



Southeast Region Babe Ruth Baseball & Softball



Southeast Region Annual Meeting

Plenary Session MINUTES

**25-26 October 2013 ~ Friday and Saturday
Grand Shores Ocean Resort
201 77th Avenue North
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29572-4242**

Participants:

Henry Sermons	SER	Regional Commissioner
Rob Connor	BRL	National Commissioner
Spike Hupka	BRL	At-Large Member, Board of Directors
John Armentrout	SER	Assistant Regional Commissioner
Marty Barker	NC	Assistant State Commissioner (ASC)
Dennis Baucom	NCW	ASC, Baseball
Jim Blanton	NC	District 6 Commissioner
Paul Buckner	FL	State UIC
Randy Burgess	SC	State UIC
Frank Chiodo	GA	State Commissioner
Mike Cundiff	NCE	State Baseball UIC
Ron Duncan	SC	District 8 Commissioner
John DeYoung	VA	ASC, Baseball Operations
Pete Gibson	NCE	Executive Director, West Raleigh Baseball Assoc.
Roger Giles	TNE	State Commissioner
Don Gowen	VA	ASC, Softball Operations
Phillip Larcomb	VA	ASC, Training & Compliance
Paul Link	VA	State Commissioner
John Lucas	FL	State Commissioner
Wayne Mangum	NCE	President, South Granville Athletic Assoc.
Susan Mangum	NCE	Secretary, South Granville Athletic Assoc.
Dwight Mikel	AL	ASC, Softball
Tim Orvin	SC	State Commissioner
Eugene Reynolds	AL	State Commissioner

Donny Rose, Jr.	VA	State UIC and Southeast Region UIC
Tom Steele	NC	State Commissioner
Doug Strong	TNE	State UIC
Ken Vanderpoel	GA	State UIC
Eva Waldrige	NC	Assistant to ASC, CR
Wally Waldrige	NC	ASC, CR
Jim Wilson	AL	State Softball UIC
Shirlee Frankle	vendor	Lehigh Photo
Shannon Frankle	vendor	Lehigh Photo
Steve Powell	vendor	GameMaster

Friday sessions – October 25, 2013

Individual meetings among States.

Saturday session – October 26, 2013

Henry Sermons called the Saturday meeting session to order at 8:37 a.m. (welcome, housekeeping, introduction of attendees, and recognition of vendors)

News from Headquarters

Rob Connor reviewed rule changes for 2014 including the EP/DH rules, dropped third strike in 12-Year-old 60-foot games, softball pitching limitations, and requirement for background checks. Cost of background check through First Advantage will be \$1.75 each. All funds go to First Advantage and no funds go to Babe Ruth Leagues, Inc.

Calendar of events: It is important to get financial statements and Commissioner certification requests in to Grace Paglione as soon as possible so this can be completed before league chartering begins on Tuesday, January 6, 2014. The only rate increase will be on liability insurance. New league presidents must send contact information to Grace so that the league account can be changed to send information to the new (and not the former) league president.

Rob also reviewed improvements in the roster tool, which is now 6 years old. There will also be a change in the Add/Drop process to require a letter of approval from Headquarters.

Rob ended with an eloquent personal statement about the rewarding experience of working with Babe Ruth volunteers and the good fortune we had to work with Virginia State Commissioner Don Rose, and the sadness we all feel with the absence of Don, who passed away in January of this year.

2013 “State of the State” Reports from State Commissioners:

FL (John Lucas) – John Lucas reported that things are going well in Florida. They have eight new leagues, with a possibility of four more joining for the 2014 season. Five of these leagues are current Little League programs who have decided to make the change to our program. The Florida girls softball program is doing very well. They now have an Assistant State Commissioner in charge of softball, Doug Robinson. Doug is doing very well and Florida Softball looks like it will continue to grow under his leadership. Florida will host three Regional tournaments in baseball: 9-Year-olds in Palm Beach Gardens, 11-Year-olds 70' in Altamonte Springs, and 13-Year-olds in Sarasota. They will also be hosting the 12U Softball World Series in Alachua, the 12-Year-olds 60' Baseball World Series in Alachua and the 14-Year-olds Baseball World Series in Ocala.

TNE (Roger Giles) – TNE added three additional leagues this year. One was small, but the other two were around 850 players each. For 2014, there is the promise of two more around this same size. Roger was asked by a State Commissioner what organization the three leagues that were added this year were from. Roger said that one was from Little League and the other two were from Dixie Youth. The two coming next year are one each from Little League and Dixie Youth.

