

MONTHLY MYBA BOARD MEETING, MARCH 5, 2013 at McRae Park

Meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by the President, Mike Blumenfeld (by phone). Present at the meeting are Bill Garrison, Scott Beazley, Scott Zosel (by phone), Alicia Skow, Christine Jackson, Elise Fine, Kristie Woelfel, and Lori Mittag. Not present are Brent Gregerson, Art Harlow and Guy Cierzan.

Secretary Update:

Barnes makes a motion to accept minutes from the monthly MYBA Board's February 5, 2013 meeting. Seconded by Fine. Passed unanimously.

Team Formation Update:

Blumenfeld indicated that we may have between 15 and 16 teams.

10U: AAA, AA, A and a developmental team, the latter team a late entry into the process after reviewing all tryout data. Discussion had regarding forming two A teams at this level. It would be difficult for these teams to be competitive. Tiering the teams would make the lowered tiered team even less competitive. So, discussion was had about making it a developmental team. This team will play in the Minneapolis Park Board league. The team will have a MYBA uniform, etc. On the developmental team, 11 players have registered to date.

11U: AAA, AA and A. Some players are wait listed.

12U: AAA and two AA, no single A. No wait listing of players.

13U: AAA, three AA, one A. There was a late decision by the Team Formation Committee to tier the AA teams, Tier I and Tier II (the two AA teams in Tier II are balanced). Discussion regarding the tiering of the teams is reserved for later in the meeting.

13A team--right now we have one A team with nine players on the wait list. If we can find more players, we could create two A team at this level and not cut many players.

14U: One AA team. 14 players on the roster. Some players may decline a roster spot because of the size of the roster. Two players were cut, not wait listed.

Roster spots were offered to 74 new players to MYBA. If second team is formed at the 13A level, we will have 83 new players. Last year the number of new players was 53.

Tryout Process:

Blumenfeld indicated that the tryouts overall went well. We were able to process players quickly.

2nd tryout was more comprehensive. Pitching machine was unpredictable at the first round of tryouts and did not work so well. There are many limitations of the field house. Fly balls for outfield skills are difficult to evaluate using the machine. This led to the discussion of fall tryouts. We need to have this discussion at a later board meeting but it is something we should seriously consider. Fine will try to get the Holy Angels dome. This year we had an unbelievable number of conflicts with other sports.

Team Formation:

Blumenfeld--The Team Formation Committee ("TFC") was able to follow the team selection methodology well. Some decisions about where to place teams were made very late--once again, the TFC needed more time. This year the TFC Tiered teams at the 13U level and created a developmental team at the 10U level. Communication to parents about these decisions could have been better, although communication was hampered by arriving at the decisions late.

Treasurer's Update:

Garrison informed the board that the operating account currently has a balance of \$31,410.00. The bill from the YWCA is paid. \$1,960.00 was the final payment. St. Mane's was paid about \$867.00. We purchased all new first aid kits for every team at a cost of \$414.00. Travel directors account has a balance of \$10,932.00. Outstanding \$8,400.00 for tournaments. There is a balance of \$57.00 in the Cooperstown account. We set up a separate account this year for Cooperstown money. Financial aid requests are completed--4 full waiver and 1 reduced. The families are extremely grateful. League fees are due on March 15th for MBL.

MYBA will pay for the 15U MYBA team. Skow indicated that we can always get a refund from MBL.

Travel Director's Update:

Beazley indicated that we are in good shape for tournaments. Approximately 75% checks have been written and accounted for. There are three tournaments booked for the 13A team. May need to book three more if we form another team at this level. There are tournaments available. He is communicating with coaches about what he has booked.

Beazley indicated the need to update coach addresses and cell phone numbers.

Fine will do this.

Skow gave a fields update. Right now, we do not know where fields are at. Skow is waiting for a phone call to set up a meeting with the park board. Expects to get the same number of fields as last year. MYBA receives a good number of fields, but many are on the weekends. Teams will have to play more of their regional games on the weekend. Travel directors are meeting this Thursday. Nothing new is expected. The scheduling meeting is April 13th.

Registration Update:

10U Developmental--16 players are interested. 5 have been offered a spot that have not confirmed. Mr. Laird, present at the meeting, is interested in helping Zosel coach.

