



BIG TRAIN BULLETIN

Unveiling Shirley & Walter



Photo from the left: Maury Povich, son of Shirley Povich; Casey Anderson, Montgomery County Planning Board Chair; sculptor Toby Mendez; Hank Thomas, grandson and biographer of Walter Johnson; and Mike Riley, Montgomery Parks Director. ©2021 Eye on the Ball photography.

On November 6, a gorgeous and festive Saturday morning, members of the families of **Shirley Povich** and **Walter Johnson** joined with Montgomery Parks officials, County elected leaders, and Bethesda Community Base Ball Club leaders past and present to dedicate sculptures of two of Washington's most iconic sports figures. The sculptures of journalist Shirley Povich, for whom our ballpark is

named, and Walter Johnson, whose Big Train nickname our team carries with pride, were crafted by **Toby Mendez**, the sculptor who turned the legends of Birdland into bronze at Camden Yards.

Former *Washington Post* sports editor **George Solomon** spoke about his colleague Shirley Povich and was presented with a replica plaque for the newly named George Solomon Press Box. ESPN's **Tim Kurkjian** spoke about the career of Walter Johnson and received a replica of the Tim Kurkjian Sports Journalism Fellows (aka Big Train summer interns) plaque that will also be displayed near the door to the Solomon Press Box.

Ripken League Hall of Fame



Luke Adkins (BT 2006, 2008, and 2009/Mississippi State), super host mom **Becky Crowley**, and **Hunter Renfro** (BT 2011 and 2012/Mississippi State) were inducted into the Ripken League Hall of Fame on November 7 along with inaugural Ripken League Commissioner **Bill Spencer**, Thunderbolt founder **Dick O'Connor**, and Maryland Orioles slugger **Justin Bour**.

Luke Adkins, named to the League All League Team in all three of his Big Train seasons, now serves as head baseball coach at Starkville High School in Mississippi. Becky Crowley serves on the board of directors of the Bethesda Community Base Ball Club and as Treasurer of the Ripken League. Hunter Renfro, now a Milwaukee Brewer, 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/Southern Mississippi), and Big Train Founder **Bruce Adams** were three members of the 2019 inaugural class of the Hall of Fame along with **Cal Ripken Senior**, Youse's Maryland Orioles Manager **Dean Albany**, and Thunderbolts hurler **Brett Cecil**.

2022

2022 SEASON TICKETS & FAN PACKS NOW AVAILABLE

Big Train fans are now able to buy **2022 Season Tickets** and lock in their favorite seat location for all home regular season and exhibition games. By buying now, fans can save 40% compared to buying single game tickets. For Big Train fans who want more flexible ticket options but still with the ability to lock in preferred seats, we have established three discounted **Fan Pack options** of 8, 16, or 24 tickets. **Single game ticket sales** will open in the Spring after Season Ticket and Fan Pack purchasers have had a chance to pick their seat locations. To buy your tickets before all the best seats are claimed, please go to www.bigtrain.org/tickets.

EVERY KID DESERVES A GREAT SUMMER!

Give your son or daughter an opportunity to learn the game from some of the best college baseball players in the country. It is so fun for kids to get to know the Big Train players at our Summer Camp and then watch them play at night at Povich Field. The **Early Bird Discount** is available through March 15. To reserve your child's place at one or more of our six weeks of camp this summer, please go to www.bigtrain.org/summercamp. Use EARLYBIRD22 for discount at checkout.

JOIN THE BIG TRAIN BULLPEN CLUB

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. If you are interested in learning more about how you can help us maintain the small town charm of Big Train baseball at Povich Field by volunteering with our Bullpen Club, please email Bruce Adams at bruce@greaterwash.org.

Cal Ripken League 2021 Champions



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. Manager Sal Colangelo named **Matt Thomas** the 2021 Big Train most valuable player; **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 PREPS FOR OLYMPICS AT SHIRLEY POVICH FIELD



It was standing room only at Povich Field for the Israel-Bethesda Friendship Game on July 18, 2021 when the Big Train hosted the Olympic bound Israel National Baseball Team. Just days before departing for Japan, former major leaguers Ian Kinsler, Ty Kelly,

Ryan Lavarney, and Danny Valencia faced off against the Big Train. The Big Train took a 7-5 lead into the last inning, but Team Israel won it with a dramatic home run. Team Israel split two exhibition games with Ripken League All Stars, winning at FNB Field in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and losing at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen, Maryland.

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.

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**. Groups honored included **Nourishing Bethesda**, **Manna Food**, **B-CC Rescue Squad**, and **National Center for Children and Families**.

BIG TRAIN BASE BALL & HOLIDAY AUCTION

Thanks to our generous donors and auction bidders, our annual Big Train Base Ball & Holiday Auction netted \$50,000 to put us on a sound financial footing for 2022 and help support our community service initiatives. The in-person portion of the event on Saturday November 13 gave Big Train fans an opportunity to be photographed with our new sculptures of **Shirley & Walter** and meet artist **Toby Mendez**. We presented our **Randy Schools Big Train Outstanding Service Awards** to Mendez, architect **Richard Leggin**, who designed the setting for the sculptures, **Guy Bami** of our partner Gelberg Signs, our Associate Head Coach **Galvin Morris**, and long-time Big Train fan and our BCBBC Secretary-Treasurer **John Daniel**. Our virtual event on Sunday December 5 featured ESPN's **Tim Kurkjian** and **Eve Rosenbaum**, Director of Baseball Development for the Orioles. **Manager Sal Colangelo** presented awards to the most outstanding players from the 2021 championship season.

CHECK OUT BIGTRAIN.TV TO GET YOUR WINTER BASEBALL FIX

Bill Veeck famously said, "There are only two seasons – winter and baseball." Big Train has you covered. Just go to bigtrain.tv and click on "View Full Archives" at the bottom of the page. There you will find our holiday event featuring **Tim Kurkjian** and **Eve Rosenbaum**, **Shirley & Walter dedication ceremony**, July 18 **Israel-Bethesda Friendship Game** and the full slate of 2021 Big Train playoff and regular season games, as well as the 2020 Safe at Home Tuesdays interviews featuring **Mike Veeck**, **Maury Povich**, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum President **Bob Kendrick**, and others.

WE WANT TO CONNECT WITH YOU

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

Bruce Adams: bruce@greaterwash.org

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