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## MAYOR'S LETTER



On behalf of the City of London, it is my pleasure to extend warm wishes and congratulations to the London Majors Baseball Club, as it launches its new season under new ownership in The Forest City. Downtown revitalization has been a focal point in our community during the past few years. Many features, including the refurbishment of the Majors' home field at historic Labatt Park, along with the openings of the John Labatt Centre, the new Central library and the debut of an interactive play area at the Forks of the Thames, have attracted thousands of Londoners and visitors to the heart of the city.

And, we anticipate many more exciting times in the downtown district as the London Majors continue to entertain us with high calibre baseball throughout the summer season. We wish our hometown team great success, as we celebrate the blending of London's notable past with its vibrant future.

Congratulations and good luck London Majors!

Sincerely,

*Anne Marie DeCicco*

Anne Marie DeCicco  
Mayor



**Kris Kewley**  
Sales Representative



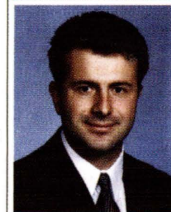
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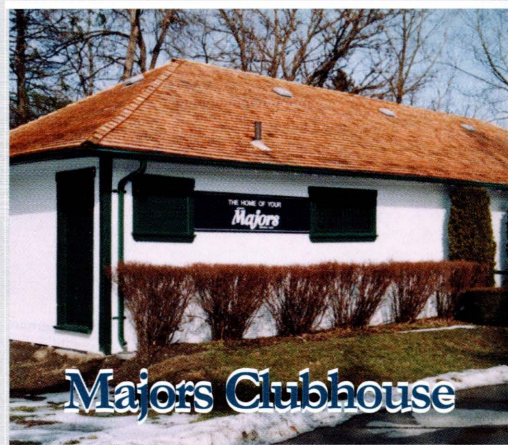
## Majors Home Games

Day	Date	Team	Time
Mon	May 24	Stratford	7:00 pm
Thu	May 27	Hamilton	7:30 pm
Thu	June 3	Stratford	7:30 pm
Thu	June 10	Brantford	7:30 pm
Sun	June 13	Barrie	1:00 pm
Thu	June 17	Guelph	7:30 pm
Tue	June 22	Kitchener	7:30 pm
Thu	June 24	Brantford	7:30 pm
Tue	June 29	Stratford	7:30 pm
Thu	July 1,	Toronto	5:00 pm
Thu	July 8,	Hamilton	7:30 pm
Thu	July 15	Brantford	7:30 pm
Sun	July 18	Oshawa	1:00 pm
Tue	July 20	Kitchener	7:30 pm
Thu	July 22	Guelph	7:30 pm



## Majors Away Games

Day	Date	Team	Time
Sat	May 22	Brantford	2:00 pm
Sun	May 23	Stratford	7:00 pm
Sat	May 29	Guelph	2:00 pm
Sun	May 30	Hamilton	1:30 pm
Sat	June 5	Brantford	2:00 pm
Sun	June 6	Toronto	1:00 pm
Sat	June 12	Oshawa	2:00 pm
Sat	June 19	Barrie	1:00 pm
Sat	June 26	Guelph	7:45 pm
Sun	June 27	Kitchener	7:00 pm
Sat	July 3	Stratford	7:30 pm
Sun	July 4	Hamilton	1:30 pm
Fri	July 9	Brantford	8:00 pm
Sat	July 17	Stratford	7:30 pm
Sun	July 25	Kitchener	7:00 pm



ALL DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.  
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## A Brief History, by Jeffery Reed

For more than 150 years, baseball has been played at the forks of the Thames. Today's London Majors continue that tradition with their involvement in the Intercounty Major Baseball League. The is the ballclub's 80th year of play - they entered the league in 1925, and captured the championship during their charter season. The rest, as they say, is history.

The moniker "Majors" is traced to 1944, when a group of Londoners, including Clare Van Horne (who would operate the team for a decade before Frank Colman took charge) tagged the senior club with its current handle. But history buffs can research all the way back to 1855, when the London Baseball Club played just north of where Victoria Park now rests. Of course, the legendary London Tecumsehs amateur club began play in 1868; they were the forefathers of today's Majors. And in 1877, the professional Tecumsehs - who were also 1876 Canadian champs - beat the Pittsburgh Alleghenies to win Canada's first major-league baseball championship.

Also that year, the pro Tecumsehs club moved to Tecumseh Park, today known as Labatt Park, a gift to the city of London from the Labatt family. It remains a city landmark, and home of the Majors.

