

While anecdotally later stories tell of the Flamboro/Guelph encounter of 1861 as a 27-all tie, I've never found a box score to confirm this. Also, in the 1873/74 Guelph Directory the local team (Guelph) is said to have started in 1863 - any thoughts on this (or a box score for the tie game)? I lean more to 1863 simply because the Directory account is closer to that year; on the other hand the playing of baseball all around Guelph by the late 1850s/early 60s argues for an 1861 start. BH 28Jul2020

W.r.t. the Guelph team... yes, there are different accounts of its date of inception. There are two articles, written much later than the Directory, that both cite 1861. The article from the *Mercury* goes on to say "nothing of importance seemed to have happened in 1862, but in 1863 the Maple Leafs journeyed to Hamilton, where they played a team by the same name in that city." This is almost certainly a reference to the game of Jul 29, but in 1864, not 1863 (this error may then lend less credibility to the 1861 start date).

Box scores for this 1864 game are given in the *Guelph Mercury* and the *Hamilton Weekly Times*. The only hint of any prior engagements by or between either team is found in the *Mercury* write-up: "The evenness of the game and the small scores made on both sides, rendered the match one of the most interesting that has been played in that city [Hamilton] for a long time." It doesn't help shed any light on the history of the Guelph team, and this is the earliest box score I can find of the Guelph team. I have yet to stumble across whatever resource was used in those retrospective articles that cited 1861; I lean towards 1863 as the start date, but have yet to find any references between those years to confirm either way. It is interesting that some of these sources state that teams started in 1861 in Flamboro and Woodstock as well; the earliest game accounts I've found for these are 1860 for Woodstock and 1862 for Flamboro West. The *Hamilton Times* did provide good coverage of baseball in the area starting in 1861, between notably the Hamilton, Burlington and Barton teams, but no Flamboro; this leads me to further doubt the 1861 inception date for Flamboro, and perhaps for Guelph as well. Further thoughts?

By the way, I've searched high and low for more on Alfred Feast, the purported founder of the Guelph team (and the Hamilton Maple Leafs as well?); he has been quite the elusive character, considering his influence on the game in Guelph as

well as his status as a marble dealer. His obit is, well, rather disappointing. He's not even listed in the records of the Hamilton Cemetery, which is where he is supposedly buried. If he did indeed found both the Hamilton and Guelph teams, I would think we should look into him more as a founder of note. I've hunted him high and low and am happy to share with whoever else has time on their hands. ML 28Jul2020

Feast bedevils me as well. Eves Raja claimed William Shuttleworth and Feast opposed the move to the New York rules, favouring the old Canadian (I have such commentary in Eves' written words). I'm now convinced Raja made this up to try and explain why there was so little fuss over the move. I think the move was part of the general movement across North America to adopt a common set of rules so that games could be played against other jurisdictions. Perhaps Feast wasn't as important as we might have been led to believe, particularly if the 1861 Guelph start-up, of which he was said to be the originator, is false. The only person credited with the start of baseball in Hamilton is Shuttleworth and that came in his talks at the club's annual dinners, so it was somewhat self-serving.

We appear to have almost exhausted the search of local sources, though I suspect the early *Hamilton Spectators* from the 1850s remain a final source. BH 29Jul2020