

UCSSL MEETING MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 5, 2020

The following is a summary of our league meeting:

33 were in attendance with all 24 teams represented.

Managers were reminded to turn in any completed registration forms and sponsorship fees as well as to submit the \$50 "forfeit fee" by the April league meeting. A tentative roster for each team is due soon so it can be compared to registrations already received, checked for OOC players, etc.

The former Yogi's Boys is now sponsored by Renda Roads.

Gary Wiese reminded managers that completed shirt order forms are due no later than the March league meeting. Equipment requests are also due then, including new bases as we will be using a separate (white) base at 1B in the 50+ Division this year as recommended by NJSSA and approved by officers in December 2018. Old, slightly worn bases can be saved for this purpose. The double bags previously used at first base can be returned to the league for the purpose of donating them to a league that can use them.

After a discussion regarding the possibility of teams purchasing their own shirts independent of the league, and the financial ramifications that would entail to the league, to its teams and to individual players, in a nearly unanimous vote of managers it was decided to maintain our longtime practice of uniform ordering. Managers were again reminded that, to be worn in league games, shirts purchased in a past season must be of essentially the same color and unless the team has switched sponsors in 2020 must display the current sponsor's name.

Last month, it was announced that the addition of a 15th team would require a new divisional structure and a new schedule in the 50+ Division.

During the past two seasons we have had an abundance of postponed games. The 50+ Division had 8 game days completely rained out in 2018, and 8 more (plus 4 partial rainout days) in 2019. The 60+ Division had complete rainouts on 8 days in 2018 and 9 days in 2019. These postponements could not all be rescheduled, resulting in 50+ teams completing between 19 and 22 games in 2018, between 19 and 21 last year. 60+ teams were only able to play between 18 and 20 games last season, and 20 to 22 the previous year. In addition to the scheduling headaches created by these postponements, as hard as we tried to equitably reschedule an abbreviated makeup schedule some teams played more games than others and some teams wound up playing a schedule somewhat more difficult than other teams in the division despite our best efforts to make things as equal as possible.

Regarding the placement of teams, UCSSL Rule 1.2 states " A 50's team will enter the league as an 'A' team unless the league grants a waiver." Some have suggested that the new team, Suspenders, should be automatically placed in the A Division this year. In the past 13 years, we have had 3 new teams enter our 50+ Division. Two of them were granted waivers at the discretion of officers based on what was believed best for competitive balance:

2018	Phenomenal Boyz	A record 12-8	(3rd of 4 A teams)
2015	Waxtel Constr.	B record 5-19	(5th of 5 B teams)
2012	AJ Jersey	B record 1-23	(4th of 4 B teams)

The 50+ Division regular season schedule consisting of 20 games per team in a 4-7-4 alignment was discussed and overwhelmingly approved by managers. B teams will play each A and each C team one time, and play the teams in their own division twice. A and C teams will not face each other, and will play each team in their own division 4 times plus one mid-season bumper game.

A potential new, tenth 60+ team is still planning with hopes of becoming viable; they have been allowed an additional two weeks to do so. If this is not possible, we will again have a nine-team league.

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

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
Liberty Lighting	Awnings Galore
American Legion	Avengers
Renda Roads	DeBellis Associates
Kenilworth VFW	Creative Too
Cranford VFW 2	(new "Yogi's Boys ??")

Among other concerns, it is unreasonable to expect a schedule of 24 games over 27 game days in the 60+ Division, and perhaps unfair to have the 60+ teams play several more games than do 50+ teams. As a consequence, a new 60+ schedule will be developed consisting of 20 games per team, as in the 50s. A teams will play each other 4 times, B teams will play each other 5 times, and each A team will play each B team once.

A plea by Cranford VFW2 to again remain in the B Division was roundly defeated after details of their record over the past two seasons was presented.

Marty Marks and Pete Osborn met last week with Union County Parks & Recreation Director Ron Zuber and Park Maintenance Director Mike Brennan. We were joined later by Park Reservation Supervisor Jeanne Strahan. Our goal was to simplify the existing process of requesting fields, learning what is available, selecting fields, then getting permits. Our hope was that there might be one or more fields that could be dedicated to UCSSL on game nights so that we would have use of those fields all season long, including for makeups without reapplying and going through the permitting process multiple times.

We learned that some heretofore unknown fields might be available: Liberty Ave. Park and Conant Park in Hillside, and (occasionally) Black Brook Park in Kenilworth, Wheeler Park in Linden and Union County Vo-Tech in Scotch Plains.

We also believe we have secured Rahway River Park #1 four nights a week all season long.

This would give us the 4 fields we need in the 60+ Division on Mondays and Wednesdays -- Tremley, Memorial #2 and #3, Rahway River #1. (If the tenth team joins, we will need a fifth field.)

The same four fields would also be 4 of the 7 we need for the 50+ Division games, so we need 3 more on Tuesdays and Thursdays, one of which we expect will continue to be Jerseyland on Thursdays. (Jerseyland has also been requested on Tuesdays.)

The document emailed to managers yesterday is a summary of fields that are, or may be, available to us to complete our scheduling needs. Officers would like to give both Black Brook and Vo-Tech a try on a limited basis to learn firsthand if they are fields we should pursue in the future.

Last season, 4 volunteers met on two separate days to set ground rules at each of our fields. We will need to do the same for any fields we did not visit last year that are included in this year's schedule.

Preseason testing for new bats (only) will again be held. Bats certified for 2019 can be used in this season's games until each team in the (50+ or 60+) Division has been tested at the field.

We follow USA/ASA bat certification rules. There have been no changes to the USA list since March 22 of 2017.

70+ players are allowed the option of using "senior bats," as determined by SSUSA.

There is an updated senior bat listing.

Links to these lists will be forwarded to managers in an email.

The new format in the 50+ Division will require a new playoff format. That, and any proposals for new or changed rules, will be discussed and voted on during the March meeting.

UCSSL annual awards banquet will be held on Friday, October 9.

Let the commissioner know if you need players.

Remaining UCSSL 2020 meetings (each is a Wednesday):

March 11 -- Discussion and possible revision of rules. Please review current league rules and begin preparing wording for proposals for change. Email the commissioner with any proposals for change in advance of the March meeting. Shirt orders due.

April 1 -- Sponsor fees and \$50 forfeit fees are due. Field selection. Distribution of balls, rule books, scorebooks, umpire fee checks.