

canoe.ca

**Myanmar Cyclone** Children are vulnerable. Your help is urgently needed. **World Vision** [Donate Now](#)

Currently 12°C | Overcast  
London

# The Londoner

Classified Extra

News Sports Special Sections Arts/Life Multimedia City Living Contact Us

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2008

[SUBMIT](#) [JOIN](#) | [SIGN-IN](#)  
Community Sports

## Local Sports

Home Sports Local Sports Majors makeover: New faces, new hopes

**ELGIE BUS LINES LIMITED** **School Bus Drivers Wanted**  
LONDON 519.451.4440

Sign up for the latest, breaking news, weather, sports and more [Subscribe](#)  
sent right to your inbox!

### Majors makeover: New faces, new hopes

Posted By Sean Meyer

Posted 12 hours ago

Just call it Extreme Makeover: The London Majors Edition.



The London Majors – who began their 2008 season with an 8-3 win over the Guelph Royals – will be relying on several key returning players this season, including infielder, Kyle Piwowarczyk.

Sean Meyer Photo

Following a 2007 Intercounty Baseball League season that didn't exactly go according to plan, Roop Chanderdat decided his team needed an almost complete makeover.

The end result is a 2008 edition of the Majors which will see only a half-dozen or so players returning from a roster that finished seventh in the intercounty regular season and was swept out of the playoffs in the first round by the Brantford Red Sox.

"I want to win so I knew this team had to be revamped. There were some guys we targeted to come back, but I knew we had to improve this team," says Roop who besides being London's co-owner is also the team's general manager and field manager as well. "There were guys I knew I wanted back. I had a third baseman and a right fielder; that meant I had seven other positions to go. I knew it was going to be my busiest off-season ever, but I was also excited by the challenge."

The core of players Roop wanted back included Kyle Piwowarczyk (.373, six stolen bases, 22 RBIs), Kevin Virtue (.288, 43 total bases, 20 RBIs), Mike Mitre (10 games, two wins, 20 strikeouts), Ted Kalnins (nine games, one save, 10 strikeouts) and Josh Palmer (5-6, five wins, 40 strikeouts).

"Kyle was a second-team all-star. You know what you get from him. Kyle was worried when we moved him from second to third base, but by the end of the season he was right up there with the very best in the league," Roop says. "Josh led the way for us with five wins. He didn't get going early because of the pressure of possibly being drafted, and when he didn't, that affected him too. But down the stretch he was great with four wins. He was our most valuable pitcher. Mike is a guy who is dedicated to London and Ted is a London guy, he knows his role and is always right there, giving his all."

After a busy winter of player signings, Roop says he is happy with the team he has assembled. After three away games to open the season, London plays its first home game this Sunday, May 18, against the Stratford Nationals at Labatt Park.

Among those players Roop is most excited about adding are Toshi Sasa, an infielder-outfielder who played for the Fullerton Flyers of the Golden Baseball League in 2006, batting .271, Mike Galloway, a former member of the Toronto Blue Jays and Kansas City Royals organizations who won a homerun title in the independent Frontier League, and Canadian national junior team members Dave Narodowski and Mehdi Djebbar.

Roop is particularly happy to have signed former Stratford Nationals second-team all-star Will Richards who hit .312 with six home runs and 24 RBIs last season.

"We've never had a number one catcher who stayed with us (former catcher Chris Dennis left the Majors after signing with the Milwaukee Brewers who selected him during last summer's Major League Baseball amateur draft) and now we've added Will Richards," Roop says. "I have coached Will at the all-star game two years in a row now and he definitely fills that number one role."

Other additions include Christian Ruiz, who was listed among the top 100 players in Puerto Rico, and Mitch Delaney, who Roop says is expected to be selected within the first eight rounds of this year's amateur draft.

Advertisement

While the team has seven players returning from last season, there is one other significant returnee who actually missed all of last season.

Scott Dart, the Majors' co-owner and team president, was dealing with pancreatitis last year, but is back in good health and looking forward to not only helping run the business-side of the Majors, but watching a lot of action on the diamond as well.

"I am looking forward to seeing a lot of baseball this year. It was very frustrating last year, not being able to be here. At least I could watch the games on Rogers," Scott says. "I kept in touch a little, but it was hard to watch the games knowing I couldn't be there, couldn't be a real part of the team."

