



Beacon

A publication of the Ban Johnson Amateur Baseball League

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Natural Baseball wins first title

At one point late in the regular season, Natural Baseball Academy had a record of 9-12.

The club rebounded and came alive in the post-season tournament.

The sixth seed in the tournament, Natural Baseball beat No. 3 seed NKC Apt. Giants, No. 1 seed UMB Bank and No. 2 BJ Raiders to claim their first Ban Johnson League championship.

They lost the first game to both UMB and the Raiders, but came back to win the series.

“The key was our team getting hot at the right time,” second-year manager **Brian Knippemeyer** said. “Our pitching and hitting came together and we were a tough team to beat the last third of the season. It was fun to watch them play.”

In the best of five championship series against the BJ Raiders, Natural Baseball lost the first game 9-6 on July 28.

The club came back to win a doubleheader on July 30

by scores of 3-1 and 7-3.

Then in the fourth game it was a standout pitching job by right-hander **Alex Knight** and timely hitting that resulted in a 6-0 win and the first title for the club in just its fifth year in the league.

Knight, who graduated from Olathe Northwest in the spring, allowed just one hit, while striking out six and walking two.

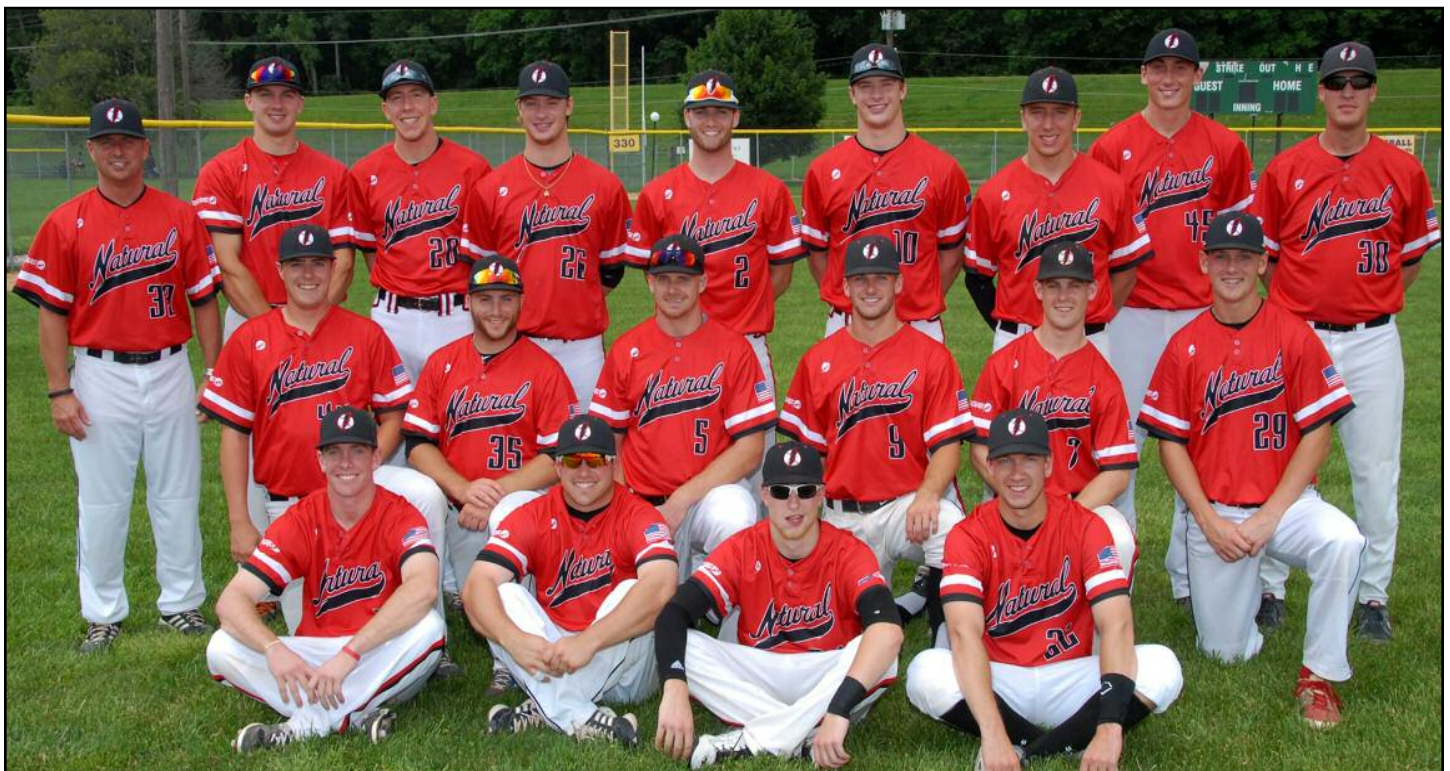
“We got an early lead and that helped me,” he said. “I couldn’t have done it without my teammates. This is one of the biggest victories in my career.”