London ballclubs, amateur and professional, would form and disband, but baseball would continue to grip Londoners. During the Second World War, the London Army Team won the Canadian Sandlot Congress title in 1943 and '44. In 1945, the team first used the Majors name, in honor of Canada's fighting soldiers. The Majors continued a winning tradition, capturing the 1947 and '48 Congress championships.

Of course, the 1948 Majors captured the World Sandlot championship. London beat Fort Wayne in a best-of-seven affair which ended at Labatt Park in late September of that year. Tommy White of London, who would become a St. Thomas sporting legend, won three games for that '48 team. His friend, hitting legend Russ Evon, was also a member of that squad. Other members of that dream team help make up a Who's Who list of local baseball heroes: Stan "Gabby" Anderson; Tom Burgess; Jack Fairs; Ken McFadden; and Norm Aldridge, who was a trainer with the '48 champs, just to name a few.

In 1955, Frank Colman, the former Pittsburgh Pirate and New York Yankee, purchased the ballclub and promptly brought London the 1956 Intercounty title. Jumping to the Great Lakes-Niagara District Association in 1957, the Majors won the Great Lakes portion, but lost the championship to Niagara Falls. London returned to the Intercounty in 1958.

The 1960 and '61 ballclubs, known as the Chester Pegg Diamonds, briefly became the Majors in 1962 under manager Dave Taylor. But in 1963, sportswriter Bob Ferguson came to the rescue, purchasing the club and gathering sponsorship from London Motor Products. The new London Pontiacs finished first in 1964, '65 and '68, but failed to win the Intercounty title. The 1969 team, under former pitching legend Roy McKay, won it all.

And that was it for the Pontiacs, who became the Avcos for four seasons, 1970-73. The El Morocco Majors played ball in 1974 and '75; that '75 ballclub, under manager McKay, was London's last senior Intercounty championship club. Arden Eddie purchased the club after the 1976 season, and continued to keep the Majors alive, before selling the club to current owner Scott Dart during this past off-season. Eddie holds many league records, including seasons and games played, hits, walks, and stolen bases.

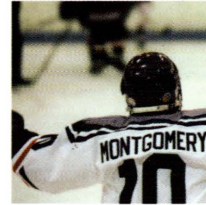
Take a look at some "Major" accomplishments: pitching champion Brian Murphy turned in a 0.93 earned run average in 1968. The popular Joe Bechard won the league batting title in 1949 with a .424 average. Hank Czerwieniec equaled that feat with identical numbers in 1962. Then Dave Byers hit at a .424 clip in 1977. Home runs came often, too. Legendary river shots blasted off the bats of Evon, and Larry Haggitt, an important member of the 1975 squad when he hit .412 and knocked in 22 RBI.

Many Majors stars of recent times, including Steve Bushby, Mike Lumley, Jon Owen, Mike Shewan, Chuck Westman, and recently-retired all-star centre fielder Richard Thompson (whose great-grandfather, "Bull" Thompson, was a member of that legendary 1877 Tecumsehs ballclub) have continued to keep London's field of dreams alive. Names like Bobby Deakin, Fergie Jenkins, Wayne "Doggie" Fenlon, Kane Godwin, Alex McKay, and the Mendham boys - current coach Dan "Uncle Buck" Mendham, his late brother, Dave and Dave's sons, former Majors Dan and Pete Mendham - all come to mind when you consider the last 79 seasons of Majors baseball.

These are just a few of the people who have made London Majors baseball a London institution. As you watch today's Majors, take a good look around Labatt Park. The ballyard is the best in the world. With the Majors calling Labatt Park home, London baseball fans have the best of both worlds.



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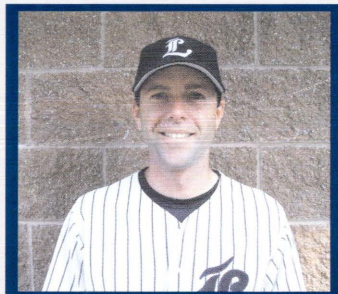


