



# Baseball & Softball

Home of Babe Ruth Baseball,  
Softball and Cal Ripken Leagues



## SOUTHEAST REGION

Alabama | Florida | Georgia | E. North Carolina | W. North Carolina | South Carolina | Tennessee | Virginia

### Southeast Regional Annual Meeting

#### Plenary Session

#### MINUTES

15-16 October 2010 ~ Friday and Saturday

Grand Shores Ocean Resort

201 77th Avenue North

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29572-4242

#### Participants:

Henry Sermons	SER	Regional Commissioner
Spike Hupka	BRL	At-Large Member, Board of Directors
John Armentrout	VA/SER	Assistant State Commissioner (ASC), Training & Compliance/Assistant Regional Commissioner
Alan Bracewell	AL	District 8 Commissioner
Bob Brown	VA	President, Winchester Baseball (Sat. eve.)
Mike Cole	ENC	State Baseball Commissioner (Sat.)
Ron Duncan	SC	State Commissioner
John DeYoung	VA	ASC, Baseball Operations
Roger Giles	ETN	State Commissioner
Don Gowen	VA	ASC, Softball Operations
Phillip Larcomb	VA	District 9 Commissioner
Natalie Loudan	VA	VP of Operations, Winchester Baseball (Sat. eve.)
John Lucas	FL	State Baseball Commissioner
Dwight Mikel	AL	ASC, Softball
Patti Nagy	ENC	State Softball Commissioner
Nelda Pritchard	WTN	State Commissioner
Mike Roberts	ENC	President, Havelock Babe Ruth
David Rodriguez	FL	Assistant District 5 Commissioner
Don Rose, Sr.	VA	State Commissioner
Donny Rose, Jr.	VA/SER	Umpire Consultant, Babe Ruth Baseball
Eva Waldridge	WNC	Assistant to ASC
Wally Waldridge	WNC	ASC
Paul T. Williams	ENC	Equip./Fields, Havelock Babe Ruth

## **Friday session – October 15, 2010**

Henry Sermons called the Friday meeting session to order at 2:03 p.m. (The Saturday session was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The Hall of Fame banquet was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Saturday.)

### **Review of 2010 Southeast Region Tournaments (reports):**

Henry Sermons asked participants to review the experience of the 2010 Southeast Region tournaments, including World Series participation by Southeast Region champions.

Rookies (Henry Sermons) – host: Winterville, NC; champion: West Raleigh, ENC. 20 teams; good attendance; one minor complaint that was resolved.

9-Year-olds (Don Gowen) – host: Varina, VA; champion: New Bern, ENC. Very hot weather.

10-Year-olds (Ron Duncan) – host: North Augusta, SC; champion: Jacksonville Beach, FL. Went smoothly.

11-Year-olds (60') (Nelda Pritchard) – host: McKenzie, TN; champion: Southern Pitt, NC. Went well; wet field delay for final game.

11-Year-olds (70') (Alan Bracewell) – host: Semmes, AL; champion: Oviedo, FL. Some schedule changes for weather.

12-Year-olds (60') (John Armentrout) – host: Lakeland, FL; champion: Nassau, Bahamas. 12 teams; Nassau won the Cal Ripken 12-60 World Series in Wilson, NC.

12-Year-olds (70') (John Lucas) – host: Ocala, FL; champion: Ocala, FL. Engaged managers of previous SER tournament teams to apply their experience to tournament planning; used 215' fences with 8' additional height to be equivalent to 225' fences (maybe 225' should be minimum?); Ocala was USA champion in Cal Ripken 12-70 World Series in Aberdeen, MD.

13-Year-olds (Mike Roberts) – host: Havelock, NC; champion: Tallahassee, FL. Rain before first game caused initial delay; good tournament other than that.

14-Year-olds (Henry Sermons) – host: Demopolis, AL; champion: Tallahassee, FL. Runner-up in Babe Ruth 14 World Series.

13-15 Year-olds (Henry Sermons) – host: Matthews, NC; champion: Greenville, NC.

16-18 Year-olds (Roger Giles) – host: Lewisburg, TN; champion: Mobile, AL. played early and late because of heat (heat indexes of 115 to 120); fire in football concession stand.

8 and Under (Patti Nagy) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; champion: Creeks, FL. Comments with 16U below.

10 and Under (Patti Nagy) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; champion: Pitt County, NC. Comments with 16U below.

12 and Under (Patti Nagy) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; champion: Altamonte Springs, FL. The 12U Babe Ruth World Series was won by host Alachua, FL; other comments with 16U below.

14 and Under (Patti Nagy) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; champion: Wilson County, ENC. Comments with 16U below.