Knight will be a freshman at Fort Scott Community College this fall.

Natural Baseball scored two runs in the first inning, one in the second and three in third frame.

The highlight in the three run outburst in the third was a two-run homer by outfielder Matt Elliott.

See Natural, page 5



CHAMPIONS - Natural Baseball Academy beat the BJ Raiders 6-0 in the fourth and deciding game of the 2015 Ban Johnson League championship series July 31 at the Mid-America Sports Complex in Shawnee. It was the first title for the team in its fifth year in the league. (photo by Lightfoot Studio)

Notable Numbers presented by Independence Ridge Apts.

(FINAL UNOFFICIAL)

BATTING

(based on a minimum of 44 plate appearances)

Average

1. Daniel Reilly, KCSC Blaze	.472
2. Seth Eil, UMB Bank	.453
3. Craig Straws, UMB Bank	.425
4. Andrew Vogelbaugh, Prodigy Baseball	.413
5. Matt Milner, Milgram Mustangs	.404
6. Zach Pirrello, Natural Baseball	.386
7. Brett Macary, Seaboard	.383
8. Curtis Boyer, UMB Bank	.382
9. Christian Patterson, Natural Baseball	.381
10. Jeremy Lufft, NKC Apts. Giants	.377

OBP

1. Seth Eil, UMB Bank	.540
2. Austin Hoergel, Seaboard	.506
3. Daniel Reilly, KCSC Blaze	.500
4. Craig Straws, BJ Raiders	.489
5. Alex Pener, NKC Apt. Giants	.487
6. Brett Macary, Seaboard	.486
6. Tyler Burgess, UMB Bank	.486
8. Matt Milner, Milgram Mustangs	.481
9. Curtis Boyer, UMB Bank	.479
10. Joshua Hare, NKC Apts. Giants	.452

SLG%

1. Andrew Vogelbaugh, Prodigy Baseball	.761
2. Daniel Reilly, KCSC Blaze	.623
3. Jack Pauley, Natural Baseball	.614
4. Seth Eil, UMB Bank	.604
5. Ian Barker, Midwest Orioles	.587
6. Jordan Eckley, MidAmeriCare Nationals	.541
7. Alex Pener, NKC Apt. Giants	.536
8. Jeremy Lufft, NKC Apt. Giants	.532
8. Matt Milner, Milgram Mustangs	.532

10. Joshua Hare, NKC Apt. Giants	.525
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OPS%

1. Andrew Vogelbaugh, Prodigy Baseball	1.210
2. Seth Eil, UMB Bank	1.143
3. Daniel Reilly, KCSC Blaze	1.123
4. Ian Barker, Midwest Orioles	1.032
5. Jack Pauley, Natural Baseball	1.024
6. Alex Pener, NKC Apt. Giants	1.023
7. Matt Milner, Milgram Mustangs	1.013
8. Curtis Boyer, UMB Bank	.988
9. Joshua Hare, NKC Apt. Giants	.977
10. Brett Macary, Seaboard	.969