## Majors Coaches

**Scott Dart**  
President



**Ron LeClair**  
Field Manager



**Brandon Steele**  
Assistant Manager



**Dan "Uncle Buck"**  
Mendham

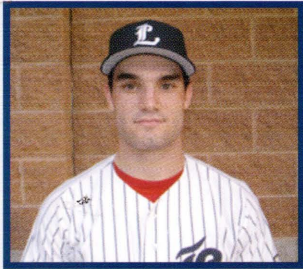
**Harry Muir**

**Chris Mercier**

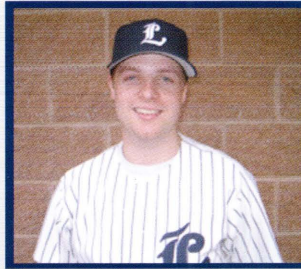


## Majors Players

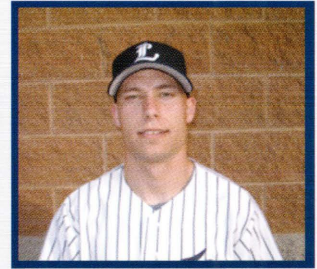
Alex Blackburn



Brooke Coatsworth



Jeremy Hudson



Jeremy Middleton



Kevin MacDonald



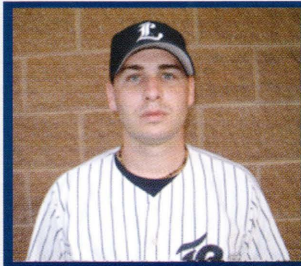
Kevin Virtue



Kyle Piwowarczyk



Kris Kewley



Mike Carswell



NEW TEAM  
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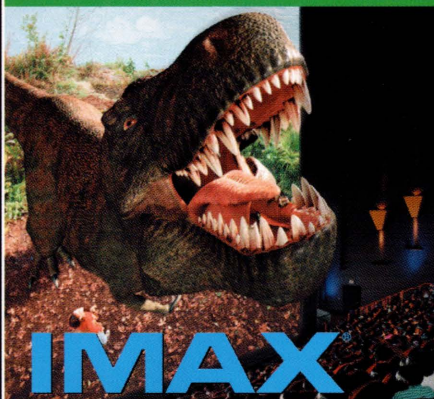




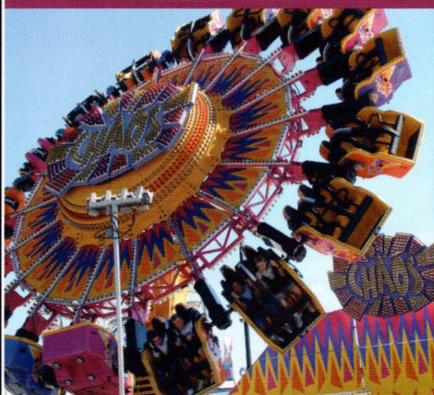
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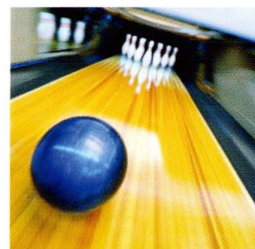
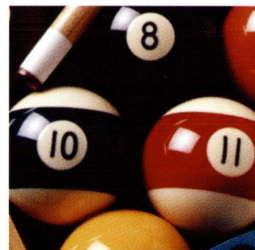
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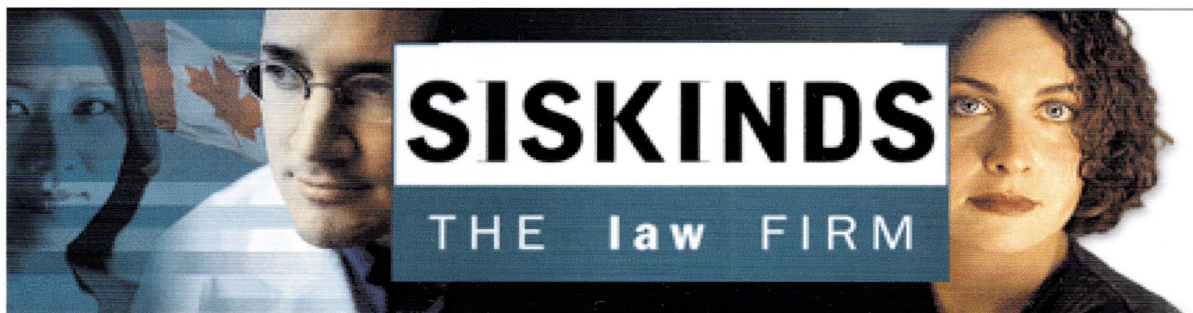
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4 Second Baseman	9 Right Fielder
5 Third Baseman	DH Designated Hitter

—	Single	<b>K</b>	Strikeout	<b>PB</b>	Passed Ball
==	Double	<b>BK</b>	Balk	<b>SB</b>	Stolen Base
≡	Triple	<b>F</b>	Foul Fly	<b>FO</b>	Force Out
■	Home Run	<b>FC</b>	Fielders Choice	<b>DP</b>	Double Play
<b>SH</b>	Sacrifice	<b>HP</b>	Hit by Pitcher	<b>E</b>	Error
<b>BB</b>	Walk	<b>WP</b>	Wild Pitch	<b>SF</b>	Sacrifice Fly

# Good Luck London Majors!



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1 Pitcher	6 Shortstop
2 Catcher	7 Left Fielder
3 First Baseman	8 Centre Fielder
4 Second Baseman	9 Right Fielder
5 Third Baseman	DH Designated Hitter

