

# Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association

MAY--JUNE--JULY NEWSLETTER

VOL.8 NO.6

**1976 BASEBALL SEASON:** The 1976 baseball season is in full swing with most teams in the middle of their conference play and looking forward to state tournament play. A lot of coaches are sending in their scores to the Des Moines Register and local newspapers. I would like to see all the games called into the Register so the coaches and people can see the scores and who is winning.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The Association membership again went over the 450 mark. We have achieved our goals every year for the past eight years. If there is a coach in your league or area who is not a member, mention the organization to him and explain what we are trying to do for baseball in the State of Iowa. Remind him of the District Meetings which will be held July 24 or 25. Also remind him of the clinic that will be held next March 11-12, 1977, with Ted Williams being the feature speaker.

It's time for the coaches to renew their membership and help us make Iowa the best High School baseball State in the country. Send in your dues and have them paid up until September 1977. The Association needs your membership in order to set up our Clinic and send out the newsletters to you.

This letter is going to every baseball coach in the state. If you are not a member of the coaches association, we would like to have you join and help promote high school baseball by getting involved. We need good baseball people and you will get many returns from our organization. Membership is still only \$5.00.

**DISTRICT CHAIRMEN:** President Mick Mattiace, Cedar Rapids Prairie appointed the District Chairmen for All District Team selection and conducting the District meetings that will be held in the five district throughout Iowa. They are: Northeast District: Lowell Thomsen, Mason City, 515-423-4461; Southeast District: Doug Dunlap, Washington, 319-693-4832; Central District: Dave Posegate, Ames, 515-292-4519; Northwest District: Stuart McCord, Lawton, 712-944-5202; Southwest District: Ron Clinton, Creston, 515-782-2757.

**THE FOLLOWING DATES HAVE BEEN SET FOR THE MEETINGS:**

NORTHWEST DISTRICT: July 24, 10:00 a.m. Lawton High School

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT: July 24, 10:00 a.m. Southwestern Community College

CENTRAL DISTRICT: July 25, 1:00 p.m. Ames High School

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT: July 25, 1:00 p.m. Washington Junior High School

NORTHEAST DISTRICT: July 25, 1:00 p.m. Elgin High School

**DISTRICT MEETINGS AGENDA:** The following topics will be discussed at your district meetings. Please make every effort to attend.

- (1) Recommendations for Hall of Fame membership (See rules)
- (2) District coach of the Year Award--Nominate 5
- (3) All District Team selection
- (4) Recommendations for Board of Directors to consider at the Fall Meeting

SCHEDULE FOR ALL DISTRICT TEAMS SELECTION: 1/ Ballots out to coaches by July 7th; 2/ Ballots back to Executive Secretary by July 17th; 3/ District teams selection July 21st by District Meetings; 4/ District teams released to press August 3rd at 12:00 noon.

ALL DISTRICT BALLOT: Enclosed you will find your All District Ballot. Please fill it out and send it back before July 17th. You may vote for any boy who you feel is deserving of All District. If your team plays in more than one district, vote for the boys on the back of the ballot who are not in your district. Their names will be forwarded to the district in which they belong. Please give as much information as possible on any boy you nominate. This will be very much appreciated by the selection committee.

All District Priorities: This is the list of priorities that the committees will follow in selecting All District teams.

- 1/ Number of votes for nominated candidates (total)
- 2/ Nomination of player by own coach
- 3/ Degree of difficulty of schedule
- 4/ Any previous All-State recognition
- 5/ Any previous All-District recognition
- 6/ Nomination from floor by nomination committee
- 7/ Year in school by the player
- 8/ Coach is member of Baseball Association.

Four other suggestions for District Chairman to follow.

- 1/ Majority vote of committee members present for each position chosen at All-District meeting.
- 2/ Use seasonal batting averages only--not conference averages.
- 3/ All District Chairman contact coach of player nominated 5 times and ask why player was not nominated by own coach.
- 4/ Conference Representatives attend All District meeting.
- 5/ Each school get's 1 vote at District meeting.