Pitching

(based on a minimum of 19 innings)

Earned Run Average

1. Samuel Gilbert, KCSC Blaze	0.36
2. Dalton Moats, UMB Bank	0.78
3. Jacob VanVacter, UMB Bank	0.82
4. Dakota Graham, Milgram Mustangs	1.13
5. Wally Nellor, Seaboard	1.20
6. Tayler Ross, BJ Raiders	1.27
7. Shamus Kearney, Milgram Mustangs	1.40
8. McConnell Preston, UMB Bank	1.57
9. Hayden Edwards, KSSC Blaze	1.59
10. RJ Burrola, MSBL Royals	1.60

WHIP

1. Dalton Moats, UMB Bank	0.89
2. Samuel Gilbert, KCSC Blues	0.92
3. Jacob VanVacter, UMB Bank	0.98
4. Wally Nellor, Seaboard	1.02
5. Dylan Pollock, BJ Raiders	1.06
6. Dakota Graham, Milgram Mustangs	1.07
7. Tayler Ross, BJ Raiders	1.09
8. McConnell Preston, UMB Bank	1.26
9. Jordan Brown, Midwest Orioles	1.27
10. Shamus Kearney, Milgram Mustangs	1.30

K/G

1. Zachary Hegger, Prodigy Baseball	13.2
2. Samuel Gilbert, KCSC Blaze	11.4
3. Jacob VanVacter, UMB Bank	11.2
3. Tayler Ross, BJ Raiders	11.2
5. RJ Burrola, MSBL Royals	11.1
6. McConnell Preston, UMB Bank	11.0
7. London Collins, Midwest Orioles	10.8
8. Tanner Strickbine, Seaboard	10.4
8. Thomas Wright, NKC Apts. Giants	10.4
10. Brandon Johnson, KCSC Blaze	10.0

Beacon

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Tournament highlights presented by North KC Apartments.

Post-season tourney highlights

Play-in game

July 22

Building Champions 10, MidAmerCare 0 (5)

Jake Slocum tossed a one-hitter fanning nine and not walking a batter.

Blake Shinkle went two-for-three with a triple and three RBIs and **Jordan McCloud**, one-for-three with a triple and three RBIs.

Quarterfinals

July 23

Natural Baseball 2, NKC Apts. Giants 1

Natural Baseball Academy scored a run in the top of the seventh on a two-out single to right by **Alex Cargin**.

Alex Knight went the first six innings, allowing one run, six hits while striking out eight and walking one.

Cole Newell fanned the side in the seventh for the save.

Natural Baseball 4, NKC Apts. Giants 0

Brandon Martinkus went the distance with a three-hitter. He struckout eight and walked three.

Seaboard 10, Milgram Mustangs 8

Seaboard scored four runs in the top of the seventh.

Austin Hoegerl was three-for-four with a double and four RBIs and **Drew Green** went three-for-three with a double and two RBIs.

Milgram Mustangs 15, Seaboard 6

The Mustangs scored seven runs in the top of the seventh to turn a close game into a rout.

Andrew Curry was two-for-four with a triple and three RBIs and **AJ Salinas**, two-for-two with a double and three RBIs.

July 24

BJ Raiders 5, KCSC Blaze 2

Craig Straws was two-for-four with two RBIs while **Zach Hoeflicker** went two-for-two with two RBIs.

BJ Raiders 3, KCSC Blaze 2.

Sam Baxter had a solo home run.

Taylor Ross went the distance allowing one earned run. He struckout 10 and walked three.

UMB Bank 9, Building Champions 5

UMB pushed across six runs in the fourth inning.

Tyler Burgess was four-for-five while **Seth Ell** was two-for-three.

UMB Bank 6, Building Champions 2

Henry Weiler was three-for-four with a double and **Curtis Boyer** went two-for-four with an RBI.