—	Single	<b>K</b>	Strikeout	<b>PB</b>	Passed Ball
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<b>SH</b>	Sacrifice	<b>HP</b>	Hit by Pitcher	<b>E</b>	Error
<b>BB</b>	Walk	<b>WP</b>	Wild Pitch	<b>SF</b>	Sacrifice Fly

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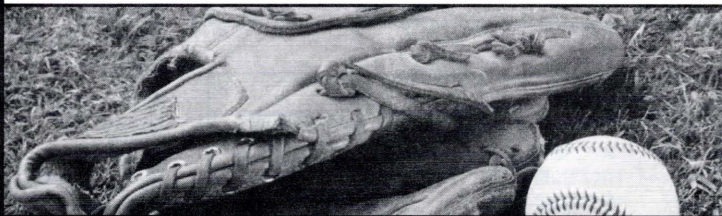
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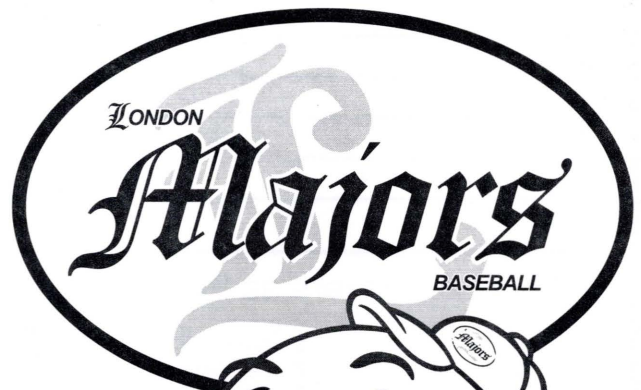
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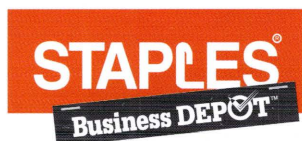
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Sunday, June 13	Barrie @ London Majors - Double Header	LIVE @ 1:00 PM
Thursday, July 1	Toronto @ London Majors - Double Header	LIVE @ 5:00 PM
Thursday, July 8	Hamilton @ London Majors	LIVE @ 7:30 PM
Thursday July 15 <b>ROGERS NIGHT</b>	Brantford @ London Majors	LIVE @ 7:30 PM
Sunday, July 18	Oshawa @ London Majors - Double Header	LIVE @ 1:00 PM
Thursday, July 22	Guelph @ London Majors	LIVE @ 7:30 PM

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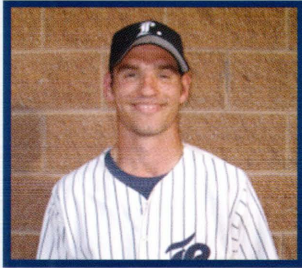
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# Majors Players

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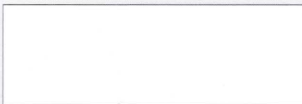
Mike Payne



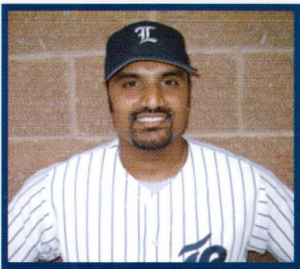
Trevor Greenway



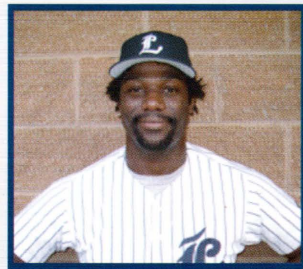
Pete Babcock



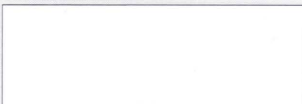
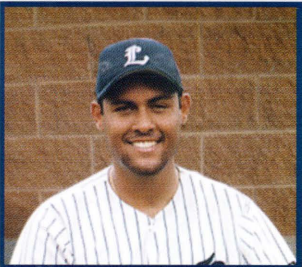
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Steve Charles