This season, however, Scott says he is looking forward to coming out to Labatt Park and seeing an exciting team on the field.

"I see the program Roop has put together and I am excited. I believe it's going to be a competitive team, I'm excited about what is going to happen," Scott says. "I think you have your elite teams, Brantford, Toronto, Barrie, and then a group right after that. We are right there. We feel we could be there in that top four. If you look at the pieces Roop has added, we could be a real good team."

Scott also says the off-field business of the Majors is also looking positive as well.

"We've had good contacts with the community, we are looking to get more groups involved. If things pan out, I think you will see that happen and more fans coming out," Scott says. "If everything goes according to plan I think we'll average around 500 fans for our regular season games. Special events like Canada Day, Father's Day, opening day, we expect they will be much bigger."

Past 7 days - FREE  
 Archive Service  
 UR London

[Submit](#)

What are these icons?  
[Camera icon] = Photo Gallery  
[Click here for the icon legend](#)

[Calendar](#)

**The Londoner**  
519-673-4239  
classifieds@thelondoner.ca

Today  
Lambeth Lawn Bowling Open House.

**Contact Us At**  
519-673-5005

Registration for 2008-2009 School Year  
May. 15, 2008  
Hyde Park Lions Club's Country Cruizin - Cruise Night

**AVERAGE \$20/HR MARKETING**

Integrative Restoration-meditation  
Lambeth Lawn Bowling Open House.  
London Fanshawe Horticultural Society Meeting

*Coming Soon!*  
**Fall/Winter Edition**  
2008 ISSUE

London Writers Society: Forensic Presentation, May 15th  
May. 16, 2008

**Contact The Sales Team today at 519.673.5005**  
**The Londoner**

Ontario Sport Riders Annual May 2-4 Ride/London Food Bank Donation!!!  
May. 17, 2008

Framing the Phoenix - A Mental Health Art Exhibition

Plant and Compost Sale  
May. 20, 2008

Try it on Everything! The revolution starts within.  
May. 21, 2008

Auditions for Amabile Choirs

While Roop shies away from predicting wins and losses, he does say with a smile he is hoping to maintain an interesting recent trend. The past four years has seen the Majors alternate between reaching the league finals and losing in the first round of the playoffs – and London is coming off a first round sweep last season.

"I don't know about wins and losses. I think we are going to be a good team though," Roop says. "I think we will be a competitive team on the field. We'll just have to see what happens."

MAJORS ON ROGERS TV

! Rogers TV will broadcast London Majors games during the 2008 Intercounty Baseball League season, Sundays at 1 p.m. from Labatt Park and the Tuesday, July 1, Canada Day doubleheader, starting at 5 p.m.

! For more information on the Majors visit [www.londonmajors.com](http://www.londonmajors.com).

Article ID# 1026220

Canoe Klix **Advertise!**

<p><a href="#">Welcome to Audi Canada</a> World car design of the year! Get your own now!</p>	<p><a href="#">Mondial de la bière</a> The brewing event of the year for beer lovers and gourmets!</p>	<p><a href="#">Golf Vacations from Canada</a> Book your dream golf vacation here! Amazing deals. Free information.</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



**Local Sports Articles:**

- [London-Western wrestlers win national gold](#)
- [Integrity, harmony and a lot of martial arts skill](#)
- [Confidence taking London gymnast to nationals](#)
- [Sports council announces 2008 Hall of Fame class](#)
- [Running to set a good example](#)
- [Street hockey tournament to Play On](#)
- [Meet a major league busy Londoner](#)

[More Local Sports »](#)



*Spoil Yourself*

**Click here for the lowest prices on thousands of products**

canoe.ca SHOPPING

Canoe Klix **Advertise!**

**Golf Vacations from Canada**  
Book your dream golf vacation here! Amazing deals. Free information.

**Play fantasy hockey**  
Over \$15,000 in prizes for playoffs Free to enter and join anytime.

**Welcome to Audi Canada**  
World car design of the year! Get your own now!

**Mondial de la bière**  
The brewing event of the year for beer lovers and gourmets!

**Golf info**  
Get info on golf. Search from 14 search engines in 1.