



WBSC Europe – Baseball Report

Q1 | April 2025

To: All Federations, Officials, and Volunteers Involved in Baseball in Europe  
From: Bart Volkerijk, WBSC Europe VP Baseball

Dear Baseball Friends,

It is a pleasure and an honor to update you on the latest developments, actions, and upcoming events in Baseball Europe.

First and foremost, I want to thank you for the trust you placed in me and the Members at Large during the Congress in Zagreb. Together with our Commission and committee members, we are proud to be your Team Baseball Europe. Our shared goal is to elevate the sport—by improving the level of play, enhancing tournament organization, and growing athlete participation. We will work closely with our colleagues in Softball and Baseball5 to advance our collective goals.

One of our first actions was to draft the 2025–2028 Position Paper [see here](#). This is a living document that will be updated as we achieve our goals, receive new input, or adapt to evolving circumstances.

I would also like to sincerely thank Petr Ditrich, François Collet, Juergen Elsishans, and Paweł Szczepanik for their dedicated service on the Executive Board.

I look forward to working with all of you to advance our sport across Europe.

## **Commission and Committees Updates**

### **Technical Committee**

We began the year by forming a new Baseball Commission, and simultaneously expanding the Technical Committee. While Frantisek Bunta carried out this crucial work almost alone last year, we now have four experienced members who will share these responsibilities.

We are also pleased that the members of the Scoring Committee, Linda Steijger and Stephanie Winkler, have agreed to continue their excellent work. Reliable and accurate



statistics are vital—especially now that live streaming plays a growing role in our events. Up-to-date information helps make our broadcasts more engaging for fans.

## Umpire Committee

After the resignation of the previous Umpire Committee earlier this year, we faced two urgent tasks:

1. Collect availability forms and assign umpires to the 2025 tournaments.
2. Appoint new members to the Umpire Committee.

We are all deeply appreciative of the work done by Zdenek Židek, Dirk Biehl, and Serge Makouchetchev. Their contributions have been invaluable, and we thank them for their service. We look forward to continued cooperation, as they remain active within the umpiring community.

As communicated to all umpires and supervisors, it is our intention—and a requirement for new Committee members—to continue on the path that has already been laid out. I strongly believe that we must remain committed to elevating the status, performance, and support of our officials.

The first online information sessions will be announced shortly. These sessions will introduce the new WBSC rules, which are the guiding rules for this season.

## **European Competitions & Tournaments**

Competitions and tournaments are at the heart of our work. In the first two months of the year, tournament schedules were finalized, officials were assigned, and Local Organizing Committees (LOCs) have been working hard to deliver the best possible events.

This summer will culminate with the European Championship, starting in Rotterdam, Milan, and Antwerp, and concluding with the final round (12 teams) in Rotterdam.

Stay updated via our website:

- [Tournament Calendar 2025](#)
- [WBSC Europe Governance & Committees](#)

## **Regulations 2025**

The tournament and competition regulations are updated and approved by the Executive Board. Two additional addenda have been issued: one for the Senior Baseball European Championship 2025 and another for the Baseball European Champions Cup.

See the website, <https://www.wbsceurope.org/en/documents>

## **Bat List**

Thanks to the strong cooperation with WBSC, we are pleased to announce that, in addition to bats from European manufacturers:

(<https://www.wbsceurope.org/en/documents/search?type=&keyword=bats>), bats listed on the WBSC Bat List:

(<https://static.wbseurope.org/uploads/federations/0/cms/documents/f1cb9b91-133f-85a9-403b-c84416ba1039.pdf>) are also permitted for use in all European tournaments and competitions.

All bats will undergo official testing. European-manufactured bats will be tested as soon as possible. In the meantime, they are granted a conditional status and may be used during the 2025 season.

Further details will be published shortly.

## **Organizational Overview**

### **Baseball Commission Members**

- Oleg Boyko (OEK)
- Juergen Elsishans (GER)
- Darja Grimsic (SLO)
- Jan Kuipers (NED)
- Cristian Manea (ROE)
- Yasen Nedelchev (BUL)

### **Enhancement (Development) Committee**

- Elliot Fleys (FRA)
- Darja Grimsic (SLO)
- Cristian Manea (ROE)
- Yasen Nedelchev (BUL)

### **Performance Committee**

- Pierluigi Bissa (ITA)
- Darja Grimsic (SLO)
- Roderick Balk (NED – TC)

### **Technical Committee**

- Roderick Balk (Chair – NED)
- Frantisek Bunta (SVK)

- Juergen Elsishans (GER)
- Jan Kuipers (NED)

