



— JEUX DU —  
**CANADA**  
— GAMES —

## **Sport Profile – Baseball**

Canada Games Council  
Last Updated – August, 2005



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### A. HISTORY OF THE SPORT

The game of baseball is generally considered to be a descendant of the English game of rounders. Although historians believed Abner Doubleday to have founded the game in 1839 in Cooperstown, New York, it was in fact Alexander Cartwright who published the first list of rules in 1845.

The game became very popular in the Northeast U.S., and began to spread across the border to Canada. In actuality, an early form of baseball was played in Beachville, Ontario, in 1838. Since that moment, baseball has grown in popularity in Canada and has been heralded as Canada's unofficial summer sport.

Baseball began to be played professionally throughout the United States and Canada in 1865, with the National League being formed in 1876. Other leagues formed and folded, with the strong American League forming in the year 1893. It stood as the only true competition, encouraging an inter-league playoff, resulting in the first World Series taking place in 1903.

The Toronto Blue Jays were introduced to Major League Baseball in 1977, winning two World Championships in 1992 and 1993. The Montreal Expos were Canada's other team; introduced in 1969, they resided in Montreal until 2005 when they moved to Washington, D.C., under the new name of The Nationals.

### B. CANADA GAMES SPORT HISTORY AND PAST RESULTS

Baseball made its debut at the first ever Canada Summer Games in 1969, which took place in Halifax-Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

#### PAST RESULTS

	1969	1973	1977	1981	1985	1989	1993	1997	2001
	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
<b>AB</b>	10	6	7	7	7	7	7	3	4
<b>BC</b>	7	1	1	3	3	6	3	7	1
<b>MB</b>	8	2	2	10	2	9	4	4	6
<b>NB</b>	4	8	9	2	9	4	5	5	7
<b>NF</b>	9	10	6	6	10	5	8	10	9
<b>NS</b>	3	4	4	9	4	8	9	8	3
<b>ON</b>	1	5	3	1	1	1	2	1	2
<b>PEI</b>	6	9	10	8	8	10	10	9	10
<b>QC</b>	2	7	5	5	5	3	1	2	5
<b>SK</b>	5	3	8	4	6	2	6	6	8

### C. NUMBER OF ATHLETES ON TEAM

Competitors: Male 18

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### D. EVENT FORMAT AND RULES OF PLAY

Seeding shall be based on the results of the 2001 Canada Summer Games, and teams shall be grouped as follows:

Pool A: 1 (BC) - 4 (AB) - 5 (QC) - 8 (SK) - 9 (NF)  
Pool B: 2 (ON) - 3 (NS) - 6 (MB) - 7 (NB) - 10 (PEI)

Following round-robin play within each pool, the top two teams in each pool play off for medals and other teams for ranking.

### E. EQUIPMENT AND TERMINOLOGY

*Athletic supporter and cup* – a hard plastic shell which protects the genitals from injury. The "cup supporter" (also known as a "jockstrap" or "jock") is a special undergarment designed to hold the cup in place without restricting movement.

*Ball* – a cork sphere, tightly wound with layers of yarn or string and covered with a stitched leather coat.

*Base* – one of four corners of the infield which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more specifically, they are canvas bags (at first, second, and third base) and a rubber plate (at home).

*Bat* – a round sectioned, solid wooden or hollow aluminum striking implement. Wooden bats are traditionally made from ash, though maple is also sometimes used. Aluminum bats are not permitted in professional leagues, given that they produce a higher number of easier hits; but are frequently used in amateur leagues.

*Batting glove* – glove often worn on one or both hands by the batter. They offer additional grip and eliminate some of the shock when making contact with the ball.

*Batting Helmet* – helmet worn by batter to protect the head and the ear facing the pitcher from the ball.

*Catcher's helmet* – protective helmet with face guard worn by the catcher.

*Catcher's Mitt* – leather mitt worn by catchers. It is much wider than a normal fielder's glove and the four fingers are connected. The mitt is also better-padded than the standard fielder's glove.

*First baseman's mitt* – leather mitt worn by first basemen. It is longer and wider than a standard fielder's glove. The four fingers are connected and the glove is rounded like a catcher's mitt. A first baseman's mitt has a bit more padding than a standard fielder's glove

*Glove* – leather glove worn by players in the field. Long fingers and a webbed "pocket" between the thumb and first finger allow the fielder to catch the ball more easily.

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*Hat* – baseball cap worn by all players. Designed to shade the eyes from the sun, this hat design has become popular with the general public. When at bat, players usually put their batting helmet right over their soft hat.

*Sliding shorts* – padded support shorts sometimes worn to protect the thighs when the player slides into the bases.

*Spikes* – baseball shoes have spikes to increase traction on dirt and grass. Different levels of competition may allow different types of spikes. For example, Major League Baseball allows metal spikes to be worn while lower levels of competition (such as Tee-Ball or beginner baseball) may only allow plastic spikes. Baserunners will often use the spikes to their advantage by executing an aggressive slide, feet first towards the fielder, with the goal of "breaking up" a double play. Spikes are also sometimes referred to as cleats.

