



2010 BBF LEAGUE SEASON
GUIDE
(ADULT LEAGUES)



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INTRODUCTION

The BBF Adult Leagues have made tremendous progress recently and going into the 2010 season there are positive news in all departments. The number of teams entering the league has grown from 45 to 51 teams (13% increase). This includes nine new teams entering the BBF leagues (the leagues they will be playing in are shown in brackets):

- Bracknell Blazers III – A (South)
- Chelmsford Clippers – A (South)
- Essex RedBacks – AAA (South)
- Glasgow Baseball Association – AAA (North)
- Horsham – AA (South)
- Leicester Blue Sox II – AA (Midlands)
- Mildenhall Bulldogs II – AA (Midlands)
- Poole Piranhas – AA (South)
- Tonbridge – A (South)

The BBF has just concluded a contract with the number one baseball brand in the world, Rawlings, confirming them as the official ball supplier of British Baseball. New baseball fields are starting to appear on the British Baseball map, with the Essex RedBacks, the Chelmsford Clippers and Herts Baseball Club unveiling new diamonds this season. Existing baseball venues are being improved by clubs receiving grants from BSUK and other organisations, as well as carrying out separate fundraising projects. Essex is one of the clubs which will be unveiling its improved facilities including an impressive grandstand with a 150-seat capacity. Baseball clubs are putting emphasis on increasing publicity by working closely with regional and national media organisations which is starting to generate a lot of interest from new players who want to get in the game and former players who want to get back into baseball.

This document will introduce you to the 2010 BBF Adult League season as we build up to Opening Day on 18 April and will provide club officials with information which they need to bear in mind.

NATIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE (NBL)

The NBL has been expanded from 5 to 8 teams. The new members are the Essex Arrows, the Mildenhall Bulldogs and the Southampton Mustangs. The British Baseball Federation's decision to expand the league will not only bring excitement to the NBL in 2010, but the hope is that the three clubs will take advantage of this unique opportunity to continue their growth and development and create vibrant baseball communities in their regions.

The following is the NBL line-up in 2010:

- Bracknell Blazers

- Croydon Pirates
- Essex Arrows
- Herts Falcons
- London Mets
- Mildenhall Bulldogs
- Richmond Flames
- Southampton Mustangs

Number of regular season games per team: 28 games

Number of weeks: 15 weeks (13 double-headers and 2 single games as part of NBL Special Events – see below for more details)

League Format: Teams play 4 games against each of their opponents.

Postseason: teams finishing in first and second place progress automatically to the National Baseball Championships. Teams finishing third, fourth, fifth and sixth will have to win in a single 9-inning playoff game to progress (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

AAA-LEAGUE

In a change from the 2009 structure, the Northern Conference has been divided in two, with the top 6 teams forming the AAA (North) League. In AAA (South) Essex and Southampton may have moved up to the NBL but in their place the BBF has approved the addition of the Bracknell Blazers II, the Kent Mariners and the Essex RedBacks, which is a new club in Essex comprising adult and youth teams entering the league for the first time.

AAA (North)

- Glasgow
- Halton
- Harrogate
- Liverpool
- Manchester A's
- Menwith Hill

Number of regular season games per team: 28 games

Number of weeks: 14 weeks (14 double-header)

AAA (South)

- Bracknell Blazers II
- Bristol Badgers
- Essex RedBacks
- Herts Eagles
- Kent Mariners
- London Metros

- Oxford Kings

Number of regular season games per team: 24 games

Number of weeks: 12 weeks (12 double-header)

League Format: Teams play 4 games against each of their opponents.

Postseason: The team finishing in first place progresses automatically to the National Baseball Championships. Teams finishing second and third will play a single 9-inning playoff game to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

AA-LEAGUE

This season the AA League has a structure which resembles that of MLB in that it has several separate sub-divisions of five teams. A total of 20 teams from every corner of the country are part of the AA League line-up and with a MLB-like postseason format the season in the AA is expected to bring a lot of excitement.

