



British Baseball Data CENSUS REPORT May 13th 2022

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Introduction

This report has utilised data originally collected and put together by Rhodri Theaker and Richard Evans in 2020. The insights included are restricted to adult baseball teams only. A separate piece of work would need to be conducted in order to cover university and youth teams.

This data combines and compares the information collected in the December 2020 report with the latest baseball club and team data collected in May 2022. The data was split into separate columns on an excel spreadsheet that segmented every British Baseball adult team by club, affiliation, level & region.

The original December 2020 report should not be taken as a completely accurate reflection of either the 2020 or 2021 seasons. For example, at the time of writing the 2020 report the Taunton Muskets were planning on entering two teams into the SWWBL. In the 2021 season this was not in fact the case and the Muskets only entered the season with one team.

As a result, for consistency and clarity in this report, we will be referring directly to the numbers referenced in the December 2020 rather than amending any inaccuracies based on what the actual team and club numbers were as of May 2021.

WB-UK	Women's Baseball UK (Verified by Tracey Wilks)
BBF	British Baseball Federation (Verified by Joe O'Connell)
BBL	British Baseball League (Verified by Ian Blease)
WMBL	West Midlands Baseball League (Verified by Mike Hayward)
WBL	West Country Baseball League (Verified by Neale Raleigh)
SWWBL	South West and Wales Baseball League (Verified by Kevin Snow)
BS	Baseball Scotland (Verified by Paul Convoy)
EEBL	East of England Baseball League (Verified by Daniel Mara)

We hope this analysis can paint as accurate a picture as possible of the landscape of British baseball and identify areas for clubs, affiliations, governing bodies and regions to focus their efforts for ensuring the sustainability and growth of the sport in the country.

One positive conclusion we can make is that the number of teams and clubs across the UK is growing. It is not entirely conclusive why this has occurred. A separate piece of analysis would have to be conducted in order to make any accurate conclusions on this topic.

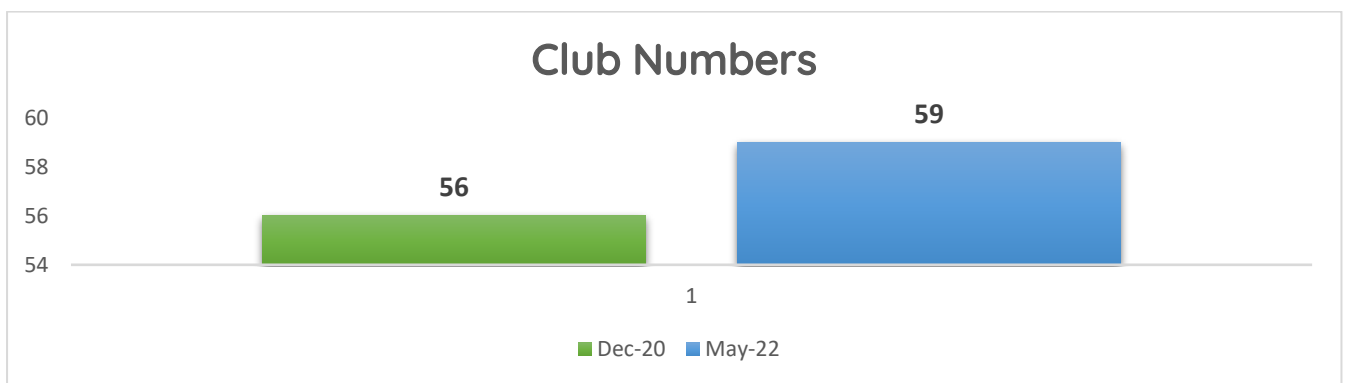


Figure 1: Number of Clubs

There are 59 clubs within British Baseball. This represents a net increase of three new clubs across the entire country over the last 17 months.

Both the Ipswich and Bedford baseball clubs have yet to materialise on the British Baseball scene. In the December 2020 report, both clubs were earmarked as developmental. As of May 2022, both have yet to submit a side into any competitive league in the country.

Cartmel Valley Baseball Club and the Nottingham Rebels Baseball Club have folded for unknown reasons.



Removed Clubs Since December 2020:

- Ipswich Baseball Club
- Bedford Muntjacs Baseball Club
- Nottingham Rebels Baseball Club
- Cartmel Valley Baseball Club

Additions as of May 2022:

- Clifton Baseball Club
- Formosa Islanders
- WB-UK Nomads
- Belles Baseball Club
- Yeovil Baseball Club
- Wragby Baseball Club
- Wellington Baseball Club



Figure 2: Number of Teams

There are currently 116 teams within British Baseball. This represents a net increase of 21 new teams across the entire country over the last seventeen months.

