



Big Train Baseball 2001

The Bethesda Big Train made a late season run in the Clark Griffith League that came up short. The 2001 season will best be remembered for impressive individual achievements and record breaking crowds at Povich Field.

The Bethesda Big Train, playing its third season in the Clark Griffith League, had a league record of 20-20 and an overall record of 26-22. Despite a disappointing start, the Big Train rallied to win nine of its last eleven games and finish second in the Griffith League's July Round. The Big Train shared the championship of the rain-shortened Ledo Pizza July 4th Capital Hardball Classic with the Maryland Bombers. For the second year, Bethesda won The Montgomery Cup, a competition among the three Montgomery County based teams in the league that is sponsored by the *Gazette* newspapers.

Once again, the Arlington Senators won the championship of the All American Amateur Baseball Association (AAABA) in Johnstown, PA. The Senators won the Griffith League's June Round with a record of 15-5. The Fauquier Gators beat out the Big Train in the very competitive July Round with a 14-6 record. Arlington defeated Fauquier three straight games in the championship series to win the right to represent the league in Johnstown. For the third time in four years, Arlington won the national crown.

There were a number of outstanding individual achievements by the Big Train players in 2001:

- ◆ Kent State's Dirk Hayhurst struck out 18 Reston Hawks on June 12 to set a new Griffith League single game strikeout record. For the season, Hayhurst led the league with 69 strikeouts in 48 innings.
- ◆ Penn State's Kevin Damiano threw a June 29 no-hitter to defeat the Lower Bucks Indians in the first round of the State College (PA) Firecracker Tournament.
- ◆ Kentucky's Mark Galvin was nearly perfect in a July 27 no-hit victory over the Silver Spring-Takoma Thunderbolts. Galvin allowed one walk and the runner was doubled up by the very next hitter.

These three outstanding pitching efforts all made baseball news across the country, but were overshadowed by an amazing performance by Bobby Livingston. On July 1, also in the State College

Firecracker Tournament, Livingston shut out Philadelphia's ABCO Phillies for five innings left-handed. The fourth round draft pick of the Seattle Mariners then changed gloves and threw a perfect sixth inning right-handed!

It wasn't just a year for pitchers. There was plenty of hitting excitement as well.

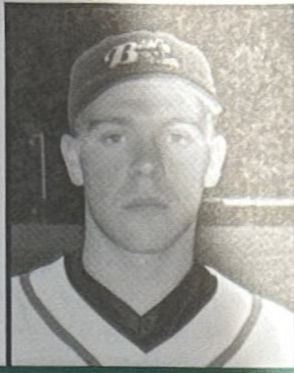
- ◆ Kent State's Chris Welsch hit a grand slam to lead a June 3 romp over the Thunderbolts at Blair High School. Welsch finished the season tied for third place in the league with 23 RBIs.
- ◆ Miami's Jim Burt, fresh from victory in the College World Series, hit a home run in his first Big Train at-bat on June 25 and won our final game of the season on July 31 with a sixth-inning grand slam home run. Both home runs came at the expense of the Germantown Black Rox.
- ◆ Jacksonville's Jason Hurst hit a walk-off home run on July 12 to beat the Black Rox and put the Big Train in first place in the league's July Round.

The steadiest performers for the Big Train didn't make any of these season highlights. "Each year, some guys stand out for their commitment to the Big Train and to the game of baseball," Bethesda Big Train Manager Derek Hacopian said in announcing his two Manager's Awards for the 2001 Big Train season. "Casey Gilvin and Steve Kline are outstanding players who gave us their all this summer. It is a pleasure to be able to recognize them for their talents and their tenacity."

Casey Gilvin, a sophomore at Morehead State University from Lexington, KY, was named Most Valuable Player. MVP Gilvin posted the third highest batting average in the Clark Griffith League at .322 while playing centerfield for the Big Train. "Casey was the team leader and the real sparkplug for the Big Train," said Hacopian.