*Uniform* – shirt and pants worn by all players. Each team generally has a unique pattern of colors and designs. Traditionally, the home team's uniform is predominantly white, and the visiting team's is predominantly gray.

### F. JUDGING / SCORING SYSTEM

Games to consist of 7 innings, unless tied.

Points: win - 2 points

loss - 0 point

The ten-run rule will be in effect anytime after the completion of 5 (or 4½) innings of play. The umpire will award the game to the team with a lead of 10 or more runs any time after the trailing team has had 5 or more turns at bat.

### G. PLAYOFF AND TIE-BREAKING FORMAT

All games will be played until a winner is declared.

### H. TECHNOLOGY OF SPORT

*The Glove* – a major advancement in the game of baseball is the technology of the baseball glove. It began as a actual mitt, with minimal padding, five full fingers, and nothing else. As the game advanced, defenders began to realize that a larger glove could help in the defensive process. By also adding a web between the thumb and forefinger, a basket type of glove was introduced.

*The Bat* – the baseball bat requires a wood that combines strength, flexibility, and resilience with a low overall weight. Ash wood was the best for meeting these needs of the baseball bat, and has been used since the first baseball bat was created. However, a recent advancement in the last thirty years has seen the metal bat come in to use in most youth and college leagues. With the first metal bats being aluminum, makers are now using extremely light and strong alloys of scandium and titanium. Some bats even offer gas chambers, and extra flex to their bats. In addition to the metal craze, maple wood has started to be used as a material for bats, owing its increased popularity to Barry Bonds. He used the patented Sam Bats, made of maple by Ottawa's Sam Holman, during his record breaking seasons. Many players in both amateur and pro leagues are

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now finding maple to be a more durable wood and the popularity of both Sam Bats and maple bats is rising quickly.

### **I. ROLE OF OFFICIALS IN SPORT**

The game of baseball is very unique, as the time element does not play a factor into the game-play itself. However, this does not mean that umpiring is also not a factor - umpires who reside over a game are involved in numerous decisions, with the home-plate umpire making over two hundred calls a game. And so, the role of the umpire in baseball is a large and important one, but it is also quite simple. The umpire must uphold the rules of the game that they are umpiring ( each league and age group have slightly different rules, and the umpires must be aware of this ), and carry out his umpiring duties in a fair and consistent manner. Finally, the umpire should not have the game revolve around him, but rather the umpire should let the players play.

### **J. SPORT MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS AND STRUCTURE**

The number of players participating in baseball is increasing every year, with the total number of players under the national governing body of Baseball Canada reaching over 400,000. There are also approximately 62,000 coaches, 11,000 umpires and 13,000 teams nation-wide. On top of this, there are thousands more playing in other leagues throughout Canada, including Little League, Babe Ruth, and Legion ball.

### **K. NOTABLE PAST ATHLETES/ALUMNI**

There have been many past athletes who have played in a Summer Games and have gone on to much success in baseball. Those athletes include:

*Jeff Francis LHP* – Ace of Colorado Rockies pitching staff and former first round draft pick. Pitched for Team B.C. in 2001.

*Adam Loewen LHP* – Named to 2005 Futures Game World Team. Adam is the highest drafted Canadian in the history of the MLB draft, going in the first round with the fourth pick overall to the Baltimore Orioles. Played with Team B.C. with Jeff Francis in 2001.

*Corey Koskie 3B* – Toronto Blue Jays third basemen. Regarded around MLB as one of the best third basemen both offensively and defensively. Played for Team Manitoba.

*Jeff Zimmerman RHP* – Pitcher for Texas Rangers. Was an all-star in 1999, and notched 28 saves in 2001. Pitched for Team B.C.

*Russel Martin C* – Highly regarded prospect in the Los Angeles Dodgers system. Played for Team Quebec.

*Dave Pagan RHP* – Yankees pitcher in the 1970's, led the Team Saskatchewan pitching staff in 1969.

### **L. NOTABLE CANADIAN RECORDS**

Fergie Jenkins of Chatham, Ontario is the only Canadian to have been inducted in the Baseball Hall of Fame. His career totals add up to 284 wins, 3192 strikeouts, 4500 innings pitched, and a career era of 3.34.

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Eric Gagne of Mascouche, Quebec, emerged in the past few years as one of the, if not the most dominant closer in the majors. At one point, he had converted 84 straight save opportunities, earning him the Cy Young award in 2003.

Larry Walker of Maple Ridge, B.C., is regarded as the best Canadian position player to have ever played in the Majors. His career totals add up to 375 homeruns, 2116 hits, 1288 rbi's, 2116 hits, 230 stolen bases, a lifetime average of .312, 7 gold gloves, 3 batting titles and the MVP award in 1997.

Terry Puhl of Melville, Saskatchewan, holds the highest fielding percentage ever by a major league outfielder with a percentage of .993.