



## **2021 WBSC OCEANIA ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT**

This report will deal with what transpired during the period of January to December 2021 for baseball and softball within the Oceania Region which was hugely effected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. Very little activity and competition took place in the region due to the member countries lockdowns. This report has been prepared in collaboration with assistance from the following;

- **American Samoa Baseball - Marcus Langkilde**
- **Softball New Zealand - CEO Tony Giles**
- **Baseball New Zealand - Dan Tan, Baseball New Zealand player development manager**
- **Softball Australia - Jack Lucas**
- **Federated States of Micronesia – Jake**
- **Saipan Baseball League - Jay Santos**
- **Palau – Atley Kazuma – Development Officer**
- **Guam – Bob Steffy – President Guam Baseball Federation**
- **Fiji Baseball and Softball Federation - Inoke Niubalavu**
- **Ray Brown - Oceania DO consultant**

### **American Samoa Baseball 2021**

Baseball and softball had a combined little league program with about 300 kids ranging from 3-18. The games were good with Nick King, Chris King and about 15 other coaches involved. We did both baseball and softball for the kids and softball for the high school girls. We also had the first annual Tony and Ben Solaita Softball Classic which had 14 teams come out and play.

#### **Goals and objectives**

The goal of this proposal is to obtain funding that will allow the Summer Little League Baseball/softball Programs to take place. This program will foster baseball and softball sports development which will help continue to build these athletic extracurricular programs in the schools. This program also brings the different youth around the Territory, and abroad to come together in fellowship in providing friendship and positive social interaction.

#### **The focus of the proposal and plan is to:**

1. Provide alternatives and choices for students to participate in a successful proven program that will keep them occupied.

2. Allow for learning, growing physically and mentally, character building, and individual preparation for responsible community living through softball.
3. Provide a foundation through maximum and continuous development for youth who are interested in using baseball as a vehicle for opportunities to further education through athletic scholarships.
4. Prepare youth for national and international baseball competition.

## **Conclusion**

ASBA and the ASSA thanks its members and supporters for all the help with ensuring COVID safe measures were implemented throughout this program.

## **FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA (FSM) 2021 Activities**

Objectives & Major Achievements for the Year:

Meeting was held middle of this year to dialogue upon matters requested by WBSC on key issues/requirements from the FSM Baseball Softball Federation. Items in the agenda are: 1.) To select State representatives from Yap, Chuuk and Kosrae and Pohnpei as members of FSMBSF. 2.) To complete the vacancy in the FSMBSF Executive Board, 3.) To propose a draft Constitution Bylaws for FSMBSF and 4.) Future plans/ activities for 2021. Leading the discussion is the newly appointed Interim President- Mr. Loyola, Interim Secretary General- Mr. Scaliem along with FSM Olympic Committee SG James R. Tobin.

The matter was put on hold due to COVID 19 Pandemic, travel restriction within the FSM and low internet connection within the states for Zoom virtual meeting. Looking forward to continue the process and hopefully seek adoption for the new Constitution and filling of the vacancies in the federation at the beginning of 2021.

Main objectives for FSMBSF are to:

- Identify and train our baseball and softball athletes
- Provide training to certify our community and national coaches and officials
- Compete in both Regional, Oceania and International games
- Seek support and funding from the International Federation and stakeholders for our programs.

Attendance & Results at International / Regional Tournaments.

In January of 2021, Pohnpei National Team and Kosrae National Team have participated in the 3th Micronesia Baseball Classic (MBC) held at Paseo Stadium in Guam. USA. At these games, each of the 4 FSM States represented their own Island home. A total of 4 teams participated in the Micronesian Baseball Classic. Guam and CNMI have been to there for three consecutive tournaments. This mark the first time Team Pohnpei has attended the MBC. Unlike Pohnpei, Kosrae attended the MBC for the second time. The Teams are listed according to the result of the MBC 2021.