The introduction of the WB-UK league represents a boost to this number with 8 teams.

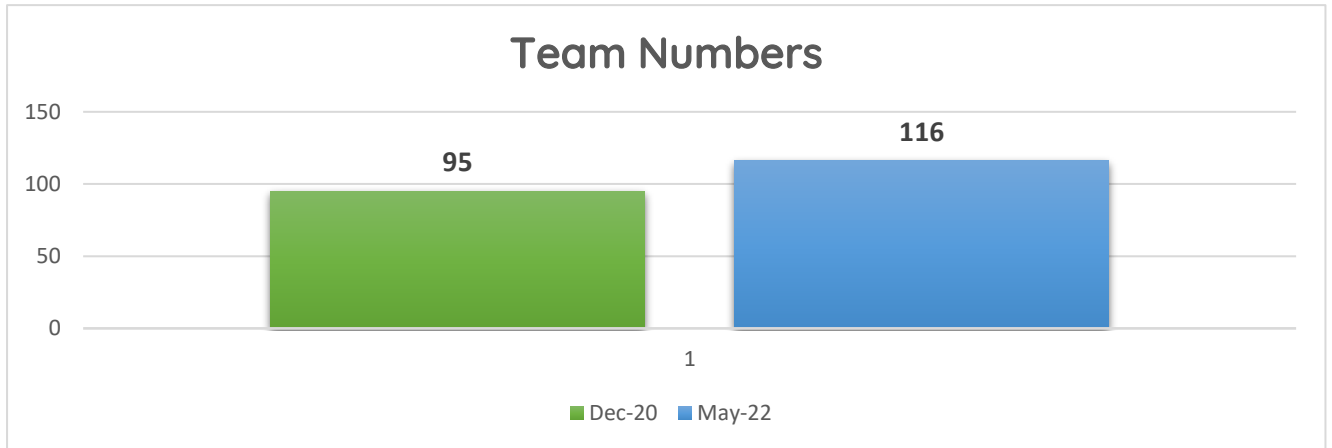




Figure 3: Teams by Region

Splitting clubs and teams down by region can also give us a better picture of the main locations of the teams within the UK.

Definitions of what constitutes a region as a means of sorting our clubs are sourced from the governments highest tier of sub-national divisions. The exception to this is London and the Surrounds which was done for ease of travel for matches.

London & Surrounds as well as the South West still have the greatest number of teams compared to the rest of the county.

N/A refers to travelling teams without a specific region to call home. The team in question here are the WB-UK Nomads.

