

**RFYBO Board Meeting ~ Monday, October 12, 2009**  
**Kilkarney Hills**



**Discussion with Coaches:**

- 1) Feedback from coaches on tools to make them a better coach:
  - a. Tools that coaches need or would like association to find to assist with coaching skills:
    - i. Beneficial to have coaches clinics
      1. i.e. St Thomas Coaches Clinic was very beneficial this past year
      2. Twins clinic has been helpful in past
      3. Get word out earlier about close by clinics
      4. Play Ball MN – in April each year – usually on Gopher State website – RFYBO needs to advertise on its website
      - 5. Quarterly communication tool – newsletter that would be emailed or mailed out to association members – Action Item that Board needs to initiate – send via email/post to website and remind members to check website for new updates. (post March 7, 2010 from 6-8pm as RFYBO Registration Night at HS Commons)**
      6. How many people actually look at website – coaches do look at it frequently and think newsletter would be beneficial – and alert people to look at website more frequently for updated information
      7. Opportunity for coaches to visit high school practices – learn new drills and skills to incorporate at younger age level
      8. Ben – has seen other programs where high school level coaching staff goes through what they like to see and incorporates into younger level coaching staff.
      9. HS Head Coach has always encouraged others to come and watch high school level practice – could prove to be more valuable than attending a clinic.
      10. In past – have done every other year where one year Ryan Bishop and coaching staff will assist in putting on a coaches skill session, opposite year bring in other ball program coaching staffs (St. Thomas) – key is timing of when skills session will be hosted..

11. Last year – it was on a Monday night (as tryouts were hosted on a Sunday) – Rosters were handed out at Monday coaches training session

 **Starting out the Season – what could board do to make communication with parents more smooth?**

- 1) **What is the philosophy for each age group – more competitive as it gets older – give parents heads up that as player gets older – it will be more competitive (need to get this on website at each age level – take bylaws and do a recap for each age level so parents are aware of expectations, competitiveness etc. at age level)**
- 2) **Take bylaws and expand in more narrative form on website at each age level – so player and parents are prepared for change in level**
- 3) U10's are usually unaware of expectations – have a mentor at U10 level to assist in giving coach pointers on the process – someone who has been a part of the process before
- 4) Definite transition at the U10 level – so many parents are not aware that the philosophy is changing - (going from Park and Rec and transitioning into Youth Baseball program) – i.e “I want my kid to catch”...etc
- 5) **Narrow down who potential coaches will be earlier in the process – will be key with future teams – (at least have age levels figured out)**

Who wants to coach next year? As an association, need to know who is signed up and volunteered and willing to assist or head coach.

Gary Langer - yes

Jim Williamson - yes

Bert Penny - yes

Jeff Feyereisen - yes

Matt Graetz - yes

Aaron Cudd - yes

Ben Fraser - yes

Fred Barr - yes

Brett Norman - yes

Phil Gribble - yes

Mike Peterson - yes

## **Tournaments**

Nice to do an Early Bird – allowed kids to connect and brought families together – got to know each other better (Witt) – traveled to St Cloud in May – main purpose was to build comradery – booked rooms, had to get away as families, kids bonded, parents bonded, kids get to know each other

- Last weekend in April – good revenue maker, gets the kids a couple of games on the front end, only drawback is if weather is bad
- Don't need many teams – just go round robin / works well.
- Thoughts on board funding 2 tournaments? And playing in our own. Total of 3 tourneys is good and then state if they qualify. Coaches in agreement that this is a good number.
- What will association pay for without raising registration fee? Right now we can keep cost below \$200 with 3 total tourneys. Board will pay for auto state qualifier, but not if in by default.
- **Many boards do pre-pick tourneys to insure that they do not fill up.**
- Need to determine levels before making that decision.
- **Younger coaches are not always aware of their responsibility to book tourneys etc – can be overwhelming, so it may be better at younger levels for board to schedule tourneys ahead of time. – can always cancel if ends up being a bad weekend or there is another tourney coach would prefer to register for.**
- As ages get older, more repetition with coaches and their responsibilities. Have System down and know the “whens and hows”....by then coaches have knowledge of what communities have better tourneys –
- May want to share with up and coming coaches which tourneys were better.
- **Umpiring – for our tournaments – something needs to be stated about scheduling about more than one umpire on the field for the day – we had a situation that one umpire signed up for 6 slots in a row on a field – by 3<sup>rd</sup> game – becomes pretty fuzzy for an ump. Assign 3 umpires to 2 fields and let them rotate (awful lot to expect from an ump) – need to talk to Pechacek about this... (Witt) – others in agreement with this**
- Lack of turnout at U12 level (if home tourney is not well attended, allow for possibility for team to travel to another town?) Trouble with this is we are out revenue and board

has to expend additional dollars to send team to another tourney...when it would have been free at home...