AA (North)

- Bolton
- Humber
- Manchester Torrent
- Oldham
- Sheffield

Number of regular season games per team: 24 games

Number of weeks: 12 weeks (12 double-header)

AA (Midlands)

- Birmingham Maple Leafs
- Leicester Blue Sox
- Leicester Blue Sox II
- Mildenhall Bulldogs II
- MK Bucks

Number of regular season games per team: 20 games

Number of weeks: 12 weeks (8 double-header and 4 single)

League Format: Teams play 5 games against each of their opponents (2 double headers and 1 single game).

Postseason: Teams finishing in first and second place progress through to the postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC. Teams finishing in third and fourth place progress through to the A-League postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

AA (South) Pool A

- Croydon Pirates III
- Horsham
- Poole Piranhas

- Windsor Bears
- Thames Valley Bisons

Number of regular season games per team: 18 games

Number of weeks: 13 weeks (5 double-header and 8 single)

League Format: Teams play 2 single games against each of their opponents plus interleague double-header against each of the teams in the other AA (South) pool.

Postseason: Teams finishing in first and second place progress through to the postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

AA (South) Pool B

- Brentwood Stags
- Essex Archers
- Herts Hawks
- Richmond Knights
- Sidewinders

Number of regular season games per team: 18 games

Number of weeks: 13 weeks (5 double-header and 8 single)

League Format: Teams play 2 single games against each of their opponents plus interleague double-header against each of the teams in the other AA (South) pool.

Postseason: Teams finishing in first and second place progress through to the postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

A-LEAGUE

The A-League will also have two sub-divisions of five teams and the top two teams in each of them will qualify for the postseason where they will be joined by teams finishing third and fourth in AA (Midlands) and AA (North). The A-League (South) welcomes three new teams to the line-up this season – the Chelmsford Clippers, Tonbridge and Bracknell Blazers III.

A (South) Pool A

- Bracknell Blazers III
- Guildford Mavericks
- Richmond Dragons
- Southampton Mustangs II
- Tonbridge

Number of regular season games per team: 13 games

Number of weeks: 13 weeks (single games)

League Format: Teams play 2 single games against each of their opponents plus one interleague game against each of the teams in the other A-League (South) pool.

Postseason: Teams finishing in first and second place progress through to the postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

A (South) Pool B

- Braintree Rays
- Chelmsford Clippers
- Herts Raptors
- London Marauders
- Old Timers

Number of regular season games per team: 13 games

Number of weeks: 13 weeks (single games)

League Format: Teams play 2 single games against each of their opponents plus one interleague game against each of the teams in the other A-League (South) pool.

Postseason: Teams finishing in first and second place progress through to the postseason where they will play two rounds of playoff games to qualify for the NBC (see Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details).

SPECIAL EVENTS

This year British Baseball will introduce several special events as part of the league schedule. The objective is to start to turn our league games into a real celebration of baseball which will not only enhance the enjoyment of players but will add a sense of occasion. This is expected to generate interest from the general public and attendances at our events are expected to rise.

As our clubs continue their development and improve their facilities in the next two or three seasons, they will have the capabilities to turn every one of their league game days into special events. This will be a gradual process which will have to start at the NBL level where the clubs are in a stronger position to execute this. AAA, AA and A teams that make progress and show that they are capable of staging such events will move up the leagues and the hope is that in time all teams at all league levels will be in a position to turn their regular season game dates into special events.

The BBF Special Events which are being introduced this season are listed below. Most of these events will be subject to a bidding process and clubs from all parts of the country are able to submit their bid to host them. Full details of how clubs can apply to host these events will be published in the coming weeks.

The BBF Adult and Youth League Commissioners will be considering ways of combining both adult and youth games as part of these BBF Special Events, if possible, in order to make them even more vibrant. This would be fantastic for club spirit.

NBL Independence Day Weekend

Date: Saturday, 3 July 2010

Venue: To be confirmed (Subject to bidding process). Venue requires two baseball diamonds.

Format: All 8 NBL teams come to the same venue and play one single game each as part of their regular league season. The games which will be played are as follows.

