poll already has had six teams in the top spot. Texas was the preseason No. 1 and since then, Florida has spent three weeks at No. 1 and both Rice and Florida State each have spent two weeks as the top team in the nation. Georgia Tech and South Carolina also have spent one week in that top slot.

Baseball America is out with its postseason predictions and lists the top 8 seeds as follows: Cal State Fullerton, South Carolina, Rice, Clemson, Mississippi State, North Carolina, Nebraska and Alabama in that order. While it certainly is too early to predict who will be playing in the College World Series, the list, which includes the other 56 teams the publication thinks will be in the tournament, makes for good discussion. Coincidentally, no school from a northern conference has been predicted to host a regional, though it mentions both Ohio State and Notre Dame as possible regional sites should one of the teams earn a No. 2 seed.

We are certainly a ways away from ironing out the details of who will be in the tournament. Selection Monday is still seven weeks down the road with a lot of conference baseball still to be played.

This week, nominations for the midseason watch list for the second annual Stopper of the Year Award are due. Please send pertinent stats to Dave Fanucchi of USA Baseball and the NCBWA first vice president, no later than Friday, April 14. The midseason list will be announced the week of April 17. Friday is also the deadline to submit nominations for the Pro-Line Cap NCBWA All-America Awards and the Dick Howser Trophy. All of those nominations should be sent to Bo Carter of the Big 12 Conference and the executive director of the NCBWA.

I hope you will take the time to make nominations. This process is one of the most important responsibilities of the membership and without you our lists might not be complete.

I also would encourage you to help bring more members into the organization. In one of my first president's messages from last fall, I challenged everyone to help in this effort. It can be something as simple as running off copies of the membership application and setting it out with game notes and media guides in the press box or maybe you can target your beat writer or even radio announcer. It may say "Writers" in the name of our organization, but it is open to all writers, broadcasters and publicists of college baseball.

Be sure to get those nominations in. See you at the park!

Sincerely, Todd Lamb NCBWA President The Ohio State University

Dick Howser Trophy on the Horizon: Deadline Reminders

Here is a quick timeline for nominations and selections for the Dick Howser Trophy and NCBWA All-America teams. Please contact any officer of the NCBWA with questions, and we will have forms emailed to the membership as each deadline approaches. Thanks to all for your present and past help!



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

(www.ncbwa.com)

2006 DICK HOWSER AWARD NOMINATION PROCESS

DALLAS - For the seventh year in succession, the NCBWA and St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce are starting the process for nomination and awarding of the 20th annual Dick Howser Trophy and Pro-Line Cap/NCBWA All-America teams.

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

Timeline

Timeline	
Fri., April 14	Deadline for Initial Set of Nominations
Wed., Apr. 19	First Ballot e-Mailed to Membership
Wed., April 26	Deadline for First Round of Voting
Thu., April 27	64 Dick Howser Trophy Watch List Announced
Tue., May 9	Second Ballot e-Mailed to Membership
Wed., May 17	Deadline for Second Round of Voting
Thu., May 18	16 Dick Howser Semifinalists Announced
Tue., May 30	Final Ballot e-Mailed to Membership
Wed., June 7	Deadline for Final Round of Voting
Thu., June 8	Eight Dick Howser Trophy Finalists Announced
Fri., June 9	Regional Players of the Year Announced
Tue., June 13	NCBWA All-American Teams Announced
Fri., June 16	Dick Howser Trophy Winner Announced in Omaha

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. 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. 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; Khalil Greene, Clemson, 2002; Rickey Weeks, Southern, 2003; Jered Weaver, Long Beach State, 2004; and Alex Gordon, Nebraska, 2005.

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.



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

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2006 DICK HOWSER TROPHY – PRO-LINE CAP NCBWA ALL-AMERICA TEAM NOMINATION FORM

Nominations are due on April 14

Pos. Name, School	Class	BA	AB	R	2	Н	Н	R	RBI		
											_
Name, School (L/R)	Class	W-L	ERA	G	IP		Н	BB	so	SV	

Please Fax (214-753-0145) or email (bo@big12sports.com) – Attn: Bo Carter if faxing...Thanks!

