



Southeast Region Babe Ruth Baseball & Softball



Southeast Region Annual Meeting MINUTES

**Friday, February 3 – Saturday, February 4, 2023
Embassy Suites
3006 Mooretown Road
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185**

Participants

John Lucas, Southeast Regional Commissioner
John Armentrout, Assistant Regional Commissioner
John DeYoung, Assistant Regional Commissioner (Friday only)
Curtis Moore, Assistant Regional Commissioner
Cherrie Sanders, Secretary
Paul Link, Virginia State Commissioner
Paul Coates, Virginia Assistant Commissioner, Softball
Doug Strong, Tennessee State Commissioner
Jimmy Sanders, ENC State Commissioner
Jimmy Davis, ENC Assistant State Commissioner
Wayne Harwell, WNC State Commissioner
Joe Lane, WNC Assistant State Commissioner
Sandra Eldridge, Florida State Commissioner
Pat Eldridge, Florida State UIC
Donny Rose, Virginia State UIC
Steven Tellefsen, President and CEO, Babe Ruth League, Inc. (Saturday only)
Rob Connor, Vice-President/Operations, Babe Ruth League, Inc. (Saturday only)
Daniela Bottoni, Acting National Softball Commissioner, Babe Ruth League, Inc. (Saturday only)

Friday, February 3, 2023

Welcome and opening comments

John Lucas welcomed attendees and made opening remarks. Attendees introduced themselves. There was discussion on future meetings; location and time of year. All suggestions will be taken into consideration.

Approval of Minutes

Curtis Moore made a motion to dispense with reading the previous minutes and accept them as posted. Seconded by John DeYoung, motion carried.

Financial statement

John Lucas reported a surplus of \$12,000, mainly owing to lack of meetings and travel during COVID. Jimmy Sanders asked about increasing the amount paid to umpires, possibly based on mileage rather than a set amount.

Umpires

The host is required to provide food and drinks during tournaments. They are asked to vary the menu. Each umpire officiating at a SE tournament will be provided a hat with the SE logo affixed. The logo on the hat should be sufficient, but John will order 60 patches to have on hand for umpires who need one on their shirt.

There was discussion on the definition of a local UIC. No umpire should be working the plate that has worked with the participating teams during regular season. Wayne Harwell suggested the UIC bring his own crew. During discussion, problems seemed to crop up with all umpires being from same State. The database for Regional umpires will be reinstated. The prospective umpire should have to indicate whether they are willing to travel and how far.

There is no balk warning in SER tournaments.

Under discussion concerning responsibilities of SER tournament representatives and UICs, it was determined the weather policy will be reemphasized with UICs and SER representatives.

Baseball and Softball Tournament Team Conduct – Manager Certification

Bullet 3 – remove unnecessary.

Bullet 5 – change Tournament Director to any tournament official.

Air horns, boom boxes, and any other artificial noisemakers are prohibited in the ball park.

Curtis Moore made a motion to accept the changes made and have them incorporated into the Tournament Team Check List. Seconded by Paul Link, motion carried.

Spectator Conduct

Heading – to be added and discussed in the pre-tournament meeting. The heading should now read, “IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT SIGNS WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION BE PROMINENTLY POSTED AT DUGOUTS, CONCESSION FACILITIES, AND PARKING LOTS AND DISCUSSED IN THE PRE-TOURNAMENT MEETING.”

Item 3 – Replace with air horns, boom boxes, and any other artificial noisemakers are prohibited in the ball park.

Tournament Policies and Contracts

The icebreaker, opening ceremony, manager meeting, and check-in should be held on the same day. Suggestion from Curtis Moore to make the icebreaker optional in Babe Ruth and mandatory in Cal Ripken.

Drawing brackets, bracket creation, player participation, and other – change Policy 20231027 to read, the State champion teams and teams from the same State will be equally divided in double-elimination (top and bottom) brackets (in double elimination, a Regional host team is not eligible for a bye – Rule 11.06, paragraph 7), and pool divisions. Curtis Moore made a motion to approve the change. Seconded by Doug Strong, motion carried.

Policy 20191001 – in double-elimination brackets requiring a play-in game, the host team will be in the play-in game.

Policy 20221025/20231026 – Add, a player who registers with a league and is placed on a team roster by the annual cutoff date established by Babe Ruth League, Inc., is eligible to participate on a tournament team provided that the player has participated in at least 50% of his or her team's games played after being placed on the team roster. Curtis Moore made a motion to accept the change. Seconded by Paul Link, motion was defeated. The policy will be rewritten and sent to Commissioners for a vote.

Policy 20231028 – Players registering with leagues located outside of their State of residence – That policy will not be adopted.

Saturday, February 4, 2023

Rules

Meeting participants were reminded of the procedure for replacing players between tournaments.

Rule 1.16 requires that players and coaches, standing or crouching, wear a mask when warming up a pitcher. The stated penalty for non-adherence to the rule only applies to a player. John Lucas will address clarity of the issue with Robert Faherty.

