

FIRST PITCH



IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

- Friday, February 8 - Sunday, February 10 – 20% discount weekend at Dick’s Sporting Goods. The flyer can be found on our website (www.papillionselectbaseball.com)
- Friday, February 22, 5pm-7pm and Saturday, February 23, 9am-1pm – 30% discount days at the Omaha Storm Chasers team store.
- March 1 – 31 – team practices on assigned outdoor fields (weather permitting)
- Tentative – March 1-7 team photos for banners
- Friday, March 15 through Sunday, March 17 – 20% discount weekend at Dick’s Sporting Goods. Flyer will be made available as we approach that event.
- Saturday, April 20 – come out to Werner Park at 12pm, 2pm & 4pm to watch our 14U teams compete!



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Good evening – Before I dive into some of the specific survey topics, I thought it was important to share with everyone our Organization’s mission statement:

The objective of the Storm Chasers shall be to develop in the players of the organization, a winning attitude, good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage and reverence in order for them to grow into responsible and productive adults through youth baseball. The objectives will be achieved by providing supervised competitive games and hands-on coaching. The development of future responsible citizens, as well as the attainment of exceptional athletic skills, and a winning program, are the dual goals of this organization.

In the last edition, I referenced Papillion Select Baseball as a “small town” program, competing against the “businesses” who offer Select Baseball. There are two very distinct elements that set us apart – VOLUNTEERISM and a commitment to the City to formulate rosters with a minimum of 80% Papillion/LaVista school district residence. While we work to build young men of distinguished character, we will hand the majority of them off to Papillion Monarch High School or Papillion South High School to compete on the baseball field, as well as in the classroom.

The City of Papillion is currently the fastest growing community in the State of Nebraska. It is estimated that within 20 years, Papillion will be the third largest city in the state, with some 75,000 residents calling Papillion HOME. As an Organization, we will continue to work hard to provide the best we can provide to our “small town”, whether that is a town of 20,000 or 75,000. We thank you for your commitment to our program, and to your children!

SURVEY SAYS

This edition of the newsletter will focus on two specific topics that came out during the end of year survey: Cost/Budget and Indoor Facilities.

Cost/Budget

Cost – we do our best to keep our program as cost competitive as possible. There are organizations that charge in excess of \$2,500 per year. Those are the “businesses” I referred to previously. One pays their tournament director \$40,000/year to put on their events (keep that in mind for the next newsletter).

Our budget is made up of two components:

- Organizational budget
- Team budget

Organizational Budget

Organizationally, the 2019 season budget is \$700. That is broken down as follows:

- 3 uniform tops, 2 pair of pants, 2 pair of socks, 1 belt, 1 hat (\$230)
- Coaches uniforms (\$40)
- Umpires (10 home games) (\$65)
- Game balls (\$15)
- Insurance, City fee, PRO fee, coaches back ground checks (\$40)
- Advertising, banner costs, Game Changer subscription, Administrative costs (\$60)
- Indoor facilities (\$300)
- Tournament CREDIT (each family is credited \$50 for being the host of one of our events) (\$50)

Some of the survey comments were centered around the uniform tops and the pants (equal responses on both sides).

Jersey tops

Specific to uniform topics, we want each team within the Organization to look like they belong to an Organization, and therefore the Org uniform tops will be just that, uniform across the teams. We provide three tops to give our teams some flexibility in what they wear, and that becomes advantageous during tournament weekends when you play Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It also gives us flexibility in our own tournaments when we have two or three of our teams playing, so they don't show up wearing the same top. We do give each team the latitude to create their own fourth jersey (within reason) as part of the team budget if they decide to do so.

Jersey pants

As for the pants, in my 21st year of doing this, this is something we will always battle. Regardless of which brand we choose to go with, the pant will fit some kids just right, while not fitting other kids. It's no different than shoes – if we told all 220 kids that they had to wear Nike, the shoe would fit some just right, and others would have a hard time wearing them. We work with our vendor to learn what products are successful and at times we will look to change manufacturers. In the first six years of our Storm Chasers organization, we have moved from one manufacturer to another twice. We will continue to try to make improvements, but recognize that any changes may benefit some, while negatively impacting others.

Team Budget

The team budget will typically cover costs such as:

- Tournament entry expenses
- Additional home games/umpire expenses
- Additional uniform items (hats, socks, belts, jerseys)
- Training/instructional sessions
- Other team expenses

As an organization, we do not mandate team budgets. The expectation is that coaches will discuss with their families plans for the season, which will result in the team budget, and share those details accordingly.

Indoor Facilities

Seven years ago, we did not have our own indoor facility. We were at the mercy of the High School and Junior High to give us gym time. Our teams typically got two hours a week in those gyms during the winter months (after Thanksgiving through March). Teams had to forgo hitting in the gym or had to spend money to rent indoor hitting at The Strike Zone or UBA. And, when a school event was planned, those teams scheduled had to forfeit their practice.

In a very short period (year #2), we were able to find a facility that could provide indoor hitting tunnels. Two years later, we were able to capture additional space and made it more flexible with the ability to turn it into tunnels or keep it open. Our “fielding” facility has been in our possession now for two years. We recognize it isn’t UBA, but we also know we aren’t charging \$2500-\$3000 in support of that type of facility.

Last summer, ahead of Papillion Landing opening, we had dialogue with the City about Papillion Select Baseball being a tenant. The original idea was to leave behind the hitting and fielding facility in exchange for equivalent time at Papillion Landing in their quads and hitting tunnels. Unfortunately, we were unable to land on an agreement that was financially responsible for our organization, while giving our coaches an equal amount of indoor practice time.

I am pleased to tell you that we have begun dialogue again with the City for use of Papillion Landing for the winter of 2019/2020. I am unable to share details yet while we are in the negotiation stages, but I’m extremely optimistic that our 2020 season will include some indoor practice time at Papillion Landing. It won’t replace our indoor hitting and fielding facility but will help to supplement our facilities. It will likely require a small increase in the Organizational Fee for 2020, but we will do our best to keep the costs as affordable as possible.

I’ve often had people ask me, why don’t we build our own “UBA” type facility. At a high level, I have looked in to that type of venture. Unfortunately, to acquire land, build a facility, outfit it with the necessary material, develop parking, lighting, etc., the price tag approaches \$5 million. That doesn’t even factor in the ongoing operating costs.

IN CLOSING

I know that the information above may provide some insight to some of your questions or concerns. I also know that it might raise more questions, or it may not have answered the questions you currently have. As I said in the last newsletter, we won’t be able to be everything to everyone. I will continue to promise you we will commit to do the best we can at the things we do control, and that starts with communication.

In the next newsletter, I will address the following topics that stood out in the survey:

- Papillion Select Baseball tournaments
- Field – game allocation
- Field – practice allocation
- Indoor practice allocation

Look for the next newsletter by the end of the month.

Sincerely,

Mike Apgar – President of Papillion Baseball