(At the All District meeting only members of the Association may vote)

DISTRICT COACH OF YEAR NOMINATION: We would like for all to nominate a District Coach from your district. He should be a coach who is deserving of the honor for his work on and off the field of baseball.

HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS: Check over the rules you must follow to nominate someone you feel is deserving of Hall of Fame honors. Please read these rules over and nominate according to the guidelines set forth by the Hall of Fame Committee. These rules can be found in 1975 May-June newsletter.

BASEBALL RATING PULL: The Des Moines Register is conducting a rating of the baseball teams in Iowa once again. This is the third year for the rating pools. This rating is getting the backing of the Association. Call your scores in so the coaches doing the rating can get a good look at the scores across the state. The coaches doing the rating are listed in the newsletter. Call any of the committee if you feel your team deserves a vote.

CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVES: Would the conference representatives please send in the results of the league standing at the close of your conference. Also send in the name of the conference champs coach. Also appreciate the games won and lost by all teams in your conference. The Conference Representative should also represent his conference in the District Meetings. We need your input, please take the time to fulfill this obligation.

FUR SALE: The Association has five items for sale to coaches.

- 1/ Folders set \$9.00
- 2/ Bumper stickers 50¢ each
- 3/ Plaques for your certificates \$10.00
- 4/ Pen's \$2.50 with Logo
- 5/ Coffee Mugs \$1.50 with Logo

RATING COMMITTEE AND ADDRESSES:

CENTRAL DISTRICT:	Jim Mahoney 3400 Ashby Des Moines, Ia 50310 515-274-0174	Byron Rhodes Box 262 Conrad, Ia. 50621 515-366-2552	Jim Ellwanger 1323 25th Ave.N Fort Dodge, Ia 515-576-7963
SOUTHWEST DISTRICT	Dick Legg 411 5th St. Griswold, Ia. 712-778-2457	Gene Sardall Box 122 Churdan, Ia. 50050 712-685-3608	Tom Vincent 3021 Ave. J. Council Bluffs, Ia 712-322-2424
SOUTHEAST DISTRICT	Ron Welch Eddyville Ia. 52553 515-969-4780	Kent Bennett 312 S. Wilson Mount Pleasant, Ia. 319-385-8568	John Vanni 1312 Tracy Lane Iowa City, Ia. 319-337-3627
NORTHWEST DISTRICT	Dennis Turnure 3252 Douglas Sioux City, Ia 712-277-9359	Marv. Thelen 523 Madison Remsen, Ia. 51050 712-727-3461	Bill Rahm 301 5th Ave. Algona, Ia. 50511 515-295-2730
NORTHEAST DISTRICT	Leo Hensley Lawler, Ia. 319-776-6219	Dick Core 1791 Rosemont Dubuque, Ia. 319-588-9368	Lowell Thomsen 1033 1st. St. N.W. Mason City, Ia. 515-423-4461

*Membership/Renewal*

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

CUT OUT  
AND RETURN  
WITH YOUR  
DUES  
\$5.00

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Being interested in promoting the welfare of Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association I hereby apply for membership in the association.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Present coaching job \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (over) School Phone \_\_\_\_\_

To: High School Baseball Coach

From: Iowa Babe Ruth Baseball  
302 F Avenue West  
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577

Dear Coach:

I have a Baseball Program, that would fit well into any program that you now have. You could use your Varsity Squad or Junior Varsity Team. This is Babe Ruth Baseball 16 - 18.

We can offer you the following and this is in agreement with the Iowa High School Ath. Assoc. Here are the only requirements.

1. No player can be over 19 years old before Aug. 1st
2. We need 4 or more teams in your area to make a league, your present league or conference schedule will do.
3. We offer State, Regional, and National Tournaments.
4. No Entry Fees for Regional or National Tournaments, also all housing and most of players meals are furnished, FREE.
5. The only cost is \$12.0 per team.

If you are interested, please write Charlie Kentfield, 302 F Ave. West, Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577. If you wish to call me by phone you may do so in the evenings after 7:00 P.M. My phone is 672-2272 Area Code 515.