I.) First Place - Guam

- 2.) Second Place - CNMI
- 3.) Third Place - Pohnpei
- 4.) Fourth Place - Kosrae

Competitions Conducted:

FSM National Baseball team have continued to train for the mini Pacific games in Saipan in June 2022.

As for each of the FSM States, baseball and softball activities were conducted later this year but have been monitored under strict surveillance / rules from the States COVID 19 Task Force.

Pohnpei is set to host MBC 2021 but forced to cancel due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.  
Courses (Coaching/ Development/Technical) / Junior Development Programs  
Conducted : Coaching Course and Umpire training was put on hold due to COVID 19 Pandemic.

Activities in Junior Sport Development:

No activities conducted this year under Junior Sports Development due to COVID 19 Pandemic in which result in closure of all Public Sports Facilities and social distancing restriction.

## **Financial Overview**

All financial funding were either from State and National Government that supported our athletes to participate in the Micronesian Baseball Classic and other activities within each of the FSM states in 2021. These funding are available either we are hosting major competition or attending to one. Aside from that, FSM Olympic Committee supported our FSM Athletes, Coaches and Federations with equipment and funding to conduct trainings.

## **Fiji Baseball and Softball Federation**

### **Executive Members (2020 – 2024):**

**President:** Takao Mochida

**Vice President (Baseball):** Tavo Sorovakatini  
Coalala

**Treasure:** Shameet Kumar

**Secretary & DO:** Inoke Niubalavu

**Vice President (Softball):** Mataca

### **DISTRICTS:**

6 Districts & Names are: Suva, Lami, Nasinu, Nausori, Nadi & Lautoka. (Yet to be formalized – Nasinu, Sigatoka & Savusavu) New District; Tailevu

### **CLUBS:**

11 Clubs & Names are; Suva: (Raiwai, Raiwaqa , Vatuwaqa, Toorak), Lami: (Nadonumai, Delainavesi), Nasinu: (Nadera), Nausori: (Lomanikoro), Nadi: (Edupia Tigers, Nadi Free bird), Lautoka: (Ba Province Free bird) New District; Nayavu Youth Sports Club

### **PLAYER NUMBERS:**

(in the national team development programs)

U12: 45 player                      U15: 30 players                      U18: 25 players                      Seniors: 30 players

(during club competitions)

U12: 165 player                      U15: 121 players                      U18: 90 players                      Seniors: 110 players

(during schools program)

Primary schools: 1200 students                      Secondary schools: 40 students                      Tertiary: 0 students

(special program)

Students with disability: 21 students

### **COACHES NUMBERS:**

(national baseball coaches)

National Level 2: 2 coaches                      National Level 1: 6 coaches                      Community Level: 12 coaches

(national  
baseball  
coaches)

Community Level:  
8 coaches

### **Activities;**

## **Oceania Baseball/Softball countries embassies event**

FIBSA hosted a Baseball/Softball event with Diplomatic Pacific Embassies/Missions in Fiji as we build new partnership with Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau and Japan.

Another event as part of the FIBSA 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, for the first time an event to include Baseball and Softball playing countries embassies from the pacific. As always Fiji and Japan competed for the Fiji Japan Baseball Cup which Japan held earlier this year. Fiji played well this time and won the Cup for the end of the year series.

We were surprised at the number of FSM and Nauru youths that resides in Fiji for education, they competed on the day which looked promising for the future. First timers Nauru played really well which we feel that they could get better with some practice and more game time. FSM had experienced players but most haven't played for a while and with more practice they could be competitive in the next competition. The Fiji team won the overall tournament and a great boost to the development of the games as now we have more teams to play against in future.

FIBSA would like to thank all the ambassadors, players and supporters that were involved in making the event a success!! We look forward to the next tournament.

### **Official On-line Handover of donated Baseball / Softball equipment from WBSC Development Commission.**

The Fiji Islands Baseball & Softball Association (FIBSA) recently received donated Baseball/Softball equipment from the WBSC through the WBSC equipment donation program.