10A--8 confirmed

10AA--8 confirmed

10AAA--11 confirmed (none on the wait list)

11A--8 confirmed with wait list candidates

11AA--11 confirmed

11AAA--? confirmed

12AA Blue--9 confirmed

12AA Orange--9 confirmed

12AAA 8 confirmed and no wait list at 12

13A--7 confirmed 9 on wait list wanting to play

13AA Blue--6 confirmed

13AA orange--7 confirmed

13AA white--4 confirmed

13AAA--7 confirmed

14 AA --5 confirmed

129 total players confirmed

Confirmed means they have registered and paid the fee.

Families have until Wednesday at noon to register. Fine will send out reminders to those who have not registered.

No one has asked for their commitment fee back.

Asset Manager Update:

Jackson updated the board on uniforms. The uniform order needed to be in on Monday but she needs to wait for the final rosters this week.

We need the following equipment:

\$4,000.00 worth of baseballs.

\$2,000.00 worth of shin guards and helmets.

\$100.00 worth of ball bags.

\$1,000.00 in team bags.

\$100.00 in miscellaneous items like diggers and tape measures.

Will explore buying equipment from baseballsavings.com. Shipping is free and we will get a discount on balls.

Grant Update:

Beazley received a check from Dick's for \$1,000.00. Barnes will be putting Dick's logo on the website.

We need to buy 3 pitching machines and 19 L screens by the end of March with the grant money from Hennepin County. That amount is \$10,000.00 - \$11,000.00 but we will have to kick in 20%. Beazley will get prices from a few different places and Jackson will check in with St. Manes.

St. Manes will match any price according to Jackson.

Criminal History Check Update:

Cierzan has all BCA forms sent out. Coaches will be getting their forms soon. Fine will email Cierzan all the coaches contact information so he can send the forms to them.

Coach coordinator Update:

We have two to three teams where a coach is not confirmed.

11A--Todd Wendlandt expressed interest. Blumenfeld will check to see if Gregerson is willing to help. Other than Todd, no other parents are interested in coaching.

13A--Dolezal is interested in coaching. Kevin Jagielski is interested in coaching with Dolezal.

Limited options if we form a second 13A team, but there is one parent who could be approached.

A friend of Jackson's is interested in coaching, however, more as an assistant than head.

10U Developmental--Laird with Zosel.

Marketing Update:

Barnes got the non-profit status with google. He got on Ad Words and ran key words. With Ad Words, you have a \$300.00 a day limit--this is free for a day on google because we are a non-profit. It prioritizes us on the list. You can track the website for key word searches. We can also switch out key words. On the website, we received quite a bit of response.

We also used yard signs advertising MYBA. Two different sizes of signs. An email went out asking for anyone who wanted a sign. 30 signs were made. There were signs in the parks.

Will also be updating the graphics for facebook.

Fundraising Update:

Garage Sale--board still wants to do it. We need to figure out a date and location. Coach Olive is present at the meeting and has a couple of ideas as to location. Olive will help in finding a location for his event.

Necklaces--we only had a few of these. Jackson said that we made \$6.00 per necklace and sold 10. The necklaces came from the Swarm. We ran out of them at tryouts. We only had a few. We need to have some at the garage sale. They cost \$9.00.

Tanel 360--Blumenfeld has been approached to partner with this business. We could get 20% of purchases if people buy off our website.

Max Bats--Jim Anderson, owner, would give us a discount code for gloves. We are not sure whether we would make money from purchases or simply receive player discounts.

Handbook Update:

Zosel indicated that the updated Handbook is 80% complete. We need to add the section from the old Handbook that discusses tiering teams and update that language. The goal is to vote on the new Handbook at our May meeting. Final draft will be due in April and then the board can vote on the revised Handbook in May. Mittag and Zosel will take a look at it and make final edits. Final draft due one week before the meeting on April 2.

Photo Day and Opening Day Event Update:

Woelfel has explored various companies for team photos:

1. Linhoff -- 15% of gross sales after tax with a check mailed back to the organization within 30 days after the event.
2. Sports Star -- 10% Woelfel said he was difficult to deal with, he wanted to know competition. They don't pay the organization until July.
3. Clicks was 15% and paid 30 days after event.

Woelfel recommends Linhoff.

Date for team photos remains undecided. Location is also undecided. May want to tie it in our opening day event. The idea is to have all team photos completed at the same time.

Opening day event considered by Blumenfeld. Events would include pictures, hot dogs, games. Considering a date of April 28th at Neiman Fields.

The board is not looking at it as a money making proposition, but rather a fun way to kick off the season. Blumenfeld will be involved. Fine will help.

Age Requirement Discussion:

Blumenfeld discussed whether the board wanted a wide open rule or a narrow rule knowing that there will be exceptions to the rule.

Garrison indicated that we want a well defined rule. Fine thinks players should play with their grade as opposed to what their age is.