Stopper of the Year Nominations Due

Midseason Stopper of the Year Nominations with stats are due to Dave Fanucchi (<u>davefanucchi@usabaseball.com</u> by Friday, April 14 – You can forward nominees to Dave with the same form and additional notes as the one above in this newsletter. Thanks again for your cooperation!

Pro-Line Cap NCBWA Division I Hitters/Pitchers of the Week

Mar. 7 - New Mexico State 1B Luke Hopkins; Nebraska P Joba

Mar. 14 - Creighton C Chris Gradoville; Vanderbilt P David Price

Mar. 21 – James Madison CF Kellen Kulbacki; (co) Southern Miss P Daniel Best, Texas Tech P Miles Morgan

Mar. 28 - Western Carolina 1B Trey McDaniel; Eastern Kentucky P Christian Friedrich

Apr. 4 - Clemson 1B Andy D'Alessio; Washington P Tim Lincecum

Pro-Line Cap NCBWA Division III Hitters/Pitchers of the Week

Feb. 7-Mar. 5 – Hitter of the Week: Nathan Roberts (Franklin); Pitcher of the Week: Mark Moriarty (St. Scholastica)

Mar. 6-12 – Hitter of the Week: Troy Beaver (Juniata); Pitcher of the Week: Matt Woods (Sewanee)

Mar. 13-19 – Hitter of the Week: Gerard Haran (College of New Jersey); Pitcher of the Week: Phil Kielma (Illinois College)

Mar. 20-26 – Hitter of the Week: J.B. Sowyrda (Trinity, Texas); Pitcher of the Week: Matt Mendel (Southwestern, Texas)

2006 Initial NCBWA Division II polls - March 6, 2006 Rank. School 2006 record Points Prev.

- 1. Georgia College & State U. (4) 16-2 185
- 2. Tampa (1) 13-3 179
- 3t. Abilene Christian (2) 17-2 170
- 3t. Central Missouri State (1) 10-3 170
- 5. Chico State 17-4 166
- 6. West Virginia State 5-0 153
- 7. Armstrong Atlantic State 14-0-1 151
- 8. Texas A&M-Kingsville 14-1 146
- 9t. Catawba 17-4 145
- 9t. Grand Valley State 5-1 145
- 11. USC-Aiken 15-4 111
- 12. Cal State Los Angeles 11-3 106
- 13. Florida Gulf Coast 13-4 96
- 14. Nebraska-Omaha 10-3 84
- 15. West Alabama 15-6 83
- 16. Franklin Pierce 6-1 80
- 17. Emporia State 9-2 67
- 18. Fort Hays State 15-3 62
- 19. Lynn 11-5 52
- 20. St. Joseph's (IN) 3-1 49
- 21. Nova Southeastern 13-4 34
- 22. Erskine 17-2 22
- 23. Arkansas-Monticello 16-5 18
- 25t. Concordia-St. Paul 9-0 17
- 25t. Shippensburg 5-4 17

Others receiving votes -- Western Oregon (8-4) 21, Francis Marion (11-5) 20, Columbus State (14-5) 11, Carson-Newman (15-6) 9, Incarnate Word (10-4) 9, UMass-Lowell (0-0) 8, Pace (3-0)

- 6, Florida Southern (13-8) 5, Northern Kentucky (4-2-1) 4, Ohio Valley (11-2) 4, Delta State (11-7)
- 3, Slippery Rock (2-0) 3, Tusculum (NA) 3, Wayne State, Neb. (6-3) 2, Cal State Stanislaus (14-
- 5) 1, Kutztown (6-3) 1, Mount Olive (14-5) 1