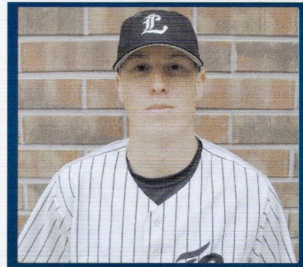
Simon Galarraga



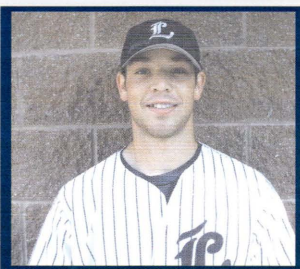
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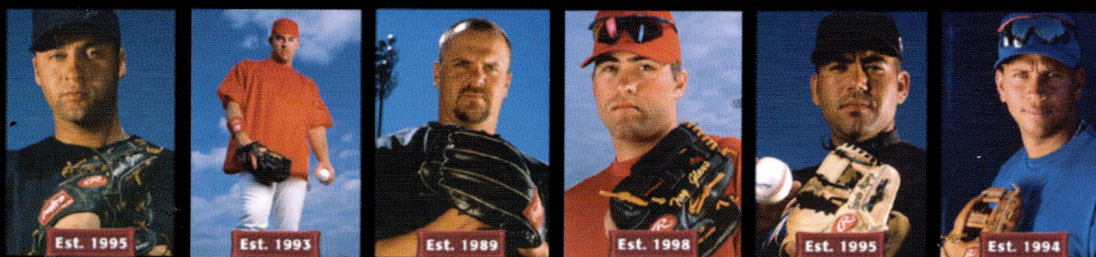
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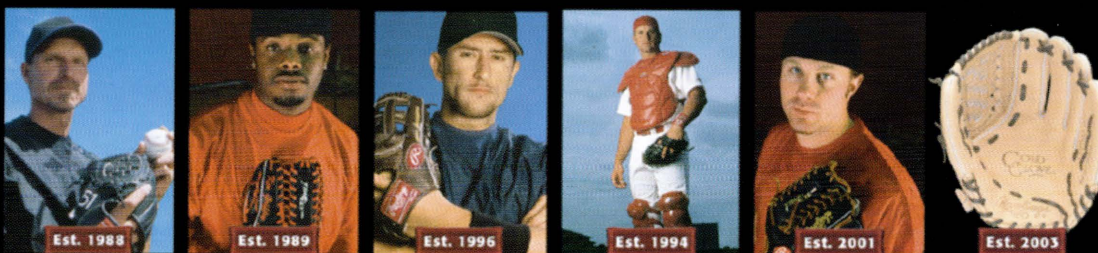
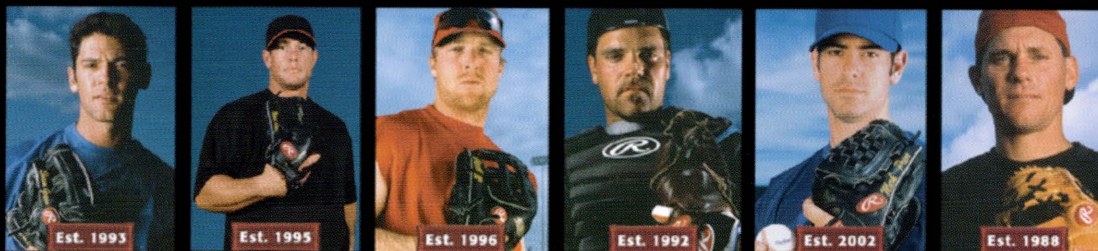
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# All-Time Majors Team

Selected By: Jeffrey Reed

While choosing among hall of fame outfielders Willie Mays, Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams - not to mention Roberto Clemente, Duke Snider and Mickey Mantle - is tough enough, try picking the cream of the crop who have pulled on the pinstripes of the London Majors since 1925.

Individual records previous to the Second World War are painstakingly difficult to find, some non-existent. The calibre of Intercounty Major Baseball League play over the past 85 years has ranged anywhere from professional Rookie Ball, to Triple-A baseball. Rosters can change drastically every season, and most Intercounty careers are short. Livelier aluminum bats were used from 1977-1994; today's gloves are bigger and baseballs livelier; and today's athletes are for the most part superior to those of yesteryear.

Of course, any all-time team is a personal list of greats, the common denominator being the selected players' talents would stand the test of time. I'm sure there will be arguments over my selections: why was Fergie Jenkins not selected as the Majors' best right-handed pitcher, when he's enshrined in Cooperstown? Read with interest my list of all-time London Majors greats. I look forward to hearing yours.

## Right-Handed Pitcher - Tommy White

White's three victories for London in the 1948 World Sandlot Championship earned him Canada's Outstanding Baseball Player of the Year award. He amassed a 108-57 lifetime Intercounty record and, when he was at his best, was invincible on the mound at Labatt Park. His best years: 1947 (11-1) and 1949 (13-3). White's .917 won-lost percentage of '47 stands as the best in the Post-War (1946-57) era. A workhorse, and a true professional, White's presence is still felt on the mound at Labatt Park.

Honorable Mention - Jon Owen, four-time all-star; Fergie Jenkins ('nuff said); Phil Schmidt.