16 and Under (Patti Nagy) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; champion: Henderson/Vance, NC. Henderson/Vance won the Babe Ruth 16U World Series in Varina, VA; inadequate number volunteers in place by the host (e.g., one volunteer to cover five fields); County grounds crew left at 5 p.m.; great opening ceremonies (fireworks display over water downtown).

18 and Under (Henry Sermons) – host: Altamonte Springs, FL; tournament became non-sanctioned by the Region; one team was chartered on July 15 with no regular season games played; they won all their tournament games; this will not be allowed to happen again.

### **Review of 2010 Southeast Region Tournaments (issues encountered):**

big barrel bats

waiver for 13-year-old to play on a 12-year-old team

softball bats in baseball games

coin flip to determine State tournament representative

press box broken into and T-ball credentials book stolen

13-year-old player on a 12U team; three different fonts on the birth certificate COPY

District Commissioner (ENC) started District tournament on first day of State tournament

complaint about shorts not being allowed for coaches

complaints about State tournament brackets being changed after being first posted

non-Babe Ruth player recruited to play on tournament team for State tournament

(these and similar issues accounted for a very large cell phone bill for Henry Sermons in July and August)

### **Back to the Book in 2011**

Henry Sermons pointed out the problems that are created from instituting policies and procedures that deviate from the rule book and declared 2011 as “back to the book” year. State Commissioners should hold three meetings a year. Keep minutes and list who was present. Set meeting times early. File financial statements on time. File and adhere to geographical boundaries. Try not to change State tournament dates after they are established. Ensure that all

aspects of tournaments are covered by insurance, including umpires. Ensure that all District Commissioner positions are filled and that they are properly trained.

### **2010 “State of the State” Reports from State Commissioners:**

SC (Ron Duncan) – Good, and getting better. Ron is ensuring that State and District officials are actively doing their assigned work or being replaced. SC Babe Ruth participates in annual SC Recreation Show; excellent place to make contacts.

VA (Don Rose, Sr.) – Everything going fine. John Armentrout and Don Gowen reported on Virginia Babe Ruth booth at annual Virginia Recreation and Park Society convention in Hampton, VA. Don reported on new leagues coming in from Dixie and Little League. A waiver last year to extend the 15-year-old swing player option to 14-year-olds increased participation in the 16-18 year-old leagues. Hosted two World Series in 2010 (16U in Varina and 14s in Purcellville) and will host two more in 2011 (10s in Winchester and 14s in Glen Allen).

WNC (Wally Waldrige) – Picked up a couple of new leagues this year. Hold invitational tournaments where non-Babe Ruth teams have a positive experience and get interested in chartering with Babe Ruth.

FL (John Lucas) – Had a two-day meeting in Orlando with training for new Commissioners. Ten new leagues committed for 2011 and two others possible. Their new Web site hosted by AE Network is a big improvement to State operations. (New league in Key West is 3-hour drive from Fort Lauderdale.)

ETN (Roger Giles) – Experienced growth in first year as ETN. Four new leagues and potential for eight new leagues next year. Have not had a booth at State Recreation meeting in Kingsport because of \$600 booth fee.

ENC softball (Patti Nagy) – More leagues are coming back to the strong ENC softball program. Fifty or sixty teams in State tournaments. Lots of fan interest with live brackets on line. Liked pool play at Regional tournaments; plan to use it in State tournaments. Pre-ordered logo softballs for State tournaments were not delivered; Districts saved the day by bringing Babe Ruth softballs to State tournaments.

WTN (Nelda Pritchard) – First year as WTN and there were some growing pains. There was growth in the Cal Ripken program, including one league with over 100 teams.

AL (Dwight Mikel) – There were several new leagues in District 8. Biggest gains were in Cal Ripken, especially in Andalusia (from Little League). Also had gains from Little League softball. In addition to participation at State Parks & Rec conventions, State Babe Ruth organizations should consider working with associations of municipalities to reach smaller communities. Dwight also discussed problems with tournament schedules that had one team playing three games before another team played their first game. There was also discussion of a

situation of tournament team officials going around the Tournament Director through Headquarters to tell umpires what to call and not to call on the field.

### **2010 Statistics and Reports:**

Henry Sermons distributed information on the 2010 season from Babe Ruth League Headquarters (CDs and paper copies) to each State.

### **Southeast Region Hall of Fame:**

Henry Sermons noted that a new member will be inducted at the banquet on Saturday evening. We may be able to have a plaque on display at the North Carolina Baseball Museum next to Fleming Field in Wilson, NC. (Ron Duncan suggested that another possible location was the Ripken facility in Myrtle Beach, SC.) Henry noted that more nominations from more States should be submitted.

### **Rules Survey:**

Henry Sermons reminded all State and District Commissioners of the importance of responding to rules surveys. Some meeting participants had not received the 4 October 2010 e-mail from Headquarters with the most recent rules survey. Copies of the e-mail were distributed to participants at the Saturday morning session.

