

**Lakeland League Spring Meeting**  
**March 21, 2022**  
**Horizon Room, AG Ross Arena, Elk Point**

**Attendance: Angi Nimeck, Jason Higgins, Dale Hedrick, Orry Gelowitz, Tyrel Turchyn, Jim Church, Dawn McMillan, Kelly Applegate, Kim Gouthier, Darby Shapka, Sharon Earl, D'Arcy Evans, Ali Fyith, Doug Bassett, Gwen Lepine, Mike Jacknife, Kate Epp, Justin Blackburn, Dennell Anderson, Margaret Bayduza**

**1. Call meeting to order**

Dennell Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

**2. Review of agenda**

No additions

**3. Introductions** around the table.

**Old Business**

1. Rookie & Mite (9U/U9) division package (modified rules). Keeps the kids moving and engaged. Developed by Darcy Warawa so wouldn't lose kids by getting bored and incorporates real baseball and softball skills. Please review with your association and we will vote at the next meeting.
2. Reminder of rule change for female baseball players. There are no restrictions on 1 year overage females in baseball. They can pitch and catch.

**President's Report**

**1. Registration**

- a. Make sure you know how Many teams you are registering by the April meeting.

**2. Umpires for upcoming season**

- a. Clinics will be posted online. You can apply to host clinics.
- b. Ensure all umpires are carded.
- c. Focus on not abusing umpires. Many of them are young and we lose them, and coming out of covid, we are going to have even lower numbers.

**3. Insurance**

- a. All players playing in the Lakeland League must be insured through BBA if playing baseball and/or SBA if playing softball
  - i. All associations must be in good standings with BBA and SBA (registered association)

- b. Note insurance does not crossover between BBA and SBA. Players/umps must be registered in both if participating in both baseball and softball.
- c. Rallycap/firstball can be registered with SBA to save money, but all other age groups must be registered through the correct association

#### **4. Reporting Game Scores**

- a. All game scores are to be reported to D'Arcy Evans (780-888-6234) or [darcyevans@hotmail.ca](mailto:darcyevans@hotmail.ca) within 24 hours and will be the responsibility of the winning team head coach or manager. Please send game #, division, teams playing and final score. (Ex: May 5/22, 15U: elk point 3 vs bonnyville 2. game #003)
- b. Scores can be reported by text or email, but D'arcy prefers text. She doesn't mind getting more than one text, but she doesn't respond until she posts the scores, so it could be a day or two before she answers. This helps her keep track. She turns her ringer off at night, so it's okay to text at midnight.
- c. Let her know if there is an error asap. Do not wait until the year end tournament draws are done to let her know. Teams should make a practice of verifying the posted scores.
- d. If you reschedule a game, let her know, because otherwise she enters a score of zero for a no show and it affects the rankings. So please say "rescheduled" not "cancelled" if game has been postponed.

#### **5. Communication Chain**

- a. Please ensure all your coaches and managers know the rules for the division they are coaching. League specific rules are posted on our website, and the rest follow BBA or SBA.
- b. Communication is improving. Please remember the more we educate our association about rule changes, etiquette on and off the field, the better all games will be. We are all out there for the same reason - to play good competitive games with good sportsmanship etc. So we ask that all associations deal with any negative issues that arise between coaches, players, umpires, parents within your own association. If it cannot be resolved then the PRESIDENT of the association can contact the league president and together they will try to find a solution. The league president will not deal directly with parents and coaches, this is the responsibility of the association president. Please use the 24 hour rule prior to contacting the league.

#### **6. Multiple teams in a division**

- a. Lakeland league is a house league. To help promote competitive games, it is the responsibility of the home association to ensure teams are **split equally**

**skill wise when there is more than 1 team in the same division.** Our goal as a league is to promote the sport and try to keep it fun and competitive for all members of our league.

b. Question re mixed softball team. Please contact D'arcy and Dennell for assistance in forming and placing teams.

## 7. Coaches

a. If a coach is causing issues it is the responsibility of the home association to deal with it, not the league. Be responsible when selecting coaches. Our athletes need positive role models so do your due diligence when selecting coaches.

b. Strongly suggest associations have a Coaches/Managers meeting prior to the season starting to ensure everyone knows the rules and expectations going in.

## 8. Schedule/Travel

a. Our league covers a large area. We can't schedule around travel. Teams are welcome to reschedule games to a weekend to play a double header to get their games in. This would also free up teams to have weekday practices. Or teams can book diamonds in central towns where distance is an issue.

b. A possible option is to split the league into divisions (N/S, E/W). We can discuss this at then next meeting when we know our team numbers and locations.

