

Sun and Fun Senior Softball League Meeting Minutes

Sunlake 3:00pm

March 7, 2008

The Meeting was called to Order at 3:03pm

Roll Call: All Members of the Operating Committee were present. All communities were represented by their Park Reps with the following exception: Bob Sny substituted for Phil Massie (Royal Highlands).

The Minutes from the Meeting held on January 8, 2008 were approved as published without correction.

The Treasurer's report was approved as published with a current balance of \$982.96. The league has no outstanding debts.

Old Business

All Star Games

The response to the All Star Games was positive as it was last year. Pennbrooke (Rick Fetty) thanked Water Oak for their outstanding effort. The event received substantial coverage by the Villages Daily Sun. Several suggestions were made to enhance the event next year.

1. The make-up date should not be a Sunday.

2. Emphasis should be placed on the event being called the "Memorial All Star Games" with recognition of those former players who have died in the past 12 months. The recognition could come with a moment of silence before each game, reading of their names and/or having their names listed on the roster sheet.

The League Secretary reported that there will be an advertisement in the Del Webb Tournament program remembering those players that have died, and offered to coordinate sharing the information with the organizers of next year's All Star Games.

3. Mementos: Legacy suggested that an embroidered patch could be given out to each participant. They will investigate the cost. Bill Gardiner whose efforts helped to make the event a success circulated a team photo of his Division 5 squad that was provided to each of the players on his team.

The President (Dave Sparrow) reported that Carmen DiCocco (Spruce Creek) has requested the privilege of hosting the 3rd Annual Memorial All Star Games during the 2008-2009 season.

Waiver Forms

The Vice President (Arnie Lumbers) reported that he now has Liability Waivers from all players.

Communications

The President spoke about the importance of communication within each of our communities as a means of maintaining our strength. He indicated that the following all contribute to various problems that affect the competition within the league: (1) players and managers being unaware who their Park Rep is; (2) Park Reps that do not accurately communicate the activities of the Executive Board to the managers and players in their community; and (3) players and Park Reps who do not know and understand the rules.

New Business

Post Season Tournament

Bob Falzone (Del Webb) reported that the tournament plans are basically complete. There will be no Division 1 Tournament. In Division 2, Sunlake will not participate due to lack of players. All teams in Division 3 and 4 will participate. In Division 5, Stonecrest will not participate due to a lack of players. Bob reviewed the rules that will be used which remain the same as last year. Divisions 2 will use the Trump Stote. Divisions 3, 4 and 5 will use the Diamond Flyer.

Summer League

The President announced that the Vice President will again be in charge of the Summer League. The Secretary will assist him. Arnie requested that each community report their interest (number of teams) by no later than the April 1st Executive Board Meeting. He also invited any suggestions that would enhance the summer program.

SSUSA 2008 Rule Changes

The Secretary reported on the following rules being changed or emphasized by the SSUSA in 2008.

1. The Strike Mat
 - * Size - The strike mat will be enlarged 1" on all sides. The practical effect is that the mat will be 1" wider on each side and 2" deeper at the back. The dimensions for the rectangular mat will now be 19" wide and 34½" deep and the mat will be placed over the home plate aligned at the front end.
 - * Defense - A defensive player making a play at Home Plate will be allowed to complete the force-out play by touching any portion of the strike mat, not just Home Plate.
2. Foul Ball Rule Clarifications
 - * A fly ball caught in foul territory (Rule 6.27D) with less than 2 outs with runners on base is not a dead ball. The ball remains alive and runners on base may advance at the risk of being put out.
 - * A foul tip is not a foul ball unless the ball rises to a height above the batter's head (this is in addition to Rule 6.28, and is different from the ASA rule for the same fact pattern.)
3. Sliding at Home Plate or Scoring Line
 - * Rule 13.6(4) is amended by removal of the last sentence therein: ~~A runner may slide into the scoring plate.~~ This amendment cures the prior inconsistency with Rule 13.5. As a safety issue, sliding into the scoring plate (or scoring line) is not permitted.

Infield Fly Rule

Uniform implementation of the Infield Fly Rule remains a problem. A discussion of the proper call by umpires focused on the positioning of players, ability of players and the phrase "ordinary effort".

Teams or Communities Not Returning for the 2008-2009 Season

The President asked the EB whether there were any communities or teams that are not planning to return for the 2008-2009 season. None of the 15 Park Reps in attendance indicated that their community or any of their teams would be leaving the league. Summer Glen indicated an interest in adding a second team to be placed in Division 5.

Divisional Re-Alignment Proposals

The President provided 3 different proposals for re-alignment for the EB to consider for discussion only.

Proposal 1: Eight Teams in Divisions 1 through 4. Division 5 would consist of the remaining 6 or 7 teams. Placement of teams should be based on performance during the regular season with consideration being given to performance in the tournament.

Proposal 2: Divisions 1 and 2 would consist of 16 teams each split into 2 conferences. Communities with multiple teams will be required to provide balanced teams if they are in the same division. To reduce the number of times that teams from within the same community play each other, they would be placed in different Conferences within the same Division. Division 3 would replace the current Division 5 having the same composition as in Proposal 1.

Proposal 3: Divisions 1 consist of 20 teams split into 2 conferences. Communities with multiple teams will be required to provide balanced teams if they are in the same division. To reduce the number of times that teams from within the same community play each other, they would be placed in different Conferences within the same Division. Division 2 would consist of 10 teams. Division 3 would replace the current Division 5 having the same composition as in Proposal 1.

The Executive Board took an 11-minute break.

Discussion of Competition and Divisional Re-Alignment

Following the break, the President opened the discussion by presenting the following thoughts:

1. Having six teams in Division 1 was an error, which has generated many complaints from the communities in Division 1.
2. The health of the competition in Divisions 2-5 is good. Care must be taken to assure that what is done to resolve the Division 1 problems does not destroy the competition of the 32 teams in the other Divisions.
3. The issue is not travel. The issue is balanced competition (recognizing that there will always be winners and losers in each division.)

A lively discussion and exchange of ideas took place. The President made certain that each community had a chance to express their ideas and concerns.

On Competition:

1. It was acknowledged the Trump stote has widened the gap between teams in Division 1.
2. Bats: should the league ban all composite bats? This idea had been discussed at previous meetings as a cost savings measure.
3. Rules: should a HR limit rule be used in Divisions 1 & 2 to reduce the advantage of the power hitting teams especially in light of the average size of our fields.

On Re-Alignment:

The pros and cons of the three proposals were examined.

1. Although the price of gasoline is a consideration, travel is not the source of the problems in D1.
2. The lack of commitment to the S&F League by players who choose to play in multiple leagues on Tuesday and Friday has contributed to travel becoming an issue.
3. It was generally reaffirmed that the solution is not a split into northern and southern divisions to reduce travel.

Following the discussion, the President charged the Park Reps with coming to the April Meeting prepared to deal with the competition and alignment issues for the fall. He encouraged them to use March to consult with their players and managers.

In light of the discussion, a request was made from the floor to have a non-binding show of hands in order to understand the current sense of the Executive Board. The majority favored Option 1.

The next meeting is April 1st 2008 at 9:00am at Pennbrooke in the building on the left just after entering through the main gate. The Meeting is for the Executive Board and Operating Committee members and does not include managers.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

pm
03-09-08