### **Recess:**

The Friday meeting session was completed at 4:47 p.m.

## **Saturday session – October 16, 2010**

Henry Sermons called the Saturday meeting session to order at 9:04 a.m.

### **Rules Survey (continued):**

Henry Sermons led a discussion of the proposed change to the rule on “Re-entry of used players (all Divisions)” on page 20 of the 2010 baseball rule book. Henry again reminded all State and District Commissioners of the importance of responding to this and all rules surveys.

### **Schedule Worksheet (and other issues) for 2011 Southeast Region Tournaments:**

Tournament schedules were discussed. The worksheet is posted on the Southeast Region web site. There will be no changes in charter and insurance fees for 2011.

For Southeast Region 12-Year-old tournaments, minimum field sizes have been established for host leagues. For 60’, a minimum of 200’ down the foul lines and 225’ to center field is

required. For 70', a minimum of 225' down the foul lines and 250' to center field is required. Thus, host leagues for these tournaments must provide two game fields.

Ensure that insurance policies cover volunteers and umpires. Check copy of policy.

The Southeast Region will probably will not order logo baseballs and softballs from Headquarters after problems encountered during the past 2 years. Participants reported on problems with Rawlings balls ordered through Anaconda.

### **New Trophy Agreement for Southeast Region with Company in Orlando, FL:**

Trophies can be ordered from this new supplier arranged by Headquarters or from Spikes.

### **Uniforms for Managers and Coaches of Cal Ripken Division Baseball Teams:**

A lively discussion was held on proposed changes.

### **New Accelerated Schedule for Southeast Region Baseball Tournaments:**

A 10-team bracket was distributed to participants showing that for 10-Year-olds and older, there will be two games played by several teams on the opening Thursday competition. This is being done in response to complaints about housing costs, etc. Only two umpires will be used for 12-Year-old and under tournaments.

The possibility of having 20-team pool play for the Southeast Region 10-Year-old tournament was discussed.

### **Headquarters Reports:**

Paper copies of State reports from Headquarters were distributed to each State Commissioner and discussed. Questions can be directed to Colleen Higgins at Headquarters on Monday.

### **Presentation on Florida Small League Tournaments Program:**

John Lucas made a PowerPoint presentation on "Small Leagues of Florida." This program enables smaller leagues (less than four teams) that are unable to compete with larger leagues to enjoy a real tournament atmosphere using regular Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth playing rules. Over 46 leagues qualify in one or more of the three divisions (10-and-under Cal Ripken, 12-and-under Cal Ripken, and 15-and-under Babe Ruth). The program started in the Districts and expanded to the State level.

### **Other Business:**

1. Don Rose suggested that the Southeast Region recommend that the fees for the National Umpires Association be cut in half. A discussion followed with general agreement that the increase in fees is pricing BRL out of business in terms of NUA membership.
2. Don Rose brought up an issue from the Virginia State fall meeting about 11-Year-old 60' tournament rosters differing from the terms of the Letter of Eligibility and differing from regular season rosters. Similar problems occurred with 11-70, 12-60, and 12-70 tournaments, highlighting some ambiguities in the rules (or lack thereof) and policy guidelines at these levels. Current policies allow a Cal Ripken league with either a 60' or 70' program to field tournament teams for the 11- and/or 12-Year-old age groups at either the 60' and/or 70' levels. Once the tournament team starts on the tournament trail, they must not change their designation.
3. John DeYoung brought up a series of issues from the Virginia State fall meeting about national Babe Ruth's computer system and some of the subtle problems that arise. One is that national accepts charter applications independent of any input from the State. In those instances where the State has reasons not to accept, the State is not able to prevent acceptance by national. Another problem is that rosters filed with national are in the Data Center data base, but there is no automatic notification to the State that the rosters have been filed. Spike Hupka explained that you can call Headquarters to "red flag" a league with problems. Henry Sermons suggested contacting Colleen Higgins with Data Center problems.
4. John Lucas asked for clarification on the Southeast Region T-ball tournament, which Florida has offered to host. There were 32 teams in the Florida State T-ball tournament in 2010.

**Recess:**

The Saturday meeting session was completed at 11:31 a.m.

**Southeast Region Babe Ruth Hall of Fame Banquet and Induction Ceremony:**

The meeting concluded with the second annual Southeast Region Babe Ruth Hall of Fame banquet and induction ceremony. Inductees for 2010 were Robert "Bob" Brown, Virginia; Steven "Spike" Hupka, Tennessee; and Henry Sermons, North Carolina. Participants honored 2009 inductee Don Rose, Sr. with a spirited rendition of "Happy Birthday"!

**Adjournment:**

The banquet and induction ceremony was completed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Prepared by John DeYoung