



2 December 2009

Dear Belgian Baseball Members,

Recently, we have been following the development of the new baseball academies in the LFBBS and VBSL. Major League Baseball is very happy that these projects are under way and feel that they will be great assets for the whole of Belgian baseball.

As part of its commitment to growing the game in Europe, Major League Baseball has supported player development projects around the continent for the past several years. With the annual MLB European Academy as its centrepiece, MLB has expanded this commitment to encompass 18 national player academies in six European nations, and several nations are creating new programs this year. In 2010, these academies will provide over 400 of the region's best young players with thousands of training sessions throughout the year. Through the excellent work of the players and coaches in these programs, we've seen the level of play improve and have had 45 European players signed to MLB contracts since 2005.

Based on our meetings with the Belgian federation and its coaches, MLB feels that the LFBBS and VBSL academies will add to these successes. The academies have laid a solid foundation similar to successful programs in nations such as Holland and Sweden: they have the full support of the federation, they are integrated in a comprehensive national program, they have a solid training plan, they are well-organised and they have a capable instructional staff. Additionally, we are pleased to see that the academies represent a close partnership between the French and Flemish communities, something that will be a key to both academies' success.

In the coming year, MLB will continue to monitor the progress of the Belgian academies, sending coaches to Belgium to see the programs at work and advising its coaches during the off-season. If the academies progress as we envision, then MLB may formalise a partnership with these academies after the 2010 season. This partnership would offer more support in the form of coaches, equipment and invitations to special MLB events like the MLB Academies Tournament. Ultimately, this could lead to more opportunities for Belgian players in international and even professional baseball.

Player development is a long-term process and the Belgian academies are just starting down what will be a long path. But in the eyes of MLB, they are heading in the right direction and we look forward to working with them in the future.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Holowaty".

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