DATE	TIME	VENUE	LEAGUE	VISITING TEAM	HOME TEAM	FORMAT
03-Jul-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Croydon Pirates	Bracknell Blazers	9 innings
03-Jul-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Herts Falcons	Essex Arrows	9 innings
03-Jul-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Richmond Flames	London Mets	9 innings
03-Jul-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Mildenhall Bulldogs	Southampton Mustangs	9 innings

NBL Summer Classic

Date: Saturday, 5 June 2010

Venue: To be confirmed (Subject to bidding process). Venue does not necessarily have to have two baseball diamonds so clubs with one diamond can bid for this event.

Format: All 8 NBL teams play one single game each as part of their regular season similar to the NBL Independence Day Weekend event or, in order to enable clubs which have only one diamond to host these BBF Special Events, the event can be split into two smaller events with 4 teams playing a single 9-inning game each at one venue and the other 4 teams doing the same at a different venue. The games which will be played are as follows.

DATE	TIME	VENUE	LEAGUE	VISITING TEAM	HOME TEAM	FORMAT
05-Jun-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Croydon Pirates	Bracknell Blazers	9 innings
05-Jun-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Herts Falcons	Essex Arrows	9 innings
05-Jun-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Richmond Flames	London Mets	9 innings
05-Jun-10	TBC	TBC	NBL	Mildenhall Bulldogs	Southampton Mustangs	9 innings

The Postseason Playoffs

The postseason of all four Leagues (NBL, AAA, AA and A) involve playoff games on the weekends of 21 and 28 August 2010. The BBF will consider ways of bundling playoff games together to turn them into larger and better attended events. An example of a Playoff event could include the following games at the same venue and on the same day:

DATE	TIME	VENUE	LEAGUE	VISITING TEAM	HOME TEAM	FORMAT
28-Aug-10	10:00	TBC	AAA	AAA South (3rd)	AAA (South 2nd)	9 innings
28-Aug-10	13:00	TBC	NBL	NBL (5th)	NBL (4th)	9 innings
28-Aug-10	16:00	TBC	NBL	NBL (6th)	NBL (3rd)	9 innings

National Baseball Championships (NBC)

The NBC brings together all of the best NBL, AAA, AA and A League teams from around Great Britain to one venue. This is the climax of the season and is the most prestigious event on the British Baseball calendar. See Postseason Playoffs and NBC section below for full details.

Other Events

As part of the process of creating the league schedule in the Southern Adult Leagues where there is a large number of multi-team clubs, we have selected a few dates where several teams from the same multi-team clubs can all play their league games at the same venue. Throughout the season teams from the same club have limited opportunity to spend time together as their league schedule usually sends them to different locations on a given weekend. The objective of this trial is to bring large baseball communities together and enhance club spirit. These events are experimental and there is no requirement to apply for them. It is up to the clubs concerned to determine to what extent they wish and are capable of utilising these dates as larger promotional/fundraising events. If this experiment is successful we will look to increase these events as much as possible in future seasons. The following is an example of one such event involving multi-team clubs:

DATE	TIME	VENUE	LEAGUE	VISITING TEAM	HOME TEAM	FORMAT
25-Jul-10	11:00	Herts1	NBL	Bracknell Blazers	Herts Falcons	7 innings
25-Jul-10	12:00	Herts2	AAA (South)	Bracknell Blazers II	Herts Eagles	7 innings
25-Jul-10	13:30	Herts1	NBL	Bracknell Blazers	Herts Falcons	7 innings
25-Jul-10	14:30	Herts2	AAA (South)	Bracknell Blazers II	Herts Eagles	7 innings
25-Jul-10	16:00	Herts1	A (South)	Bracknell Blazers III	Herts Raptors	9 innings

Another example is combining league games with other events. For example, the Essex Archers are scheduled to play their AA home game vs Thames Valley on Saturday, 26 June 2010, while the Essex Arrows will play their home NBL game against the Croydon Pirates on the following day Sunday, 27 June 2010. This is done to coincide with the Waltham Abbey Town Show attracting more fans and generating publicity for Essex Baseball Club and British Baseball in general.