SC (Tim Orvin) – South Carolina lost a few small leagues but is trying to compensate by having the other leagues adding age groups (rookie or 13-Year-olds, etc.). The State is having discussions with two leagues with one a possibility for 2014. State officials are trying to reach out to leagues that have left Babe Ruth recently to meet and discuss returning. They are also trying to get our State to commit to hosting Regional tournaments instead of declining the opportunity. Jackson White, a former Cal Ripken participant, made it to the National Pitch, Hit and Run Finals at the Major League All Star Festivities as a 13-14 entry. He has a blog on the MLB/PHR site.

GA (Frank Chiodo) – Report attached (GA baseball status report Oct 2013.docx).

VA (Paul Link) – Paul Link reported that as interim commissioner his first-year goal was “survival.” Thanks to John DeYoung (Assistant State Commissioner/Baseball) and Don Gowen (Assistant State Commissioner/Softball), plus the hard work of all eight District Commissioners, Virginia had a very successful 2013 season. Virginia hosted two Southeast Regional tournaments (Rookies and 16-18 Year-olds) and the 13-15 Year-olds World Series that was hosted in Purcellville (in the “House that Don Rose Built”). It was certainly a fitting tribute to Don that the Host Team from Loudoun County won the World Series (the first Host Team to win the 13-15 World Series). Virginia conducted 11 umpire clinics thanks to Umpire Consultants Donny Rose, Jr. and George Burke. In total, 325 umpires were trained including 28 Junior Umpires. That number increased from 240 umpires trained in 2012. As a memorial to Don Rose, Virginia permanently named the State Sportsmanship Award at each State tournament after Don (The Don Rose Sportsmanship Award). Additionally, Virginia held three Buddy Ball Games in memory of Don's dedication to this division. Challenges to Virginia Babe Ruth include the two largest travel leagues in northern Virginia merging and now offering travel ball for players age 8 to 18. Two new Babe Ruth leagues are being considered for 2014: Tappahannock in southeastern Virginia and Front Royal in northern Virginia. Paul concluded

that our product in Virginia is second to none and that we will attract even more leagues based on this advantage.

AL Softball (Dwight Mikel) – Alabama softball continued its slow but steady growth in 2013. Two areas showing interest in 2014 are Crenshaw County in south central Alabama and Talladega County in east central Alabama. Expansion in these two areas will require a move from an open State tournament to a sub-State format.

As many in the Southeast Region know, Alabama lost a great volunteer in Duke Smith on December 30. He was serving as the Alabama State UIC. He was taken unexpectedly by a heart attack. He can't be replaced but we must move on. Jimmy Wilson has agreed to accept the position of UIC for Alabama softball. Jimmy brings over 45 years of umpire experience to the program. Alabama Babe Ruth softball is excited to have him as a part of their State's program.

AL Baseball (Eugene Reynolds) – Alabama Babe Ruth Leagues, Inc. attended the 2013 Alabama Parks and Rec meeting and will attend the 2014 meeting in Hoover, AL, in February. There was growth in Ripken, 13-15, and softball in 2013 and more growth is expected in 2014. At this date, there is the possibility of adding leagues from Dixie and Little League. Little League has decreased to 8 leagues within the State. Eugene will be attending within the next 2 weeks a meeting with the Assistant District Attorney, City Council, baseball instructor, and Tim Hudson (Atlanta Braves) to discuss bringing to the Babe Ruth program the second largest remaining Little League franchise in the State (1000+ players) located in Russell County. Alabama Babe Ruth is working with the high school coaches in Alabama to increase the numbers in the 16-18 program.

NC (Tom Steele) – NCW had a good year. League counts were about the same, but increase in tournament teams. Had lots of rain during tournament season, but got them all played. Looking forward to 2014 with fourfold the number of inquiries about joining with one new league already chartered and the new role as NC Babe Ruth. Also excited about hosting three Regional tournaments in 2014.

(Break)

North Carolina:

Henry Sermons explained the change in North Carolina from having two States (Eastern North Carolina and Western North Carolina) to having two divisions in one State (North Carolina), which would each have an entry in the tournament trail.

Puerto Rico Discussion:

Henry Sermons led a discussion of a request by Puerto Rico (which has 80 teams) to join the Babe Ruth Southeast Region. Questions arose concerning the new "State" and whether they would follow the Babe Ruth rules that other States do, how many teams and leagues would be in Puerto Rico, and what would be their District and league boundaries. After a lively discussion

(that included references to Japan, the Virgin Islands, and British Columbia), the State Commissioners agreed and **VOTED** that Puerto Rico should be offered the opportunity to join the Southeast Region.

(Lunch Break)

Pool Play Determinations - Baseball Rule Book Rule 11.05, paragraph 3 (only a reference in Softball rule book):

Spike Hupka led a discussion and practical application exercise for the determination of pool play standings when three teams are tied for second place.

Web Site Review:

John Armentrout reviewed the Southeast Region Web site features, including the tournament pages and archives.