## Left-Handed Pitcher - Neil Ambrose

Ambrose made 132 appearances, pitched 802.1 innings, and compiled 48 wins and 454 Ks over 11 seasons (1975-85). He was an all-star in 1976 and '77. Ambrose never led the league in wins during a season, but he finished with a respectable 3.96 ERA during the aluminum bat era, and his longevity and dependability make him the Majors' top southpaw. His father, John Ambrose, was an all-star right-hander in the late 1950s-early 1960s.

Honorable Mention - Mike Kilkenny (former Detroit Tiger 9-0 during London's '75 championship season); Roy McKay (crafty lefty, former pro); Frank Colman (former New York Yankees, Pittsburgh Pirates outfielder/infielder was Intercounty MVP and batting champ in 1936, thanks to stellar pitching and powerful bat).

## Catcher - Wayne Fenlon

"Doggie" did everything but dog it during his 22-year career (1968-88) behind the dish for the Majors. A member of three championship clubs, including his rookie year, Fenlon was a three-time all-star as a player, and an all-star manager with London during his last season. In 1986, he won the Tim Turow Trophy for outstanding achievement. Fenlon finished with 508 games, 577 hits, and 309 RBI.

Honorable Mention - Jack Fairs (member '48 Sandlot Champs); Kane Godwin (outstanding backstop, left us too soon).

## First Base - Larry Haggitt

From 1974-84, Haggitt terrorized Intercounty pitchers, finishing his career with 47 round trips and a .320 BA. After an all-star campaign at third base in 1974, he made the transition to 1B in London's last championship season, and was named a first-team all-star in both 1975 and '76. Haggitt won the batting championship in '75 with a .412 average. Although not a terror on the basepaths, Haggitt was a gold glove infielder whose clutch bat helps him rank among the Majors all-time greats.

Honorable Mention - Tom Burgess (former pro, member Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame); Arden Eddie; Dave Laphorne; Jamie Cooke (own players feared his power during batting practice).



# All-Time Majors Team

Selected By: Jeffrey Reed

## Second Base - Barry Boughner

This was by far the toughest position to rank in the infield. Although a talented utility player, and former all-star third baseman and DH, "Boogie" was an all-star at second base in 1974, and played the position during parts of almost every season during his 17-year career (1966-84). A rare combination of power, speed and finesse for most of his career. Tough-as-nails former NHLer, the Pride of Delhi helped London capture three league titles with his professionalism, competitiveness and never-say-die attitude.

Honorable Mention - Jamie Hodge; Billy Breene

## Third Base - Dave Lapthorne

A well-rounded player, "Whitey" Lapthorne was an all-star at the hot corner in 1967 and '70 during his 17-year career (1960-76); he was an all-star first baseman in 1967 and 1970. A career .275 hitter, "Whitey" posted a .346 BA in 1963. He was a key member of three championship squads, and appeared in six championship series. A competitor in the 1970 National Baseball Championships, Lapthorne was a team leader and rightfully team captain during the memorable 1975 season.

Honorable Mention - Ken McFadden (another '48 championship team member); Barry Boughner; Larry Haggitt; Dan Mendham

## Shortstop - Tie: Tom McKenzie and Dave Byers

You call this one. Although this 14-time all-star shortstop played most of his 21-year (1960-80) career with Kitchener, McKenzie's infield wizardry and clutch hitting didn't go unnoticed during his early days (1960-65) with the Majors. An all-star in 1964 and '65, McKenzie batted a career .315, and compiled 570 hits and 155 stolen bases. A former Kitchener manager (four-time all-star), with five championship rings as a Panther, McKenzie established himself as an Intercounty hall-of-famer with the Majors. Dave Byers was a six-time all-star at shortstop, playing most of his 18-year career (1970-87) with London. A Cal Ripken-type infielder, Byers impressed equally with his glove and his bat. He has a career 551 hits, 317 RBI, 74 HR, and 105 doubles. Won batting crown with .457 BA in 1977. Teamed up with Alex McKay to form a deadly double-play duo.

Honorable Mention - Bobby Deakin (talent wise the best, but pro ball beckoned, and injuries ended career).

