

**Montana District 2 Little League
President's Meeting**

**December 6, 2019
Butte Plaza Inn**

PRESENT

Officers

Keith Miller, DA
Meiers, Missoula UIC

Daurine Spritzer, Secretary
Skyler Criscuolo, Butte UIC

Wayne Wade, District 2 UIC Duane

Presidents

Greg McGillen (Northwest)
Chip Parker (Lolo Peak)
Kevin Miltko (Garden City)
Jennifer Hartum (GF Westside)

Josh Bush (Butte NorthWest)
Cory Hafliger (Mount Sentinel)
Amy Babb (Copper City)

Jodi Rodoni (Frenchtown)
Nick Davis (Missoula Westside)
Alyssa Creighton (Beaverhead)

Proxy Voter

Wayne Wade/Americans
Sam Skinner/Riverside

Max Cannon/Mount Jumbo

Duane Meiers/Anaconda

ABSENT

Terry Galle (Anaconda)
Tim Chamberlain (Mount Jumbo)
Kelly Lee (Mile High)
Ned Ellingwood (Treasurer)
Maureen Price (ADA)

Sean Herrick (Deer Lodge)
Zack Griffin (Riverside)
Leann Svir (Americans)
Will McCarthy (ADA)
Stephanie Galle (ADA)

Rachel Baumgam (Pioneer)
Mary Bousman (Malmstrom)
Sean Herrick (Deer Lodge)
Joan O'Neill (ADA)
Shane Meyers (UIC/Great Falls)

Keith Miller called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with roll call and introductions of attendees. He went on to explain the various sections in each league packet that was divided by colored inserts. He called attention to the 2 back sections (purple and orange) that provided examples of how to create a tournament team's packet of information that will be submitted for the District's approval prior to play. He requested that each player has a separate sleeve such as those included in the packet to make it easier to determine if all of the required player documentation is acceptable (proof of residency, model release, concussion release, birth certificate)

The blue section contains materials that are pertinent to a league president throughout the course of the season. It includes a 2020 volunteer application that is required at the District level. Submitting your personal one to Keith shows that we are all compliant and makes it easier to ask our volunteers to do the same.

Keith talked about the service to District 2 that Don Davis (past president of Butte Northwest) and Pat Dudley (District Safety Officer) had given. Both men recently passed away and Keith asked for a moment of reflection for them.

Talking about the District Administrator standards that he has to adhere to, Keith explained what his role is as far as being leagues' link to the International Little League organization. As the DA, he is required to hold 5 District meetings each year to make sure communications within our large area are maintained, and that leagues are adhering to the rules and procedures. Elected every four years, a District Administrator is there to help organize and assure that leagues are helped in developing programs. The Assistant District Administrators are appointed to help facilitate programs in their local area. Duane Meiers has assumed the position of District Safety Office, and Greg McGillen has agreed to be the District Information Officer. Keith will research the possibility of holding teleconference meetings.

Minutes

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to accept the Minutes of the 2018 District 2 Meeting as written; all voted in favor, motion carried.

He asked the presidents to log in to the Data Center and review the league officers as it is near the time that Little League should be sending out the Charter Took Kits. He encouraged them to take the time to read all of the information that is included as it is a timetable of important dates for getting necessary documents submitted to Little League. This information is also available on-line at Little League University (LittleLeague.org/University).

Included in the president packet is a flyer about downloading the Little League Rule Book to your phone. When a league submits its charter, rule books are mailed back. With the app, coaches can have complete access to the entire Rule Book, including any changes that are automatically uploaded. The app only costs \$2 per coach.

The age-chart for determining league age for Baseball has only one matrix in use which utilizes the birthday of September 1st of the current year. The softball matrix still uses the date of December 31st of a current year.

Leagues utilizing on-line registration should have access to a screen as well as putting up League Finder information to help determine in which league a player should register. If listing information on-line, it is encouraged to have the parent go to League Finder which will send an inquiry to the correct league.

