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Double header

By Paul Brent

Photograph : Kevin Argue/Klixpix



When Scott Ballantyne calls it a day at the office, he heads to the ballpark for his second job: university baseball coach

entry to the World University Baseball Championships.

Team Canada placed fifth — exactly where the coaching staff expected — behind the US, Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei powerhouse teams. Still, there was victory in defeat. “We were able to stay close with the top four teams,” says Ballantyne, noting four losses were by one run. “In fact, we were winning two of them going into the eighth and lost both in extra innings.”

While most of us only pay attention to baseball around this time of year — during Major League Baseball’s climactic World Series — the game is pretty much always on the mind of Scott Ballantyne. When the workday is finished for the 28-year-old assurance manager at Ernst & Young in Kitchener, Ont., it’s a safe bet he’ll be sitting in a dugout at a ballpark somewhere in the province, in the stands scouting players or out on a recruitment trip trying to land his next power pitcher.

In addition to his full-time career as a CA, Ballantyne has an impressive second life as a baseball coach. He’s been with Wilfrid Laurier University’s men’s team for the past four years, smoothly transitioning from the mound after a five-year pitching career with Laurier as a student. He was a Roy Halladay-type fireballer early on, hurling a fastball clocked in the mid-80s. But, like the 10-year Blue Jay ace, he adjusted his game. “When I started I was a power pitcher,” says Ballantyne. “By the time I ended it, I was getting guys out with ground balls rather than trying to strike everybody out.”

The demands of coaching, and an injury, forced Ballantyne to hang up his cleats. He’s now focusing on his second season as head coach of Laurier’s team after being named Ontario University Athletics’ Coach of the Year. He is also just back from the Czech Republic, where he spent three weeks as an assistant coach with Canada’s

Résumé

- 1999** begins pitching for Wilfrid Laurier
- 2004** joins Ernst & Young (Kitchener, Ont.)
- 2005** obtains CA designation (Ont.)
- 2005** joins Laurier’s coaching staff
- 2007** becomes head coach; named coach of year