



## **NEWS**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Team Will Be Nicknamed Vaqueros & Begin Play Next May**

## **Continental Baseball League**

## **Welcomes Las Cruces to Pro Ranks**

## **Independent League Features Family Fun, Affordable Prices**

*Las Cruces, NM, October 19, 2009* – The Continental Baseball League, which offers the most affordably priced tickets among any of the professional independent leagues in the United States, is coming to Las Cruces for the 2010 season, it will be announced on Monday by CBL commissioner **Ron Baron**.

The 1 p.m. announcement will take place at the Las Cruces City Hall, in the City Council Chamber, located at 200 N. Church.

Baron, along with CBL director of operations **Bob Ibach**, a former executive with the Chicago Cubs, established the league in 2005 shortly after talks at the Winter Baseball Meetings in Dallas. The following spring and summer, the two men visited more than 40 potential sites in the Southwest and Midwest areas and had their eyes on Las Cruces but were unable to find a suitable investment group at that time.

“From the first time we visited here, we always loved the market and felt a franchise in this city would become one of our top draws,” said Baron, whose CBL offices are headquartered in Dallas. “So I am extremely pleased that this has finally come to fruition. Las Cruces is one of the fastest growing communities in the Southwest and has been rated as one of the top retirement areas in the USA.”

The Las Cruces owner is **Andrew Dunn**, a real estate executive from Beach City, TX. Dunn has a long history of operating nationally acclaimed amateur baseball programs, many of which have competed for National Baseball Congress championships in recent years and has been involved with the CBL since its inception.

The Las Cruces team will be named the Vaqueros, Dunn announced.

“I am excited to bring family friendly, affordable professional baseball to Las Cruces, where moms and dads can bring their youngsters out for a great day of entertainment at prices that truly give back value during these challenging economic times,” said Dunn. “As we all know, baseball is so traditional during the hot days of summer, and plays a big part in making lifetime memories for families. We’re honored to be playing a part in creating those memories.”

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## Page 2—Las Cruces Gets a Pro Team for 2010 Season in the Continental Baseball League

The Vaqueros will play their games at historic Apodaca Park, a facility that has a rich tradition of hosting amateur and youth baseball. Tickets for the 2010 season (60 total games, home and away plus playoffs) will be priced at \$5 and affordable season ticket and group packages will be announced in a few weeks. The Las Cruces team will be a natural rival to the CBL's Big Bend Cowboys, located in Alpine, TX. The CBL defending champion is the Alexandria (LA) Aces. Several other teams are expected to be confirmed in the forthcoming weeks, and the CBL is planning on operating a 6-team league for the 2010 season, as it did in 2009.

In the past three years, 19 CBL players have been signed to minor league teams owned by major league franchises, and several of those players are within a year or so of making it to the big leagues, something that makes Ibach especially proud. "My own son was signed to his first pro contract by an independent league team and that experience led Kevin to player development and scouting positions with the Baltimore Orioles and Florida Marlins," said Ibach, who began his career as a sports writer/columnist with the Washington Post and Baltimore Sun, and has also authored five books. "So I have seen first hand what our league and other independent leagues have offered young men who want to make baseball a career.

"During the first three seasons of the CBL, I am very proud of our level of play, along with the high degree of competition that our league has offered its fans. I've been involved in pro baseball for almost 40 years and I can assure the fans who come out to games in Las Cruces next season will really enjoy the total experience."

**Mark Johnston** of the City of Las Cruces Parks and Recreation was also instrumental in helping to bring the CBL and Dunn together. "We are looking forward to a great first season in 2010, and I am especially pleased about the emphasis that the CBL places on families and youth," noted Johnston. "Baseball plays a big part in our community and I am looking forward to being at the ballpark next summer to cheer on the Vaqueros."

Added Baron: "We take a lot of pride in our product and our pricing structure so that families can enjoy their time together in the summers watching professional baseball. I want to especially thank the city of Las Cruces for their diligence in working with Andrew and making this opportunity a reality. We look forward to seeing a strong turnout next season as the Vaqueros try to bring home a pro baseball title for their fans."

The CBL championship trophy is named after Hall of Fame pitcher **Ferguson Jenkins**. Other former major league players have been involved in the league, including **Jay Johnstone**, who is the CBL director of player relations. **Curtis Wilkerson**, **Steve Trout** and **Tom Goodwin**, all former big leaguers, have managed in the CBL in recent seasons.

For more information on the **Continental Baseball League**, visit the league's website at [www.CBLproball.com](http://www.CBLproball.com)

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