Proposed language read by Beazley that was drafted by Blumenfeld. Discussion had about waivers outside the bubble age. Barnes suggests unless you are in a bubble--no one way should play up. Garrison does not agree--if we have an outstanding player, that player should tryout at the higher level. We need the proper parameters.

Woelfel submitted a waiver proposal to the board. It is attached to the minutes.

Garrison will draft a waiver proposal and present it to the board at a subsequent monthly meeting.

Coach Accountability:

Woelfel drafted a form that we will use at the end of the year as part of the coach review process so that when there are issues we have a paper trail. Sample form with the minutes.

New Business:

Karen Kuntz 13AA, Andrew Olive 12AAA coach, Ralph Kaulesa, Janelle Peterson 13AA, Sean Laird 10A, Stacy Martin 10U were also present at the board meeting.

Karen Kuntz addressed the board with regard to her concerns about the decision to tier the teams at the 13AA level. She expressed concern about her conflict of interest because her son, Daniel, is on a lower tiered team. She also has a son on the 13AAA team, Ryan. She has other organizational experiences with tiered teams.

Last year, at MYBA 12U AA, MYBA had Ario and Hansen as coaches. Daniel had Ario as a coach. The teams were balanced in talent. Ario's team had 32/52 wins. They brought a trophy home in every tournament. The team was not fabulous, but the season was. She felt Ario's team could go against any other team and win. Kuntz feels MYBA got it right last year when creating the 12U AA teams. They had a great season.

This year there are 24 returning MYBA players from last year and 12 new players to the organization. There are 2 players that moved up a year and 6 players came from Richfield, 4 players came from the A pool. The pool has 36 total players and Kuntz believes that the pool is slightly weaker in talent overall. If MYBA evenly fielded all 3 teams, she feels that MYBA would have 3 teams with great seasons. By tiering teams, the Team Formation Committee is making one team competitive and two teams not so competitive.

Karen read from her email response from Mittag regarding the decision to tier the teams. She doesn't know what "competitive within the division" means. She doesn't think the 2 lower tier teams will be competitive at all. Fine indicated that "competitive" means having at least a .500 season. Kuntz then brought up the 2009 10A season. Gregerson rostered his team first and had an excellent year. The second A team that her son was on did not have a good year at all. She says having an "elite" team is going to create turmoil with the age group and will make MYBA look bad. She has concerns about the team formation process. The process should not be taken lightly and she is surprised the Team Formation Committee, a sub-committee of the Board, made the decision and that the full Board was not consulted.

Mittag indicated tiered teams is out of the ordinary, but has been done in past. We considered tiering the 10U A teams but decided on the developmental approach. The decision to tier the teams for 13U this year was considered a good approach by the TFC based on the assessment of talent at the 13U AA level. We considered many factors in making the decision to tier including tryout scores, stats, PTR, etc.

Kuntz said last year the Blue team had two elite players who set the tone for the team and help to make the team successful. Those players are now on the Tier I team. Another parent present, Janelle Peterson also agreed with Kuntz that taking those players away will have an effect on the other two teams. She also does not agree with the tiered approach and feels that the three teams should be divided equally and that would make all three competitive. says those kids have been taken away.

Barnes noted that there are other players within the AA group that can step up and be leaders. He agreed with the decision of the TFC to tier teams at the 13U level. He felt that the talent was there based on the tryout scores, etc. that he saw.

Garrison indicated that he felt that the two AA Tier II teams would be competitive if divided equally. He supported the TFC's decision to tier the teams. He spoke of tiering in basketball, with the goal of placing players on teams with equal talent.

Kuntz feels that she has a good read on the talent and we are taking that away by tiering the teams. She looks at the talent pool and the AAA "bubble kids" in the callbacks that are now on the Tier I team and feels that taking those players away from consideration for the remaining two AA teams leaves these two AA teams at a disadvantage. She feels that tiering teams to make one more successful at the same age level is wrong. It will make families upset.

Fine indicated that after the three teams were formed, the committee members made sure that there both teams had sufficient pitching and catching. She also discussed the decision the committee made to keep AA players from moving down to A.

Mittag talked about MYBA's philosophy of forming best teams since we are a traveling baseball organization.

Blumenfeld discussed that, at any age level, the best solution to team formation is one that puts the most players at the level that is most correct for them. When in doubt, challenge the kids, he feels the approach taken by the TFC with regard to the 3 U AA teams was the best approach.

Motion to adjourn by Jackson at 9:04 P.M. Seconded by Skow. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.