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Majors busy filling holes in their lineup

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By MORRIS DALLA COSTA, SUN MEDIA

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There has been no offseason for London Majors co-owner, player development guy, recruiter, scout, general manager and field manager Roop Chanderdat.

He's been busy retooling the team for this Intercounty League Baseball season. It wasn't just a major retool; he had a lot of work to do.

"It's the way the league's going," Chanderdat said. "You've got to stay on top of the recruiting, especially when you have some success promoting guys to the higher level. You do well with that, you have to replace them."

The Majors did "well with that."

Catcher Chris Dennis of Amherstburg went to the Milwaukee Brewers in the 13th round of the major league draft. He was followed by first baseman Mitch Delaney from LaSalle in the 21st round to the Chicago White Sox.

Right-handed pitcher Adam Arnold of St. Thomas went to the Braves in the 41st round. Arnold and Dennis signed immediately. Delaney didn't sign, but will play this year in the Cape Cod League.

"We may lose some other guys because of the exposure they've gotten here," Chanderdat said. "That's what I'm trying to do. I

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want to expose these players to higher leagues. We have young players interested in coming here because they know that's what I do."

They signed St. Thomas native Mike Galloway, who was in the Toronto Blue Jays and Kansas City Royals organizations before playing in the Frontier League. He can play the outfield or infield.

"Signing him was big," Chanderdat said. "He's winding down his pro career . . . He's looking to get into his career whether as a police officer or financial services. Hopefully he can get a job in and around London and we'll have him for a few years to build around him."

The Majors also signed their first Japanese player, 27-year-old infielder/outfielder Toshi (Kozo) Sasa, through a Japanese scout.

"We've sent some players to Italy and Australia in the past. It opens up avenues for our players and their players. Say a guy like (Majors pitcher) Josh Palmer, he's done baseball in school. He's a good pitcher who may not be picked up by a (major league organization). So we say here, go try in Australia or Japan. We had a few Japanese people who played in the Canadian Baseball League and they remember Labatt Park and they're excited to come here."

Chanderdat also added two pitchers he believes can fill the No. 1 and 2 spots. Londoner Adam Gautreau could only pitch two games last year because of work commitments but will be with the team all season.

Chanderdat also signed Perth, Ont., native Adam Echlin, 32, the MVP in the U.S. Senior World Series, leading Troy Jetbox to the title. The Majors lucked out when he was transferred to the St. Thomas Ford plant.

Also joining from the Ottawa area are infielder Denten Neill, a junior at the New York Institute of Technology, and Kevin Gamble, a left-handed pitcher.

"I still need a catcher, another outfielder and maybe a big bat if I can find one," Chanderdat said. "We've got a long way to go, but we made a good start."

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