July 25

Milgram Mustangs 10, Seaboard 0 (5)

Cameron Dean went two-for-two with a double and three RBIs.

Semifinals

July 26

UMB Bank 9, Natural Baseball 3

UMB won its 18th consecutive game with **Curtis Boyer** going three-for-four with a triple and two RBIs and **Cole Doherty** was two-for-three.

Natural Baseball 3, UMB Bank 0

Natural Baseball Academy's **Michael Popp** went the first five innings, allowing four hits, striking out one and walking one. Reliever **Cole Newell** didn't allow a hit in his two innings. He fanned five and walked two as UMB's 18-game winning streak came to an end. Newell got the save.

Jack Pauley went two-for-three with two RBIs.

See Post-Season, page 7



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What are the leaders secrets?

The regular season unofficial leaders have been featured in the last and this edition of the Beacon.

What do some of the leaders say are their secrets of success?

The leader in batting average was KCSC Blaze first baseman **Dan Reilly**. He completed his freshman year at Washburn University last year and had an average of .472 for the Ban Johnson League season.

“The only secret to success in hitting is hard work,” he said. “I was lucky enough to have my dad take me up to our facility or high school to hit almost every day. Its true when people say that hard work pays off in the end.

“I love the game of baseball and I wanted to work as hard as I could in helping contribute to my team at the plate or on the field.”

And what is the most important key to hitting?

“Every time before my dad threw me batting practice, my dad would always say the word focus over and over again,” Reilly said.

Reilly also credits something his high school coach at Blue Valley West, **Bill McDonald**, told him: “He said every time you go up to bat you are 0 for 0. You can’t let what happened early in the game dictate what you are going to do in your upcoming games,” Reilly said.

UMB Bank outfielder **Seth Ell** was second in the batting average category with an average of .453.

Ell graduated from Park Hill and is attending Southwest Baptist University.

What is his secret to hitting?

“Looking for your pitch and attacking it when you get it,” he said. “You want to relax at the plate, trusting in your preparation and believing that you are the best hitter every time you step in the box.”

UMB Bank left-handed pitcher **Dalton Moats** was second in ERA at 0.78.

He graduated from Park Hill High School and attended Northeastern Oklahoma Community College in the fall will be at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi.

“The secret to success for me is getting ahead on strike one,” he said. “Once I get ahead I can come at you with all different angles, meaning pitches, arm angle or just something I pick up from when I watch the batter swing.”

The biggest highlight of his career was being drafted by the Royals out of high school.

“Hopefully I can get drafted by them again and make my dream come true by actually signing this time,” he said.

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Natural Baseball wins first title

(continued from page 1)

"I had two strikes on me, so I was just trying to make contact," he said.

He had an outstanding championship series, going eight-for-13 with a double, triple, home run and four RBIs from his lead off spot.

He was voted by the league officials as the MVP of the championship series.

"That was really, really cool," the Olathe South graduate said. "It was the icing on the cake for me."

Elliott finished his two years at Cowley County Community College in the spring and will be at Central Missouri this fall.

"I love his work ethic and his love of the game," Knippelmeyer said. "He worked his tail off all season to make plays in the outfield and get some big hits for us."

And what were the keys to winning the club's first Ban Johnson League championship?

"Everyone contributed to winning the championship," the manager said. "Our pitching was great, our starters

wanted the ball and went after hitters.

