

November 15, 2009

Target 2020

A new vision for World Baseball.

Following the decision by the International Olympic Committee to delete Baseball from the Olympic Program, the World of International Baseball as represented by the International Baseball Federation (IBAF) is facing huge challenges.

TARGET 2020 sets out a visionary plan for a new future for World Baseball and the International Baseball Federation.

TARGET 2020 is based on two basic concepts

1. Think, Plan, & Co-ordinate GLOBALLY
2. Implement, motivate and Act LOCALLY

TARGET 2020 is based on a bottom-up approach, whereby the grassroots, the local district Baseball communities, are the cornerstones for the success of the Plan.

TARGET 2020 is not only a key date, 10 years from now, but as 2020 infers it is a clear vision for the future of World Baseball

TARGET 2020 stake-holders are

- The International Baseball Federation (IBAF)
- Professional Baseball, MLB, NPB. KBO,CPBL.
- The IBAF Continental Confederations.
- The IBAF Member National Federations (NF's)
- Officials, volunteers involved in IBAF.
- The members, players, supporters, fans of Baseball world-wide.
- The millions of Baseball fans world-wide that follow their favorite team.
- All these stake holders are crucial to the success of TARGET 2020.

TARGET 2020 is based on the following 5 key pillars of any successful international sport, these 5 pillars are

- DEVELOPMENT
- COMMUNICATIONS
- EVENTS
- MARKETING
- GOVERNANCE.

DEVELOPMENT

For any business, organization, club or Sports Federation not only to exist but to grow, development of the grassroots, the local players, coaches, officials and fans must be its TOP Priority from now to eternity.

“No development means no progress, means no new players, means stagnation, means ultimate collapse”.

Without a strong base, no structure will survive. In terms of World Baseball, without a strong and ever-growing base of new young players, coaches and officials, World Baseball and the IBAF will not survive.

The very foundation of our Future is DEVELOPMENT of

- New players,
- New coaches, officials,
- New Leagues, National Federations,
- New Events & Tournaments.
- New Communications
- New Business

First Step: World Development Workshop.

- Hosted by the IBAF, and other interested parties (Pro. Baseball, LL, Pony etc)
- Involving key persons, world-wide with Development experience.
- To create Targets, plans particular to each Continent.
- Identify funding sources.
- Establish Budgets and funding options.
- The aim being to consult, not to dictate
- Identify potential local Development officers (DO's).
- Develop standard training curriculum and contracts for local DO's.
- Create standard, “achievable” targets for DO's

Second Step; Set Targets. TARGET 2020 has as its target to have by 2020

- Over 1,000,000 Junior Players in Europe
- Over 500,000 Junior Players in Africa
- Over 1,000,000 Junior Players in Asia and
- Over 700,000 Junior Payers in the non-traditional Baseball nations in Asia such as India, Pakistan, Middle East countries.
- Over 200,000 Junior Players in Oceania
- Over 500,000 Junior Players in South America.

These suggested target numbers are based on relative potential Market Size.

COMMUNICATIONS.

For the success of the TARGET 2020 Program, communications with ALL IBAF shareholders is crucial.

Accordingly it is crucial to develop a communication system whereby ALL IBAF stakeholders can communicate, cheaply and freely to discuss issues, obtain information, be involved in IBAF matters.

The IBAF Website, has to become the prime source of International Baseball Information, linking Baseball people from all parts of the World and with the IBAF, as well as providing on-going information to other networks and agencies re International Baseball.

The Website musty include a 10 year IBAF Event Calendar.

Communication and the sharing of information and knowledge has to be a cornerstone of the IBAF in the future

Communications would include,

- Current International news,
- Local information.
- On-Line data.
- On-Line training

Baseball Television.(BTV)

The IBAF should create its own Television Channel (BTV).

BTV should provide all Baseball fans with “on-line” streaming of IBAF Events, as well as live access to National League games of its member Federations.

BTV will have the latest international Baseball news from affiliated networks

BTV would potentially be a cash “positive” vehicle to broadcast Baseball games from throughout the World, and through its broadcasts of IBAF events assist the IBAF in gaining Sponsors and Sponsorship \$\$\$\$\$\$.

BTV would provide on-line training courses/educational programs for coaches, umpires, officials, scorers

IBAF Calendar of Events.

As part of the Communications program the IBAF HAS to establish a 10 year calendar of all events, tournaments, meetings (IBAF, Continental, National & Regional) as well information from “associated” bodies and organizations.