The FIBSA would like to thank the WBSC and WBSC Oceania for their kind donated which will contribute towards the development of Baseball & Softball in Fiji.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

Fiji Islands Baseball & Softball Association has made positive strides in developing and introducing baseball and softball to the schools and communities despite without a proper baseball/softball facility in Fiji.

FBSA would like to express our strongest appreciation to all the Fiji Baseball & Softball community the athletes', parents, guardians. We would also like to thank the Baseball Confederation of Oceania (BCO), World Baseball Softball confederation (WBSC) funding assistances towards the Development officers programs, the Japanese International Agency Cooperation (JICA) and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee (FASANOC), and other partners new & old for their wonderful support and assistance towards the development of baseball and softball in Fiji. We look forward for your continued support in the future.



### **Baseball New Zealand 2021 Highlights Report Objectives & Major Achievements for the Year:**

- Attended all international events
- Advance ranking in WBSC World Baseball Classic
- Increase in playing membership Grow Kiwiball (u11 players)

- Identify and grow new areas of baseball around the country Introduce a Coaching Accreditation system
- Getting Baseball sanctioned in schools

### **Achievements:**

Domestic players contracted for Auckland Tuatara in the Australian Baseball League who went on to win Division and progress to semi-finals in only its second year. Local player Elliot Johnstone named ABL Rookie of the Year.

- Joshua Wechsler (umpire) selected to go to USA to umpire in college baseball (but cancelled due to Covid19)
- Warren Van Rooyen (umpire) selected to umpire at u23 World Cup
- Completed 4 of 5 national tournaments pre covid
- Managing Covid19 safely
- Harrison Loudon signed to Highland Community College, Maxwell Leuga signed College of Southern Nevada, Mohi Kahui signed to Hawaii Pacific University
- Jimmy Hemera signed to Augsburg University.
- New baseball diamond in Hamilton with artificial turf infield Men's and u19 national tournaments televised on Sky Television
- Skills competition introduced to all youth grade
- national tournaments E-sports baseball tournament during Covid19 lockdown

### **Attendance & Results at International / Regional Tournaments**

International:

Oceania u15 qualifier Guam – 2<sup>nd</sup> WBSC Qualifier - cancelled

Oceania u23 qualifier Mexico –

Ripken World Series - cancelled due to Covid19

### **Competitions Conducted:**

Domestic club competition ranging from Rookie Ball, u13, u16, u19, Men's and Divisional around the country National Club Championships u16, u19 and Men's - u13 cancelled due to Covid19

### **Activities in Junior Sport Development:**

Talent identification for u12 and u18 athletes in lead up to 2021 Oceania qualifiers

Athlete Development Program for athletes wanting to work towards

attending college in USA First intermediate age Baseball 5 tournament

(Wellington)

Baseball 5 program in several schools (Auckland)

**Financial Overview** Due to covid19 and the shut down of NZ's borders and the limiting of domestic travel and group activities our sport and finances took a severe hit during March to September 2021. As funding agencies were forced to close there was a significant drop in grant funding and as such our NF staff had their jobs put on hold for 6 months.

### **PALAU BASEBALL FEDERATION**

### **Objectives & Major Achievements for the Year:**

- PALAU MAJOR LEAGUE SEASON
- PALAU NATIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE SEASON
- BELAU YOUTH GAMES & FESTIVAL
- Umpire refreshing course
- Umpire Level I course & certification
- Coaching Level I course & certification

### **Attendance & Results at International / Regional Tournaments:**

- NO participation on any international and regional tournament due to the pandemic crisis.

## **Softball Australia**

### **High Performance**

Travelodge Aussie Spirit team were able to compete in the Olympic Games in Tokyo in July 2021. Due to all the COVID travel and border restrictions the team were only able to train and compete in Ota City one month prior to the Olympic Games. This was not the ideal lead up for the games however the players and staff demonstrated great resilience in Ota City being PCR tested everyday and only allowed access to three floors of the hotel and the training and competition venue.

The finished 5<sup>th</sup> at the Olympic Games having the opportunity on several occasions to play off in the medal rounds however crucial defensive errors and leaving too many runner on base in scoring position costs us a medal opportunity.

