



Fall 2021

# BIG TRAIN BULLETIN

## Cal Ripken League 2021 Champions

OUR BOYS OF SUMMER DID IT AGAIN



The Bethesda Big Train captured its fifth consecutive and ninth overall Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League championship on July 30 with a 4-0 road victory over the Alexandria Aces. The Big Train dominated the 2021 regular season with a record of 27-8 and

ran the table in the playoffs beating the DC Grays twice in the semifinals and sweeping the Aces in the league championship series. Outfielder **Matt Thomas** (William & Mary) was named the league's offensive player of the year while two way player **Kemp Alderman** (Mississippi) received the league championship series most outstanding player award. *Perfect Game USA* rated left handed hurler **Grayson Hitt** (Alabama) as the league's top pro prospect. This season, our Manager **Sal Colangelo** recorded his 524<sup>th</sup> summer college baseball victory, putting him in the top five of active summer collegiate coaches in the nation.

Manager Sal Colangelo named **Matt Thomas** the 2021 Big Train most valuable player. Thomas hit .350 with 7 home runs and 32 RBIs. Sal named **Rocco Peppi** (Long Beach State) most outstanding hitter; **Grayson Hitt** (Alabama) most outstanding pitcher; **Ryan Metz** (Virginia Tech) most outstanding relief pitcher; and **Keith Torres** (Sacramento State) most outstanding defender.

## Israel-Bethesda Friendship Game

TEAM ISRAEL PREPPED FOR OLYMPICS AT POVICH

On a festive Sunday July 18 night before a standing room only crowd of 835, the Bethesda Big Train hosted Israel's National Baseball Team as part of Team Israel's preparation for the Olympics. Just days before departing for Japan, former major leaguers Ian Kinsler, Ty Kelly, Ryan Lavarney, and Danny Valencia faced off against the Big Train at Shirley Povich Field. Team Israel won 8-7 on a dramatic last inning two run home run.

With support from our partners at the International Jewish Sports Foundation, Jewish Community Relations Council, Bender JCC of Greater Washington, The Jewish Federation, *Washington Jewish Week*, and the Embassy of Israel, the Friendship Game was a true celebration of community. Importantly, we were able to raise \$30,000 to support Team Israel in its historic trip to the Olympics.

## Join Us at the Annual Big Train Base Ball & Holiday Auction

Join us on **Saturday November 13** at the Davis Family Picnic Pavilion at Shirley Povich Field for part one of our 2021 Big Train Base Ball & Holiday Auction. Be among the very first to have an opportunity to be photographed with our new sculpture of "**Shirley & Walter**" and meet sculptor **Toby Mendez** who created it. Toby turned the Heroes of Birdland into bronze at Camden Yards. You will be thrilled to see the masterpiece he has created for us of two icons of Washington sports – legendary journalist Shirley Povich interviewing Hall of Famer Walter Johnson.

As a precaution in the age of covid, attendance at the Sunday November 13 event will be a ticketed event limited to 100 people. So sign up now online or send in your sponsorship check – go to [www.bigtrain.org](http://www.bigtrain.org) for details on how to secure your spot at the Base Ball & Holiday Auction.

On **Sunday December 5** from 7 to 8 p.m., we will hold part two of the Base Ball & Holiday Auction -- a virtual event open to all through [bigtrain.tv](http://bigtrain.tv) featuring ESPN's **Tim Kurkjian** presenting his annual assessment of the World Series and the MLB Season. Each event will include an online auction where you can do your holiday shopping without worrying about the global supply chain.

As in the past, we will hear from our **Ripken League Hall of Fame Manager Sal Colangelo** about **our championship season**. Sal will present awards to our 2021 **MVP Matt Thomas** and our other most outstanding players in 2021, and we will honor volunteers and supporters who have helped us build the Big Train organization.

Since 1999, our **Big Train Base Ball & Holiday Auction** has been an important opportunity to bring the Big Train Family together in the off season, celebrate our victories and our service to the community, and raise funds to support our program. We hope you will join us on November 13 and December 5.

