

# UCSSL MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 9, 2013

The following is a summary of our league meeting of January 19, 2013:

26 were in attendance. All teams were represented, with the exception of Creative Industries Too.

League officers for 2013 are again:

|                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Pete Osborn    | Commissioner/Treasurer      |
| Rich Grossberg | Director of Operations      |
| Norm Stumpf    | Coordinator of 60s Division |
| Paul Brody     | Coordinator of 50s Division |

The 2012 Final Financial report was distributed and discussed. We operated at a \$2287.76 deficit for the year. However, we do have an inventory of approximately \$900 worth of softballs: 16 dozen Stotes to be sold back to other counties and 7-1/2 dozen SB-12s for this season. So our balance is actually closer to \$1900, which is still an 2012 deficit of nearly \$1400 (which breaks down to around \$4.40 per player or \$73.70 per team).

Officers were mindful of this imbalance in our 2013 budgeting. We expect to remedy this in a couple of ways:

Last year we increased the sponsor's fee in the 60+ Division to make it equal to the 50+ Division sponsor fee, but we left the players fees the same as the previous year.

Sponsor fees will not increase this year except for those teams that have multiple sponsors. Because it costs us twice as much for duplicate sponsor plaques and team posters, we will require an additional \$50 per team for each "extra" sponsor they have. Sponsor letter forms will be emailed to managers in a few days.

Player fees for 2013 will increase by \$5 per player per team -- to \$75, and \$135 for those who play in both the 50+ and 60+ divisions. Registration/waiver forms were emailed in late December. Managers are reminded to check them for accuracy, legibility, and completeness when received from team members. As usual, they can be submitted at our remaining league meetings. Players should be encouraged to include their email addresses if they are interested in receiving regular league updates and announcements.

Weekly highlights and standings are also available on the NJSSA website:

<http://njseiorsoftball.com/>, where UCSSL info. is regularly updated – schedules, results, meeting minutes, photos, In Memoriam, state tournaments, etc.

Award costs may also be reduced in 2013. The banquet/awards night (Friday, October 19) was recapped. There were 71 paid attendees; 17 more than 2011. The \$5 increase did not seem to negatively impact attendance.

Managers were reminded of the purpose of league meetings:

1. To prepare for upcoming season.
2. To discuss and make changes to the way we operate -- rules and league practices.

Several additional suggestions were made that might help to reduce expenses, including the use of a single umpire in all playoff games. It was agreed that this might be considered when we reach that point in the season if finances are low.

Managers were reminded to submit all player registration materials and to meet league-mandated deadlines: initial rosters before season begins, all materials and final rosters by May 20.

A few areas in need of improvement were presented:

1. Players must wear uniform shirts at all games.
2. The international tiebreaker used in 9th inning and beyond.
3. There is no mercy rule in UCSSL playoffs.
4. The scheduling and rotation of fields during playoff series.

At our March 2012 meeting we adopted the following rule:

5.9.4. (50s division) Playoff games will be rotated among the three available fields. Field selection will be random. After considerable input from managers, players, Linden Rec. representatives and citizens, we have decided to schedule our 2013 50+ league playoffs the same as the NJSSA tournament:

A division at Memorial #2, B at Memorial #3 and C at Tremley.

Norm Stumpf's proposal for part-time players was read. This generated much discussion leading to a consensus that additional players on any team's roster would benefit the league's finances and would not give that team an unfair advantage on the field. Consensus could not be reached, however, on whether rosters should be allowed to increase through the addition of part-time players or through an expansion of players with full-time status. Managers will give this thoughtful consideration prior to our February meeting.

Other ideas were discussed and tabled until our February or March meeting. Those items that impact our schedule and the number of games played must be decided in February, league rules need not be considered until March.

Joe Hrubash was present as the new manager of Sun Tavern, as was Don Miller from Family Investors (formerly LLG/Frenchy's). Molly Maguire's will now be sponsored by Cranford VFW, and Linda's #1/Linwood Inn will be sponsored by Linwood Inn only.

Despite disappointing response to extensive advertising last year, we will again advertise to recruit new players in 2013.

A "UCSSL Seeks Players" advertisement will again be sent to the Westfield Leader – Scotch Plains Times, Suburban News, Patch.com, fitness centers, diners, etc. Rich Grossberg has prepared a one page flyer that will be emailed to managers that can be posted in suitable public places.

Managers seeking new players should let the commissioner know so he can direct inquiries to those teams most in need.

Managers were again requested to have someone on their team email results and highlights of games in a timely manner, and to be careful in presenting accurate game scores. There will be a Friday night deadline this year for submitting highlights to division coordinators.

SB-12 softballs need to be ordered soon to be available at the start of the season. Teams in need of equipment need to let Gary Wiese know. Completed shirt order forms are due no later than our March league meeting.

Linden fields were used extensively last season, including all games played in the 60+ Division. Ed Kushner was acknowledged and thanked for his assistance in providing us with those fields. Fields for 2013 will likely be similar to last season although we may need an additional field for the 60s this year.

The three division 50+ format and the 60+ format with an A and a B/C division seemed to work well last year. It is our goal to add an 8th 60+ team this year.

An additional goal is to get the 65+ division off the ground in 2013. Although no fees are listed, a statement to gauge interest was inserted (item #4) on this year's registration form. The expectation is that our only expenses will be to purchase softballs after we "use up" the white SB-12 balls that were left over when the manufacturers forced us to the optic yellow balls a few years ago.

In the 50+ Division, by league rule: Contact Lens & Vision returns to the A, Top Line Appliance and Cranford VFW move down/up to the B, and AJ Jersey moves to the C Division.

| <b>A Division</b> | <b>B Division</b>  | <b>C Division</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Roselle Legion    | Top Line Appliance | AJ Jersey         |
| Renda Roads       | Awnings Galore     | Linda's II        |
| Family Investors  | Linwood Inn        | D&K               |
| Contact Lens      | Cranford VFW       | Sun Tavern        |

The 2013 season will begin on Monday, April 15. A 24 game 50+ schedule would end on Tuesday July 9, whereas 24 games in the 60s would end on Wednesday July 10 (or Wednesday July 24 if we again have 7 teams and schedule 24 games in 28 game days). It was suggested that we might want to establish a date beyond which no regular season games would be rescheduled. This will be considered after we know exactly how many teams we have and what our schedule will be.

The need to increase participation in the 50+ and 60+ state tournaments was discussed at the December NJSSA meeting. One option is to hold the tournaments earlier in season. Dates will probably be selected at the NJSSA meeting later this month. Ed Kushner cautioned that NJSSA representatives will need to clear the dates with him and submit requests in a timely manner.

Information for the NJSSA newsletter is due by May 1. In each of the past three years UCSSL has highlighted noteworthy non-softball accomplishments of a league player (Bill Reichle 2010, Gordon LeMatty 2011, Bill Dugan 2012). Suggestions for this year would be appreciated. The 2013 newsletter may include advertising (\$50?) to help cover costs -- team sponsors, player's businesses, etc. If interested, please let us know.

Other opportunities for our older players were presented:

Retired leagues in Morris/Union and in Middlesex play Tuesday AM doubleheaders, A 70+ league in Middlesex plays Wednesday AM doubleheaders, and Morris County is trying to start a 69+ league (Wednesdays?).

Remaining UCSSL 2013 meetings (each is a Wednesday):

February 6 -- Deadline for determining number of teams, schedules.

March 6 -- Discussion and possible revision of rules. Please review current league rules and begin preparing wording for proposals for change. Shirt orders due. Field selection if possible.

April 3 -- Distribution of balls, rule books, scorebooks, umpire fee checks.