IBAF EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS.

IBAF event and tournaments must be more professionally presented, promoted and marketed.

To start, there has to be created “Global 10 Year Rolling Calendar” in consultation with the Professional Leagues, with events allocated years in advance to potential hosts, thereby giving ample lead-up time in regard to qualification tournaments, and involvement and planning by NF’s. The involvement of Professional players in IBAF events must be recognized as crucial and therefore early planning is essential to avoid conflicts re the release of players.

High Level standards for Facilities/venues need to be established AND followed /implemented for IBAF Events in partnership with the Professional Leagues.

Qualification events leading up to the Key Events (World Cup & World Baseball Classic) must be equally promoted, professionally presented and marketed and must give due recognition to the availability of Professional Players. Example Future World Cups should be staged in November

The creation of National/Continental Leagues, should be the basis of a strong Baseball “Presence” in key countries and in the continents of Asia, Europe and the Americas, with all games “live” on BTV.

IBAF MARKETING

This component of IBAF Activities must include the marketing of

- Events
- Programs.
- Licensed Products
- “IBAF” branded Baseball Equipment,
- IBAF “On-Line” Shop, for ALL baseball equipment and merchandise

Baseball programs need to be marketed world-wide with particular emphasis on emerging markets in Asia and the Americas , with profits to be disbursed to the emerging “Baseball” markets in the Middle East, Europe, Asia & Africa to further expand global markets.

OLYMPIC GAMES & OTHER EVENTS

Although the IBAF’s Olympic Experience has been disappointing to say the least, the IBAF must maintain its goal of Baseball returning to the Olympic Games.

The IBAF should vigorously promote Baseball being a “played” sport within other international Multi-Sport events, such as the Pan-Am Games, the Asian Games, Oceania Games, Africa Games, Commonwealth Games. Master Games and thereby, involving local NOC/Government funding agencies support.

COMMERCIALIZATION OF IBAF **PROPERTIES/FUNDING SUPPORT FOR NF's**

The aim of all of the above projects is not just to create activities but to use our global numbers to interest commercial entities to become financial partners of the IBAF.

Obviously these financial partners will want a reasonable return on their investment, but they also want access to our membership and the hundreds of thousands/ even millions of Baseball players around the world.

Individually we are few, Together we are many.

Through IBAF Communications we will have access to millions of Baseball players and supporters world-wide, these numbers mean \$\$\$\$ that is what the digital revolution is all about.

Through IBAF Tournaments and Events, we will attract sponsors and official suppliers,

Through BTV, we will have a global TV Channel for Baseball, from all levels, whether it be the AA, AAA, IBAF World Cup, from all continents, this will bring in sponsors for our events and tournaments

Through the above programs we will have numbers that are the dreams of marketing people, these numbers we will convert into financial support for our National Federations.

Already we have promises of Financial support from several governmental agencies that see baseball as a means to create better political and financial opportunities for their countries.

Sport is often used to break down political boundaries or to create commercial opportunities; World Baseball will be there to help create these opportunities FOR A FEE.

“Many people see things as they are, others see things as they could be...”

The New IBAF will use its numbers to create opportunities for commercial enterprises, who in turn will pay a royalty or Fee for these opportunities.

Obviously these things will not happen overnight, but with patient and careful planning and by looking at our activities and the sheer numbers of people that we can access, these numbers can be turned into \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$.

That is what modern day marketing, the internet, Global TV, Brand marketing, the power and force of numbers (our players, parents, teams, bats,balls, uniforms,) is all about.....the more the numbers and the more accessible the numbers are, the greater the commercial interest and as a consequence the more important the Business of Baseball will become in replacing some of the funds no longer available to Baseball by not being an Olympic Sport.

IBAF GOVERNANCE.

The current IBAF Government needs to be restructured, in consultation with all IBAF stake-holders.

The IBAF Congress for example should be more than what it is at present, i.e. a political forum. Rather the Congress should be a vehicle to exchange ideas, to review practices, and methods. It should hold workshops on issues of importance, or up-coming issues, perhaps it could be held in conjunction with other key events or conferences.

IBAF Governance should welcome the involvement/participation of “professional Leagues”

The aim should be to have a “lean & efficient structure that is inexpensive” but also focused, result driven and outward looking”.

The concept of the “Presidential Council” should be reviewed and possibly be re-created.

