

# UCSSL MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 23, 2019

The following is a summary of our league meeting of January 23, 2019

??? were in attendance, with 21 of 23 teams represented (Contact Lens & Vision and Creative Too were not).

League officers for 2019 are again:

Pete Osborn	Commissioner/Treasurer
Rich Grossberg	Director of Operations
Paul Brody	Commissioner of 50s Division
Marty Marks	Coordinator of 60s Division
John Malone	Advisor

The final treasurer's report for 2018 was presented - there was a \$1284.10 surplus for the year, nearly the same as the previous year's deficit.

Increasing player fees and/or sponsor fees in 2019 was discussed by officers at their annual league meeting in December. It was decided that, rather than increasing fees, the following actions would be taken in an effort to reduce expenditures instead:

- \* Advise managers to purchase only that number of shirts that are needed for players that don't already have two or more of the same team color. The number of team hats ordered can also be greatly reduced.
- \* It is likely that we will raise the cost of admission to the annual league banquet to \$20.
- \* Forfeitures were down in 2018 (from 15 in 2017) despite the unusually poor weather which often came late in the afternoon on game day. We will continue the new requirement that each team needs to put up \$45 in addition to their sponsor's fee - to be used to pay the umpire in the event of an unexpected forfeit. Only two games were forfeited at the field, the others were announced prior to the 3 PM "deadline."

Player fees will remain at \$80 (\$145 for playing in both 50+ and 60+) and sponsor fees will remain at \$525 in 2019.

Sponsor letters were emailed to managers in December. Sponsor fees are due by the beginning of the season.

Registration/waiver forms were emailed in mid December. Please have players return them to team manager so you can check them for accuracy, legibility, and completeness, as well as updating team roster information where there are changes in address, etc. 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.

Last year we instituted several new initiatives that proved beneficial during the 2018 season and will continue during the upcoming season:

1. The \$45 forfeit fee reduced the number and cost of forfeits; more importantly, it reduced the number of players driving to fields unnecessarily.
2. Because it is extremely difficult for managers to determine whether participants on opposing teams are on that team's official final roster, final rosters will again be disseminated by email immediately after the May 15 deadline for completing player registrations. No player will appear on a team's official roster unless his completed registration form and full league payment have been received by that date.
3. A deadline for completion of regular season makeups that gives us the likelihood of completing the playoffs prior to Labor Day was set for Thursday, August 9, 2018. Without this initiative, the idea of scheduling makeups would have been far more chaotic; far worse, we may not have been able to complete all of our playoff series before we no longer had lighted fields. We had 26 days during which at least one game was postponed due to wet conditions. Thank you all for your cooperation in working with us to schedule as many games as possible in as balanced a way as we could under the circumstances.

Managers were reminded that any player who expects to transfer from one team to another league team this season must inform both the league commissioner and their 2018 team manager by January 31.

The annual league banquet/awards night, held Friday, October 12, was reviewed. There were 67 paid attendees.

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

Weekly highlights and standings, league schedules and rules, and other UCSSL (as well as other county's) information is available on the NJSSA website: <http://njsseniorsoftball.com/>, which is updated regularly.

Team leaders are also encouraged to follow the league at the UCSSL Facebook page, Union County Senior Softball League, and to provide photos and short videos from league games. Marty can be contacted at [MartinMarks62@msn.com](mailto:MartinMarks62@msn.com) with submissions.

Shirt order forms are to be returned by the March league meeting.

Bat testing will be done at fields as was done last year. Bats with 2018 stickers can be used until a cutoff date TBD in late April or very early May, after testing has taken place at the field for every team.

Officers emphasize that rules (whether they be USA/ASA or UCSSL) are rules, and they should not and cannot be waived by managers and/or umpires. This would include, but not be limited to, wearing uniform shirts, start/forfeit times of games, late arriving player rule, rabbit rule, etc.

A goal for 2019 will be to coordinate 50's and 60's rules as much as possible. This would include, but not be limited to, the 6-run rule for the first inning.

Rule 7.4 needs clarification and rewording emphasizing that each fair ball hit over the fence counts toward the total of 3 "home runs."

Our forfeit rules (5.1 and 4.4.2) need clarification to emphasize that once a team declares that they are unable to field a team their game is considered to be a forfeit regardless of the status (weather or otherwise) of any other league games that day.

Teams applying for a hardship waiver to add a player after the May final roster deadline will have to identify which player or players are being removed from their roster (due to injury, illness, work schedule, ...) so that their roster falls below the threshold required to qualify to add a player. The minimum roster size may need to be revised based on this requirement.

Officers recommend using separate bases at first base, rather than the current attached bases, as a safety measure to reduce collisions. Due to the added expense, this will be phased in for the 60+ Division in 2019, with the 50+ Division following in 2020. Bases that have been replaced due to excessive wear can be used as the runner's base as a savings measure.

We need to re-emphasize Rule 3.3 which requires that league/team shirts must be worn. This must be enforced for each team by that team's manager. Our umpire assigner will be reminded so that league umpires will know this is a forfeitable offense.

We agreed to form a committee that will establish uniform ground rules for each of our fields.

## **Fields**

Prior to last season, discussion of how to get more time on better fields led officers to conclude that it would be ideal if we were able to schedule a second, later time slot for two different teams (not a doubleheader) when Linden lighted fields were available to us. A second time slot was also used to schedule late season makeup doubleheaders that enabled us to better balance the reduced number of regular season games we were able to play before beginning the playoffs.

7:45 games were played on Linden fields 38 times -- 13 regular season games in 60s, and 22 regular season games plus 3 playoff games in 50s.

As a way to get more time on better fields, Rich is pursuing the goal of adding Rahway River #1 as a daily option in the 50s as well as the 60s.

A suggestion was made for an earnest approach to county officials on field maintenance and timely updates on play-ability web site.

The 2019 UCSSL season begins on Monday, April 15.

## Teams/Divisions in 2019

By league rule, the following would be the alignment of teams in the 50+ Division:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
Deegan Roofing	Linwood Inn	Advanced Financial *
JoeMax Telecom	Contact Lens	A J Jersey
Phenomenal Boyz	Riverside Inn	Bad Brains
Roselle Legion	Cranford VFW	Conair
	Garwood Metal	
	Linda #2 *	

\* Advanced Financial confirmed they do not want to play in the C Division, Linda #2 is undecided at this time. A final determination will be made at the February meeting.

By league rule, the following would be the alignment of teams in the 60+ Division:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
Liberty Lighting	Awnings Galore **
American Legion	Avengers
Kilkenny House	DeBellis Associates
Yogi's Boys	Creative Too
Cranford VFW 2 **	

\*\* Cranford VFW 2 and Awnings Galore agreed to remain in their previous divisions for this season (Awnings in A, VFW2 in B).

Remaining 2019 meetings (Wednesdays):

February 13 -- Deadline for determining which teams are in each division. Preliminary rules discussion.

March 13 -- Discussion and possible revision of rules. Please review current league rules and begin preparing wording for proposals for change. Shirt orders due. Field selection.

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