2006 Regional polls

North Atlantic Region

- 1. West Virginia State (4) 5-0
- 2. Shippensburg 5-4
- 3. Kutztown 6-3
- 4. Slippery Rock 2-0
- 5. Ohio Valley 11-2
- 6. Millersville 3-1
- 7. Shepherd 7-5
- 8. Concord 2-1
- 9. Pitt-Johnstown 3-2
- 10. West Chester 0-5

Northeast Region

- 1. Franklin Pierce (6) 6-1
- 2. UMass Lowell 0-0
- 3. Southern Conn. State 0-4
- 4. Stonehill 2-3

- 5. Pace 3-0
- 6. Dominican 3-2
- 7. Dowling 1-2
- 8. Adelphi 0-0
- 9. Concordia (N.Y.) 6-5
- 10. Felician 3-3

North Central Region

- 1. Grand Valley State 5-1
- 2. Saint Joseph's (IN) 3-1
- 3. Northern Kentucky 4-2-1
- 4. Ashland 6-2
- 5. Kentucky Wesleyan 5-3
- 6. Wisconsin-Parkside 1-6
- 7. Bellarmine 5-4
- 8. Wayne State (Mich.) 0-2
- 9. Rockhurst 6-3
- 10. Saginaw Valley State 0-0

Central Region

- 1. Central Missouri State (2) 10-3
- 2. Nebraska-Omaha 10-3
- 3. Emporia State 9-2
- 4. Concordia-St. Paul 9-0
- 5. Pittsburg State 9-2
- 6. Wayne State (Neb.) 6-3
- 7. Missouri Western 6-3
- 8. Southwest Baptist 7-4
- 9. Augustana (S.D.) 4-3
- 10. Washburn 5-3

West Region

- 1. Chico State (4) 17-4
- 2. Cal State L.A. 11-3
- 3t. Fort Hays State 15-3
- 3t. Western Oregon 8-4
- 5. Cal State Stanislaus 14-5
- 6. Colorado State-Pueblo 8-4
- 7. Nebraska-Kearney 11-3
- 8. UC San Diego 10-8
- 9. Sonoma State 11-9
- 10. Mesa State 9-9

South Region

- 1. Tampa 13-3
- 2. Catawba 17-4
- 3. Florida Gulf Coast 13-4
- 4. Lynn 11-5
- 5. Nova Southeastern 13-4
- 6. Carson-Newman 15-6
- 7. Florida Tech 11-6
- 8. St. Leo 11-5
- 9. Florida Southern 13-8
- 10. Miles 9-3

South Atlantic Region

- 1. Georgia College & State U. 16-2
- 2. Armstrong Atlantic State 14-0-1
- 3. USC Aiken 15-4
- 4. Francis Marion 11-5
- 5. Erskine 17-2
- 6. Columbus State 14-7
- 7. Mount Olive 14-5
- 8. UNC Pembroke 11-7
- 9. USC Upstate 9-8
- 10. Barton 11-8

South Central Region

- 1. Abilene Christian 17-2
- 2. Texas A&M-Kingsville 14-1
- 3. West Alabama 15-6
- 4. Arkansas-Monticello 16-5
- 5. Incarnate Word 10-4
- 6. Eastern New Mexico 16-4
- 7. Central Oklahoma 9-5
- 8. West Florida 16-9
- 9. St. Mary's (Texas) 9-4
- 10. St. Edward's (Texas) 8-7

Assistant Coaches Named for 2006 Team USA

USA Baseball has announced that Mark Machtolf of Gonzaga University, Jim Schlossnagle of Texas Christian University, and Tom Slater of Auburn University will serve as Assistant Coaches on the 2006 USA Baseball National Team that will represent the United States this summer internationally. They will each assist 2006 Team USA Head Coach Tim Corbin of Vanderbilt. In addition, USA Baseball also announced that Andrew Norden of Duke again will serve as the Team Athletic Trainer and that NCBWA member Thomas Samuel of Vandy will serve as the Team Press Officer.

