

62nd Annual NBC World Series Tournament Report

The National Champion, El Dorado Broncos (formerly the Wichita Broncos), won their third national title in ten years, as they won two games on the final day of the tournament against the Tacoma Timbers and finished the series with a 9-1 record.

Champion	El Dorado (KS) Broncos
Runner-up	Tacoma (WA) Timbers
3rd Place	Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers
4th Place (tie)	Hays (KS) Larks, Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers*, St. Joseph (MO) Saints*
7th Place (tie)	Topeka (KS) Capitals, St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks, Anchorage (AK) Glacier Pilots, Liberal (KS) BeeJays
11th Place (tie)	Cape Girardeau (MO) Kohlfeld-Capahas*, Oklahoma City (OK) Aggies*, Dallas (TX) Eagles*, Clarinda (IA) A's, Denver (CO) Cougars*, San Diego (CA) Stars, Nevada (MO) Griffons*, Athletes in Action*, Santa Barbara (CA) Foresters*
17th Place (tie)	Wichita (KS) Jets*, Hartselle (AL) Expos*, Newton (MS) Taters*, Paducah (KY) Chiefs*, Winter Haven (FL) Indians*, Austin (TX) Gold Sox, Pensacola (FL) Reds, Crestwood (IL) Panthers, Winter Haven (FL) Roccas, Dallas (TX) Sox, Albany (GA) A's*
25th Place (tie)	Columbia (TX) A's, Columbia (TX) Angels, Clinton (OK) Cardinals, Wharton (TX) Royals, Fresno (CA) Royals, Greensboro (NC) Brewers, Colorado Bears, Kokomo (IN) CFD Saints, Houston (TX) Braves, New Ulm (TX) Firemen

* Denotes extra game win

El Dorado received \$14,000 including the champions bonus for international play as compensation for making it through the title game, while runner-up Tacoma will take home \$8,000. Total compensation was \$44,800 with the following breakdown:

Champion/ International Play	El Dorado (KS) Broncos (\$14,000)
Final Round/ Runner-Up	Tacoma (WA) Timbers (\$8,000)
Final Three	Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers (\$4,000)
Final Six	Hays (KS) Larks, Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers, St. Joseph (MO) Saints (\$2,400)
Final Ten	Topeka (KS) Capitals, St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks, Anchorage (AK) Glacier Pilots, Liberal (KS) BeeJays (\$1,000)

The remaining 30 clubs shared the \$7,600 compensation pool.

Some teams just know how to turn it on when it comes to tournament time! The 1996 El Dorado (KS) Broncos won the 62nd Annual National Baseball Congress World Series, by defeating the Tacoma (WA) Timbers not once, but twice, on the final day to capture the crown. It was the first time since the 1970 finals when Grand Rapids (MI) defeated Anchorage (AK), that a team went into the finals undefeated as Tacoma did, and lost both games. For the Broncos (formerly of Wichita), it was the third national title game they have won (1989 and '90 being the others) and their fifth appearance in the finals in their ten year history.

The Broncos, normally one of the top teams in the NBC Premier Leagues, basically backed into the tournament, receiving a berth into the Series because they had finished third in 1995. Normally, the top two teams from the previous year receive automatic bids the following year. Because Team USA, the 1995 champion, was competing in the Olympics, the bid went to the third place team. El Dorado had a very average summer, compiling a 26 - 22 overall record. Once they got to Wichita though, it all came together.

The Broncos began the World Series with an easy win against the Wharton (TX) Royals, but that would be the last contest that El Dorado would breeze through. Four of their next five wins were all close games decided by three runs or less; beating the Oklahoma City (OK) Aggies by two, the Dallas (TX) Sox by a single run, the Topeka (KS) Capitals by one run and the Hays (KS) Larks by three, to reach the finals. Sandwiched in between the wins was a 13 - 5 thrashing they took by the number one seed, Tacoma Timbers.

The Tacoma Timbers had a scenario that was much different from their counterpart. The Timbers came into the tournament as a relative unknown to fans of the NBC, but were seeded in the top spot. When the Pacific International League champs arrived, the number one seeding definitely fit. The Timbers would roll through the field of forty teams, with five of their six victories coming by the run rule. Tacoma was *averaging* a run differential of more than seven per game. The Timber's pitching staff had allowed only 19 runs and 36 hits in their six previous games and their defense was nearly flawless, committing only two errors.