8U and Rookie rules update were presented to be sure that everyone is aware of the change.

Paul Link asked about using coach pitch in the Rookie Regionals and the coach running the pitching machine during the tournament. Many differing opinions were offered on coaches running the machine. Paul would like to do a pilot program in Virginia. He was given approval. The issue of coach pitch vs. machine pitch will be looked at for the future. Batting the order will also be looked at more closely.

Headquarters

Steven Tellefsen, President and CEO of Babe Ruth League, Inc. spoke to the group. Michael Solanik is now a National Commissioner at HQ. Commissioners were asked to copy Michael on emails sent to Robert. Michael is in Mexico signing a partnership agreement with the Association of Children's and Youth Leagues of the Mexican Republic AC (ALIJBRM)—approximately 18,000 kids! Daniela Bottoni is acting National Softball Commissioner and will soon be made permanent. Team participation is looking good for 2023. The SER Service Rep is Jessica LaBella. Steven spoke about the rule changes for 2023. 8-year-olds will go by a pitch count. Jewelry is permitted. The Major60 World Series has been discontinued and could possibly be replaced with another World Series in 2024. Tournament team administration fees have been increased. Charter and insurance fees have been increased. There is an annual golf outing to benefit the scholarship program. In 2022, 195 individuals failed the background check and were not allowed to participate in the Babe Ruth program. There are pending lawsuits involving sexual molestation. Two are from the 1970s because the State of New York took away the statute of limitations. One case in Florida was settled by K&K. Steven shared a breakdown of World Series income and expenses. The World Series program is not a moneymaker for the organization. Next year, the 13-15 Division will become the 13-16 Division. Tournament trail will include 13-year-olds, 14-year-olds, 13-16 year-olds, and 16-18 year-olds.

Rob Connor, Vice President/Operations, gave a presentation on SportsEngine HQ. All leagues should claim their SportsEngine site by February 21, 2023. Premium service is on a yearly fee basis. Commissioners will be given full access to the site. The chartering process remains the same.

Rob also gave a presentation about S.A.F.E. (Safety Awareness for Everyone). Some criteria have been modified. An individual is told in real time if they passed or failed the background check. If a volunteer fails the background check, the league can initiate an appeal. Background checks go back to 1980. The opening day promotion sponsored by Dick's Sporting Goods will continue this year. Banners were provided to first 350 leagues that chartered advertising the promotion. Leagues are encouraged to submit photos of opening day ceremonies. New leagues are provided a 5x5 banner designating this year as their inaugural season.

Background checks for Commissioners are being deferred until September to tie them in with the annual elections.

There were questions about the use of the NUA fees. Steven stated that there is now insurance provided with NUA registration. Headquarters will make patches available next season.

Headquarters is working with an online company to develop training for umpires.

Daniela Bottoni, Acting Softball Commissioner, made a presentation concerning updating league information and chartering. She outlined softball rule changes for 2023. There were concerns about the wording of the "last out" provision. That will be clarified. She outlined requirements to attend the invitational World Series. The only requirement is to play to completion in your

respective tournament trail. No matter where you place in the tournament trail, you will still be able to participate in the World Series. Curtis Moore suggested that the 12U and 16U softball tournament trail be the same as baseball and not function as an invitational.

The Southeast Regional softball invitational will be held in New Bern, NC, with games beginning on July 8, 2023, and concluding on July 13, 2023. John Lucas asked the Commissioners how many softball teams they may have in the 14U and 16U. Each will check. Paul Link suggested that the 14U and 16U teams play as a 16U team.

Volunteer of the Year

Steven was asked about criteria for nominees. It is up to each Region to develop their own criteria and make nominations. There will be eight volunteers from the Regions. Suggestions for criteria should be sent to John Lucas.

Miscellaneous

Small league and B tournament participation gives more kids an opportunity to play tournament ball. Small league tournaments have become very popular and afford more kids the opportunity to play in a tournament setting.

The status of Georgia and South Carolina was discussed. There is a league in Georgia with 16 teams that plans to charter in the 13-18 year-olds range.

Silver Club membership – John DeYoung is spearheading this effort. The nomination form is on the SER website. The years of volunteer service do not have to be consecutive. After John Armentrout compiles the information, it will be forwarded to Headquarters.

Uniform Pilot Program – This was discussed in the Executive Committee meeting on Thursday and the decision was made to bring it before the Board for a vote. Doug Strong made a motion to decline the opportunity to be a pilot program for the uniform policy. Seconded by Paul Link, the motion was defeated. Curtis Moore made a motion to accept the opportunity to be a pilot program for the uniform policy with changes. Seconded by Sandra Eldridge, motion carried. The changes are: low-cut socks below the calf, they may wear a collared shirt or a team jersey, all coaches must be dressed alike (if one wears shorts, all must wear shorts and vice versa). Pullover jackets are allowed.

John Lucas thanked everyone for their patience and input.

Curtis Moore made a motion to adjourn, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cherrie Sanders
Secretary