

Sports

Baseball



Our game too!



The history of baseball, often referred to as “America’s pastime”, is well documented. Its roots are in British games such as rounders, but rules similar to those we have today had been developed by 1850.

The game quickly spread to Canada, and **Cobourg, with its U.S. connections, would have taken to the game easily.** We know that there were competitive teams in Cobourg, Newcastle and Bowmanville as early as 1874, for a travelling team from Guelph passed through, picking up a share of the game receipts.*

In 1918 the Toronto World reported that a team from **Cobourg's Military Hospital played a Town team** and defeated them. And, “In the Inter-church League



(juniors) the Alpines of the Methodist Church won from St. Peter’s team by a large score.” (After which appeared an advertisement for SPERMOZONE for nervousness and accompanying ailments.)

The Central Ontario Baseball League was formed at least by 1923, probably with the Cobourg Baseball Club as a founding member. This news item appeared in a local newspaper on April 5, 1923.

Lindsay Post: “President Dedman of the C. O. B. L. has wagered with Dick Turpin of Cobourg, that the Cobourg team will finish the season in cellar position of B. Section and very much financially in the hole”. Surely this must be an error. You could hardly make us believe that the President of a Baseball League would make a bet of that kind with a representative of one of the teams in his circuit.



Things may not have changed much over the years for the Club's financial statement for 1932, appearing in the *Cobourg World*, **showed a closing bank balance of \$.78.**

A list of champions and runners up in the Ontario Baseball Association, formed in 1918, shows that **Cobourg teams have held their own in provincial competition** at all levels. The Eastern Ontario Baseball Association was formed in 1964 and Cobourg teams competed until 2014. In that year the Cobourg Baseball Association and the Port Hope & District Minor Baseball Association amalgamated to form the Northumberland Baseball Association.

For those in their late teens and up, from time to time a men's baseball league has been formed. While players are often enthusiastic, their availability is often challenged by work and other distractions.

There was a time, long ago, when baseball pushed cricket and polo and lacrosse to the side. Now, with the emergence of soccer and the resurgence of lacrosse, **baseball is wondering if the cleat is on the other foot.**

In 1985 G. A. Spalding was appointed Baseball Commissioner for the Parks and Recreation Board. A George Spalding Memorial Trophy is awarded in a number of Cobourg sports.

Picture credits: Cobourg Public Library
*Brian Martin The Tecumseh of the International Association