Finance Report

The Finance Report was included in the packet and is pretty straightforward. The District generates most of its income on league dues and the sale of advertisements that are included in Tournament Programs. Leagues using the pre-order option for their tournament teams ensures that all players receive one while, at the same time, the District is not stuck with an oversupply of copies. Sponsor ad fees are: \$45 for ¼ page; \$75 for ½ page, and \$150 for a full page. Leagues can get a rebate on the ad fees if they secure new ones.

The second page of the report lists the amount of travel reimbursements that were paid back to leagues. Keith explained how each reimbursement was determined. If a league had an outstanding balance to the District, he deducted that amount from its reimbursement.

The fees also help to cover training costs and other things and are divided equally among all the leagues. By District Policy of charging each league the same amount, Keith feels it encourages them to send people to the umpire clinics, either locally or to San Bernadino. In 2020, there will be 3 people go to San Bernadino: Robert Lane, Bryar Newbary, and Trevor Price. The District pays for their tuition at the clinic, while their local areas split the cost of transportation.

Enrollment Stats

The enrollment sheet that Keith uses to track the enrollment statistics from each league helps show growth or loss of participants for each league. The sheet can document the need for combinations for tournament teams, helps determine how much each league's assessments should be, and shows trends in participation. Keith began compiling the leagues' enrollment in 1997, and it shows that we are almost at 50% of the number of participants as we were 20 years ago. It also shows that creating city-wide softball leagues is showing good growth in participation numbers.

Little League Round Tables

These will take place in San Diego in January. It is a great learning experience as there is nothing better in getting to see how things work when making rule changes. The District will pay for your registration – just contact Keith. The 2021 Little League Congress will take place in January in Anaheim.

Tournament Season

Keith reported that, overall, this was one of the best tournament seasons we have had. Umpires and volunteers were very good and everyone appeared to have a great time.

One problem that was noted was that a t-ball was inadvertently put into play during a baseball game. Duane said that it was just a "play on" situation and not anything that would require "re-do pitch". The ball was taken out of the game. The only thing with consequences is an illegal bat being used. Umpires will be reminded to tell managers that all foul balls will be returned to the home-plate umpire before being reinserted back into play.

Duane talked about the tournament format for the baseball games. Having the two different weekends for Pool Play and the District play worked well. Although District 1 has the capability of stretching their tournaments out for 3 weeks, but the way we do it, teams have to manage their pitchers and their pitch counts, especially when advancing to higher level Pool Play games. Our way also provides more opportunities for players to pitch during Pool Play.

Senior Regional

We are set apart from other tournaments by the way we schedule a full round-robin schedule of games. Most other Regional tournaments are simply a double-elimination format so a team may only play 2 games and be done. Teams really appreciate a chance to play every team that is here.

Tournaments

With the District tournaments being hosted in Butte, Keith will look into the possibility of having the teams traveling there scheduled for evening game times if possible. For the softball program, the earlier that dates are set, the better it will be for those players who participate in both Little League and travel ball. It is sometimes hard to get kids to commit to tournaments so a combined team form can be submitted and approved prior to June 1st deadline.

The weekends went okay for the baseball tournaments. It seemed to work as there were more teams this past year. The softball games were held during the week and also worked well. Garden City Softball's 11/12s advanced to San Bernadino where they had a fantastic experience.

Two District 2 umpires officiated at higher level tournaments this summer. Max Cannon was at the Little League Softball World Series in Portland, and Skyler Criscuolo was an umpire at the Major Baseball Western Regional in San Bernadino. Both umpires were treated very well and had great experiences.

Constitutions & By-Laws

A league's Constitution is required to be updated and submitted every 3 years. By-Laws can be changed but still need to be written down. These can include how a league selects tournament teams, age make up of divisions, etc.

Data Center

The site has been adapted to be easier for every president to utilize throughout the season. If you have problems, please contact Greg McGillen (procountry@yahoo.com). Greg can also help with the Blue Sombrero program.