Tacoma had proven it deserved the number one seed and went into the finals a resounding favorite. The problem was, the Broncos were not going to give in. In the first game, El Dorado scored 13 runs and pounded out 20 hits, including a prodigious blast by Broncos' designated hitter Wyley Steelmon that cleared the light tower in right field. The Timbers meanwhile, committed four errors and the Broncos coasted to a 13 - 8 victory.

In the nationally televised game, it was a much different story. The teams were scoreless going into the top of the fourth inning, when the Broncos would scratch out three runs. It would be all the El Dorado pitching staff would need. Nate Robertson, coming off of only two days rest, threw five gutsy innings of two hit ball to earn the victory. Broncos manager Bob Fornelli would use three relievers most effectively, as they limited the vaunted Timbers attack to two runs on only five hits and El Dorado walked away with their third crown, by a score of 6 - 2.

Once again, the National Baseball Congress World Series proved to be a haven for hitters. The Topeka (KS) Capitals edged out the Liberal (KS) BeeJays by a .0002 margin to take the top spot in team batting averages, with a .391 average. A special note goes out to the Dallas (TX) Eagles who hit .444 as a *team* in four games but did not accumulate enough at-bats to meet the minimum requirements. As a whole the forty teams combined to hit .320 and knocked 207 home runs out of the park. The offenses also averaged 16.1 runs per game and 10 or more runs were scored by one team in 49 of the 80 games.

The entire tournament was not based around the offense though. The St. Joseph (MO) Saints finished with a tournament low 3.26 ERA, which led them to the round of six. 1995 runner-up, the Hays Larks, also put up an impressive 3.46 team ERA to lead them to a tie for fourth place.

As always at the NBC World Series, there were some solid individual performances turned in. MVP Kevin Frederick, from El Dorado, finished up the series hitting .431 with two home runs, led the tournament in runs batted in with 19 and tied for the lead in runs scored with 15. St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks catcher Rick Mundy hit at a phenomenal .647 clip, with two home runs and 12 RBI. St. Joseph shortstop Joel Fuentes hit a tourney-

leading five home runs for the surprising Saints. St. Joseph was in their first year of existence and they quickly became a fan favorite, as they were named the most popular team.

Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers pitcher Andy Kimball led all hurlers with a 0.69 ERA in 13 innings pitched and was 2 - 0 for the Oilers, who after getting upset in their first round game against the Winter Haven (FL) Roccas, won five consecutive games before getting knocked out by the Tacoma Timbers. Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers pitcher Steve Leinhard turned in one of the best performances of the tournament, throwing a seven hit shutout in the round of six to beat St. Joseph 2 - 0. The Sluggers came out of nowhere to make it to the semi-finals, using a number of ex-Wichita State University and former professional players on their roster. Sluggers shortstop Jim Thomas, a former WSU Shocker, found the fountain of youth at Lawrence-Dumont Stadium, hitting .464 and scoring eight runs. Thomas was the recipient of the Most Popular Player and Outstanding Local Player awards.

The tournament once again attracted a number of fans from around the country as more than 84,000 attended the 14 dates at an average of 6,003 per night, with the single day high being 9,553. The hotels and restaurants around Wichita were once again overflowing, as the tournament continued to be a major contributor to the community's economy.

The Baseball 'Round the Clock promotion was back in full swing, as 246 fans and one dog made it through the marathon 17 games in 56 hours session. The contestants actually got a few bonus hours this year, as the final game on Sunday night stretched into the 2:00 am hour. The evening ended with a 9 - 3 victory by the Santa Barbara (CA) Foresters over the Crestwood (IL) Panthers. Fans who stayed for the duration received gifts, including seven lucky fans who won color TV's from Best Buy and two that won custom made diamonds from Mike Seltzer Jewelers.

Major League scouts were once again out in force to see some of the top amateur players in the country. More than 60 Major League scouts attended the '96 World Series. Santa Barbara's Ty Walker, voted the 1996 Top Professional Prospect, definitely gave them something to look at. The University of California at Berkeley pitcher repeatedly cracked the 95 MPH barrier on the radar guns. Once again, there are sure to be several signings that result from the tournament.