### **Commercial**

Commercially, we have again recorded strong results bringing on several new partners including Kumho Tyre, National Storage, PTP, Aussie Athlete Agency and Gamesense as well as retaining our partners from the previous 12 months.

We also entered a crucial partnership with Crocmedia who not only greatly improved the broadcast of our Australia Pacific Cup and Summer Slam – Fully Loaded Softball tournaments, but also provided live streaming of our Men's and Women's National Championships.

Importantly, Crocmedia provide us with multimedia facilities, including a full broadcast studio, to assist us in creating engaging content around major announcements. Another aspect of our partnership is the ability to tap into their extensive commercial contacts to sell our sport further.

### **La Trobe University partnership**

The Softball Australia and Softball Victoria offices moved into the new La Trobe Sports Stadium based in Bundoora next to the La Trobe University campus. This is so much more than a change of scenery, along with the new office, we now have access to first class sports science facilities, training grounds and meeting rooms.

We have also entered a partnership with La Trobe University and their internship program allowing us to achieve more in various areas of the business while assisting in the professional development of students.

#### **Grassroots**

At a grassroots level we have re-invigorated the Softball Batter Up (SBU) program including the development of starter packs an online platform for purchasing equipment and offered every Association who runs an SBU program store credit. We also offered up a number of beginner

coaching courses for free to arm Associations with the necessary knowledge to host their own junior participation programs.

I'm pleased that the organisation has invested in the marketing of the sport with investment in digital SEO/SEM and Google AdWords in a first for the sport.

### **COVID-19 effect on play**

In March, Australia was in the grips of the global COVID-19 Pandemic, an uncertain time for not only the country, but the entire world. There is no playbook to follow for a situation such as this, but I am extremely proud of our staff and our Member States for their handling of the situation. From Softball Australia's perspective, it was important to share relevant information we were receiving from the Australian Government and Sport Australia. Softball Australia does not have the ability to enforce a cancellation on local tournaments, but recommended competition be suspended following our first wave of COVID-19 infections, falling in line with other NSOs and sporting codes.

This information was not met with resistance from the community but rather understanding of the unique situation and of course disappointment.

Of course, we didn't escape the COVID-19 Pandemic without a hit, notably we were forced into the cancellation of the U23 Men's and Women's National Championships along with the International Friendship Series, Aussie Diamonds and Futures Tours originally planned for April 2021.

The re-scheduling of international events including the Open Men's and U18 Women's World Cups also led to a cancellation of 2021 National Championship.

## **Softball New Zealand**

### **Highlights**

- The rescheduling of the 2021 Men's World Championship at North Harbour to November 2022.
- The Challenge Cup held at North Harbour including 3 of the top 4 Mens teams in the world
- The upcoming tours for our U23's and U15's to international events

We have completed the One Softball: Kia Whakakotahi Te Hoe O Te Waka Strategic Plan 2019 – 2029

It has been a very robust process involving key stakeholders to ensure that we have a very clear direction and priorities going forward. The plan is now in place with a focus on encouraging greater alignment across our sport and to work more efficiently and collaboratively as a sport together. We have exceptional people and resources within our sport so it's important that we apply the key concepts of teamwork and we encourage Associations to align their own plans so that our sport can achieve the best outcomes collectively.

### **4 Strategic Outcomes:**

- A bigger, more diverse participant base
- Capable, aligned and consistent delivery
- Strengthen the business of softball
- High performance success



It's the first time Guam has qualified for a WBSC event. The closest it ever came previously was a loss to South Africa in a playoff for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Guam defeated New Zealand, 12-0, on home turf at *Paseo Stadium* in Hagåtña to win the final of the Oceania Region Qualifier and earn a historic spot in the **WBSC U-15 Baseball World Cup**.

Nolan Babauta, nicknamed *Princess*, dominated New Zealand from the mound. He allowed only two hits and helped himself with three RBIs on three hits, a couple of singles and a double.