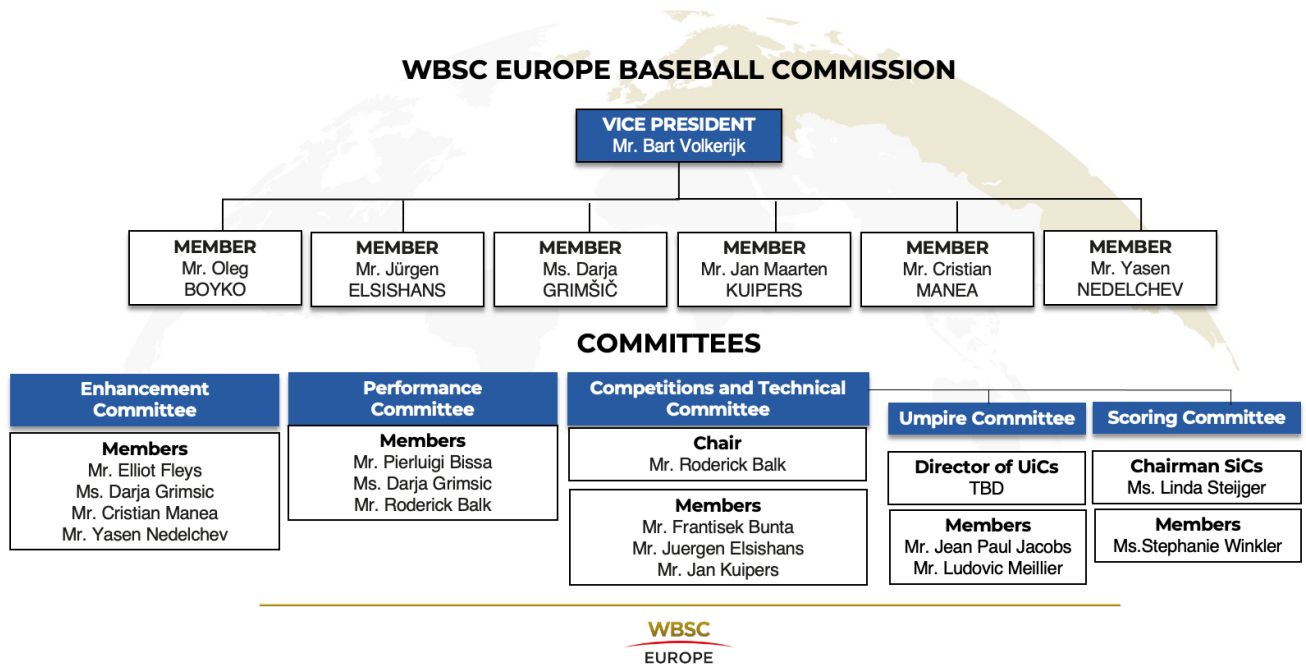
Scoring Committee

- Linda Steijger (Chair – NED)
- Stephanie Winkler (GER)

Umpires Committee

- Jean Paul Jacobs (BEL)
- Ludovic Meillier (FRA)

Additional members will be added soon.



Personal blog by Bart Volkerijk, FIRST PITCH



As a youth player in the Netherlands, it was, and undoubtedly still is, a great honor to be selected for the national team.

My first selection was in 1972 when I was selected for the, what we call now the U15 and at that time it was The Babe Ruth League. We played other European countries and American youth teams at the Ramstein airbase. Two years later we played the first ever official European Championship for juniors (U18). It was in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands and there were four teams competing, Italy, France, Spain and Netherlands. I was one of the players of the Netherlands. We became the first official U18 champion, Netherlands won the final from Italy, 3-0. I was one of the pitchers for the Netherlands.

Newspaper article august 1974: European Champion, now forward!



In the article in the newspaper was mentioned that Italy added 10.000 youth players in one year and the Netherlands still had problems attracting youth players.

Now it's 2025 and baseball and softball had great developments over the years. In many more countries in Europe our sports are played, and we have tournaments with even more than 20 national teams. 27,4% (52) of the 190 members of WBSC are from Europe.

These numbers look good, but we must do more to improve more players, more volunteers and more trainers, coaches and officials. We must create more awareness of our sports in Europe to make it possible to finance our sports in a better way. Not only more, but also with more quality.

That's the challenge we are facing, and I look forward to work on this challenge with all of you.



If you have any questions, suggestions, feel free to contact me anytime.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. Volkerijk", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

*Bart Volkerijk*

*Vice President Baseball*

*World Baseball Softball Confederation Europe*