

Elmwood Giants Baseball Club



Alumni & Friends **NEWSLETTER**

Spring Edition 2012

Our Cover Photo

Donnie Smith is something of a local legend. The grandson of the likewise legendary and Hall of Famer Bob Smith of the Elmwood Giants, Donnie grew up in North Winnipeg and played his Junior ball with the Legion 141 Veterans. He moved on to play Senior ball in the area with, among other-teams, Legion 141 and the Elmwood Seniors. Club legend has it he was practicing with the Senior Giants when he got the call to join the Goldeyes.

He went on to play with the Goldeyes for parts of eight seasons (1998-2006). Playing mostly in a relief role, he set a Northern League record for appearances (206), had a career won-loss record of 15-15 and recorded 28 saves, struck out 246 batters over 246 innings. He was voted to the team's 10th Anniversary All-Star team in 2003. His #21 jersey was retired by the Goldeyes in January, 2009.

He was scouted by Troy Fortin, another Hall of Famer with Giants connections, who told Scott Neiles, then a coach with the Goldeyes and now the owner of Home Run Sports and President of the Manitoba Junior Baseball League. Scott convinced Hal Lanier to come out and watch Smith pitch in a Manitoba Senior league game and that led to Donnie's professional career.

He later became a teacher at Garden City Collegiate and coached at the High School level.

He will be inducted into the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Dinner in Morden on June 2 of this year. Everyone is welcome to join us in celebrating his success in our beloved sport and the legacy he leaves for other young players to emulate.

(With thanks to the Winnipeg Free Press)



Giants Wear For Sale

The Club has for sale a collection of outerwear, T-shirts, caps and other items bearing the Elmwood Giants and Kildonan Mudcats logos. All inquiries should be directed to [Al Kinley](#) at 204-338-9603.

University of Winnipeg Wesmen Baseball Program

Former Giant player and coach **Mike Krykewich** (reigning Baseball Canada “**Coach of the Year**”) is also Head Coach of the University of Winnipeg Wesmen baseball team. The new program recently completed its first year of operation. The team has designated Giants Field as its official practice diamond.

2012 Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame Inductees

Each year, the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame identifies Manitobans who have made extraordinary contributions to the game on and off the field; in some cases: both! This year is no different.

At the sixteenth annual induction ceremonies and dinner, the Hall of Fame will welcome the following people with connections to the Elmwood Giants:

- Ernie O’Dowda
- Donnie Smith (See our cover story!)
- Rob Kollesevich (a second time!)
- Gord Revel

The dinner was held in Morden at the Recreation Centre on Saturday, June 2.

Pages From the Past

This year, the Club marks several significant anniversaries of past championships. How many did you witness?

- 1912 Winnipeg Senior League - Labour Day Cup Winners (100 Years!)
- 1912 Manitoba Senior Champions (100 Years!)
- 1927 Manitoba Junior Champions (85 Years)
- 1952 Manitoba Bantam Champions (60 Years)
- 1987 Manitoba Bison Pennant Winners (25 Years)
- 1987 Manitoba Junior Champions (25 Years)
- 1992 Manitoba Midget Champions (20 Years)
- 2002 Seniors AA Western Canada Baseball Association Champions (Senior Giants; 10 Years)

We will be looking to provide more background on some of these accomplishments throughout the year. Watch our web sites and our upcoming newsletters.

Special Honours for Marc Babaluk

The Giants are proud to have Marc Babaluk as part of our coaching staff and as a contributor to the greater good of the Club. We are also proud to know his skills and abilities are being recognized beyond our organization.



In the past few months, he has been awarded the following honours and duties in relation to his contributions to baseball in Manitoba:

- Coach of Team Manitoba in the 2011 Western Canada Summer Games
- 2011 Jeff Collins Winnipeg Male Coach Bursary (Coaching Manitoba)
- Coach Team Manitoba in the 2013 Canada Summer Games

We are looking forward to more good results from our Junior AAA squad with Marc at the helm again for 2012. We wish him all the best in all his endeavours and know he will continue to provide young Manitobans with the skills and knowledge that will propel them to high levels of achievement in our game!