The Government Structure MUST encourage the involvement of Specialized Commissions in the Areas of

- Baseball business, commercialization and Marketing
- Development
- Events and Tournaments.
- Communications.
- Legal Matters
- Umpires

- Medical
- Anti-Doping

These Commissions should be “expert” based and their function would be to continually review IBAF practices in the specific areas of the Commission and to recommend and where necessary overview improvements.

PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL

It should be clearly recognized that the relationship between the IBAF and Professional Baseball will form the foundation of the future of World Baseball.

Our relationship with MLB, MLBPA, NPB, KPB and CPBL will become more and more important and interconnected to our mutual benefit.

By working closely together, IBAF and Professional Baseball can ensure that baseball will truly become “A World Game”.

Our futures are inextricably linked in terms of Development, Tournaments, (The Classic, World Cup and their Qualification Tournaments,) Elite Training Centers, World Draft, creating “career paths,” for talented players, coaches, umpires and administrators.

As well by joint ventures in Marketing, Merchandise, Licensed products, Communications and Baseball TV, Baseball will become a global sport played and appreciated on all 5 Continents and in all parts of the World.

We, the IBAF and Professional Baseball entities, will achieve our joint objectives by meeting regularly to plan and implement these projects and by working closely together for all matters and at all levels.

THE BENEFITS.

The ultimate benefits of Target 2020 are many, they include the following,

- YOUR “new” IBAF will have greater credibility, in the eyes of Sponsors, Governments NOC’s, because Target 2020 clearly defines the concepts, priorities, goals and values of the new IBAF.
- Your IBAF will be seen as a very “Professional” organization, with clear (AND MOST IMPORTANTLY) achievable goals and visions, this increases the credibility of all our members.

- Through IBAF's new credibility , the credibility of local clubs will be recognized by local city councils thereby assist local clubs to obtain to better fields, better facilities and thereby attract new members, new/young players and possibly money.
- Through IBAF Programs, obtain assistance and expertise in the creation of Baseball Leagues and Tournaments that are attractive to local people, sponsors and media.
- Through IBAF Educational Programs (Per BTV), we can educate people in the techniques of Marketing, Communications, the business of Entertainment, Game presentation, Sponsorship, Publicity, media relations. Youth Baseball programs, Parent involvement programs,
- Through our plans in Marketing and Communications, we will be able to raise funds to assist in the grass-roots development.
- Communications will allow greater exchange of information, the sharing of experiences of what works and what does not work. Knowledge is POWER.
- The ability to employ Development officers world-wide to assist YOU in your local clubs/regions.
- The ability to employ coaches to raise the level of Baseball Played
- The creation of a "Progress-Path" for clubs who aspire to join .provincial , National, State or Continental leagues
- The creation of a career path for talented players, who through IBAF Programs in Local, National and National leagues can progress to the best Professional Clubs in Asia or USA.
- Training courses for Coaches, Umpires, Scorers, Administrators, Medical personnel.
- Training courses in proper Field Maintenance and improvements.
- Assistance in obtaining quality equipment at affordable prices.
- The more PROFESSIONAL we "THE IBAF" (That means ALL of us) becomes the greater our Credibility will be as a sport.
- If we can achieve only part (say 50%) of our aims, I am confident that IBAF/BASEBALL will be enormously better off and our financial Sponsors will be truly happy
- I expect that our BTV plans will become cash-flow positive relatively quickly.
- Through the commercialization of all our baseball activities, the IBAF and our World of Baseball will gradually and increasingly be able to offer financial assistance to our member Federations and Continental Confederations.

These are but some of the benefits, perhaps the greatest benefit will be that ALL our members throughout the World KNOW that they are part of a truly GREAT sport, that cares and aspires to assist all its members , wherever they are so

YOU CAN BE TRULY PROUD

OF YOUR IBAF

THAT YOU ARE BASEBALL

SUMMARY

International Baseball is at the cross-roads.

The IBAF now has the opportunity to seize the moment to re-create itself into a truly dynamic, forward-thinking organization or become irrelevant and slowly fade into oblivion.

Certainly from a very personal perspective I am committed to grab this once-in- a life time opportunity to make a real difference in World Baseball.

Ultimately the IBAF Congress will make the final decision.

THANKS;

This document is the culmination of many discussions with many passionate Baseball people in the Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania and Africa, and our friends in MLB, MLBPA, NPB, KPB CTBL and others who preferred to remain nameless. All gave their time willingly and freely and their wisdom and passion is reflected in this Document.

So, this is a short note to thank all those who contributed to the creation of this document.

This document hopefully will now form part of

“ A New Vision for World Baseball”