ASAP

League's ASAP plans have already been accepted in 2019, so a president just needs to be updated with new dates for trainings and meetings. The only exception will be if you built a new field and then you will need to put in the necessary information on it. The District will receive a refund on fees from Little League for achieving 100% compliance by our leagues, and leagues will receive 25% off of their accident insurance coverage if all are completed and accepted by March 1st. The District will get \$300 credit which will be used to buy flags for District winners. Presidents should just submit their plan; they will let you know what deficiencies it has.

Waivers/Charter Cases

Leagues can apply for a waiver to any rule prior to beginning of league play. These must be approved prior to the beginning of a league's regular season. The difference between a waiver request and a charter case is that the Charter affects the structure of a league (like permanent boundary changes) while a waiver affects a process or a rule (a player who resides out of boundaries). Waivers must be refilled every year to be in effect. A player who is waived into a league for play is ineligible for participation on a tournament team (make sure parent knows this). All Waivers and Charter Case documents must be kept on file and included in the Tournament packet if applicable. If you have questions on what needs to be submitted, contact Keith for the proper procedures.

If a league closes registration early, a player may be waived into an adjoining league to participate but must have a waiver accepted prior to play. The president of the home league must agree with the player's participation in the adjoining league. If a player's boundaries change, a iid form must be filled out and retained for the duration of the player's eligibility.

Tournament Rotations

In 2020, Mount Jumbo Little League is on the rotation to be the host for the baseball 8/10, 9/11 and 11/12 tournaments in the Missoula area, and one of the Great Falls leagues will be assigned by Keith. If a league opts out, they will be dropped down the rotation schedule until its next time. There is a sheet that shows what is expected of a league that hosts tournaments, and Keith has the option to amend the requirements if necessary. He did say that the scorekeeper and the pitch-count person should sit together at all games.

Teen Age Division

An opportunity for 3 leagues to combine for one team is a great option for these upper-age divisions. Leagues that have only one major team may be approved to combine with another league if the numbers prove that there is a need. The request for a combined tournament team must be in and approved by June 1st so Keith suggested submitting the required documentation and, if necessary, not fielding a team.

He encouraged the presidents to check on the Data Center to see how many teams the league has chartered and compare it to how many it actually has fielded. A refund request can be submitted if the number is lower than anticipated. A league needs to have to have an official number in the event you need to request a combination tournament team

For the baseball participants ages 13 to 16, they can be chartered as senior baseball, and still be eligible for a Junior Tournament team (ages 13 and 14). A league has to charter both a Senior program and a Junior program to give the players the option for either division.

Junior baseball can be charted for those players between the ages of 12 and 14, while Intermediate is for players between 11 and 13. They can play as a 12 year old in majors and also play in Juniors – but they have to play at least 60% of the games of the division they want to participate in for tournaments. The 50/70 program does not require rosters being submitted, just participant information. Whatever program a player participates, the pitch count still must be adhered to for all divisions.

Background Checks

Presidents are to make sure that all volunteers who have continued access to the children have been subjected to an annual volunteer background check. Any questions on this, call Keith.

OLD BUSINESS

Umpire Outreach Clinic

The 2020 Umpire Outreach Clinic will take place in Missoula on April 25th and 26th at the Dale Clawson Complex. As the cost is equally divided among all of District 2 leagues, it is important that each league sends people to this highly educational event. Sending people to the Umpire School in San Bernadino is a bit of a risk as other programs poach them for officiating. It is good to try to submit those volunteers who are committed to Little League as we pay for their tuition, plane ticket, and shuttle fees. Keith mentioned that the cost for the 3 we are sending to San Bernadino will be approximately \$1,500. Kevin Miltko will approach a person about donating the money to cover this expenditure.

League Assessments

Keith will send out invoices for individual league fees early in 2020. He also reminded leagues of the opportunity to submit a bid to host the Western Regional Senior Softball Tournament if so desired. Just contact him for information.