## Outfield - Arden Eddie, Russ Evon, Stan Anderson, Richard Thompson

Yes, there are only three outfield positions, but all four of these players deserve a spot amongst the Majors' all-time greats. Eddie holds numerous records, including games, seasons, at-bats, hits, RBI, stolen bases, and walks. Six of Eddie's eight all-star selections followed outstanding seasons in the Majors' outfield, where he began his career with speed to burn. He later switched to first base and DH (wouldn't you at age 50?), but it says here he'll forever be known as one of the Majors' all-time great outfielders. Evon was the best all-around athlete ever to don the Majors' uniform. An 18-year Intercounty star, Evon's 12 triples in 1950 still stand as a league record. He amassed a .345 career batting average, hit .355 in '48 Sandlot Series. Both Stan Anderson and Richard Thompson were nicknamed "Gabby." Both let their bats and gloves do the talking. Anderson was a six-time, first-team all-star between 1958-65. He patrolled the Majors' outfield for 12 seasons, finishing with a .339 BA. A one-time professional, he won two Intercounty batting crowns, was runner-up twice, and captured two MVP awards. In 1963, "Gabby" Anderson was a player-manager. Thompson, who played eight seasons in centre field, was a modern-day Evon, an all-round athlete whose main attributes were a keen batting eye and speed. "Gabby" Thompson was named to six all-star teams since his Rookie of the Year season in 1988. Switched from aluminum to wood in 1995 and promptly won batting crown with .415 average. In fact, hit better with wood than aluminum. His father and great-grandfather were also local baseball stars. Top three outfielders? You make the call.

Honorable Mention - Joe Bechard; Reid Heffernen; Brian Pearen; Ty Crawford; Hank Czerwieniec.

## DH - Arden Eddie

The only Major I name an all-time great at more than one position. While many have taken their turn at bat, Eddie is the senior member of the Majors' DH fraternity. He was an all-star DH in 1994 at age 47.

Jeffrey Reed, London's 3B coach in 2000 and 2001, is the Majors Alumni Director.



## Majors Trivia

You think you know your London Majors trivia? Test your skills with these five questions.

1. Which seasons did Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Fergie Jenkins play for the London Majors?
2. What year did Labatt Park receive its current name?
3. Name the eight Majors to have their numbers retired.
4. Which three current London Majors played in the Toronto Blue Jays minor league system?
5. When did London capture its first Intercounty championship?



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**Answers:**

1. (1984, and part of 1985).
2. (The Labatt Brewing Company purchased the park and named it Labatt Park in 1936).
3. (Norm Aldridge, 3; Russ Eason, 4; Stan Anderson, 5; Wayne Entlon, 9; Roy McKay, 16; Tommy White, 17; Dave Byers, 18; Fergie Jenkins, 31).
4. (Outfielder Steve Chanke, catcher Alex Blackburn, and coach Harry Murphy).
5. (In its first season in 1925).





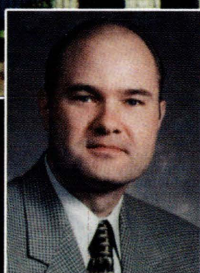

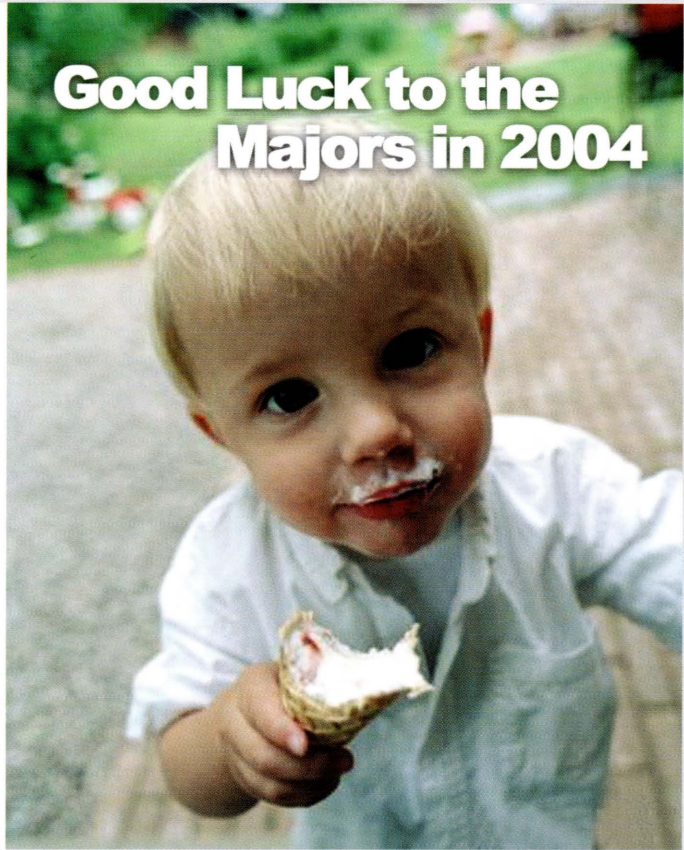
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# Labatt Park

Labatt Park A Diamond Gem, by Jeffrey Reed

To London baseball fans, the corner of Wilson Avenue and Riverside Drive holds more memories than Detroit's famous corner of Michigan and Trumbull, home of Tiger Stadium. In fact, Labatt Park has housed baseball contests since the late 1860s. It is, indeed, the world's oldest continuous baseball grounds.