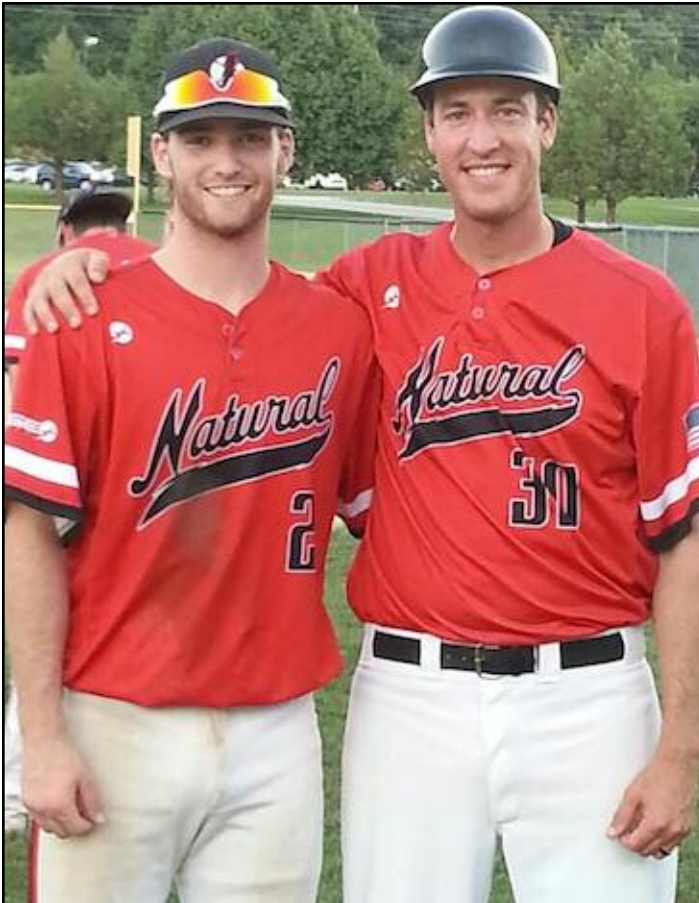
"**Alex Knight, Brandon Martinkus, Brennen Rollin, Jared Henderson and Luke Popp** all had great performances during the playoffs. **Cole Newell** did a fantastic job closing the door and sealing wins for us late in games."

The second year manager also was pleased with his position players.

"The position players did a great job of swinging the bat during the playoffs," he said. "**Matt Elliott, Zach Pirrello, Hunter Hisky, Josh Scribner, Christian Patterson, Jack Pauley and Alex Cargin** stepped up in big situations. When we played versus NKC, **Alex Kincaid** stepped up and played excellent for us."

Knippelmeyer has enjoyed his time in the league.

"I've enjoyed coaching in this league," he said. "Last year was my first year and we came up one win short of making it to the championship. We used last years experience to encourage our players to take care of business and win a championship."



Championship series MVP **Matt Elliott** (left) with second-year Natural Baseball Academy manager **Brian Knippelmeyer**. (Photo by Steve Elliott)

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	<i>Champion</i>	<i>Manager</i>			
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1966	Western Auto	Alex Nigro	1992	Boyle's	Pat Nolan
1967	Western Auto	Alex Nigro	1993	Lloyd's Pharmacy	H. Thornburgh
1968	Western Auto	Alex Nigro	1994	KC Creekers	John Kiser
1969	Feld	Bill Delich	1995	Lloyd's Pharmacy	H. Thornburgh
1970	Katz	Lew Denny	1996	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy
1971	Feld	Bill Delich	1997	BJ Raiders	Pat Nolan
1972	Guy's	Roy Brown	1998	BJ Raiders	Pat Holan
1973	Butternut	Carl Blando	1999	Milgram Mustangs	Don Motley
1974	Butternut	Carl Blando	2000	Regal Plastics	Terry Ellis
1975	Butternut	Carl Blando	2001	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy
1976	Boyle's	Pat Nolan	2002	BJ Raiders	Blake Moore
1977	Boyle's	Pat Nolan	2003	BJ Raiders	Blake Moore
1978	Boyle's	Pat Nolan	2004	BJ Raiders	Blake Moore
1979	Butternut	Bill Sharp	2005	BJ Raiders	Blake Moore
1980	Milgram	Don Motley	2006	NKC Apts.	John Strobl
1981	Butternut	Arnie Briggs	2007	KC MSBL	Matt Goldbeck
1982	Crouch Meat	Roy Tabb	2008	Milgram Mustangs	Don Motley
1983	Butternut	Arnie Briggs	2009	MSBL Royals	M. Evans
1984	Crouch Meat	Roy Tabb	2010	Build. Champions	Brad Willis
1985	Milgram	Don Motley	2011	Seaboard	Brian McCullough
1986	Milgram	Don Motley	2012	KCSC Blues	Chris Faddis
1987	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy	2013	Seaboard	Will Meier
1988	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy	2014	Milgram Mustangs	Kevin Shaw
1989	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy	2015	Natural Baseball	B.Knippelmeyer
1990	UMB Bank	Cary Lundy	2016	Only time will tell	

