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# ANDREW (ANDY) BOEHM

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Constable #1481 (retired)

*Written & researched by John Burchill  
March 31, 2023. Winnipeg Police Museum*



Andy in 1978 with Des Moines Iowa CC

Andy is the ultimate baseball journeyman in Manitoba.

Raised in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Andy started playing senior baseball before he was even in high school, playing for the Kinosota Cougars at 14.

In 1978, just out of high school, Andy was spotted by Murray Zuk, a Canadian Scout for the Cincinnati Reds, at a training camp in Souris, Manitoba. Seeing promise in the young 17-year-old, Zuk and Bill Clark, International Scouting Supervisor, forwarded his name to several junior colleges in the United States.

Andy was accepted into the Des Moines Area Community College at Boone, Iowa, that fall. Andy played for two years with Des Moines as a catcher while attending school in Liberal Arts.

While still 19, Andy moved to Statesboro, Georgia, to attend Georgia Southern University, where he was a pitcher with the NCAA Division I Georgia Southern Eagles. Andy was one of only two international players and the only Canadian-born player on the Southern Eagles team (the other was Australian).



1982 Georgia Southern Eagles. Andy is third from right, first row.

As an international player, cracking the Major League Baseball (MLB) line-up was (and still is) difficult for Canadians. Competing against players from Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico, to name a few, there were only 12 Canadians on the opening day rosters in 2022. As such, it was almost impossible for Andy to get noticed 42 years ago.

However, he was noticed back home in Canada, where he was picked up as a catcher for Canada's first National Youth baseball team in Vancouver in 1979.

After pitching for two years with Georgia Southern University, Andy returned to Portage la Prairie. However, he never gave up his love for baseball, playing for 16 seasons in the Manitoba Senior Baseball League (MSBL) for Dauphin, Neepawa Farmers, Brandon Marlins, Baldur Regals, Brandon Cloverleafs, St. Boniface, Carman and Portage.



1993 Neepawa Farmers. Andy is standing far right.



In those 16 seasons in the MSBL, between 1984 and 2000, Andy batted .301 with seven home runs while pitching to a win-loss record of 37-21 with 356 strikeouts in 507 innings pitched. He was the MSBL Rookie of the Year and on six MSBL 1<sup>st</sup> All-Star teams. In 1994 he was the MBSL top pitcher, and in 1999 he was the MSBL playoff MVP with the Brandon Marlins.

Representing Manitoba, Andy played in nine Western Canadian Baseball Championships and five Canadian Baseball Championships, winning the MVP award in 1985 in Vancouver.

Courtesy of his old friend and mentor Bill Clark, Andy was also invited to guest coach for the Atlanta Braves at their 1995 Spring Training camp in West Palm Beach, Florida.



Unfortunately, the love of baseball in Manitoba doesn't pay the bills. In 1984, when Andy returned home to Portage la Prairie, he began work at the Agassiz Youth Centre, a 59-acre site operated by the Manitoba government as a youth correctional centre for young offenders (the facility was closed in 2022).

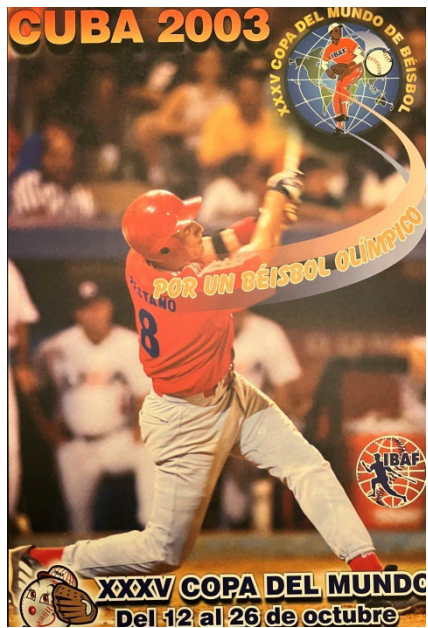
With his background in corrections, Andy applied for the Winnipeg Police in 1986. He was accepted into Recruit Class #107 starting January 19, 1987. Andy would work for the Winnipeg Police for the next 27½ years doing uniform duties in the Downtown, St. James and Fort Garry areas, as well as the Airport Unit, Crimestoppers, Protective Services and Crowd Management units. He would continue to play baseball in the MSBL as well as the Winnipeg Police Baseball League on the "Aces" team and on the Winnipeg Police (WPS) Exhibition team that would play against various all-star teams at fundraising events.