## 9. Review consequences for late/inaccurate team registrations.

a. **No shows.** Communicate with the other team if weather is an issue. Teams will not be fined for rescheduling due to weather as long as there is communication between the teams. The call to reschedule due to weather should be made by 4 pm. It is a good practice for managers to contact one another prior to all games to confirm details. At our last meeting, we passed the following motion, and we will hold firm to it:

**NO SHOW (team is not able to field a team at the scheduled time)  
Games start at 6:30 pm, with a grace period of 15 minutes. If a team no shows with no contact with the other coach/manager within a reasonable timeframe with respect to travel, the consequence will be:**

**1st offence - team is fined \$200, payable to Lakeland League Minor Ball and due prior to their next scheduled game. That association will receive a strike. Lakeland League will cover the umpire cost from the fine.**

**2nd offence - team is removed from league for the remainder of the season. The association will receive another strike and will be under review by the League.**

b. **LATE ENTRY/WITHDRAWAL OF TEAMS.** Due to the difficulties it causes the schedulers when teams are entered or withdrawn after the schedule has been drawn up, the league will impose consequences for failure to accurately register teams on time. The following motion was passed at our previous meeting:

***The league can levy a \$500 fine for late withdrawal of a team and \$250 for late entry of a team.***

#### **10. Competitive teams**

a. Allow your players to try out at the highest level at which they are capable. Please don't hold back your players just to form a team. Let's all work together to get the most players out there playing AA and get them in their appropriate tiers whether it's tier 1 or tier 4.

We have 8 U15 players playing in AAA. That's big. We want players to be able to go on to play college ball. Players develop better playing at their proper level. The league has the talent to have multiple AA teams, but it's spread around, so towns have to work together.

b. Question regarding overage players (baseball). Players can play down if there is no team at their level. There is no limit to the number of O/A players on the roster, but only 3 can be on the field at once, and O/A players cannot pitch or catch (with the exception of 1 year O/A female players).

c. Bonnyville has AA teams. St. Paul does not this year. Cold Lake is trying to put some teams together.

d. Tryouts for competitive teams need to be early (February, March, even December) so players can go try out somewhere else if they don't make it. Rosters have to be finalized in early April, so if associations wait to form teams, it's hard on players who don't know if there will be a team and associations who don't know if players will be available.

e. Associations that don't have AA teams can start with A teams to grow their program.

f. Bonnyville Softball teams will be B. We don't have any A teams. Usually we try to host a C or D provincial tournament, but the coaches who used to spearhead it are aging out.

#### **11. Practice/Play Ratio**

a. 9U: practice once a week/play once a week (may & June)

- i. BB is coach pitched. SB is player pitched (to develop pitchers) BUT with the proposed new division rules, after 5 pitches, T ball stand would be brought out, so keeps the game moving.

- b. 11U: practice once a week/play once a week (May & June)
- c. 13U/15U/18U:
  - ii. Practice once a week/play once a week (May)
  - iii. Play twice a week (June)
- d. Teams can book exhibition games or host a tournament to get more games in. The more players play, the more they develop.
- e. Question re why U15 BB plays Mon/Wed. It allows those players to ump at Tues/Thurs games. It also helps with diamond availability.

## **12. Rosters**

- a. Teams rosters must be in by the 1st week of May. Clearly mark overage players (O/A) on the rosters and on the score sheets. Be open about it.
- b. Email rosters to lakelandball@gmail.com. Please put all your rosters in one email so it's easier to track and maintain.

## **New Business**

### **Softball Alberta Update**

Player numbers are down.

SBA has a new president.

Please get your registrations in as soon as you've made your team. You can add to your roster after, so don't wait. Have rosters in by May 1.

Age categories have changed so they now match the BBA age categories.

Alberta Summer games are coming July 20-23 in Okotoks for U15 (born 2008 or younger). Zone 7 needs a head coach. Due date to apply was today, but they are still looking. Apply through the SBA website. There also have to be 2 female coaches on the bench staff. The players can come from anywhere in the zone. This is for B,C or D level, not for elite players.

Some provincial hosts are set, but not many. Still looking for host associations at all levels. Look on the SBA website for which teams are open. If there are no hosts in place by May 15, it's possible some provincials will be cancelled. Regional qualifiers are on June 24-26 at all levels.

The zone 7 UIC has resigned.

Umpire clinics are posted on the SBA website. There are clinics in April. First session is done online, and only the mechanics session has to be done live.

Question regarding moving U15 girls to T/Th games so they can ump on M/W. Answer - in the past, few have come forward to ump from that group.

Coaches need to be certified if they are going to provincials.

SBA has revised bylaws to be approved at the AGM in October.

## **Baseball Alberta Update**

Lots of turnover in the BBA office staff.