I am hopeful that I will be hearing from you. I remain,

Sincerely yours,

*Charles E. Kentfield*  
Charles E. Kentfield

State Commissioner  
Babe Ruth Baseball 16 - 18  
302 F Ave. West  
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577

## BASE RUNNING

### GENERAL

The moment a batter hits a fair ball, or receives his base on balls, he becomes a base runner.

The subject of base running covers those maneuvers by the team, collectively, or by individuals of the team, by which runners are advanced all the way around the bases until the runs are scored.

The ideal base runner is a student of the opposition who learns when and how to make a move, follows his manager's orders, is alert to take advantage of opportunity and who studies his art as the pitcher studies the art of pitching. His assets are speed, and knowledge of how to do what he must do to excel.

Alert, timely base running will score more runs and will produce a psychological condition that tends to upset the opposition, produce confusion in the defense and win ball games.

Base running is a major part of the team's offensive.

### THE BATTER BECOMES A BASE RUNNER

When the umpire says "Take your base," the player tosses his bat aside and trots to first base. As he nears the bag he should glance at the defense. You may see the shortstop walking toward his deep position with his back turned to the runner, and the second baseman so far from second base that by a burst of speed he can beat both defensive men to second base. This cannot be done often but the play should be in every base runner's mind as he comes down the line.

When the batter hits the ball fair he has but one obligation - to run as fast as he can to first base. "The shortest distance between two points is a straight line." He should, therefore, pay no attention to the ball but run straight down the base path to the base.

As the runner reaches within a few feet of the base his coach will indicate whether or not he may safely take another base and it is probable that he, himself, will have glanced at the defensive situation and will have appraised his chances to go to second base. In any event, until he reaches first base his speed should remain at its maximum.

If he is to go for more bases he should hit the bat in his stride and undertake to make his turn as short as possible in order to save steps and time. If he hits the bag with his left foot, let him practice the "crossover" - a movement by which he changes direction abruptly bringing the right foot across in front of him, as he runs, and continues in full stride to second base.

If he hits the base with his right foot he must "push" himself into the new direction.

His purpose in practicing these turns must be to save every extra step and every second of time.

## "Base Running"

The young player should be impressed by his value to his team by being able to take an extra base. If he is on second base he is now in scoring position.

If, however, he has hit safely and the ball is being returned to the infield, the runner should make his turn at first base and keep on until he has forced the outfielder to throw the ball. He may then, and only then, return to first base. Any player who gets the reputation of being a fast, alert base runner will cause the defense to make errors in their eagerness to get the ball back to the base ahead of the runner. Alertness has, thus early, caused some concern in the minds of the defense.

### THE BASE RUNNER STEALS SECOND BASE. THE LEAD.

The coach or manager who wishes to develop base stealers will do the following:

In squads of five men each he will place a pitcher on the mound, a catcher behind the plate, and a player at first base to "hold him on." He will line up his squad of five men with the front man on the base line off first base and the other four in single column behind the front man. His five men are now one behind the other off first base.

The pitcher pitches to the plate - or he chooses to throw to first base. The runners do not know where the pitch is going. If it goes to the plate they all break for second; if it comes to first, they all return to the base line. If they break for second, have another squad ready to move into the base runner's positions. If they return to first safely they all rise and take another lead. The manager watches this and if, and when, a player is "caught" he must move to the rear position in the line of five.

Each time a player returns to the base safely and takes his next lead, he should go six inches further, making a mark in the dirt to indicate his greatest "lead". When he reaches the point that an additional six inches causes him to be caught by the pitcher's throw he has reached his maximum distance. Let him then measure that distance, fix it in his mind and always thereafter take that maximum lead off first. This is called the "Two way lead."

Let the squad develop rivalry. Let the fellow who gets caught suffer the penalty of being at the end of the line.

If a manager will teach his entire squad to practice the "two way lead" he will develop the spirit of "a running club" - and running ball clubs win games. This maneuver discourages lethargy, laziness and, incidentally, adds to the pitcher's worries. Many times it will disconcert the pitcher causing a wild pitch, a balk, or some other disaster for the other side. Develop a running team.