2001 Big Train MVP
Casey Gilvin

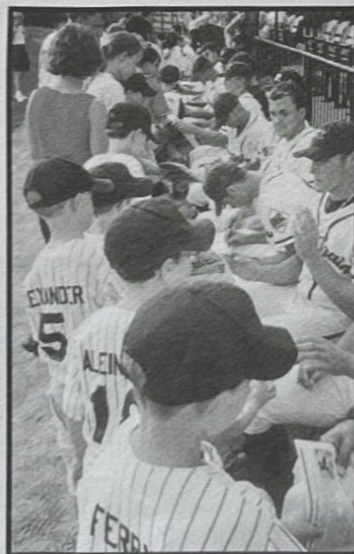


Gilvin was also named MVP of this year's Joe Branzell All-Star Game between Washington's Clark Griffith League and Baltimore's Eddie Brooks League. With a depleted All-Star bullpen in an extra-inning game, outfielder Gilvin pitched a scoreless eleventh inning and then knocked in the winning run with his bat for a 7-6 Washington victory.

Steve Kline, a sophomore at Middle Tennessee State University from Murfreesboro, TN, was named Most Outstanding Pitcher. Kline had the second best earned run average in the Griffith League at 1.20. "Steve pitched magnificently for the Big Train this summer both as a reliever and down the stretch as a starter," Hacopian explained.

Other records were set at Povich Field in 2001. In the summer of 2001, we broke the 1,000 fan attendance barrier three times in the season's last two weekends. Aided by a very favorable article in *The Washington Post* and the draw of Mini-Bat Night, 1,326 fans flocked to Povich Field on Friday July 20 to watch Bobby Livingston defeat Silver Spring-Takoma 10-2.

A week later, when 5-year-old Brett from Chevy Chase walked into Povich Field on Saturday night July 28 to watch the Big Train beat the Arlington Senators, he guaranteed the Big Train's first "capacity season." Brett was the 14,364th fan to attend a league game at Povich Field this season, an average of 756, the capacity of Povich Field. Brett and his family, at their very first Big Train game, were introduced to the standing-room-only crowd, and Brett was presented with a bat signed by the Big Train players. With exhibition and tournament games included, more than 16,000 fans attended Big Train baseball games at Povich Field in the summer of 2001.



Where are they Now?

More than 80 college players have played for the Big Train during our first three seasons. Some of them are now playing professional baseball. And others are likely to be picked during the upcoming Major League Baseball draft on June 4 and 5. To keep up-to-date on their progress this summer, log onto www.bigtrain.org.

Three Big Train alumni signed professional contracts in 2001. Bobby Livingston, drafted in the fourth round of the 2001 MLB draft, pitched for the Big Train before signing. Bobby is now in extended spring training preparing for the June 22 start of the Arizona Rookie League where he will play for the Peoria Mariners. Torik Harrison, a Big Train pitcher in our inaugural 1999 season, signed with the Florida Marlins. Torik was released and has returned to Southern University to complete his studies.



College World Series MVP Charlton Jimerson at the new Staten Island (NY) ballpark with Big Train scoreboard operator Emily Adams and Big Train batboy Hugh Adams, August 2001.

Charlton Jimerson, an outfielder on the 1999 Big Train team, had a phenomenal spring of 2001. CJ led his Miami Hurricanes to a national championship and was named MVP of the College World Series. CJ's heroics and moving life story were the subject of a two page spread in *Sports Illustrated*. Jimerson was drafted in the fifth round and signed with the Houston Astros to play in the New York-Penn League last summer. CJ is hitting .300 this spring as the every day center fielder of the Lexington (KY) Legends. The Legends are leading their division in the South Atlantic League.

The (Baltimore) Sun ran a May 9, 2002 feature story on 1999 Big Train MVP Gregg Davies. In addition to posting top grades as a business administration major at Towson University, Gregg has had an outstanding spring on the field. In his first 47 games, Gregg hit .423 with 13 home runs and 48 RBIs. Look for Davies, 2000 Big Train MVP Pat Boran (Princeton, shortstop), Dirk Hayhurst (Kent State, 2001 pitcher), Danny Matienzo (Miami, 2000 catcher/DH), John Maine (UNC Charlotte, 2000 pitcher), Chad Oliva (Jacksonville, 1999 catcher/DH), Jahsan Page (New Mexico JC, 2001 pitcher), David Reaver (Richmond, 2000 & 2001 shortstop), Justin Sims (Middle Tennessee State, 2000 outfielder), and Matt Swope (Maryland, 1999 & 2000 outfielder) to attract the attention of major league teams in the June draft.