2010 POSTSEASON

On the basis of feedback from clubs, the 2010 National Baseball Championship will take place at one venue in order to make it more cost-effective than last-year's NBC which was held at two separate venues. However, the postseason playoffs have been scheduled so as to increase the number of high-profile events and allow teams in all parts of the country to apply to host them as mentioned in the Special Events section above.

Playoffs have been scheduled on Saturdays to leave the Sunday as a backup date in case of a rainout. The NBC format will achieve substantial savings by reducing or completely removing the need of AAA, AA and A League teams to incur accommodation costs, as they will not have to stay overnight during the two-day NBC event.

The full postseason schedule is provided below.

Playoffs

NATIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE (NBL)

NBL (1st) – automatically qualifies for the NBC

NBL (2nd) – automatically qualifies for the NBC

NBL Playoffs (to be played on Saturday, 28 August 2010)

(NBL Playoff 1) NBL (6th) @ NBL (3rd)

(NBL Playoff 2) NBL (5th) @ NBL (4th)

Note: Both playoff games to be played at the home field of the NBL (3rd) team. Umpire costs to be shared equally between the four teams. Balls to be provided by the host club. Winners of playoffs progress through to the NBC. If a playoff game is postponed due to rain, the game will be played 24 hours later on Sunday. If game is postponed again due to rain, the team with the better regular season record progresses through to the NBC.

AAA LEAGUE

AAA North (1st) – automatically qualifies for the NBC

AAA North (2nd) – automatically qualifies for the NBC

AAA South (1st) – automatically qualifies for the NBC

AAA Playoff (to be played on Saturday, 28 August 2010)

(AAA Playoff 1) AAA South (3rd) @ AAA South (2nd)

Note: Winner of playoff game progress through to the NBC. If a playoff game is postponed due to rain, the game will be played 24 hours later on Sunday. If game is postponed again due to rain, the team with the better regular season record progresses through to the NBC.

AA LEAGUE

AA Playoffs (Round 1) to be played on Saturday, 21 August 2010)

(AA Playoff 1) AA Midlands (2nd) @ AA North (1st)

(AA Playoff 2) AA North (2nd) @ AA Midlands (1st)

(AA Playoff 3) AA South-A (2nd) @ AA South-B (1st)

(AA Playoff 4) AA South-B (2nd) @ AA South-A (1st)

AA Playoffs (Round 2) to be played on Saturday, 28 August 2010)

(AA Playoff 5) Winner AA Playoff 1 @ Winner AA Playoff 2

(AA Playoff 6) Winner AA Playoff 3 @ Winner AA Playoff 4

Note: Playoff winners progress through to the NBC. If a playoff game is postponed due to rain, the game will be played 24 hours later on Sunday. If game is postponed again due to rain, the team with the better regular season record progresses through to the NBC.

A LEAGUE

A Playoffs (Round 1) to be played on Saturday, 21 August 2010)

(A Playoff 1) AA Midlands (4th) @ AA North (3rd)

(A Playoff 2) AA North (4th) @ AA Midlands (3rd)

(A Playoff 3) A South-A (2nd) @ A South-B (1st)

(A Playoff 4) A South-B (2nd) @ A South-A (1st)

A Playoffs (Round 2) to be played on Saturday, 28 August 2010)

(A Playoff 5) Winner A Playoff 1 @ Winner A Playoff 2

(A Playoff 6) Winner A Playoff 3 @ Winner A Playoff 4

Note: Playoff winners progress through to the NBC. If a playoff game is postponed due to rain, the game will be played 24 hours later on Sunday. If game is postponed again due to rain, the team with the better regular season record progresses through to the NBC.

National Baseball Championships (NBC)



The BBF is working on the National Baseball Championship format. A final decision is expected to be made by 9 April 2010. The BBF reserves the right to make changes to the postseason details in this document.

