



## MEDIA RELEASE-COMMUNIQUÉ

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### **It's Official: Thunder Bay to Host 2017 IBAF 18U Baseball World Cup**

The Thunder Bay International Baseball Association (TBIBA) is pleased to announce that the International Baseball Federation has chosen Thunder Bay as its host for the 2017 International Baseball Federation (IBAF) 18U Baseball World Cup. Participation from all baseball playing regions of the world, namely Asia, the South Pacific, Africa, Europe, North America, Central America (Caribbean) and South America is expected. The biennial event will take place over eleven days in late August concluding on the Labour Day weekend in September, 2017.

“The Thunder Bay International Baseball Association is proud to have been selected to host this high caliber international event for the second time. This day is a true testimony of the event hosting ability of the TBIBA and is a tribute to the high quality volunteers that step up to assist Thunder Bay event hosts like us to operate high profile events.” stated Larry Hebert, President of the TBIBA. “With the success of the 2010 World Juniors fresh in the minds of our citizens, the TBIBA looks forward to hosting another great event for Thunder Bay residents and visitors from near and far.”

The 2017 International Baseball Federation (IBAF) 18U Baseball World Cup is the re-branded version of the very successful IBAF World Junior Baseball Championships held in Thunder Bay in the summer of 2010. Since 2010, the event has been held twice, once in Seoul, Korea in 2012 and last summer in Taiwan. The 2015 event will be held in Japan.

The event has a long history going back to 1981. Since 2000, the 12 team event has been held every two years with the exception of one occasion and involves the 18 and Under National teams of member countries of the International Baseball Federation. The tournament is regarded as a launching pad for players aspiring to play professionally. Players such as Larry Walker, Ryan Dempster, Russell Martin and Brett Lawrie are among the more than 50 Canadians who have participated in the event before moving on to sign professional contracts.

The announcement from the TBIBA comes after many years of preparation and hosting experience that includes the IBAF World Juniors (2010), Warm Up to the Worlds (2008), Baseball Canada Cup (2004), Gore Motors Honda Nations Cup (2002) and the Three Nations Cup (2000) and five previous international bid attempts. For more information on the TBIBA, go to [www.worldbaseball2017.com](http://www.worldbaseball2017.com).

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**Please visit [ibaf.org](http://ibaf.org) to see the release posted on their website.**

Background Information to follow:

For more information go to [www.worldbaseball2017.com](http://www.worldbaseball2017.com)



## **IBAF 18U BASEBALL WORLD CUP FACTS**

- The 12 team event has been held every two years since 2000 with one exception and involves the 18 and Under National teams of member countries of the International Baseball Federation (IBAF);
- There have been 25 competitions dating back to 1981. Besides Canada, hosts have included the USA, Mexico, Australia, Korea, Cuba and Chinese-Taipei. The United States have won last two competitions;
- Approximately 50 games are played. Countries competing represent all baseball playing regions of the world, namely Asia, the South Pacific, Africa, Europe, North America, Central America (Caribbean) and South America;
- To become eligible, countries usually take part in regional qualifying events in the year prior to the event;
- Several Major League stars have played in this event including Ryan Dempster (Red Sox), Larry Walker (retired), Brett Lawrie (Jays), Russell Martin (Pirates) from Canada; Joe Mauer (Twins), John Smoltz (retired), Greg Zaun (retired), Andrew McCutcheon (Pirates), JJ Hardy, (Orioles), Justin Upton, (Braves), Michael Cuddyer, (Rockies), and Paul Konerko (White Sox) from the United States, and Shin-Soo Choo (Rangers) for Korea, Yasiel Puig, (Dodgers) for Cuba among others;
- The event's hockey counterpart is the IIHF 20U World Junior Hockey Championships and soccer counterpart is the FIFA U20 Soccer Championships.
- Find information at [www.baseball.ca](http://www.baseball.ca), [www.usabaseball.com](http://www.usabaseball.com), [www.ibaf.org](http://www.ibaf.org), the IBAF website and [www.wsbc.org](http://www.wsbc.org).
- Watch for the 2017 IBAF 18U Baseball World Cup website coming at [www.worldbaseball2017.com](http://www.worldbaseball2017.com).

### **Acknowledgements:**

**The TBIBA is pleased to acknowledge the role played by the Thunder Bay Baseball Association in making this event happen. Without the volunteer efforts of the TBBA especially with regards to the facility development at the Baseball Central site, this announcement today would not have been possible. The support of Baseball Ontario, Baseball Canada and USA Baseball was also received to support the bid for the event.**

### **About the Thunder Bay International Baseball Association (TBIBA)**

The Thunder Bay International Baseball Association (TBIBA), a not-for-profit organization, was created in late 2002, with its primary objective being to bid for and host national and international baseball events. The TBIBA aspires to be regarded by the national and international amateur baseball communities as the organization to stage well run, well received and professionally managed championship events played on world class facilities. In 2004, the TBIBA hosted the Baseball Canada Cup and in 2010 hosted the IBAF World Junior Baseball Championship, July 23 to August 1st. It has also bid for five other World Championships, most recently the 2015 IBAF 18U Baseball World Cup awarded to Japan.

For more information go to [www.worldbaseball2017.com](http://www.worldbaseball2017.com)