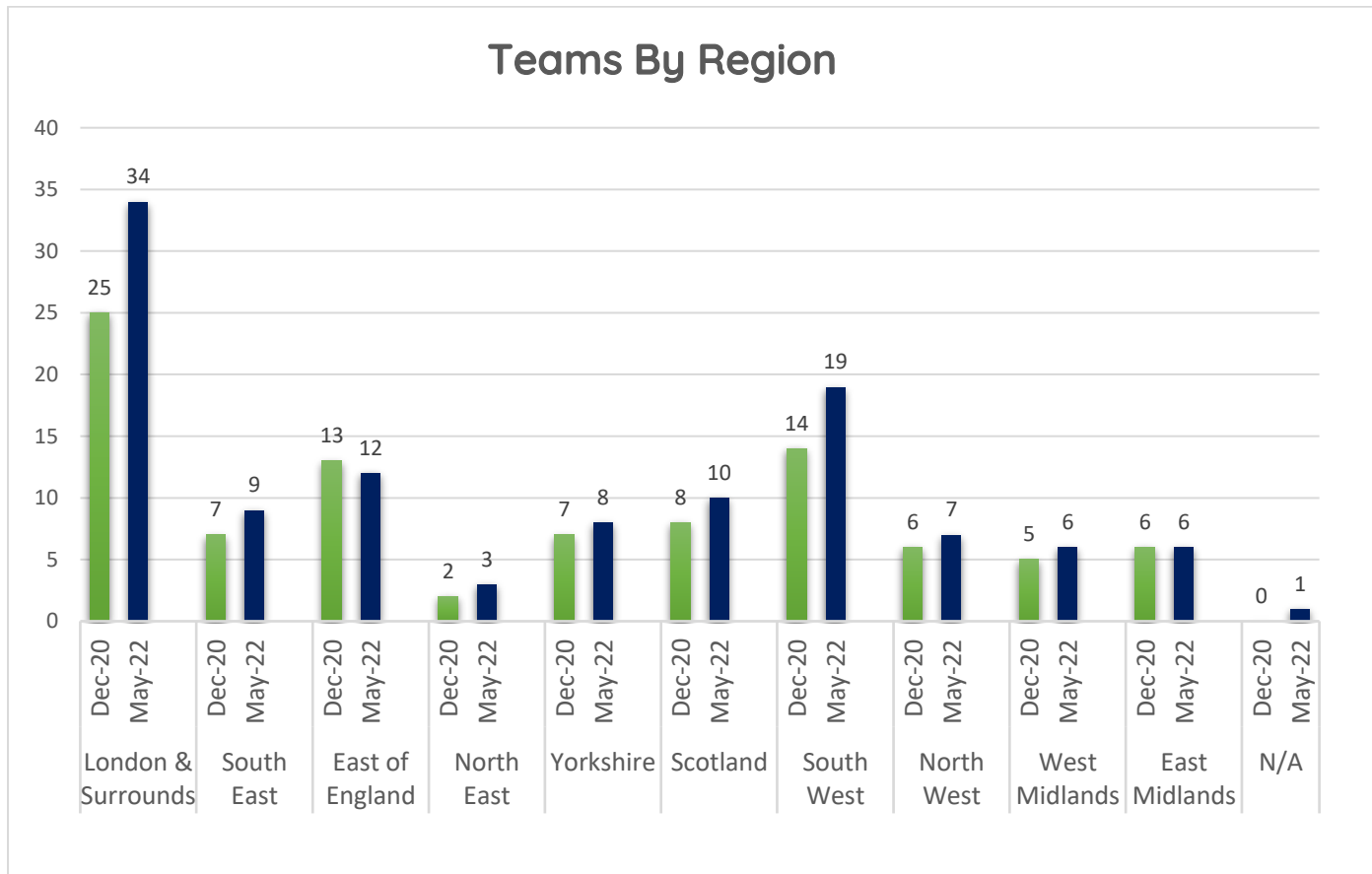




Figure 4: Team Level

Across the 116 teams within British Baseball, all leagues have increased in size a part from Triple AAA.

The elite leagues in British Baseball (Triple A & NBL) now make up 19.8% (23) of the total number of teams in the country. This is comparable to the 2020 report which showed that AAA and NBL made up 22% (21) of the number of teams in the county.

The levels, as shown below, are taken from what the affiliations would define them to be. The quality of play within these levels can vary from affiliation to affiliation as there are no acceptable mechanisms apart from the affiliation’s definitions themselves.

There appears to be not too much clear evidence to prove what constitutes a Double AA in any league when comparing it to others. The West Midlands Baseball League (WMBL), for example, have defined their level of play as Double AA. This is in contrast to the 2020 report which applied a Single A level of play to the division.

For simplicity, we have also not included the category of developmental clubs from this piece of analysis. This was a categorisation used in the 2020 report that is not continued here. Developmental is subjective and as a result it has not been included here.