### THE BASE RUNNER STEALS SECOND BASE. THE BREAK.

Now, the runner on first base has received permission, or direction, to "go" - to steal the base.

He has been watching this pitcher in other games, in today's game. He has been watching the pitcher's feet, every little habit of the pitcher, and he has become familiar with every move he makes. (Pitchers, even major league pitchers, have had habits unknown to themselves,

## "Base Running"

but held sacredly secret by opposition base runners, that have tipped off the runners when it was to be a pitch or a throw to first base.) Have your players study the pitcher, particularly have them watch his feet. The feet must always move toward first before the throw.

But now the runner is going to "go". This is his time to break. He is at his maximum distance from the base ready to go in either direction. He holds steady. If he makes any move, as the pitcher glances at him just before the pitch it is a short, snappy move of the shoulders only, his feet have not moved and he is in a position to move toward the base as readily as to move toward second. When the pitcher has committed himself to the pitch to the plate, the runner makes his break in one of two manners: (1) he pivots to the right on both feet, crosses the left foot over and is in full stride getting his drive off the left foot, or (2) he lifts the left foot across in front and takes his drive off the right foot. The player decides which of these methods gets him into full stride the more quickly. There is no set rule. The quickness of his break may save a full stride at the other end of his journey. He should practice the "break".

### THE BASE RUNNER STEALS SECOND BASE. THE SLIDE.

The runner has moved at full speed until he is within fifteen feet of second base and the ball is on its way from the catcher to the baseman who is moving in to take the throw. He now undertakes to decide by the baseman's actions whether or not the throw will be high or low, to one side of the base or the other. His decision must of course be almost automatic but he goes into the bag to be as far away as possible from the touch by the baseman. He wants one of his feet to touch and "hook" the base before it can be touched by the baseman. So, he "hook slides" either to the right or left. Without loss or break of stride he throws his legs flexed and his foot on its side, and the other reaching for the bag, he presents only his foot to the hurried baseman for the touch.

If the player is falling away from the touch to his right he goes in on his right side, left leg reaching to hook the bag and his right foot flexed and sliding on its right side. If he is falling away to the left he goes in with his right foot reaching to hook the bag and his left foot flexed and sliding on its left side.

Players must practice in sand, sawdust or soft dirt in order to judge correctly how far from the bag the slide must start. Sliding is dangerous unless the art is learned properly. Once the player commits himself to the slide he must not undertake to stop it. He must go through with it - or possibly break an ankle or a leg. The head first slide is almost obsolete. There is always danger of the baseman coming down from a jump for a high throw and cutting the runner with his spikes. Finally, whenever the play is close, slide. Nothing appears quite so silly in baseball as the player who refuses to "hit the dirt" and goes to his "Out" standing up. Make a real play for the decision. Make the opposition put you out! Slide!

### THE RUNNER GOES TO THIRD FROM FIRST.

Save time and distance making the turn at second (or indeed at third base) either by the crossover or the definite "push" method. To save one stride, or one second of time frequently means that the player is safe instead of "out".

"Base Running"

BASE RUNNERS MUST WATCH THE COACHES.

Base runners must always consider themselves under control unless given their discretion by the manager by a sign allowing them to go whenever they choose.

The situation in the game determines what risk shall be taken by the manager. The situation may change with each succeeding pitch. Player should be taught the way to receive and acknowledge "signs" - and the "crime" of missing signs. In general, base running is always in the field of calculated risks. Unless the risk is a necessity in the winning of the game, it should not be taken. But when necessary, teach your team that they must go all out to win.

Base runners going for extra bases must learn to pick up their coaches at certain spots. When going from first base past second, glance at the third base coach about fifteen feet before reaching second base. At that spot you will get his signal to hold - or to come on at full speed. Watch the coaches. With the possibility of going from second all the way home, the coacher will give the sign as you near third. Watch the coaches.

Finally, and again, second base is most often stolen on the pitcher, not the catcher. Study the opposition pitcher and learn his mannerisms, unconscious habits and then -- GO!

**Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association**

**Harold J. Primrose**

**4211 High Ridge Road S.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403**

*Address Correction Requested*

