



Tuesday, February 02, 2010

To: McCandless PONY Players, Parents, Managers & Coaches
From: Jeff Trettel, President McAA/Co-GM, PONY
Subject: 2010 PONY season

Dear PONY Players, Parents, Managers & Coaches

The Holiday decorations are stashed away (hopefully) and the Spring 2010 PONY Baseball season preparation has begun! The season is approaching at the usual fast past and once again this year we have many Baseball opportunities for the members of MCAA Baseball program. For those players that will be joining the Pony league this season, the biggest change from prior years is that the Pony level provides a larger number of players the *opportunity* to play in as little as 20 or as many as 40-50 games depending on their level of skill, desire, and commitment.

2010 SEASON OUTLINE

SCHOOL TEAMS:

As you are probably aware, NA players in the 7-8th grade level (NA schools) are eligible to try out for one of three (3) NA Middle School Baseball formed for the Carson, Ingomar and Marshall Middle Schools.

In other parts of the country it is not unusual for Baseball players to be involved in 60-80 games per year and, if our players are interested in playing after high school, our players must also be given this opportunity if they wish to compete for College baseball positions. Having the opportunity to participate in WPIAL Baseball competition at the middle school level combined with our In-house, Federation and Tournament and Fall programs provides these opportunities at a reasonable cost with minimum travel expense vs. thousands of dollars investment in travel and large time investment found in other programs.

IN HOUSE PROGRAM:

Our in-house program is not be adversely affected by this change since provides guidelines for playing in ***both*** the school and in-house programs so that the players may play in as many games as possible.

Currently we will have 26-32 teams (12-13 players per team) participating in our traditional in-house Pony league, consisting of a 21 game schedule plus playoffs and championship series beginning on April 16 and ending late June. Participating Associations are: McAA, B-M-P, IFPAA, Mars, North Hills, WestViewRoss, Pine-

Richland, Zelig-Harmony, Avonworth, and Bellevue-Avalon, Players on the School team *will* be drafted by an in-house team and *will* be expected to honor their in-house commitment during the school Baseball season.

“FEDERATION” LEAGUE:

In addition to our traditional in-house program, players may apply to play additional games in the Federation League. (Provided that they have honored their in-house commitment). The Federation Season begins *after* the school’s Baseball season and ends in mid-July. We have been participating in the Federation league for over 11 years straight. The Federation League season, of 21-21 games and will provide a higher level of competition than in-house play. We will enter at least one (1) and maybe two (2) teams for each age group in the League. Federation Teams will travel to other parts of the city to play teams of equal ability such as Shaler, Butler, Cranberry, IFPAA, North Hills, Pine Richland, Brad-mar-Pine, Fox Chapel, Hampton, and Ingomar.

There is some additional cost associated with this league (roughly \$200) as well as a “commitment” by each player to their in-house team as well as the Federation Team.

All players that wish to be considered for the Federation League must register through McAA. Roster spots are limited and they *may* be subject to additional evaluation (tryouts) depending on the number of players that are interested in playing.

Each team starting roster will consist of a minimum 12 players. Additional players may be added however no team active roster will exceed 14 players. Playing time is not guaranteed however every effort will be made to play all players at least 2 innings. Substitutes can be listed on the Federation roster (up to 25 players). NOTE: Some Players can elect to be on the 25 man Team roster as “substitutes” instead of full-time players.

“POST SEASON PLAY”

As part of our continuing long-standing relationship with PONY Baseball, we will once again have the honor of hosting the PONY Host Area tournament at the Vincentian facility July 30 to August 2, 2010. As in the past, our “NA GOLD 14” Federation team will be entered in this tournament whose winner receives a berth in the PONY World Series in Washington PA held August 6 to 14, 2010. Prior to the Host area tournament our NA GOLD team will participate in select local and regional tournaments (to be announced).

Our NA BLACK 13” Federation team will enter PONY sanctioned “section” tournament play in early July (parallel to the Federation season) with winners of the tournaments moving up each level toward the PONY 13 World Series competition held 7-30 to Aug 3 2010 in Fullerton CA.

Additional tournament teams, such a “14-under” team (if there are enough interested players) can be formed if there is enough interest.

DRAFT

The in-house program draft will take place the week of March 8, 2010 shortly after the Middle School team selections. Players that are chosen for the Middle School teams will be evenly spaced between all teams to maintain parity as much as possible. It is critical that we have an accurate team count prior to the draft date since we must plan for uniform purchases, supplies, field allocations, management selection etc.. Our on line registration site www.mcaa.net remains open and there is still some time before any late fees are added starting February 15, 2010. Those unable to register on-line or those needing special payment arrangements (confidential) are asked to contact Jeff Trettel via email (jpt@jbindustrial.com) or cell (412-818-1244).

SPRING TRAINING

The month of March is not known for stable weather conditions so the traditional team practice concept is not the best way to use our time. So often some teams luck out and have good weather while some teams get short changed by bad weather.

This year I will talk to the team managers and propose a “clinic” approach to spring training which is how we did it during the 2000-2001 seasons. By scheduling group workouts, we can use the station approach and practice several skills at each practice. Even if the field is wet, we could still use the batting cage, do stretching, strengthening drills, etc. More information to follow!

PLAYER CONDITIONING

We have contacted some local professional training facilities with the goal of offering spring strengthening and conditioning clinics throughout March until mid April IF we have enough interest. There will be an additional cost associated with this service (The more players we have, the lower the cost).

I believe that the players will benefit greatly from these clinics while reducing the possibility of injuries associated with overexertion of muscles in the early part of the season.

I strongly suggest that Pitchers and Catchers should take part in these clinics since they are most subject to arm injuries but ALL players will notice an improvement in their leg strength arm strength and stamina, a benefit that applies to all sports, not just Baseball. We could continue the sessions throughout the season in the evenings after games in May & June since it stays light until 9:00 (if the players are interested)

VINCENTIAN Field 1

Our PONY teams will be using our Vincentian #1 field as their home field. Lets try to make their games a special event. We have one of the the nicest facilities in the area a lighted scoreboard, PA system, and concession stand that all contribute to the quality of the event. I ask that those of us who have flexible schedules make themselves available to prepare the field, run the scoreboard, announce the players, and “man” (moms) the concession stand. Let’s make this a memorable event for the boys.

Field Preparation: Mid-March 2010: Some bullet items (more to follow)

- 1) Repair the mound and confirm the field dimensions for 80’ and 90’ bases.
- 2) Repair/prepare the ATEC Pitching Machine. This machine can pitch curves, sliders, etc. and is a \$1700.00 piece of equipment that is currently underutilized.
- 3) Hang Batting net in batting cage

Before opening day (Mid April)

- 4) Re-seed/sod the bare spots and roll the outfield.

SUMMARY

For over 17 years I have had the honor of working with the finest Managers, Coaches, and, most of all, young men in the area. I am confident that we all recognize the need for us to work together this year with these boys as our common bond and commitment to this community.

McCandless Baseball provides us an opportunity to have a positive impact in our young men’s lives and heaven knows they have more than their share of challenges.

Let’s divide up the chores, get them done, put the world’s troubles behind us and play some ball.

Sincerely,

Jeff Trettel

Co-GM Pony