Machtolf is entering his third season as skipper for the Bulldogs. Machtolf, an 11-year assistant at the school, was handed the coaching reigns in the summer of 2003. He made an immediate impact on the Bulldogs program, guiding GU to a 16-11 record in West Coast Conference play while placing three players on the All-WCC first team. A 1987 graduate of Stanford University, Machtolf was a member of the Cardinal's 1987 College World Series championship team and was an All-CWS selection. A four-year baseball letterman and two-year football letterman, Machtolf received his B.A. in history in 1987.

Schlossnagle's presence at TCU has already been felt in just two seasons as the head of the program. In his first two seasons, he led the Frogs to school record win totals of 39 and 41. TCU's first back-to-back NCAA Regional appearances, and two Conference USA Championships. The 2004 CUSA tournament championship was the first ever by a TCU squad. Prior to his time at TCU, the Frogs' coach spent two years as head coach of the UNLV baseball program. In two seasons, the Rebels owned a 77-47 record under Schlossnagle, including a 47-17 in 2003. For that year, he was recognized as the Mountain West Conference Coach of the Year after leading the Rebels to the regular season and conference tournament titles as well as the finals if the NCAA Tempe Regional. He became the first UNLV skipper ever voted league Coach of the Year, and the team's regular season championship was the first outright title in school history. In addition, the Rebels' tourney crown was their first in the MWC.

Slater enters his second season as the head coach at Auburn after guiding a team picked to finish at the bottom of the Southeastern Conference in 2005 to an NCAA Regional berth. The Tigers won two games in the Tallahassee Regional and advanced to the championship game. As an assistant coach at Auburn from 1995-2000, he helped lead the Tigers to five NCAA Regional appearances including two Regional championships in 1997 and 1999, a Super Regional berth and one appearance in the College World Series in 1997. Following those six years at Auburn,

Slater returned to his alma mater, VMI, in 2001 as head coach. He led the Keydets to a school-record 25 victories and 16 league wins in 2003 while posting their first winning record in conference play since 1989. In 2003, he was named the Southern Conference Coach of the Year by both the coaches and the media.

"USA Baseball is extremely fortunate to have each one of these outstanding coaches dedicate their summer to our program," said Eric Campbell, USA Baseball General Manager of National Teams. "This will be the first USA Baseball experience for all three coaches as well as Samuel and Norden."

Norden is currently in his fourth season as the Duke Baseball Athletic Trainer and worked with Team USA last summer.

Historically Speaking: Three Dick Howser Trophy Alumni Meet in Same Game

Georgia Tech's Jason Varitek (Boston) and Mark Teixeira (Texas) joined the Florida's Brad Wilkerson (Texas) as starters in the first-ever meeting of three Dick Howser Trophy winners in the same game on Apr. 4, 2006, when the Red Sox and Rangers opened the season at Ameriquest Field in Arlington. One of the first Major League Baseball active members of Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), Jeff Bajenaru (currently with the Arizona Diamondbacks and played collegiately at Oklahoma), was on hand at Comiskey Park in Chicago for the White Sox ring presentation ceremonies from the 2005 World Series.

Quite a Start for WCU's Strausburgh

Western Carolina right fielder **Steven Strausbaugh**, who was a consensus Freshman All-America last season, is not experiencing a sophomore slump to date. The Venice, Fla., native has belted eight home runs in 10 games played, is batting .368 with 20 RBI and a slugging percentage of 1.026. Last year as a freshman, he hit 12 home runs and batted .367.

Strausbaugh missed four games (two at Charleston Southern and two at UNC Wilmington) with a hand injury. In the first game at Charleston Southern (Mar. 10), he hit a two-run home run in the first inning and a two-run home run in the second. Later in the game, who beating out an infield single, he was hit on the hand with the ball. Intense swelling and pain caused him to miss the next four games. However, upon his return to the lineup at Elon, he hit a home run in game one and a two-run home run in game three. Strausbaugh, who has a hit in all but one game and a seven-game hit streak, has at least one home run in seven of his 10 games played. Also, he had an RBI in all but one of his first 10 games in 2006 while scoring a run in all of his 10 games.