# Big Train in the Community

## HONORING OUR FRONTLINE COMMUNITY HEROES



The Bethesda Community Base Ball Club dedicated our 2021 Big Train season to the community heroes -- the nurses, community nonprofits, first responders, doctors, grocery store clerks, and others -- who worked so tirelessly on the frontlines during the pandemic. At each Big Train home game during the 2021 season, we honored 25 Frontline Community Heroes with a free ticket to the game and a dinner and a drink thanks to the generous support provided by the **Jim and Carol Trawick Foundation**, **The Sebrechts Family**, and **Melanie Folstad, RBC Wealth Management** and our wonderful food providers at **Gregorio's Trattoria** and **Catalyst Hot Dogs**. The Frontline Heroes from **Nourishing Bethesda** are shown in the photo being applauded by the Big Train fans during our June 20 game. Other organizations honored included Shepherd's Table, B-CC Rescue Squad, NIH Clinical Center, Manna Food Center, and National Center for Children and Families.

## Ripken League Hall of Fame

### ADKINS, CROWLEY, & RENFROE TO BE INDUCTED NOVEMBER 7

Three more members of the Big Train Family will be inducted into the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League Hall of Fame on Sunday afternoon November 7 at Shirley Povich Field. **Luke Adkins** (BT 2006, 2008, and 2009/Mississippi State), super host mom **Becky Crowley**, and **Hunter Renfro** (BT 2011 and 2012/Mississippi State) will be inducted along with inaugural Ripken League Commissioner **Bill Spencer**, Thunderbolt founder **Dick O'Connor**, and Maryland Orioles slugger **Justin Bour**.

Luke Adkins, named to the Ripken League All League Team in all three of his Big Train seasons now serves as head baseball coach of Starkville High School in Mississippi. Becky Crowley's Hall of Fame plaque says she "is a role model for the generosity of spirit upon which summer college baseball thrives." Hunter Renfro, now with the Boston Red Sox, led the Big Train to a national championship in 2011 and shattered Ripken League hitting records in 2012.

Big Train Manager **Sal Colangelo**, **Brian Dozier** (BT 2006), and Big Train Founder **Bruce Adams** were in the inaugural class of the Ripken League Hall of Fame along with **Cal Ripken Senior**, Youse's Maryland Orioles Manager **Dean Albany**, and Thunderbolts hurler **Brett Cecil**.

Tickets for the 4 p.m. induction ceremony on November 7 are \$25. Please come out and support Luke, Becky, and Hunter. For information about tickets, please email [bruce@greaterwash.org](mailto:bruce@greaterwash.org).

## Join the Big Train Bullpen Club

### HELP US PROVIDE SMALL TOWN CHARM AT POVICH FIELD IN 2022

A friend once told our founder John Ourisman: "John, when I come to Povich Field, I feel like I live in a small town." Our Bethesda Community Base Ball Club (BCBBC) is working hard to make Big Train games at Povich Field the most fan friendly experience in all of baseball. To help make that happen, we have established a Big Train Bullpen Club.

The mission of the Bullpen Club, as approved by the board, is "to represent and reflect the voice and vision of the fans of the Bethesda Big Train back to the leadership of the BCBBC; to promote awareness of Big Train baseball in the local community; to ensure a fan friendly environment at Povich Field that is welcoming to fans of all ages and backgrounds; and to support the charitable mission of the BCBBC both at Povich Field and in the community at large."

If you are interested in learning more about the Bullpen Club and possibly joining, please email Bruce Adams at [bruce@greaterwash.org](mailto:bruce@greaterwash.org).



### WE WANT TO CONNECT WITH YOU

To stay informed about Big Train activities, please go to [www.bigtrain.org](http://www.bigtrain.org) to sign up for our email. Send your questions and ideas for the 2022 season to:

**Bruce Adams:** [bruce@greaterwash.org](mailto:bruce@greaterwash.org)

**Chris Rogers:** [crogs@bigtrain.org](mailto:crogs@bigtrain.org)

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### BETHESDA COMMUNITY BASE BALL CLUB

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