Miscellaneous

The three baseball Little Leagues in Missoula are going to try to make some changes in boundaries in the near future to try to increase registration numbers in Missoula Westside. Progress on this is very slow.

He reminded presidents that using school attendance as proof of residence can only be an actual school building address. Players who are home schooled or attending an on-line digital school must use proof of residence listing their home address.

NEW BUSINESS

League Dues Assessment

In 2017, the assessment for player fees was raised from \$6 to \$8 per player. This money is set aside to help provide reimbursement to leagues for the travel costs for tournament teams as well as for other district expenses. Every year we have done more as a district by providing clinics, trainings, and other events for all of the leagues. District 2 is the only one in the region that provides any financial support to the leagues who travel to participate in tournament play as well as try to help support those umpires who also travel to provide their services throughout the district. Keith talked about the need to continue doing things as a District to enhance all of the leagues..

MOTION: A motion was made and seconded to retain in 2020:

1. Base dues of \$8 per participant based on last year's enrollment.
2. Umpires Fund: \$100 per league for tournament fund.
3. Umpire School:
 - a. District pays tuition and b. area leagues reimburse district for travel expenses.
4. District-Sponsored Training Opportunities
 - a. Split costs billed as needed and b. open to entire district

All voted in favor; motion carried.

League Tournament Travel Reimbursement

MOTION: A motion was made and seconded to retain the Tournament Travel Reimbursement Structure in 2020:

- I. \$125 per day for out of area travel beginning the day of the first game. Last day not reimbursed if team starts last game before noon or game after noon is last scheduled day of the tournament.
- II. \$750 block sum for teams traveling out of Montana except Little League Baseball and Softball Divisions which fly to San Bernadino through Little League.
- III. Maximum \$12,000 per year. If reimbursements surpass, daily rate will be adjusted – out of state travel tournament paid first.
- IV. State tournament reimbursement – one reimbursement payment goes to the team that traveled the farthest.

All voted in favor; motion carried.

Keith explained how he made the determination on which league received what for reimbursement. If a league travels more than 150 miles for State play, Little League reimburses them \$1 per mile and is returned back to the league as a credit for charter fees. When District 2 sends 3 teams (10/11 and 8/10) to State play in District 1, one league qualifies for the Little League reimbursement while the other two receive the District reimbursement. Both 11/12 baseball and softball state winners are scheduled to fly out of Bozeman so usually do not receive a reimbursement.

Pool Play for 8/10, 9/11, and 11/12 baseball divisions will be scheduled for July 10th and 11th – at either Mount Jumbo (Missoula) or Riverside (Great Falls) unless those leagues decline; in which case, Keith will assign the host designation to another league in the area. The District Tournaments will be held on July 16th – 20th at (8/10 and 9/11) Butte Mile High and the 11/12 Tournament will take place at Butte Northwest's Scown Field. Tournaments for State will take place in District 2. (Please refer to Tournament Schedule in your packet for additional Tournament Dates)

Softball Divisions

Kevin Miltko suggested a possibility of having softball tournament teams play in a 9/11 division instead of an 8/10 division as the majority of 8 year olds are not ready for tournament play. There are several 11 year olds who are not skilled enough to participate on the 11/12 team but would be able to contribute in a 9/11 division. It may be a way to increase the number of teams participating.

Although Keith likes the idea of trying this, he cannot restrict individual leagues into creating tournament teams at this level but suggested that the presidents involved have a conversation with their boards and decide what would work best for their programs. Although Amy Babb is not certain if they will have to have 8 year olds included to fill out a team roster, Kevin said that Garden City Softball will do whatever Butte, Anaconda, and Dillon decide the best age configuration works best for their leagues.

The host for the 2020 District Softball Tournaments will be Butte Copper City Softball Little League with the 11/12 tournament being played on July 6th and 7th.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.