

Mar 7, 2011

The Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm at Pizza Gourmet.

Board members present: Steve Quinn, Ron Kunert, Ed Tworek, Dick Smith, Dave Dye, Chuck Grubb and Dave Janda. Dave Banghart participated from Florida via telephone. Players present: Rod Evans, Jim Price, Lee Towle, Bill Smuck, Gary Dukat, Cort Fernald, and Gerry Storovich.

Steve Quinn opened the meeting with comments from League players present: Both Gary Dukat and Cort Fernald confirmed that they would be available to assist at the Westroads Summer Recreation Fair on March 19th. Rod Evans requested clarification on the new Home Run rules. The rule clarification is on the agenda and will be discussed by the Board during the meeting.

1. **Summer Recreation Fair-Westroads Mall** - On Saturday, March 19th, from Noon to 3:00 pm, NSS will join other summer recreation programs at Westroads Mall. We will have laptops available for online registration and payments. Also included will be a running picture show for casual view, posters and placards, brochures, and business cards. Several players will be on hand to discuss the league with shoppers and browsers. The players attending are encouraged to wear their league jerseys.
2. **Marketing Report** - Chuck Grubb presented his report of things he is working on to help promote the league.
  - **Opening Day First Pitch** - LaVista Mayor Doug Kindig and Recreation Department Coordinator Eddie Burns will join us on May 2nd and throw out the first pitch of the season. We encourage all players to show up early for this ceremony and celebrate the first day of play in 2011 and show the mayor our commitment and support of the league.
  - **Promotional Efforts** - Chuck has sent letters and NSS brochures to Tom Shatel of the Omaha World Herald and the La Vista Sun Sports and Recreation requesting stories about NSS and extending invitations to opening day. There has been no response from either as of 3/7/2011. He has also submitted text and graphics to air on Bellevue (BTV) and Papillion (Papio Vision) television; cable channels 17 and 18 respectively. Air dates to be determined. The graphic will encourage registration for the upcoming season and have website information along with phone and email contact information.
  - **Corporate Sponsorship** - As of 3/6/2011, a total of four (4) corporate sponsors are onboard. One Diamond League, One 'Touch Em all', and Two 'Web Gem' levels. Total money taken in: \$750.00. Projected expenses associated with the sponsorships: \$210.00. Chuck encourages all players league wide to offer sponsorships to businesses they think might be willing to be associated with our league. Affordable 14 month sponsorship plans range from \$50.00 to \$300.00. For further details contact Chuck Grubb.

- **Diamond Bits** - The first issue was sent league wide on March 1, 2011 to nearly 300 email recipients. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with several offers to write articles for the next edition. The next issue should be released on or about May 3, 2011, maybe with a couple days delay to ensure we get opening day coverage in the publication.
  - **Business Cards** - Chuck has ordered 500 promotional business cards for board members and players to hand out to prospective players. The business cards provide our mailing address, website, and email information. Cost to the league: \$0.00. These cards are available by contacting Chuck Grubb.
3. **Courtesy Runner Rule Review and Conclusion** - Based on the player survey results the majority of responses indicated that the NSS board should study the rule further and provide a decision prior to the season opener. As currently stated in the NSS rules article 3.b. COURTESY RUNNERS: Courtesy running is primarily intended as a safety measure for players with injury or physical difficulty. Normally the player on base will make the request. Managers must guard against abuse of this rule such as strategy of excessive courtesy running to optimize scoring. Ed Tworek gave a brief history of the courtesy runner rule. Ten years ago when the NSS league was developed the courtesy runner rule was a 2/1 rule; a maximum of 2 runners per inning, and a player could only run a maximum of once per inning. Application of the rule started changing about 5 years ago as more players became involved with tournament play where the rule is more relaxed. During regular league play it was perceived that players started using the rule in a more strategic manner to score more runs. Approximately 3 years ago it was clarified that the courtesy runner was for courtesy, not as a strategy for game competition. In the spring of 2009 the rule was modified to allow a player to run a maximum of twice per game. The rules were updated to include in print the initial intent of the rule. In 2010 between the summer and fall seasons it was discussed as to how can we better control the use/intent of the rule. The 2nd base rule was implemented for the fall 2010 season. A batter/runner advancing beyond first base may not be replaced by a courtesy runner unless injured or unforeseen circumstances occur. Suggestions submitted to the matter include:
- Unlimited courtesy running
  - Continue with the current rule but limit players to running only once per game
  - The player who made the last out must be courtesy runner if one is requested
  - Once a player requests a courtesy runner in the game, must continue using a courtesy runner the remainder of the game
  - Managers declare which players will be using courtesy runners prior to the start of the game
  - Eliminate the rule altogether and not allow courtesy running at all.

Most of these suggestions raised concern for the safety of players, those injured and with physical difficulties. Dave Dye stated that over the last few years the league has grown considerably. We have many more players who are more competitive than others. The bigger issue is enforcing the rule, rather than changing it. Steve Quinn suggested that the simple answer is 2 courtesy runners per inning; players are limited to running twice per game. Dave Banghart suggested simplifying it further by limiting players to courtesy running only once per game. A motion was made by Dick Smith and 2nd by Dave Dye: The Courtesy Runner rule should read as follows: Teams are allowed two (2) courtesy runners per inning; An individual may courtesy run only one (1) time per game; The courtesy runner may enter at any base; Violation of the stated Courtesy Runner rule will result in an out at the runner's position when the courtesy runner touches the base. Board members voted 7 in favor 0 opposed; the motion carried.