The 1996 NBC World Series had to battle for the media coverage early in the tournament because of the Olympics in Atlanta, but the tournament definitely did not suffer, as more than 60 press passes were issued. The Wichita Eagle again provided outstanding coverage of the tournament and the local radio and television stations did a number of live remotes during the two weeks. KAKE-TV covered the Championship games live from L-D for the third year in a row. Prime Sports will show the final game on a tape delay basis to every affiliate around the nation and the Championship tilt will reach more than 50 million homes in the United States.

The NBC would like to thank the many fans and business sponsors who made the 62nd NBC World Series a very successful event. Recognition should go to the many NBC Tournament Directors and Commissioners who assisted with the tournament. In addition, thanks to each team sponsor, manager, coach and player involved with the tournament. All these participants make the NBC World Series a world class event. Special thanks goes out to the City of El Dorado for hosting games at McDonald Park. The 1997 World Series will take place from Friday, August 1st through Friday, August 15th-- so please mark your calendars. Hope to see you all at Lawrence-Dumont next summer!

**1996 NATIONAL BASEBALL CONGRESS ALL-AMERICAN TEAM
SPONSORED BY AMERICAN EAGLE**

POSITION	PLAYER	NBC SQUAD	COLLEGE
Pitcher	Trey Poland	Hays (KS) Larks	SW Louisiana
Pitcher	Andy Kimball	Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers	Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Pitcher	Zach Diaz	St. Joseph (MO) Saints	Florida State
Pitcher	Steve Leinhard	Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers	Graduate
Catcher	Jim Horner	Tacoma (WA) Timbers	Washington State
Catcher	Rick Mundy	St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks	Graduate
First Base	Chaz Eigeren	Liberal (KS) BeeJays	Seward County CC
Second Base	Joe Caruso	Nevada (MO) Griffons	Alabama
Third Base	Kevin Frederick	El Dorado (KS) Broncos	Creighton
Shortstop	Shannon Hinkle	Tacoma (WA) Timbers	Graduate
Outfielder	Dustin Carr	Liberal (KS) BeeJays	Houston
Outfielder	Jeremy Dodson	Topeka (KS) Capitals	Baylor
Outfielder	Jason Fellows	Tacoma (WA) Timbers	Graduate
Designated Hitter	Todd Fereday	Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers	Kansas State
Utility	Andy Wilson	Hays (KS) Larks	Cal State Northridge
Utility	Jim Thomas	Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers	Graduate
Manager	Bob Fornelli	El Dorado (KS) Broncos	Fort Hays State

1996 NBC World Series Trophy Winners

Most Valuable Player	Kevin Frederick, El Dorado (KS) Broncos: .439, 15 runs, 19 RBI
Leading Hitter	Rick Mundy, St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks: .647 (11-17, 2 BB, 1 HBP)
Leading Pitcher	Andy Kimball, Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers, 2-0, 0.69, 13 IP
Most Extra Base Hits	Rick Mundy, St. Louis (MO) O'B Clarks, nine, 6 2B, 1 3B, 2 HR
Most Home Runs	Joel Fuentes, St. Joseph (MO) Saints, 5HR
Most Stolen Bases	Jeremy Troutman, El Dorado (KS) Broncos, 9-12 SB
Manager of the Year	Bob Fornelli, El Dorado (KS) Broncos
Outstanding Local Player	Jim Thomas, Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers
Most Popular Player	Jim Thomas, Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers
Top Professional Prospect	Ty Walker, Santa Barbara (CA) Foresters
Individual Sportsmanship	Steve Leinhard, Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers
Individual Sportsmanship (Coach)	Barry Aden, Tacoma (WA) Timbers
Team Sportsmanship	Athletes in Action
Hap Dumont Award	Jack O'Toole, Coach, Anchorage (AK) Glacier Pilots
Most Spectacular Play	Gaby Halcovich, Santa Barbara (CA) Foresters, double play vs Crestwood
Most Inspirational Player	Derek Nicholson, Kenai (AK) Peninsula Oilers
Best Dressed Team	Tacoma (WA) Timbers
Most Popular Team	St. Joseph (MO) Saints
Best Offensive Team	Topeka (KS) Capitals: .391 (61-156)
Best Defensive Team	Wichita (KS) Alumni/Sluggers .992 (2 errors in 253 chances)
Best Team Pitching	St. Joseph (MO) Saints: 3.26 ERA
Most Double Plays	El Dorado (KS) Broncos: 12
Umpire of the Year	Gary Haehn
Scout of the Year	Dave Lakey, Houston Astros