



# Baseball Ireland Newsletter

WWW.BASEBALLIRELAND.IE



## President's Report Spring 2022

After two years of lockdowns and social restrictions, Baseball Ireland is returning to a full baseball season for 2022. Our league coordinators are currently working with our adult and youth clubs on schedules, field assignments and various logistics in preparation for as much baseball as possible.

The newly elected National Executive Committee is now in place and planning and supports are underway. Despite the pandemic, travel restrictions, periodic lockdowns, and lots of mask wearing, baseball in Ireland has seen a flurry of activity and is even gaining momentum.

While the fitout and opening of Strike Zone – already one of Europe's premier indoor baseball training facilities – was top news, Baseball Ireland volunteers delivered online coaching courses, supported child protection safeguarding instruction and compliance, and ran an indoor cage league this offseason.

Our partnership with Genesis Strategic Advisors continues to benefit the game on the island of Ireland, as clubs in Dublin, Cork and Belfast were awarded significant infrastructure improvement grants made possible from our generous donors. These are just some of the examples of the innovation and dedication of the Irish baseball community this past year.

Congratulations to Mariners Baseball as they captured the A League, B League and Youth League championships in 2021. This was an incredible achievement and their club organisation and player commitment is a model for all to follow. 2021 was also the inaugural season for our Cadet League, which featured players between 12-15 years of age. Many thanks to Rav Mphande for putting this competition together as we deliver on the 10 x 10 development plan. The Cadet League is a crucial bridge from youth to adult competition in Ireland.

Our Senior National Team made its way to Bratislava and participated in the 2021 European Championship Qualifier.

Under the guidance of Jay Murphy, our National Teams General Manager, the boys in green took the first two games in the tournament and qualified for the final, yet lost to a formidable Slovakian national team. Many thanks to Sean Mitchell and Frank Andrews for stepping up and coaching the team in Slovakia. Unfortunately,



Baseball Ireland decided to withdraw our 18U National Team from the European Championships due to the enormous travel challenges brought on by the pandemic. However both our Senior and 18U national teams will be in the next cycle of the European Championship tournament in 2022. Baseball Ireland commences the 2022 season with significant momentum and positive energy coming out of the pandemic.

We are grateful for the ongoing global support for Irish baseball. This engagement and optimism keeps us moving forward and thank you to the many volunteers across Ireland and overseas. The signs and indications in place suggest that 2022 will be another historic year for baseball in Ireland.

**Go n-eirí an t-ádh leat,  
Tom Kelley  
President Baseball Ireland**



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## BASEBALL ADULT 2022 SEASON

The new season for Adult Baseball started on the 2nd of April with games all over the island,

This year we have in addition to the usual 4 A teams, 13 B teams including new teams from Cork (Cosmos 1) and Mariners Baseball (Vikings).

Teams in the B league are split in 2 divisions, (B1 and B2) and will play more games in division than across; at the end of the year, the top 2 teams in B2 will be promoted to B1 and the bottom 2 teams in B1 will be demoted downward to the B2 division.

Playoffs are being scheduled for the middle of September and 3 teams from the A league as well as 4 teams from the B (2 in each division) will make the playoffs and compete for the League Championship.

This year we are also saying farewell to our Umpire in Chief, Damiano Iacobelli who is returning to his home in Italy and we would like to welcome our new umpire in chief Patrick Fleming and we would like to wish him luck.

We are returning to pre-restriction schedules and regulations with maybe a couple of H&S recommendations depending on government advice, as we go, but the A league is scheduled to play 21 games per team this year, while the B league will be playing 18 games per team.

Last year the Ashbourne Titans and the Cork Cosmos were promoted to B1 while the Ashbourne Stags were demoted to B2.

We have had some great action already and we look forward to a great 2022 season.

Jose Santos  
Adult League Coordinator





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## LOCKER APP

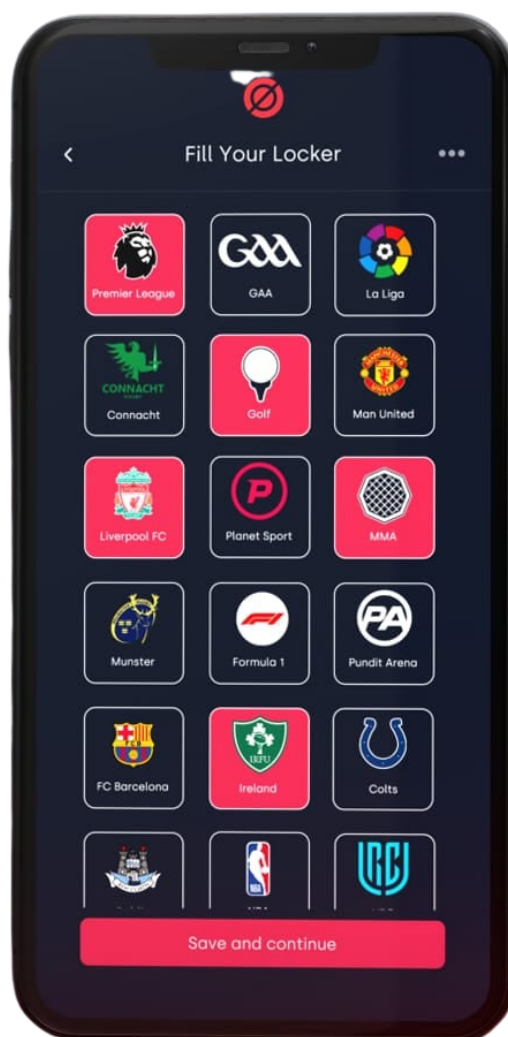
Over the past year, one former Baseball Ireland player Matt Steerman kept himself busy trying to solve a problem for sports fans. After working in sport media for a decade, Matt and 3 others from the Irish media landscape founded a company that's building a mobile app that addresses the problem of fragmentation in the sports content world. "It's never been a better time to be a sports fan in terms of the amount of content that's in different formats from thousands of sources all over the world.