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More post-season tourney highlights

(continued from page 3)

Milgram Mustangs 7, BJ Raiders 4

JJ Wesley went two-for-two and **Dylan Christie** was two-for-three with a double.

BJ Raiders 12, Milgram Mustangs 1 (5)

Dylan West was one-for-two with a home run and two RBIs while **Zach Hoeflicker** was two-for-four with a double and two RBIs.

July 27

Natural Baseball 7, UMB Bank 6

Natural Baseball trailed 6-1 after three innings, but came back to win the game and advance to the championship series for the first time since 2013.

The winning run was scored in the top of the sixth on an RBI double to leftfield by **Hunter Hisky**.

Zach Pirrello was three-for-four with a double and two RBIs in the game.

BJ Raiders 3, Milgram Mustangs 2

The Raiders scored three runs in the bottom of the first inning and held on for the victory to advance to the championship series.

Zach Hoeflicker had the eventual game winning RBI in the bottom of the first on a single to right field. He was one-for-two in the game.

Championship Series

July 28

BJ Raiders 9, Natural Baseball 6

Tyler Cox and **Zach Hoeflicker** each went one-for-three with two RBIs.

July 30

Natural Baseball 3, BJ Raiders 1

Matt Elliott went two-for-three with a double and an RBI and **Alex Cargin** was two-for-two.

Luke Popp gave up just one run on six hits. He struckout six and walked two. **Cole Newell** got the save, striking out two in the seventh inning.

Natural Baseball 7, BJ Raiders 3

Matt Elliott was two-for-three; **Christian Patterson** went two-for-four with a homer and three RBIs and **Jackson Layton**, one-for-four with two RBIs.

July 31

Natural Baseball 6, BJ Raiders 0

Matt Elliott was two-for-four with a home run and three RBIs and **Jack Pauley** went two-for-three with a double and an RBI.

Alex Knight went the distance with a one-hitter in the championship game He fanned six and walked two.

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Ban Johnson award winning players (from left) **Chris Halford** (KC Life, 1980, Hustle Award), **Moe Lago** (Western Auto, 1958, MVP Award) and **Ron Zuber** (Western Auto, 1966, MVP Award) threw out ceremonial first pitches prior to game one of the Tournament Finals July 28 at Mid-America Sports Complex in western Shawnee.

BJ Hall of Famers in pro baseball

There are three Ban Johnson League Hall of Fame members involved in professional baseball.

David Cone is a New York Yankee analyst for the Yes Network; **Rick Sutcliffe** is a MLB analyst for ESPN and **Frank White** is the first base coach for the Kansas City T-Bones.



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- Crouch Meat 1981
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- Boyle's Corned Beef 1984-86
- Boyle's Corned Beef 1973-76
- KC Bandits sponsor/coach 2008-11
- Country Club/Milgram 1966-70,
Milgram Coach 1975-2011/
Asst. general manager 2012-present
- Boyle's Corned Beef 1974-79
- Milgram 1977-79
- Milgram 1957-60
- Lapetina's 1955-57
- Gateway late 1960s; KC Life manager/
coach 1970s; BJ executive director/
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- KC Life 1975-79
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