
BYA PRIDE

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Commissioner's Address

by Muhammad Small

The 2008 baseball and softball season has concluded, and we hope that you found it to be enjoyable and memorable from the gala of Opening Night to the festivities of the Closing Ceremonies and all of the exciting games in between. We hope there were pleasant moments that will stay with us, but moreover, the children, for a lifetime. The regular-season encompassed a 276-game schedule, the playoffs presented 59 thrilling contests, and 4 exciting coaches' games.

In one year's time the program expanded. The total number of registrants was 643, far surpassing last year's amount of 446. Consequently, the quantity of teams increased from 34 to 46. A new division was added to the program for the 13-15 boys. Fifty-one registrants enrolled, which was enough to have four teams. The formation of this age group is important to provide an organized activity for our adolescents.

While the numbers grew, the program also introduced some new features to the playing field. The geometry of two infields was made compliant to the standards of most boys playing baseball around the country. Our 9-10 BB Minor and 11-12 BB Major divisions played at 65 ft and 70 ft, respectively. Despite some pre-season concern about this move, these fine young athletes adjusted to the difference without missing a step.

Our debutantes of the diamond, the ladies of softball, provided us with some unforgettable contests and other experiences. Both the younger and older divisions showcased some great games and extraordinary talent. The intention for 2009 is to have three softball divisions: 7-9 SB Minor, 10-12 SB Major, and 13-16 SB Junior. Whereas, for baseball, we hope to expand into a BB Senior 16-18 age group to go along with the already existing 7-8 BB Rookie, 9-10 BB Minor, 11-12 BB Major, and 13-15 BB Junior.

As for the backbone of our program, the 5-6 Tee Ball Instructional division, a curriculum will be devised in order to have a lesson plan for the development for our future stars of baseball and softball. For example, at the mid-way point of the season the players should be learning how to swing at live pitching and begin to discard the comfort of the tee-stand.

Baseball & Softball is the first department within BYA to initiate an annual fund-raising effort for the upgrade of the facility. The Departments of Basketball and Football & Cheerleading are to follow suit. Every organization, regardless of how opulent or destitute, has fund-raisers -- and some of them have multiple fund-raisers per year. The big picture is improving the BYA organization as well as each individual program with the fund-raisers -- and for this reason alone every team (baseball, softball, tee-ball, football, cheering, and basketball) should want to do its part. The first alteration that is scheduled to occur is the purchase of an LED sign to keep the membership informed about all events, activities, and occurrences pertaining to the organization. BYA is just waiting for the other two sports to contribute their financial portions. There is a long list of needs that is necessary for the improvement of the facility. Hopefully, next year the three sports will raise enough funds to obtain scoreboards for the several fields. The BYA Board of Directors and the Baseball & Softball Committee genuinely expresses their gratitude to all the teams that raised funds for the benefit our youth.

After a hiatus, we re-entered teams into the Williamsport Tournament. The district asked us to host six contests, and under the direction of the deputy commissioner a staff of gracious volunteers was recruited who exhibited Brentwood's hospitality to every guest from our neighboring towns. We had three baseball teams compete and each faired-well. The 9-10's and 11-12's advanced to the quarterfinals, and the 13-14's were one game away from the district championship. Districts are geographical areas that encompass 10-20 local leagues, or Little Leagues, as they are usually called -- and each of these local little leagues contain multiple teams per age group similar to the BYA. Every town enters the best of their teams -- an amalgamation of All-Star talent from their Little League programs. Our program is 1 of 13 local leagues within District 35. District 35 has no less than 350 teams under its umbrella. With this being said, we can see that our BYA teams are extremely talented based on our district tournament advancement. The pinnacle of the Williamsport Tournament is the Little League World Series that is aired on ESPN every year. As each team advances in the town, district, sectional, state, and regional brackets they get closer to the apex of this tournament -- the national championship from the U.S. Region, and then the world championship versus the International Region champion -- thereby, making an appearance on the national broadcast of ESPN, the worldwide leader in sports.

The work of baseball, softball, and tee-ball does not stop with the conclusion of the season. During the off-season there will be conferences to discuss and revise, where applicable, the administration and operation of the sport [from marketing to registration to drafting to equipment distribution and return to uniform purchasing to grounds keeping maintenance to game-scheduling to planning opening day to evaluating umpires to enforcing rules to tracking pitch counts to conducting coaches

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meetings to updating standings to organizing Williamsport representation to assigning fields for travel teams to ordering trophies to arranging closing ceremonies to mediating differences as well as addressing several other unmentioned and unexpected concerns and needs throughout the course of the season]. Many have expressed a concern about the professionalism and quality of the umpiring, and consequently, Deputy Commissioner Shani Iodice has already begun addressing this issue.

