

UCSSL MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

The following is a summary of the league meeting of January 14, 2015:

31 were in attendance, with 19 teams represented (Creative Too was not).

League officers for 2015 are again:

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

Danny Nigro was introduced as the new team managers of Liberty Lighting Group.

The final 2014 financial report was distributed and reviewed. We had a \$2925.70 surplus for the year, due in part to a new supplier for softballs (and the final sell-off of Trump Stote balls), fewer playoff games (most series were 2 game sweeps), as well as income from increased attendance at our year end banquet.

Player and Sponsor fees are unchanged this year. Player fees for 2015 remain at \$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 should 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. Sponsor fees are again \$500 per team.

Managers were requested to carefully review and understand some important UCSSL rules so that potential conflicts and disagreements may be avoided. These include:

- 4.10. PLAYER TRANSFER FROM TEAM TO TEAM
- 4.2. OOC player limits
- 4.3. GRANDFATHERED PLAYERS
- 10. EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

Managers were reminded that the League entry fee and team roster (preliminary) must be submitted before the fourth league meeting that is held in April. Final rosters are due by May 15th of each year. No changes can be made after that date unless deemed necessary by league officials.

Sponsor letter forms will be emailed to managers in the next few days. Sponsor fees are due at the beginning of the season.

A proposal was made that players who have participated in the league for 25 consecutive years or more be granted an exemption from paying their league fee. Discussion revolved around the number of affected players this year and in future years, as well as granting a partial fee reduction including (but not limited to) payment of the mandatory NJSSA membership fee of \$5. The proposal was tabled, awaiting an attempt by the commissioner to compile an accurate number of players that would be impacted this year as well as a projection for future years.

The annual league banquet/awards night, held Friday, October 24, was reviewed. There were 103 paid attendees, our most ever, which nearly covered the cost of the meal. Attendance was 25 more than our previous high in 2010.

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

There is an ongoing need for additional team leaders/contacts for some teams!! – help with rosters, and results/highlights submissions to meet our Friday night deadline. Most teams do a great job with these responsibilities, others need improvement.

Managers agreed to utilize SB-12 softballs again this season.

Shirt order forms were distributed to managers. These are to be returned by the March league meeting. Teams in need of equipment should also let Gary Wiese know.

Fields are likely to be the same as last year but Rich Grossberg will seek additional fields at Rahway River Park and other county venues.

Based on last years standings, the divisional lineup for 2015 in the 60+ Division will be:

| <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Creative I | DeBellis Assoc. |
| Awnings II | Office |
| Kilkenny House | Creative Too |
| Robin's Nest | Associated Auto |

An alternate arrangement, presented at the meeting, will be discussed at a 60+ managers meeting to be held after the full league meeting in February. Managers will also resolve the possibility of employing the unbalanced schedule of 2014 again, as well as deciding if we will continue to use the "level the playing field rule" involving a choice of 5 runs or an extra fielder when stronger teams play lesser opponents.

Because this attempt to "level the playing field" seemed to work so well in the 60+ Division last season, officers recommend that the 50+ Division consider adopting such a rule for games in which their top teams play the bottom teams (top 4 vs. bottom 4, most likely) this season.

In the 50+ Division, by league rule Awnings Galore would be moving up to the A Division, with Top Line Appliance moving down to the B Division in our current two division alignment.

At their annual year-end Officers meeting in December, a comparative review of 2014 team vs. team results was undertaken. Clear evidence of three tiers of competition were apparent. A presentation of that data was again made during the meeting. Discussion ensued, after which managers voted nearly unanimously to schedule three 4 team divisions in 2015. Each team will play 5 games vs. each team in their own division and one game against each other league team, for a 23 game schedule.

Based on last year's standings the divisions for 2015 will be:

| <u>A</u> | - <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Deegan Roofing | Linwood Inn | D & K |
| Roselle Legion | Awnings Galore | Rosie's Wine Bar |
| Contact Lens | Top Line Appliance | A J Jersey |
| LLG | Cranford VFW | Linda #2 |

The season will begin on Monday, April 20. Managers voted to leave Thursday July 2 as an open date prior to the long July 4 weekend. As a result, Game 23 of the 50s will be scheduled on Thursday, July 9. Game 24 of the 60s will be Monday, July 13.

We continue to attempt to make a 65+ Division a reality. Paul Brody asked managers to contact their potential players that do not use email to determine if there are additional players interested in playing Thursday mornings.

The first NJSSA winter meeting will be this Saturday morning. The #1 topic at these meetings is always the state tournaments, specifically the need to increase participation in 50+ and 60+ tournaments and make the competition fair and evenly matched.

In 2014, on a trial basis, league teams consisting of a few players from other teams were allowed to be formed. This helped many of our UCSSL teams to participate. UCSSL teams did very well.

60+: 5 of the 9 teams in tourney were from UCSSL, including both state champions (Creative 1 and Robin's Nest).

50+: 3 UCSSL teams participated, including A champions Deegan Roofing, B champions Roselle American Legion, and C runners-up Rosie's Wine Bar.

It was suggested that making it more well known that the cost of participation is already covered by NJSSA player fees might increase participation in future tournaments.

Information for the NJSSA newsletter due by May 1. It is hoped that we might again have an article highlighting some unusual accomplishment of a league player -- as we did in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Remaining 2015 meetings (Wednesdays):

February 4 -- Deadline for determining number of teams, schedules. At the conclusion of the joint meeting, we will divide into separate 50+ and 60+ groups to determine which accommodations (extra fielder or extra runs), if any, will be used this year. 60+ managers will also make a final decision on a balanced or unbalanced schedule.

March 4 -- 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 1 -- Distribution of balls, rule books, scorebooks, umpire checks.