We thank all our sponsors for their support!



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Our Web Sites

Watch our web sites for developments. We plan to update them over the coming weeks and months and hope to keep them current with all the latest events. We also plan to launch a Club site that will highlight the work done on behalf of all three teams, the field and the wider baseball community.

Junior AAA's: www.ballcharts.com/elmwoodgiantsjr

Junior AA's: www.ballcharts.com/WJBL5

Seniors: www.ballcharts.com/elmwoodgiants

Mudcats: www.ballcharts.com/kildonanmudcats

Cash Calendars for 2012

Once again in 2012, the Club will be conducting its major fund-raiser of the year through a Cash Calendar raffle. The top prize, once again, will be \$1000.

Tickets are available from directors, coaches and players.

Al Kinley (204-338-9603), **Don Krasowski** (204-667-5574) and **Rick Dondo** (204-951-3272) are available to answer any questions you may have about obtaining your tickets and qualifying for multiple prizes!

Darryl Ellis **2011 MJBL All-Star** **Outfielder**

Providing solid defensive play all season combined with a strong offensive contribution, Darryl was the lone Giants MJBL All-Star for 2011. His batting statistics included the following highlights:



- A .302 average and a .460 slugging average
- A .463 on-base percentage and a .924 on-base plus slugging percentage
- 2 home runs (the League high!), a triple and 3 doubles
- 16 runs scored and 13 RBI's

We congratulate him on achieving this recognition for his accomplishments in his last MJBL season and wish him well as he moves on to other sporting and life goals.

Thank you to the **Elmwood Legion!**



"The Friendly Club" continues to live up to its promise for the Giants Executive and Board of Directors. Now used regularly as a venue for Giants events, the staff and leaders of the Legion have made the Club very welcome and are always supportive of our cause and our intentions.

We thank the membership for their support to the Giants!

2011 WSBL All-Stars

In addition to collecting another League Pennant and a Silver Medal in the WCBA Senior AA Championships, our Senior squads were recognized on the WSBL All-Star team.

The following players were identified as the best at their positions:

- Chris Leclerc (Top Outfielder; Mudcats)
- Aaron Hildebrand (Catcher, Mudcats)
- Curtis Furber (Second Base; Seniors)
- Kevin Krasowski (Third Base; Seniors)

We congratulate our players and everyone who was part of or contributed to the WSBL in 2011 for a job well done!



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Wanted: A Few Good Men and Women

After 1962 the Elmwood Giants ceased to exist as a baseball organization. The reasons were for its demise are somewhat unclear. There was an abundance of players available, a thriving feeder system and a suitable playing field (Giants Field). What seemed to be missing were the necessary volunteers and organizers to maintain the teams.

Several attempts were made by various groups in the late sixties and early seventies to reform the Giants but nothing lasted. Not until 1977 did a viable group come together to reestablish and operate the Giants organization. Few people from the original group are still active but enough people have come on board over the years to allow the Giants to continue to operate.

Each year new people have been invited to join the Board of Directors. One of the goals of the organization is to not let the Giants disappear again. We welcome anyone who is interested to attend our next meeting.

Anyone interested in helping with this successful organization are welcome to contact **Al Kinley** at 204-338-9603, **Gord Menzies** at 204-257-3553 or **Rick Dondo** at 204-951-3272.

Help us solve a mystery from our archives

On our web sites, you can catch up on the results we obtained in archive mystery quests published in earlier editions of our newsletter.

Sponsorships Available

The Club is offering businesses the opportunity to connect with the Giants family and supporters through sponsorships in many forms. Examples are as follows:

- **Yearly Program:** \$60 to \$200
- **Giants Patron:** \$100 per year or one payment of \$250 for 3 years
- **Fence:** \$800 (Minimum of 3 years)
- **Red, Blue and Gold Levels** (with various other placements for relevant time periods): \$1500 through \$10,000 or more

Contact **Dave Kodak**, Club Vice-President of Marketing at 204-668-6367 or **Rick Dondo** at 204-951-3272 for all inquiries.



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