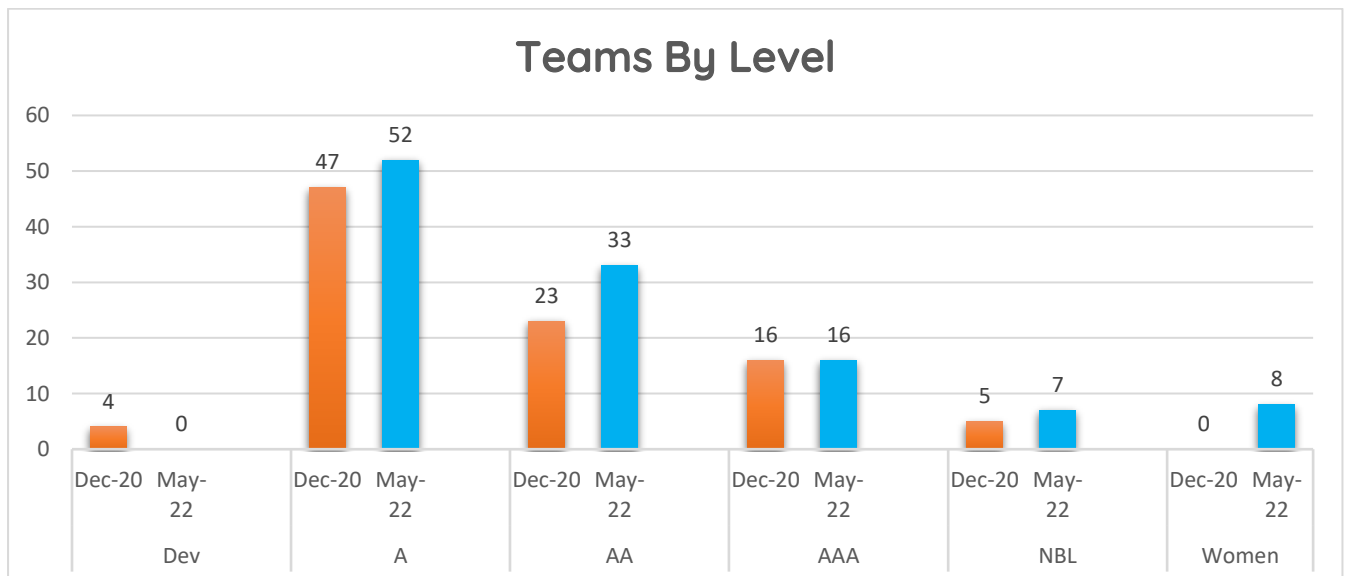




Figure 5: Team Level by Affiliation

Taking Figure 4’s analysis further, we can break down these teams by individual affiliation.

The East Midlands Baseball League, as far as we know, is no longer active as of the middle of 2021.

The team numbers for WB-UK have been included under the BBF figures. Without the women’s teams, the BBF’s total number would be reduced to **48 teams** as of May 2022.

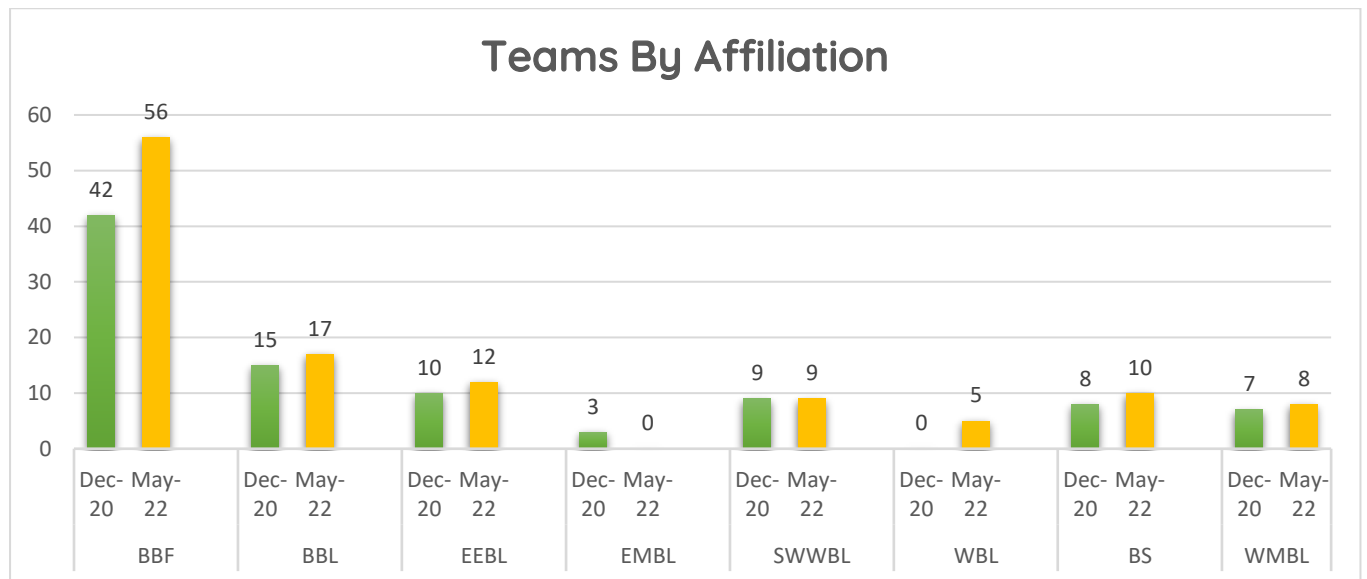




Figure 6: Total Participants

In order to calculate a total participants number across the adult baseball leagues, we will have to make an assumption on the number of average players per team.

This was the same assumption that was made in the December 2020 report.

Based on the average numbers taken from the EEBL in December 2020, the report took an average of 14 players per team roster as their benchmark.