### **Scheduling Workers for Concession stand**

- 1) Add box to registration acknowledging that you will be expected to work a 4-6 hour shift at one home tourney and occasionally at home weekly games

#### **Level of Play**

- 1) 10 year olds – going from 2 to 3 – we diluted the team talent. Struggle with going into Metro and Gopher State. All teams had some players that should have not been on the team – so perhaps better to cut these kids who are not cut out for baseball and go with 2 teams.
- 2) Clearly better to not dilute – and go with 2 teams –
- 3) Board’s perspective was that park and rec is so “under par” as far as skills being taught – development taking place.
- 4) Do you lose the 15 kids for good to park and rec that get cut, or do you put them on a traveling team and hope that they will develop more with better coaching, better experiences with traveling team
- 5) Cutting kids – that want to play traveling – we are sort of blind to Triple AAA, Double AA or A – (have we ever put a team in A ?) –
- 6) What is the philosophy at U10’s (developmental ) feeder program for the high school – Ryan agrees to a certain extent – 140 kids – senior class of 6 (that’s pretty good). Careful that it is not solely focused for development of high school ball.
- 7) Should be a stepping stone for park and rec –
- 8) Langer – 3 levels of coaching (2 kids never played baseball ever), kids who had played on prior teams, spent most of his energy on these kids who had no skills.
- 9) Williamson – biggest disappointment – was not having the time to push the better kids to the level they needed to be. More skilled kids get frustrated with the losses due to kids who are struggling and bringing the team down.
- 10) Establish a minimum level/ability – and incorporate this into tryouts
- 11) Who do you get to coach kids at lower ability levels (B’s) –
- 12) Ryan – if park and rec program was more inclusive and worked with traveling ball – need to partner with them –
- 13) U10’s – suggestion by Jim Williamson
  - a. Joint practices for first two weeks – develop those kids and then determine the team selections

- b. Need to let Leagues know by end of April –
  - c. Confidence is key at developing players
  - d. Do we want to commit the other 8-9 kids to park and rec or keep the 2-3 kids that shouldn't be there ...keep them there so the other 8-9 can develop at the traveling level
  - e. No cut is not the way to do it at the high school level –
- 14) Evaluation has to be longer at the traveling level – (especially at the U10 level) – at the U10 level you don't know what you are getting –
- 15) Objective – non parent coaches / or do we bring coaches in and have them help with evaluations
- 16) How do we make a longer evaluation due to weather? Suggestions?
- a. Williamson disagrees on weather situation –
  - b. Have 2 knowles sessions on skill development
  - c. Extend to 2 time periods – 10 and under – have coaches present to begin evaluating in this setting ahead of time

**Evaluation Process – selection of teams:**

- 1) Ben – after coaching a year, coaches need to be a part of process – Ben first hand would have evaluated differently after coaching kids a year (he evaluated not fully being aware of their overall skill level and ability)
- 2) Maybe you bring in more “situational settings” in the tryout
- 3) Coaches Evaluations should be mandatory and maybe come into play 20-30% of the placement in the year to come. (Williamson)
- 4) Original evaluation had this on the sheet, but if coaches weight differently – then it is difficult to compare – Phil Gribble disagreed with making coach's evaluation mandatory as part of the tryout weighting. Felt that board is doing a good job and current process is working.
- 5) Fred Barr – responded confirming that we do utilize coach's evaluation when we have “3-4 bubble kids” that could clearly be go in either direction –

Final Wrap Up –

Discussion of Park and Rec and how RFYBO can help Park and Rec further develop

- ✚ Bishop – Feels that as a starting point, need to change “Park and Rec” name to River Falls Youth Baseball
- ✚ Pull all ages into RFYBO program (from tee ball through 4<sup>th</sup> grade)

- ✚ Park and Rec can keep the money, but in order to transform the program and insure that those levels change in the area of instruction, skill development, etc. the program needs to be ran through RFYBO.
- ✚ Barr – difficult for Danke to give this up – too much risk for her if it fails and she has to bring it back. Bishop disagreed and felt that there was little risk due to it being a very “small” piece of the Park and Rec pie. More discussion on this – Coaches in attendance were interested in continuing discussion at a later date. They want to do what they can to further develop park and rec program and unite it more closely with efforts of RFYBO.
- ✚ Conclusion – overall feedback was to put effort into proper placement of players at the U10/U11 levels (sound reasoning behind number of teams, skill level of players, etc). – Maybe offer additional sessions to these younger players pre-season at Knowles and have potential coaches present to become more aware of their skill level/ability before tryouts/team selection etc.
- ✚ Coaches appreciated opportunity to provide feedback and would also appreciate being invited to future meetings for open dialogue.
- ✚ Create a “Did You Know” flyer that could be handed out with registration form to make parents aware of some of the expectations for players at different age levels (i.e. helping rake fields after practice/games, etc.)
- ✚ Meeting adjourned