However the biggest challenge we saw was that nobody was putting the fan first in trying to build a better way to centralise the sports content, publishers, and digital experiences that matter to them and put the power in the hands of the fans to personalise this experience in one place." Locker is a sports technology company that's addressing this with a simple mission to build a personalised world that sports fans deserve.

The app is free, and when you download you pick the teams, leagues, athletes, and publishers that matter to you from sources you trust, including teams, leagues, rightsholders and even NFT providers. "This will allow us to partner with the likes of Baseball Ireland to integrate their content, scores, teams, and highlights and have them be accessible by fans right next to international sources and leagues. This gives rights holders the ability to have their content found easier, raise profile and awareness for sponsorship, and grow their fan base." Locker is also talking to MLB directly about finding ways to engage with the Irish baseball players and fans as well. The business is still young, only launching the app here in Ireland in late 2021, however they have plans to expand to the UK and USA in the near future. They are also looking for feedback from fans on how they can continuously improve the fans' experience on Locker.

At the moment they are giving Baseball Ireland members specifically a chance to win MLB At Bat subscription for 2022.

You can still have a chance to enter and can find the details about it here ([link](#)). For more about Locker, you can visit their website at [www.getlocker.com](http://www.getlocker.com) or download the app in the app store today if in ROI.







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SPRING  
2022

## Baseball Ireland Awards 2021

### A League

Award  
MVP  
MVP  
Best Pitcher  
Silver Slugger  
Batting Champion  
League Pennant  
League Champion

Engraving  
Andy Leonard MVP 2021  
Andy Leonard MVP 2021  
Tommy Bond Best Pitcher 2021  
Dirty' Jack Doyle Silver Slugger 2021  
Patsy Donovan Batting Champion 2021  
2021 A League Pennant  
2021 A League Championship

Player/Team  
Roberto **Marquez**  
Eduardo **Hernandez**  
Liam **Shier**  
Eduardo **Hernandez**  
Eduardo **Hernandez**  
**Ashbourne Giants**  
**Mariners Baseball**

### B League

Award  
MVP  
MVP  
Best Pitcher  
Silver Slugger  
Batting Champion  
Batting Champion  
B Upper Division 2021  
B Lower Division 2021  
League Champion 2021

Engraving  
Gus Hernandez MVP 2021  
Gus Hernandez MVP 2021  
Bill Beglane Best Pitcher 2021  
Jimmy Archer Silver Slugger 2021  
Fergy Malone Batting Champion 2021  
Fergy Malone Batting Champion 2021  
B League Upper Div Pennant  
B League Lower Div Pennant  
B League Championship

Player/Team  
Ryan **Wiebe**  
David **Linn**  
Sean **Mitchell**  
Ryan **Wiebe**  
Ryan **Wiebe**  
Fionn **Gallahar-Hall**  
**Mariners Baseball**  
**Ashbourne Titans**  
**Mariners Baseball**





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## Strikezone Update

### PLAYER SHOWCASE

Thanks to the hard work of the Academy youth to reach new performance heights and the opportunities afforded by Strike Zone, the Irish Baseball Academy was able to partner with Baseballrecruits4europe to develop and host Ireland's first college recruiting showcase!

A total of 25 players from the U12, U15 and U18 Academy participated in the full weekend evaluation from the coaches and recruiters of Baseballrecruits4europe in order to help define goals for the players for their long-term development programs.

It was a new experience and new environment but everyone came out of the day with hunger in their eyes and a willingness to rise to the new opportunities in their future. A number of age-appropriate players have been graded as "college ready" and a small few have already drawn MLB scout interest from this opportunity.

This showcase was a tremendous success and Baseball Ireland hopes to repeat it at least annually and to broaden it to make it available to other players across Europe to make Strike Zone a European hub for player showcases!

### NATIONAL TEAMS

Selections for the players living on the island of Ireland have been made for the Senior National Team for the 2022 European Championships Qualifier tournament in Bulgaria and, for the U18 National Team for the 2022 European Championships Finals tournament in the Czech Republic. The representatives were selected from the Irish Baseball Academy's first ever year-round training program for the U18 and Senior Level. Both the U18 and Senior National Teams will have the highest numbers of domestic based players so far on the respective teams.

The U15 Irish Baseball Academy team will also be travelling to an international tournament this Spring. They will be visiting Valencia, Spain this Easter break to challenge Valencia's U15 team with the hopes of gaining valuable experience for future Baseball Ireland participation in official U15 European Championships tournaments as well as building new relationships and enjoying a bit of sun!

### ACADEMY NEWS

The Irish Baseball Academy's inaugural year has been a great success as regards both attendance and player development, with a total of 82 members across the U12, U15, U18, and Senior levels and players showing remarkable progress in skills and strength. The establishment of the new indoor facility, Strike Zone, has enabled players in Ireland to train year-round for the first time. We look forward to the impact that these players will have on the field this year in Ireland and on the international stage.

