

# UCSSL MEETING MINUTES FOR APRIL 7, 2021

The following is a summary of our league meeting of April 7, 2021

The meeting was held outdoors at Tremley Field with all 25 teams represented.

Managers were reminded that a registration/waiver form must be signed prior to a player engaging in any team/league activity, and all registration materials must be received before a player participates in league games.

Managers were also reminded that "preliminary" rosters are due by league rule "before the scheduling meeting that is held in early April." Because the season begins in less than 2 weeks, managers will have until Monday April 12 to submit their initial roster, using the NJSSA form in either WORD or Excel format. This is one week prior to our season openers.

These are needed so I can inform you as to what registration materials have not been received, and so a thorough check can be made on things such as too many OOC players on rosters, so I can create a list of 70+ players eligible to use senior bats,....

Final rosters are due on or before May 15, following four full weeks of league play. This should be more than enough time to finalize rosters and gather all completed registration materials.

4.4.1. ALL registration materials must be in the hands of the commissioner by the usual **May 15th** deadline. Final rosters will be disseminated to team leaders via email immediately after the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. 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.

4.4.3. Any player found to have participated in a game without having first submitted his signed registration form with league fee to his manager will be deemed an illegal player and the team will be subjected to forfeit(s) for the game(s) in which that player participated. Registration forms and fees must be in the hands of the Commissioner within 48 hours after the player participated in a game in order for that player to be deemed a legal participant in that game.

4.4.4. No team may legally participate in a game without having properly submitted their preliminary and final rosters to the Commissioner by the proscribed dates. Violation of this rule will result in forfeiture of game(s).

In addition to the usual wording on the waiver form regarding players assuming injury risks, this year's registration has two very strong statements regarding coronavirus:

I am fully aware of the inherent risks and hazards in connection with my participation in any UCSSL games, including illness, disability and deaths. I understand that this risk includes the exposure to or contraction of communicable diseases including COVID-19. I acknowledge that I am increasing my risk of exposure to COVID by participating in UCSSL games, practices and meetings. I voluntarily assume the risk of any injury or illness, regardless of the severity including death that I may incur as a result of my participation. I understand that the assumption of risk includes, without limitation, risks associated with maintenance of fields, accessories and equipment. I recognize that I am solely responsible for my decision to participate in UCSSL games. If I choose not to have a vaccine before the season or at any time after it becomes available, I do so with the understanding that I assume all risks involved with that decision.

I agree to abide by all rules and regulations set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), State of New Jersey Department of Health and UCSSL related to coronavirus and other communicable diseases.

I understand that if I travel outside the State of New Jersey to a designated "hot spot" or come in contact with a known COVID infected person I will be subject to quarantine restrictions. I agree that I will not participate in UCSSL games during quarantine and will obtain a COVID negative test before resuming participation.

There have been recent revisions to the policy in New Jersey. Current guidelines are:

Those fully vaccinated (2 weeks or more after final shot) do not have any restrictions but should be mindful of symptoms after return from travel, including softball tournaments.

Those UNvaccinated and those not yet fully vaccinated are discouraged from travel, but travel to nearby states – NY, CT, PA and DE – is not restricted. Travel to other states requires testing and quarantining for 7 days (10 days if tested positive upon return).

Sponsor checks are due ASAP, as are \$50 forfeit deposit checks.

Softballs -- each team should have received enough Tattoo 52/300 softballs prior to tonight's meeting, so that when added to last year's leftovers they have enough balls for the regular season plus the first two playoff games.

Bats -- a schedule for bat testing will be created based on the location of fields and ease of moving from one location to the next. Officers (and a skilled volunteer) will be testing as many teams as possible on each of these nights early in the season. Weather permitting, we expect to accomplish this during the first two weeks of league games.

Bats not tested on the designated date for their team will need to be made available at a later time/place.

New bats only (those that do not currently have a UCSSL 2019 validation sticker) can be tested prior to the season, at my house in Westfield, in the afternoon on Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Bats with a 2019 UCSSL sticker can be used until the deadline for the completion of 2021 testing, after which only those bats with a **2020** label (we are using the labels we bought but did not use last year) may be used in UCSSL games. This deadline is expected to occur as early as the week of May 3 (the third week of the season).