Andy at-bat with the Winnipeg Police Exhibition Team

Although Andy would "retire" from the MSBL after the 2000 season, he has remained closely connected with the game as an Associate Scout for the Atlanta Braves and, since 2000, an Associate Scout for the San Diego Padres Baseball Club.

In 2001 and 2002, Andy was the Assistant Coach for the Canadian National Youth Baseball Team. In 2003, he was Team Canada's National Men's Baseball Delegation Leader at the World Cup in Havana, Cuba, from October 12<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>.



2003 World Cup Havana Poster

In 2006 Andy was the Head Coach for the Manitoba 16-year-old team (Team West). In 2008 he was the Assistant Coach with Team Manitoba 18 & under; the Head Coach for Team Manitoba at the Canada Summer Games in Prince Edward Island in 2009; and the Head Coach for the Prairie Region gold medal team at the 2015 “T12” National Baseball Tournament in Toronto.

In 2011 Andy was inducted into the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame as a pitcher. His acceptance speech can be found online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIMJeJSID90>

Also inducted with Andy in 2011 was Anola-born Corey Koskie, who played for MLB with the Minnesota Twins, Toronto Blue Jays and Milwaukee Brewers from 1998-2006. Like Andy, Corey was also a graduate of the Des Moines Area Community College at Boone, Iowa.

In 2017 Andy was again inducted into the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame as a member of the Neepawa Farmers baseball team that went to the MSBL finals every year from 1993-1997, winning the league title in 1993 and 1997 and the provincial AAA championship in 1997.

Since 2018 Andy has worked at the [Northern Lights Baseball Academy \(NLBA\)](#), in Grande Prairie, Alberta, as a coach. The NLBA was established to help further young baseball players to reach their full potential. The staff at NLBA is dedicated to creating an environment for growth and learning on and off the baseball field. Andy takes extreme pride in developing well-rounded student-athletes who can become successful collegiate ball players and model citizens through hard work, dedication, teamwork, fundamentals, confidence, discipline and respect for others.



2019 Northern Lights Baseball Academy Team. Andy is far left, middle row





Baseball Manitoba, 2022 Honour Society Induction

In 2022 Andy was inducted by Baseball Manitoba’s Honour Society for his “*outstanding achievement and contributions to the community in the sport of baseball*” through his playing, coaching, and mentoring of young athletes. This honour is probably best summed up in a letter from Bill Clark, his former International Scouting Supervisor with the Atlanta Braves and San Diego Padres:

*Andy is a quiet man who leads and teaches without theatrics. His knowledge of the game, his judgment of both playing ability and character and his ability to work with others and follow programs make him a valuable addition to national and professional organizations.*

In a recent interview with Andy, I asked him about his involvement in the [World Police & Fire Games \(WPFG\)](#). Interestingly, Andy never competed in the games as a baseball player !! However, he did compete in the 1989 WPFG in Vancouver, B.C., in badminton, and in the 1991 WPFG in Memphis, Tennessee, in volleyball – where the Winnipeg Police team finished in second place. Andy explained that overhand sports like badminton, volleyball and even water polo, are good off-season sports for baseball players to keep their throwing arms in shape (a good lesson for you younger athletes out there – even Corey Koskie played volleyball with the University of Manitoba Bisons before going to play MLB).

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**NOTE:** Anyone wishing to recognize a police member they feel made a substantial contribution to the world of sport in Winnipeg and its surrounding municipalities is asked to send me their name and a brief description of their accomplishments so we can recognize them during the year.