But Labatt Park (as it was dubbed in 1936) is an important cultural landmark because of a number of significant dates in history. The park was the site for London's first moving picture in 1895. China merchant W.J. Reid, who purchased the field in 1877 as the home for the London Tecumsehs Baseball Club (minor league professional champions that season), constructed a bicycle track at the park in 1892; amateur and professional races were held at the park, which was home to a 24-hour endurance record for many years.

The London Lords Football Club, and high school football teams played at Wilson and Riverside. And, there were many other events staged there, including the Forest City Show Jumping tournament, the RCMP Musical Ride, public ice skating - the list goes on. But through the years, baseball and Labatt Park have been inseparable.

In 1994, the City of London designated Labatt Park an historic site, and deservedly so. Heroics of the Tecumsehs ballclub, who also captured the 1876 Canadian championship, are still bantered about by today's semi-pro London Majors of the Intercounty Major Baseball League (established in 1925 and tenants of Labatt Park ever since).

London fielded a Tecumsehs club which competed in the Michigan-Ontario Baseball League from 1919 to 1924, and captured three consecutive titles, 1920-22. Charlie Gehringer played his first pro season with the Tecumsehs in 1924 before graduating to a Hall of Fame career with the Tigers. But shortly after the Majors began play, the grounds resting on a river flat were neglected, and actually became a community eyesore.

In 1927, a group of local baseball enthusiasts refurbished the park. The group included Ernie Dinsmore, who headed maintenance of all London parks and playgrounds. They rented the park from London and Western Trust Company, tore down and replaced old bleachers, chased hundreds of snakes back into the Thames River, and put together a four-team city baseball league. Later, in 1990, head groundskeeper Mike Regan and Labatt Park won the Beam Clay Award, recognizing the best natural grass baseball grounds in North America.

One year after Labatt Brewing Company purchased the park, the great flood of 1937 washed away the old grandstand. After the flood of 1883 wreaked havoc, home plate became deep centre field in a diamond reversal still in play today. In 1939, the present grandstand was constructed. Many years later, thanks to funds connected with the 2001 Canada Summer Games, the 'ole ballpark received a total makeover.

Gehringer was only one of many famous ballplayers who graced the field at Wilson and Riverside. For example, London's own George "Mooney" Gibson, a former Pittsburgh Pirates ironman catcher and Canada's Baseball Player of the Half Century, 1900-1950, played many games at the forks of the Thames.

Many teams have called Labatt Park home. The amateur London Alerts played in the Canadian League in 1897 and 1899. A PONY League affiliate of the Pirates played in London in 1940 and '41. Since 1955, the Eager Beaver Baseball Association - London's first organized athletic league for youth - has staged all-star contests at Labatt Park. In 1990, the London Tigers won the professional Class AA Eastern League title at Labatt Park, which received close to \$1 million in renovations prior to their 1989 charter season. In 1999, the London Werewolves captured the independent Frontier League of Professional Baseball championship during their inaugural season. Last year, the London Monarchs of the Canadian Baseball League called Labatt Park home for their partial season. But no team has made more of an impact at Labatt Park than the Majors.

Still competing in the ranks of the Intercounty league (founded in 1919), the Majors are a huge part of local sports folklore, thanks largely to their 1948 World Sandlot championship. Players like Russ Evon, Tommy White and Tom Burgess are still talked about during Majors contests. Today's Majors still occupy the Roy McKay clubhouse, built in 1937 and later named after the club's long-time manager who died in 1995.

From the Tecumsehs to the Majors, Labatt Park has hosted a lifetime of magical moments.



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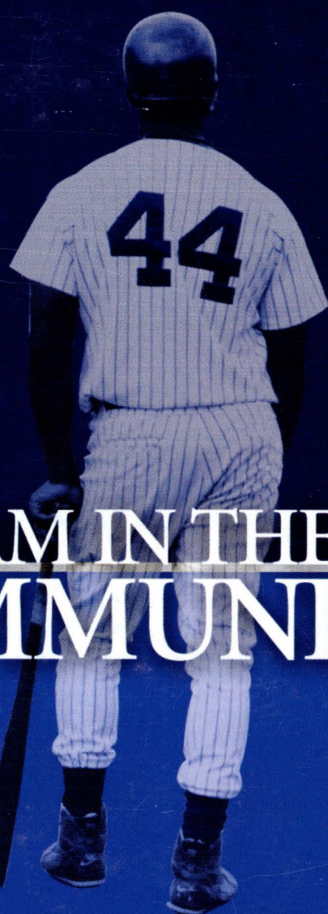
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