Rookie & 8U Rules:

John Armentrout reviewed Southeast Region rules for Rookies and 8U age groups. A discussion on the use of the rules for District and State tournaments indicated that some Districts and States have used other rules. Henry Sermons agreed to drop the District and State “requirement” in lieu of a “recommendation” to use the rules, explaining that the Region will not tolerate teams making claims that “they did it this way in the District or State tournaments.”

Regional Tournaments in 2014 - New Requirements:

John Armentrout explained that start dates have been moved up from Thursday to Wednesday; report on Tuesday. Rookies, 9-Year-olds, and 11-Year-olds 70-foot will send State champions and Runners-up. For all World Series tournament trail age groups, follow the rule book.

Southeast Region Hall of Fame Tournament in 2014:

John Armentrout explained the plans for Cal Ripken 10-Year-olds and 12-Year-olds 70-foot programs; planned start date is August 7, 2014, in Wilson, NC.

Discussion of Start Date for 16-18 Year-olds Southeast Region Tournament:

Paul Link asked about the early Check-in Date for this coming year’s 16-18s Regional tournament (July 15, 2014). After discussion, the Check-in Date was changed to July 22, 2014. The tournament will start on July 23, 2014, and **MUST** end by July 28, 2014. [Note: The mandatory State Required End Date was also updated to July 16, 2014.]

Lehigh Photo Presentation:

Shannon Frankle explained the history, capabilities, and products of Lehigh Photo.

(Break)

Review of Babe Ruth Rules 0.01 through 11.00 – (Baseball Rule Book):

John Lucas reviewed numerous aspects and interpretations of Babe Ruth rules, including tournament team roster additions and replacements, minimum of four teams for chatter, sponsors (0.02-3), requirement to file team rosters before first game, scheduling 10 or more games, scorebook requirement for Southeast Region tournament credentials (Florida collects all scorebooks before issuing LOEs), geographical boundaries (most in Florida done by ZIP code as it's easier to check on rosters), allowing pitch count as a local league option, substitution rules, base running rules, suggested rules on page 13, minimum fence distances (page 16), rules on legal bats, swing player rules (page 21) and related tournament team eligibility requirements, and numerous other rules and related situations.

Rules Surveys:

Henry Sermons reminded all State and District Commissioners of the importance of responding to rules surveys. We should do much better on response rate.

(Break)

Pitching Machine Presentation by Olan Sports LLC:

Steve Powell explained the advantages of UPM 45 pitching machine; it's accurate, delivers level pitches, and can be used anywhere. He demonstrated a hand-held pitching machine with reduced injury factor (RIF) baseballs. The Web site will be up in December.

Census Report:

Henry Sermons distributed copies of the resume of chartered leagues and teams from the 2012-2013 season.

Southeast Region Hall of Fame Inductions:

Henry Sermons explained that inductees will be honored at a Southeast Regional tournament held closest to where the inductee lives.

Travel Fund for World Series-Bound Regional Teams:

Henry Sermons appointed a committee of John Lucas, John Armentrout, and Roger Giles to address this situation.

Report on Online Rosters:

Henry Sermons reported that Virginia achieved 110% and the Southeast Region average was 89% and the overall Babe Ruth League average was 81%.

Requirements to Issue a Letter of Eligibility:

Henry Sermons emphasized following the rules and ensuring that requirements are met **BEFORE** issuing the Letter of Eligibility.

Scorebooks Required (12s60, 12s70, 13-15s, 16-18s):

(This was covered earlier during the review of Babe Ruth rules.)

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Prepared by John DeYoung

Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth Status

Georgia – 2013

Leagues at beginning of 2013 = 4

Current leagues: 6

- Atlanta YMCA League, Baseball, Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth * New 2013
- Buckhead, Baseball, Cal Ripken
- Columbus, Baseball, Babe Ruth
- North Georgia Baseball, Babe Ruth
- OCEE Park Baseball and Softball
- Southwest Baseball at Clarksdale Park, Cal Ripken Baseball * New 2013

2014 New league Discussions (Currently underway):

- Druid Hills (Atlanta) Baseball Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth
- Forsythe County Parks and Rec. 5 Leagues 7 Parks, Baseball
- Big Shanty Park, Cobb County, Baseball
- Smyrna Little League, Baseball, Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth
- Hopewell Baseball, Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth
- Augusta Georgia Baseball Organization , Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth.
- Other discussions, too early for any reported progress.

New Items for 2013 applied:

- State Championships for 12U, 10U, 8U
- 3 Teams to Regional Tournaments
- State Umpire in Charge appointed
- Discussions with 2 District Commissioner possibilities (1 North / 1 South)
 - a) Will help with growth for new leagues
 - b) Helping to reestablish Web site
 - c) Will help with administration items
- Searching for an administrator for Georgia

Meetings to be held with all current and hopefully new Leagues for 2014 tournaments.