We are checking the feasibility of having either individual team or league-wide yearbooks for 2009. And since many coaches and parents have expressed wanting more baseball options other than Williamsport and travel baseball after the spring season concludes we are making an attempt to introduce a BYA Fall League for baseball and softball.

By far, the Department of Baseball & Softball is the largest operation within the BYA organization. Therefore, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate everyone (players, parents, coaches, umpires, and spectators) for another wonderful season; and it would not have been the same without the competent members of the Baseball & Softball Committee: the professionalism of Dr. Jeanne Courbis, the zeal of Ricardo Melendez, the sincerity of Carmelo Gonzalez, the knowledge of Eric Perdomo, the enthusiasm of Jerry Morales, the insight of Rich Gonzalez, the passion of George Felix, the diligence of DJ DeJesus, the experience of Ray Martinez, and with a special word of gratitude for the dedication of Kail McLean, the integrity of David Otero, and the supervision of Shani Iodice – and the thoughtful counsel of the entire group. There are not enough words to express their priceless value to the program, which garnered them the distinction of being BYA’s Executive of the Year.

In 2007 the league was composed of 6 divisions, this year it expanded to 7 divisions, and for next year the blueprints are designed for 8, possibly 9, youth divisions as previously stated. The Baseball & Softball Department has no intentions to remain stagnant or rest upon its laurels. Our intentions are to further expand and improve the program. Parents presently enrolled in the program should expect postcards in December with registration dates for January, while flyers are to be distributed throughout the all the schools in order to increase our registration numbers.

My heartfelt gratitude is extended to the community for allowing me the honor to oversee the BYA Baseball & Softball program. I hope that I represented the commissioner’s office in a manner befitting its authority and responsibility. Enjoy your summer and God bless.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Small

Muhammad Small
Commissioner
Baseball & Softball

Williamsport Summary

by David Otero

Many great things happened during the 2008 Baseball / Softball season, as noted in the Commissioner’s address. One of the biggest accomplishments this year was the re-entry of the Brentwood Youth Activities into the Williamsport Tournament. This year we entered three teams into the Little League Williamsport Tournament. The three baseball teams entered were the 9-10, 11-12, and 13-14 age groups coached by Mel Soto, Mike Jahkhah, and Miguel Rodriguez, respectively.

The youngest team, led by Coach Soto, finished the tournament 1-2. During their play Coach Soto was supported by half of Brentwood with a great home victory on the first Sunday in July. League MVPs Joseph Masselli and Santino Ycaza along with Donte Iodice turned in great performances. The team lost a well-played game in game two but eventually fell short later in their third game.

Coach Jahkhah's Major 11-12 team was one of the last four teams remaining in district. This team started out strong and was lead by League and All-Star MVP Jonathan Romero and Championship MVP Keishan Pierce. They faced some tough competition, but the talented players on this team gave them a run for their money and finished with a 1-2 record.

The Junior Division 13-14 team advanced the furthest by reaching the District 35 Semi-Finals. They suffered a tough first round 9th inning loss that didn’t stop them. They won the next two games before losing in the semi-finals. This team was comprised of many great athletes including League MVP Brandon Ycaza, All-Star MVP Eric Perdomo, and Home Run Derby finalist Fabrizio Zanabria. Coach Miguel's squad played every game on the road and finished with an impressive 2-2 record.

In addition to our player participation, the District office asked the BYA to host six games throughout the tournament. We received many compliments from the participating teams on our field preparation and hospitality. None of this could have been accomplished without our wonderful volunteers. The organization would like to express a special word of gratitude to Edeliz SotoMayor, Marcey Matos-Hodge, Carla Patrick-Alexander, Carmelo Gonzalez, Ricardo Melendez, Rosemary Flores, Cassandra Melendez, Joe Otero, and Jose Burgos for all their help in hosting these games. We would also like to thank the coaches and parents for all their hard work and dedication in making our participation this year a great success.

In 2009, we plan on entering a team in each of the 7 divisions from softball and baseball. From this years result, the next District 35 Champion may come from Brentwood. Check back next year to see how we do!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOOTBALL PRESEASON

DATE: AUGUST 1ST

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

PLAYER AGENT	VACANT
PARLIAMENTARIAN	VACANT