LEAGUE SCHEDULE

Clubs will find the full 2010 league schedule in a separate file. You can use the filter function to look at any specific selection of games which may be of interest to you. You can also save the file in CSV format for easier upload to websites and other import/export of data. Each team's games have been scheduled on the basis of the field/team availability which clubs provided in their 2010 registration forms. If you see any discrepancies please contact the relevant League Commissioner, but other than that, the attached schedules shall be considered final.

Each team has a number of rain dates provided in the schedule. If you need to reschedule a game using one of the available rain dates please ensure that you do not schedule it on the dates which are reserved for postseason playoffs in the team's respective league.

In extreme cases of AA and A league teams experiencing a large number of rainouts, it is advisable that teams reschedule single games by bundling them with upcoming single games against the same opponent and creating a double-header, where possible.

There are several clubs with three or more league teams which have only one available field for part, or the whole, of the season. To accommodate all of their home games within the league dates, there are several dates when more than one game will take place on the same date and on the same field. The start times of these games have been adjusted (e.g. 11am instead of 12pm start etc.). The irregular start times have been shown in red in the schedules.

Due to field unavailability and extremely large number of dates when teams were unavailable on, we had to bring some AA (South) and A (South) games forward to 18 April in order to be able to fit the schedule while providing a reasonable number of rain dates.

The following are several additional notes which clubs should bear in mind.

Standard Start Time for Single 9-inning Games in the South

Over the years single 9-inning games have traditionally started at 2pm. Earlier this month the Birmingham Maple Leafs submitted a proposal that the starting time should be 12pm, same as the double-headers. Following a consultation process the response from the Southern clubs has been overwhelmingly in favour of adopting 12pm as the standard start time. As in previous seasons, clubs have the option to agree a different start time if it is more suitable for both teams involved.

The main benefits of this proposal are expected to be as follows:

- Earlier start time will mean that those travelling for the game can start their journey 2 hours earlier and this in many cases would result in avoiding the traffic which starts to build up on all the roads later in the day on Sundays;
- The game will end two hours earlier (around 3pm or 4pm). This would mean that those driving back home after the game may miss the heavy traffic which starts to build up on the roads late in the afternoon/early evening on Sundays.
- This may reduce total journey times (both directions) by around 30 to 60 minutes or more in some cases.

- Earlier return home and more time to prepare for return to work/study on Monday.
- Earlier end of the game may reduce the extent of clashes with major televised sporting events (e.g. 4pm Sunday Premier League Football).

BBF Players on International Duty with GB Senior Team and Effect on League Schedule

The GB Senior National Team will be involved in this year's European Championships. The BBF has tried to find the best balance between ensuring that the GB Team has access to all British-based players while at the same time avoiding disruption to the league season. To achieve this any teams which are missing two or more rostered players because of a call-up to the GB Senior Team will have the option to reschedule the affected game. Teams may decide not to reschedule the game especially if they are running out of rain dates.

Note on A (South) Schedule

With regards to the A-League game Braintree @ Southampton Mustangs II on 8 August 2010, if at that point the 15 August rain date is not taken, it is recommended that this game is moved to that rain date to avoid Braintree playing a 4pm game a long distance away from home.

UMPIRES

A reminder that ABUA-GB are holding two umpire clinics in April and members of clubs can take part in them. One of the clinics will be held in Menwith Hill on 11 April 2010 and the other in Guildford on 17 April 2010. [Click here for more details.](#)

RAWLINGS – OFFICIAL LEAGUE BALL

The Rawlings official balls are currently on a ship from New York on their way to the UK. They are expected to arrive on 1 April 2010 with a view to shipping to the clubs between 9th and 12th April 2010.

IMPORTANT: Clubs are reminded that they need to place their order as soon as possible in order that their order is shipped in time for Opening Day. If clubs fail to place their order, they will have to make alternative arrangements to ensure that Rawlings balls with the BBF Official Ball stamp on them are used (e.g. buy from another club) otherwise the BBF will have to apply the penalties as in previous seasons including deducting a win from the team's league record. To place your order, go to [this webpage](#) of the Rawlings UK distributor. When placing your order, enter your club details in order to be given the special discount for BBF clubs as agreed under the agreement between them and the BBF.