We will also exclude the development teams from the December 2020 report in order to boost the accuracy of the sample.

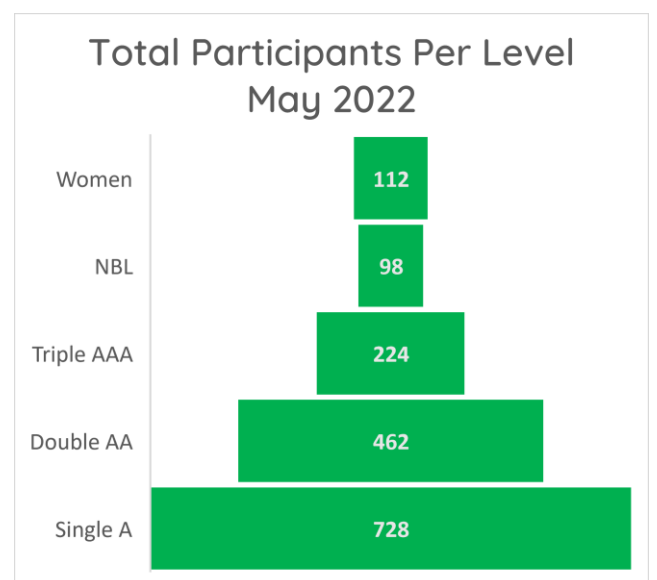
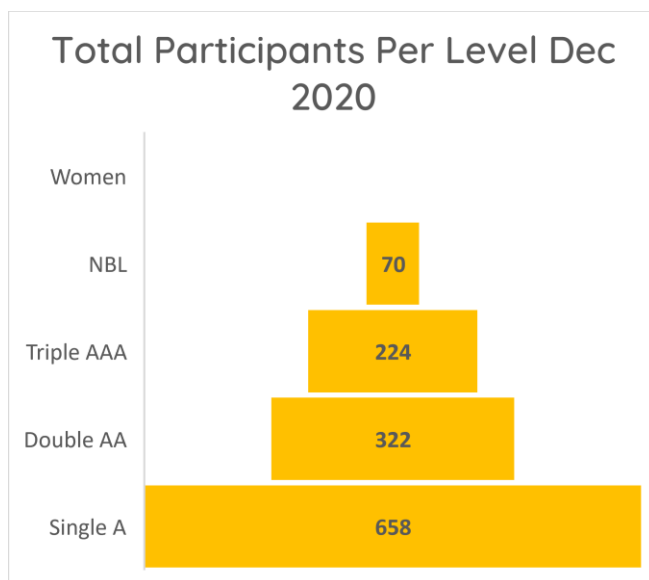
As a result, the calculation of 14 (players) x 91 (Teams) = **1274** playing participants in British baseball clubs as of December 2020.

In May, using the same equation, our number increases 14 (Players) x 116 (Teams) = **1,624** playing adult participants in British Baseball Clubs as of May 2022.

This is a net increase of **27%**.

This data also shows us that the same characteristics and demographics still exist across the sport in the UK as they did seventeen months ago. There are still nearly 10 times as many players in the Single A level than at the NBL level.

This is not surprising when compared to other sports where the elite levels contain a smaller number of players.





As a disclaimer, this method of calculating player numbers using a generic average is likely to be unreliable and is only meant to act as a guide figure.

As a second disclaimer, it is important to note that baseball playing participant numbers and participants in British baseball teams are different and should not be used comparably.

Finally, the development committee of the BBF has yet to define what characterises a British baseball playing participant. This is one for the committee to solve for the next report using, hopefully, a wealth of new data to draw a more accurate and reflective analysis from.

As part of the registration process, the BBF requires players to complete a registration form. Utilising this form to represent player numbers is however inconclusive until the end of the playing season when all the players that have played in that season have completed their registrations.

Comparing this data collected from player registrations to previous years would also create a few more challenges. In the December 2020 report a general metric was used to represent the playing participant number rather than an accurate census. As a result, comparing these two would not be a fair comparison.

Finally, as far as the BBF is aware, no complete player participant registration is collected by every league across the country. This may be a topic for the federation to communicate and research with the Independent Leagues. In the meantime, utilising the BBF figure may not create an accurate reflection of the state of playing participant outside of the BBF, especially if it is an assumptive figure used to characterise those clubs outside of the BBF and this could lead to missed crucial insights.

It is also worth noting that a selection of players playing in the women's league also play in the mixed adult leagues. When considering these numbers, please take into account that there is likely to be some duplication across these two leagues.

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