



Babe Ruth League, Inc. *Southeast Region* **Baseball & Softball**



Florida * Georgia * North Carolina * South Carolina * Tennessee * Virginia

Southeast Region Annual Meeting

MINUTES

16 January 2021 ~ Saturday
web-based meeting using Zoom

Participants

John Lucas, Southeast Regional Commissioner
John Armentrout, Assistant Regional Commissioner
John DeYoung, Assistant Regional Commissioner
Cherrie Sanders, Secretary
Wayne Harwell, WNC State Commissioner
Jimmy Sanders, ENC State Commissioner
Paul Link, Virginia State Commissioner
Doug Strong, Tennessee State Commissioner
Sandra Eldridge, Florida State Commissioner
Rob Connor, National Commissioner
Jess Cusimano, Softball Commissioner
Daniela Bottoni, Babe Ruth Designated Helper (DH) for Florida and Virginia
Doug Robinson, Florida Assistant State Commissioner
Mickey Davis, ENC Assistant State Commissioner
Jimmy Davis, ENC Assistant State Commissioner

Welcome and opening comments

John Lucas called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. EST (9:05 a.m. CST) and welcomed the attendees and thanked everyone for their patience while we navigate the new waters with him.

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the October 2019 meeting were approved after a motion by Doug Strong and second by Paul Link.

Regional umpire adviser

John Armentrout announced that Doug Strong has agreed to serve as umpire advisor for the Southeast Region. The UICs are still in charge in their respective States, but can call on Doug should any problems arise.

UIC applications for 2021 Regional tournaments

John Armentrout reported that applications for UICs for Regional tournaments are coming in.

Requests from BRL video streaming partner (GoDog Sports)

Paul Link reported on GoDog Sports, the new live streaming partner for Babe Ruth. Their costs are a little high, \$2,795 per field for equipment installation as well as \$2,795 per field for annual service. Rob Connor informed everyone that the representative who sent email requests to Paul on December 26 and John DeYoung on January 13 to “to discuss adding GoDog Sports’ live-streaming solution for your athletic programs and having your affiliate become part of the BRL Network” had jumped the gun and that the launch is not quite ready to roll out. More information will be coming.

Approval of budget

John Lucas reviewed the proposed budget. Paul Link made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Seconded by Doug Strong, motion carried.

Review of Southeast Region website

John Armentrout presented an overview of the website with emphasis on the new chat room features.

Tournament Host training

As part of his review of the Southeast Region website, John Armentrout explained how the documents and videos in the website’s Training Center will be used to train host league volunteers for Southeast Regional tournaments.

Hosting Regional tournaments for 2022

John Armentrout stated that any league interested in hosting a Regional tournament in 2022 needs to apply.

Babe Ruth Southeast Region Hall of Fame Selection Committee

Wayne Harwell has been asked and has agreed to serve on the Hall of Fame Selection Committee. Committee members are John Armentrout, Wayne Harwell, and John Lucas. There is a link on the website for submission of nominations.

Silver Club

John DeYoung described the SER Silver Club web page on the Southeast Region website, which recognizes individuals who have completed 25 or more years of volunteer service with the Babe Ruth program and have been of service to one or more of the Southeast Region States. There is also a Gold Club page for those who have served for 50 or more years. There is a link on the website to an online Nomination Form. John requested input from the State Commissioners to help keep the posted information current.

Appreciation for Henry and John

John Lucas thanked Henry Sermons and John Armentrout for their years of service to the Southeast Region.

Which States in SER use the 50% play rule for tournament team eligibility?

Paul Link spoke about the 50% playing time rule. All the State Commissioners said that their States are using this rule even though it was removed from the official rules. The main reason is to keep teams from coming in at the last minute and trying to participate in the tournament trail without participating in the leagues' regular season games.

Separate Regional tournament bracket for invited teams

Paul Link also spoke about having a separate bracket for invited teams to Regional tournaments. There would be a Regional champion from the State champions and another champion from the invited teams. John Lucas will work something up and present it to the group at a later date.

Pitch count rules used for each State in the Southeast Region

Paul Link spoke about the overall fallacy of the tournament pitch count rules. The current rule, for example, allows an 8-year-old to throw more pitches and pitch in more consecutive days than a 9-year-old. The rule seems to circumvent the safety aspect behind the rule. The Commissioners (except Paul) said that they are following the tournament-age-group rule (BR rule 11.05, paragraph 4g), and not the age of the player, in assigning pitch-count limitations. The consensus was to discuss this further and present the concerns to the rules committee.

Regional softball invitational 2021

John Lucas asked for thoughts about hosting a Regional invitational softball tournament in a central location. Because there are no teams in Georgia or South Carolina, the feeling was that this concept would still involve too much travel. There was a suggestion to have Florida, ENC, WNC, and Virginia meet to hold a mini-regional. Doug Strong advised that most Tennessee softball teams are in the western part of the State and would not be willing to travel that much. There was also a feeling that this could detract from the World Series so maybe the mini-regional could be for teams not interested in travelling to the World Series. Mickey Davis, Wayne Harwell, and John Lucas will try to work out some details to present at a later date.

Rule changes for 2021

Rob Connor gave a brief overview of the rules changes for 2021. The background check program will help stabilize liability rates as well as take some pressure off the leagues when something questionable pops up in a check. Rob also said Headquarters and the Commissioners need to do a better job of getting rules surveys out to the local leagues and sending their ideas to Headquarters.

Rob is doing his best to keep the Commissioners updated every 2 weeks. If State Commissioners want to hold Zoom meetings, give the representatives at Headquarters plenty of notice and someone will be happy to sit in on the meeting. Rob's next Zoom meeting for Commissioners will be January 20 at 8:30 p.m. EST. The meeting will be recorded and a link to the recording sent out for those who cannot attend. There are some administrative changes that will be coming and notification will be made.

Daniela and Jess informed everyone to not hesitate to reach out to them with any questions or issues that may come up.

Agenda items that were deferred

John Lucas reminded everyone that the following items were not discussed today in the interest of time and will be handled electronically or during our next meeting:

- Review of 2021 Regional tournament dates and locations – John L

- UIC applications for 2021 tournaments – John A

- NUA fees – John L

- Time limits for 9s and 11s – Wayne

- Annual Regional meeting location – John L

- Annual Regional meeting attendance – John L

- Review of Southeast Region policies – John A

2020 experience with the pandemic and expectations for 2021

John DeYoung reminded everyone to continue sharing thoughts, ideas and (or) problems encountered during the pandemic. This sharing will enable everyone to benefit from what others are or are not doing.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m. EST (10:51 a.m. CST).

Respectfully submitted,

Cherrie Sanders
Secretary