Two-Time Dick Howser Trophy Winner Kieschnick Retires From Baseball By George Tuley, CORPUS CHRISTI CALLER TIMES

Brooks Kieschnick began his career when the Chicago Cubs drafted him in 1993. After spending part of last season with Double-A Corpus Christi, he retired recently.

"I'd been thinking about it all season," Kieschnick said. "I don't want to be away from my family any more." Kieschnick, 33, and his wife Danielle are expecting their second child in June. The family lives in San Antonio.

"Really, that's what it boiled down to," he said. "I played a long time. I was ready to become a daddy."

Kieschnick won the Dick Howser Award twice and was the Baseball America National Player of the Year in 1993, his senior season at Texas. As a Longhorn, he pitched 345 innings, and hit 43 home runs as a designated hitter. The Chicago Cubs drafted him in the first round in 1993, beginning a career that took him through the dugouts of the Cincinnati Reds, the Colorado Rockies, the Milwaukee Brewers and the Houston Astros organizations.

He hit .248 in 257 major-league games, with 16 home runs in 306 at-bats. He also won two games and lost two games in 96 innings as a pitcher for Milwaukee. In 2003 Kieschnick hit homers as a pinch hitter, a pitcher and a designated hitter. "I did some things in the game that people have never done," he said. Kieschnick played last year for the Triple-A Round Rock Express and briefly with the Double-A Corpus Christi Hooks, both Astros affiliates. The Baltimore Orioles invited Kieschnick to spring training but he declined, knowing he might end up in the

minor leagues again. "I felt like my chances were OK," he said. "They weren't great." Kieschnick was inducted last year into the Texas Longhorn Hall of Honor.

McMurry University to honor the family of Judge Howard Green

McMurry University is proud to recognize April 8, 2006, as Judge Howard Green Day. As an advocate for the game of baseball, it is only fitting that the day honoring Green was built around events of America's past time.

Green was a member of the McMurry baseball club from 1940-43 where he played catcher and helped the Indians compete in the Abilene City League. Green was one of the top hitters on the team and finished his collegiate career hitting over .300. When he graduated from McMurry in 1943, his baseball days were far from over. After a short stint in the United States military from August of 1943 to November of 1945, Green changed his role from player to organizer.

Green became the father of the Abilene Blue Sox in 1946, serving as general manager and coowner. He stayed with the Blue Sox organization for three seasons before making baseball history. At the age of 26, Green became the youngest league president in the history of the minor leagues when he led the Longhorn League. The organization included clubs in Sweetwater, Vernon, Big Spring, Midland, Ballinger, and Odessa.

Green then left West Texas and headed to the coast to found the Gulf Coast League, which consisted of teams from Lufkin, Jacksonville, Port Arthur, Galveston, Lake Charles, La., and Crowley, La. He also headed up the Big State League in 1951 before being elected in 1954 to the executive committee of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, representing the 23 B, C and D leagues in the United States.

Though he left his career in baseball organization in 1956, he still stayed close to the game by founding the Flem Hall-Bill Ruggles chapter of The Society for American Baseball Research. In 1992, the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame Showcase honored Green. He began a decade of service to the Texas Legislature in 1956 before serving as a county judge until 1974. Later, he served as Tarrant County Treasurer until 1982.

While Green was a student at McMurry he served as the sports editor for both the War Whoop and the Totem and was a member and served as Chancellor of Ko Sari along with his four years on the baseball team. In 1996, he was named a distinguished alumnus by the university and just a year later on May 3, 1997, he was inducted into McMurry's Athletic Hall of Honor.

Green's family consists of his widow Mary (Utler), his daughter Leslie and his grandson Ethan Hawke.

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 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, the Stopper of the Year Award, publication and writing contests. Additionally, the organization maintains a website at www.ncbwa.com. For membership, send annual dues (\$15), along with mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail address information to Russell Anderson, NCBWA Associate Executive Director, c/o Conference USA, 5201 No. O'Connor Blvd., Suite 300, Irving, TX 75309.

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