

All League Meeting 2019

Quick Intro - Maheesh Jain

- 2 Kids - 11 and 6 - both at Green Valley.
- St. Louis Native - Go Cards!
- Have coached across sports - Soccer, Basketball and Baseball (Farm, Single A, Summer Team).
- Played more sandlot than Little League.
- Like many of you - played a ton of different sports as a kid (tackle football, baseball, soccer, tennis, etc). More on this later....

Why we are here

- We want our kids to have fun
- We want our kids to be active
- We want our kids to learn something
 - Life skills
 - Sports skills

Implicit

- We want our kids to be safe

SRV Overview

- 500+ kids between 5-16 years old playing baseball in our 2019 spring season.
- Competitive programs (All Stars and Tournament Teams). Less than 40 kids play on an All Star team. Less than 72 kids play on a Tournament Team.
- Rec Fall Ball Program.
- 30+ kids between ages 13-16 play in our juniors and seniors divisions (partners with TVLL and Danville LL). Both rec and competitive teams available.
- 100+ Umpires: Kids 12+ have the ability to be trained as umpires and can earn a stipend for each game they officiate. This is often their first paying job, and their first experience managing adults (yep - they are managing games speed, calls, etc).
- 12+ participants in our Challengers program - which is available to kids who are physically or mentally challenged. Majors teams support challenger games.
- Hundreds of parents volunteering hours to organize programming and maintain fields. We are a 100% volunteer run organization.

A few thoughts on SRV Culture

Recurring themes in conversations with parents:

“I want my kids to have the same types of sports experiences that I had as child”

“Is it insane here or what? When I was a kid, there was a lot more unorganized play. Everything is organized, parents are way more involved, and the programs are expensive.”

“I want them off the screens.”

The **differences** in conversations are around what’s the right environment for their kids: “competitive vs rec”

Youth Sports Has Changed

Children of the 80s/90s:

- Multi-sport: How many sports did you play by age 13?
- Freeplay/neighborhood vs organized
- Daily PE: Focused on movement, gymnastics, etc.
- Parents dropped off (less involvement)

Today:

- Early sport specialization: Elite/travel programs starting at 7
- Everything is organized
- Limited PE in elementary. “Parent coaches are the new gym coach.”
- With as many sports as our kids do - many aren’t actually physically literate.

US Statistics

70% of Kids Quit Team Sports by Age 13 (National Association Youth Sports)

Top reasons:

- No longer having fun
- Anxiety from excessive criticism
- Unsupportive environment from coaches
- Parental pressure
- Injury (often from overuse)

In many instances, well meaning adults have taken over the game.

What They Lose When They Quit

Face to face social connections (think middle/high school)

Life lessons: teamwork, discipline, leadership skills, etc.

Physical activity and the development of healthy habits

SRV Statistics - AA+

- Enrollment in AA, AAA and Majors down approx 30% YOY.
- League had 700 participants in 2015. We are now at 530.
- We lost over 50% of our current 12 year class over the last 3 years (there were 85 9-year-olds three years ago, 40 12's today).

- Talking to parents whose kids have not returned in AA+ divisions, the #1 reason is “no longer having fun”.

SRV Stats: T-ball - A

- Strong enrollment through lower divisions
- Consistent retention compared to prior years

- Challenge: How to we create an engaging experience that keeps kids coming back every year.

SRV Mission/Values

SRVLL is committed to helping kids develop the qualities of community, discipline, teamwork and physical fitness while teaching them the game of baseball. We do this by:

- Providing a healthy, athletic environment where kids learn the values of physical fitness, goal setting, and discipline.
- Provide a organized team environment where kids learn the values of sportsmanship, integrity and teamwork.
- Running a volunteer based organization that exemplifies how members of the community work together to provide an enriching experience for our youth.

We recognize that kids playing in our league have a variety of skills and motivations. Through our programs, our goal is to develop participants into great baseball players, but even better people.

Our organizational culture is based around Little League International's Core Values: Character, Courage and Loyalty.

Our metric of success is not wins or trophies. It's the number of kids who return the next year and keep playing the game.

Let's Hold Ourselves Accountable to Our Mission

Make sure **all the kids** are having fun.

- Nobody signed up to sit on the bench or just play in the outfield.
- 500+ spring players > 40 all star players.

Develop **all the kids** (regardless of ability).

- Create a safe environment where kids can make mistakes, even if it means losing the game.
- Reward effort and attitude.

Run a sanity check: Two weeks after a game, ask the kids if they remember the score. If you do and they don't....

Sportsmanship

Exemplify good sportsmanship. Show kids what it means to:

- Respect your opponents (win or lose)
- Respect the umpires (who are kids)
- Respect the rules
- Be a great teammate

Like effort and attitude - reward good sportsmanship liberally.

When encountering problem parents - please remind them to exemplify the above. If issues continue - feel free to escalate to me.

Measuring Effectiveness

We will be sending out surveys throughout the season to get continuous feedback on how kids are enjoying the season, where we are succeeding and how we can improve.

Parents will also receive a post season survey.

This information will be shared with the board and all managers.

Changes for this year

- Oakland A's Sponsorship: T-ball - Single A
- Farm/Rookie combined: Similar curriculum/psychomotor development
- Single A: Pitching Machine
 - More action = more fun.
 - Pitching development
 - Hitting development
- Gamechanger for scorekeeping: AA+

Community Events

- SRVFest - Pictures, Carnival, Open Community Event: April 13
- 4th of July Parade

- Sandlot Sundays:
 - Tee - Single A: Tee
 - AA+ Kid Pitch: If we can get volunteers - playground style games - no coaches - only adult supervised.

Board and Processes

- Board intros
- Meets monthly
- Annual meeting in August.
 - Active volunteers vote on board members.
- Want to get involved - email me!

Umpires: Rick and Charlene

- Parent Umpire Representative: Keeps an eye out for youth umpires during games
- Sportsmanship concerns: Huge drop in 2nd year umpire participation

Safety: Dr. Charles Preston

Questions?