Bats that pass the test will receive a WHITE pre-printed (with "UCSSL 2020") "tamper evident" label.

Senior bats will also be tested, and will need to meet the same slightly less stringent compression threshold as in 2017 - 2019 to pass. These will receive a round RED "UCSSL 70+ 2020" label.

Please understand that it is possible that ASA approved bats can develop a very low level of compression due to extensive use; these bats will fail the compression test which is unfortunate, but these bats do present a **safety** concern which is the primary reason for the bat testing program.

I encourage you to go to the ASA website's "Non-Approved Bat List" and print a copy to put together with your UCSSL Rules and USA/ASA Rule Book. I will again email this link to managers.

Shirts will be distributed at the same time and location as new bat testing is done, Saturday afternoon April 17. We are very fortunate that Gary Wiese ordered shirts and they were delivered and organized at his shop before he was hospitalized. We have the business of a player in the league doing the printing. We expect that they will be very similar to what Gary would have prepared for us.

We expect to have bases for the two new teams at that time.

One change to our rules: 50+ will continue to use the double first base bags this year, not two separate bases.

Pitcher protection (another a **safety** concern) -- pitchers are again strongly encouraged to wear a protective mask in all UCSSL games. To that end, UCSSL agreed beginning two seasons

ago to reimburse pitchers (one per team) for the purchase of a mask, up to a maximum of \$45. The mask will remain the property of the league, held by that team.

Please understand that many other leagues require the use of pitchers' protective gear.

For now, we believe we have taken sufficient **safety** measures through bat testing, the use of the ball deemed safest by USA, and the recommendation that pitchers wear a protective mask.

Our umpire assigner has been very responsive to our requests for assigning outstanding umpires more frequently and for not assigning umpires we find to be deficient. Marty will be asking managers to rate their umpires as an additional means of working collectively to have more of the best umpires officiating our games.

Let me know if you need players. I have had recent inquiries from guys eager to join the league.

The league awards banquet was cancelled last season. 2020 award plaques were distributed. (Trophies have not yet been located.)

Items you should have received at tonight's meeting:

A check for umpire fees to pay for your regular season home games plus one playoff home game, softballs and a scorebook. The new teams received a USA Softball Rule Book (which is no longer being printed -- so everyone please hold on to the one you received last year).

Fields were selected on the 2021 UCSSL Schedule calendar.

Some reminders and notifications:

1. Items you received recently (or will receive soon) via email:

2021 UCSSL Rules (make special note of our new rules), UCSSL Ground Rules, 2021 Managers/Officers Listing, 2021 Schedules for both 50s and 60s as well as for bat testing, 2021 Field Permits, and links to USA/ASA Approved and Non-approved bat lists.

2. Game day reminders:

Home team occupies bench on first base side of field, supplies bases, strike mat, pays umpire \$50 cash; each team supplies a new ball.

Speed-up rule is in effect the first two weeks on unlighted fields – no infield, only two warm-up pitches after first inning.

Paying umpires if a delayed rainout -- pay them \$10 "show up" fee if umpire must call the game before a pitch has been thrown. They get full \$50 if there is a game time forfeit.

Please report game results in a timely manner to your division coordinator and to me so we can send publicity early each weekend.

3. Items you should bring and be giving to us, if you have not already done so:

Your sponsor's fee, your \$50 forfeit deposit, remaining player registration forms and fees (please be sure that checks are payable to UCSSL, or are endorsed to UCSSL), your preliminary 2021 roster. (Any of these items you did not bring to the meeting will need to be

delivered -- email or otherwise -- to my home prior to the start of the season.) Players may not participate without a signed waiver form! Rosters should be emailed as an attachment.

4. Items you should have received at tonight's meeting:

A check for umpire fees in the amount of \$550.00 or \$600.00 to pay for regular season home games plus one playoff home game, softballs, and a scorebook. Please let me know if you did not receive a scorebook.