

# The Second Season: Big Train Baseball 2000

The Bethesda Big Train had a great summer 2000 season, posting the best overall record in the Clark Griffith Collegiate Baseball League and finishing second in the National Amateur Baseball Federation (NABF) College World Series.

It was a year of near misses as the second season produced a series of second place finishes: Second in the June First Round of Griffith League play. Second in our own 4th of July Tournament. Second in the July Second Round. Second at the NABF.

The Big Train bailed out Povich Field after a torrential opening night thunderstorm and defeated the Vienna Mustangs 8-4 on Friday June 2. A week later, Bethesda won its fifth straight league game with a miraculous come-back, scoring six runs in the bottom of the ninth to defeat the national champion Arlington Senators 8-7. After eight straight victories, the Big Train hit a mid-June slump losing three in a row. The Griffith League first half title came down to three games with the Arlington Senators. The Senators won all three by scores of 5-0, 3-2, and 3-1 to edge the Big Train and secure a spot in the league playoffs.

The Griffith League All-Stars defeated the Eddie Brooks League All-Stars from Baltimore 5-2 in the Second Annual Joe Branzell All-Star Game at Povich Field on July 1. Big Train All-Stars Pat Boran, Danny Matienzo, and Joe Parenti each had a hit. Big Train pitcher Justin Davis pitched the 7th inning, striking out two and allowing one earned run. Matt Griffith and Matt Kleweno were also named to the All-Star team.

The Second Annual Ledo Pizza July 4th Capital Hardball Classic really was baseball around the clock as the Big Train's opening night game was rained out. The game began anew the next morning at 7:19 a.m. The Big Train won an exciting 6-5 come-from-behind victory over Youth Service of Brooklyn. Sixteen hours later, Bethesda retired the last batter to defeat the Silver Spring Thunderbolts 6-3. But the next night, the Reston Hawks crushed the Big Train 12-2 in the championship game.

The Big Train got off to another quick start in the Griffith League's second round winning its first four games. In a July 11 battle between undefeated teams, the Vienna Mustangs beat Bethesda 6-4 despite a fielding gem that was reported in *Baseball America*. With men on second and third and no outs in the bottom of the seventh inning, the Big Train pulled off a 3-2-5-4 triple play. Ten days later, the Big Train moved into a tie for first place with a 4-2 victory over the Vienna Mustangs before a record standing-room-only crowd of 957 at Povich Field. On July 29, the Big Train swept a doubleheader against the Arlington Senators, winning 4-2 and 4-3 at Barcroft Field, to take a half-game lead over Vienna. Arlington walloped Bethesda 6-0 the next day, and Vienna won the second round.

Bethesda's overall regular season record of 29-11 was the league's best, but Arlington and Vienna won the right to play for the league championship by winning the first and second rounds. Overall, Vienna finished 25-13, and Arlington was 21-15. Arlington defeated Vienna in the league playoffs and represented the league at the All-American Amateur Baseball Association (AAABA) tournament in Johnstown, PA.



*The Big Train at the NABF College World Series in August, where outfielder Tony Dokoupil hit a home run into a cornfield.*

The Big Train players, coaches, and bat boys took two vans to Dayton, Ohio to play in the National Amateur Baseball Federation (NABF) College World Series. Playing its best baseball of the summer, the Big Train crushed its first three opponents to advance to the quarterfinals, defeating the Beaver Creek (Ohio) Sox 12-0, the Rochelle (NY) Robins 16-0, and the Kentucky River Rats of Louisville 13-3. On Saturday, August 12, the Bethesda Big Train won two games to advance to Sunday's championship game. In the morning quarter-final game, the Big Train came from behind to defeat the Cincinnati Stars 5-3. In the afternoon semi-final game, the Big Train defeated the Maryland Bombers 4-2.

On Sunday, August 13, the Bethesda Big Train lost 6-1 to the Ohio Warhawks of Enon, Ohio in the championship game at Wright State University. The Warhawks took a one run lead in the top of the first and the Big Train responded in the bottom of the same inning. The Warhawks scored 5 runs in the top of the fifth and held on for the win. T.F. Meagher and Rich Wallace led the Big Train hit parade at the NABF tournament, each getting 10 hits as the Big Train won 5 games and lost one. David Colangelo led the team with 8 RBIs. Big Train players Pat Boran, David Colangelo, Gary Lee (a Reston Hawk added for the tournament), and Rich Wallace were named to the All-Tournament team.

*Three League Leaders. Matt Kleweno of Campbell University, left, was named the Big Train's Most Outstanding Pitcher. He was 5-0 with the Griffith League's lowest ERA at 1.03.*



*Justin (JD) Davis of Old Dominion University, center, set a league record with 10 saves and was named our Most Outstanding Relief Pitcher. Pat Boran of Princeton University led the league in average (.318), hits (47), and doubles (12). Manager Derek Hacopian named Boran the team's 2000 Most Valuable Player.*