No rule changes

.Registration is online. April 4 is the deadline to register teams and rosters must be in by April 15.

## **New Business**

### **1. Game nights**

9U has games Tuesdays, practice Thursdays. U9 has games Mondays, practice Wednesdays. This is to help free up diamonds on Wed/Thurs for games in older divisions.

a. 9U/U9 games will be scheduled to neighbouring towns within 60 km whenever possible to reduce their travel on school nights.

### **2. Application to enter league**

#### **Lloydminster**

Lloydminster has at least 1 U15 baseball team (maybe 2 with some O/A U18 players) and would like to join Lakeland league. Concern was expressed with the distance (e.g. Lloyd to Plamondon), so there needs to be flexibility in scheduling games.

***MOTION to allow Lloydminster Baseball to join the Lakeland League with flexibility to schedule games on dates and locations that work for both teams, e.g. weekends and central locations. Moved by Ali (Lac La Biche), seconded by Kim (Plamondon). Carried.***

#### **Ashmont**

Ashmont is requesting to join league with U9, U11, U13 mixed softball teams. Concern was expressed with having mixed softball teams, especially at U13, since league softball teams rarely have male players. Some options were discussed for how they might form teams to avoid mixed softball (eg. mixed baseball teams, female softball teams with overage and underage players). Dennell and D'arcy can work with them to help them figure out the best options.

***MOTION to allow Ashmont into the Lakeland league in Baseball and Softball. Moved by Jim (Bonnyville), seconded by Mike (Elizabeth). Carried.***

**3. Lakeland Website**

- a. Margret Bayduza will update the website this season please forward your diamond allocations, coaches/manager contact information for each team at lakelandball@gmail.com. Once updated, visiting team will have the correct contact for each team in your association.
- b. RAMP. Our current website is awkward to use, and because it is a google site, it is owned by the person who created it. We propose to move the league website to RAMP. There would be an initial set up cost of approx \$1500 and an annual maintenance fee of approx \$500. The league has the funds to set this up, and we could increase team fees by \$5 or \$10 to maintain the website. It was noted that Baseball Alberta may be moving to the Teamsnap platform, and that it may be less costly to use the same platform.

***MOTION to switch to a professionally hosted sport website platform with a budget of \$1500 to create the site. Moved by Dawn (Bonnyville), seconded by D'arcy (Elk Point). Carried.***

**4. League fees**

No change for this year.

- a. Year end gifts to be determined (bags, medals, trophies)
- b. 9U/U9 \$50/team
- c. 11U/U11 and up \$150/team
- d. Game start date - May 9 (weather permitting)

**5. Clinics**

Check association websites for information.

- a. **222 Fastpitch** - Bonnyville, May 14 & 15, \$175
- b. **CanPitch** - Bonnyville, May 7 & 8, \$108
- c. **HiTek Development Camp** - St. Paul, April 22-24, \$70 (10 & under \$45)

**6. Final Tournament**

- a. Tournament format will be the same as 2019 with divisions being split top and bottom (top 8, bottom 8)
- b. It will be the responsibility of the host team to do the schedule based on agreed league format and league results. Host associations can modify the tournament format if required should weather or other unforeseen issues prevent the original format from happening. Please do your best to stick to the original format whenever possible. All complaints regarding the tournament are to be directed to the tournament host association. We will discuss the tournament complaints at the fall meeting and discuss ways to improve going forward.

c. Pitch count - discussion of whether to keep pitch count for year end BB tournaments. It causes issues for volunteers and coaches not having experience pitch count in the regular season. However, we don't want to overuse or injure any pitchers in the finals. Discussion of limiting pitchers to one inning during regular season (up to U15 division) to develop pitchers without wrecking their arm (currently U11 is 1 inning per game, U13+ is 2 innings per game). We don't use pitch count during regular season because with 4 days of rest, could pitch out your top pitchers every game.

***MOTION to remove pitch count from the year end tournaments and limit pitchers to 2 innings per game, maximum 4 innings per day and maximum 6 innings per weekend. Moved by Mike (Elisabeth), seconded by Jim (Bonnyville). MOTION TABLED***

Please go back to your associations to discuss this change. We will vote at the April meeting.

- d. Host team is to supply 2 new game balls/game during tournament play
- e. Lakeland league will cover umpire cost of \$40.00 per game
  - i. If you have a concession, suggest umpires eat for free.
- f. Each host MUST have a tournament organizer and contact info distributed to visiting teams
- g. Year end tournaments will take place the weekend of June 25-26, 2022.
- h. 18U/U18 playoffs will continue with weekday format.

### **Next Meeting**

Tuesday, April 19, 6:30 pm, Elk Point.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned 8:39 pm.