4. **Home Run Rule** - As a follow up to the adoption of maximum of 2 Home Runs per team per game, a request for clarification has been asked of the Board of Directors. A Home Run is defined as over the fence; any additional home runs in the game will be considered a Walk and runners on base can only advance if forced; Teams are still capped at 5 runs per inning, if home run ball is hit and the results would produce an excess of the 5 run cap, the extra runs do not count, and the home run is still counted toward the maximum of 2 per team, per game.
5. **Team Jerseys** - Dick Smith reported that he has finalized a list of 14 team jerseys for consideration for the new draft. Six team jerseys are white with pinstripes with different colored team hats; eight team jerseys are solid colors with no repeated colors. Final decision will be based on number of teams per registrations. The league cost per jersey, which will include player name and number, will be \$25.29; league cost per cap is \$7.50. The NSS logo will again be on the left sleeve of the jerseys. Chuck Grubb had suggested updating the NSS logo at the February 2011 board meeting and provided some examples in his Marketing and Promotions report. Although not approved by the Board, Chuck used one of these samples in the inaugural edition of Diamond Bits. This particular logo is a contemporary design of a ball player incorporating NSS & Nebraska Senior Softball in the logo. The other examples included the state of Nebraska with a flaming softball on the states northeast border, and the third example was an aerial view of a softball diamond. Ron Kunert made a motion, 2nd by Dick Smith to update the NSS logo to the ball player design. The Board members voted 7 in favor – 0 opposed to adopt the new logo. If you wish to view, you can find it on the Nebraska Senior Softball Facebook page. Dick also reported that we should be supplied with enough games balls for both the spring and fall seasons. These were ordered before the end of the 2010 calendar year.
6. **Corrective Action Panel (CAP)** - Bill Smuck gave a brief presentation to everyone in attendance the overview of the CAP. This committee consists of 6 League members whose goal is to conduct a comprehensive, timely review of cases

involving player and/or fan misconduct which would reflect NSS in a negative manner, and make recommendations regarding appropriate action to the Board of Directors if and when necessary. It is primarily the team managers who have both the authority and responsibility to apply corrective action toward players who fail to comply with the Player/Team Code of Conduct. The CAP only intervenes if there is a grievance brought forth. The CAP would then review the incident and present recommendations to the Board of Directors for their review for appropriate action to be taken (if needed). Currently the committee members are: Bill Smuck, Bob Kubat, Bill Bowes, Del Stokes, Jim Price and Lee Towle.

7. **Umpires 2011 Season** - Dave Banghart would like to see that NSS procure the best possible umpires for the 2011 season. He will research a list of good quality umpires who would be beneficial to our league and gauge their interest to working NSS games specifically on a rotating basis. Dave is to have feedback for the Board of Directors before the next meeting.
8. **Board Member Items** - Steve asked each Board member if they had any additional items to be discussed:
  - **Dave Dye** - There are no updates to the Draft process until the registration numbers are finalized. He suggests that a league wide email go out to remind and encourage everyone who is interested in playing this year get their registrations in before the March 15 deadline. Returning players will be required to pay a \$25 late fee if their registration is dated after the 15th. New players have until Apr 1 to get their registrations submitted, and are not subject to a late fee. Dave has refurbished the score boards for the new season. He also would like the Board to review the catcher rule for the new season. In the past if a team only had 9 players available, the catcher was provided by the opposing team. Last fall a non-biased player from the spectators was asked to volunteer. Which option will be used for the 2011 season?
  - **Dave Janda** - To date we have received 81 registrations. This is only about half the number of players from last year. Paul Williams is working on the new website, running it on his own server alongside our current site to ensure all activity is working as it should. It is advised that we wait until registration has been finalized and closed before we set the new web site live.
  - **Chuck Grubb** - Although the player practices held during spring/summer at Churchich and Trendwood are not sanctioned by NSS, Chuck would like to see the league purchase some new balls for the players to use at these practices. Chuck made a motion, 2nd by Ed Tworek that NSS purchase 4 dozen (2 dozen for each location) for these practices. The Board voted 7 in favor 0 opposed. The motion passed. It was also noted that managers and players should donate used game balls from previous seasons to any practices.

- **Dick Smith** - Has requested that the agenda for the April meeting include a proposed draft sequence to be presented to the Board of Directors for review. Ed Tworek was in agreement.
- **Ed Tworek** - Requests that we have a clear start and stop of the board proceedings. Once invited guests are done with the open forum part of the meeting, all other comments should be limited to Board members only.
- **Ron Kunert** - Suggested that the open forum be at the end of the board meeting. It was noted that the forum was moved to the front of the meeting in order to give guests a chance to speak and then leave early if needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm. The next scheduled Board meeting will be on Monday, April 4 at 6:30 pm, same location.