



WECSSO

WINDSOR ESSEX COUNTY SENIOR SPORTS ORGANIZATION

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SLO-PITCH REPORT -Ron Ottogalli

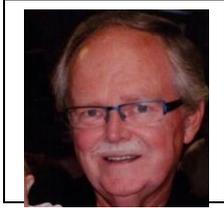
What can be said about our past winter that has not already been said? We thought that the weather could not be any worse than what we experienced last summer with all the rain that we received in our area. The rainy conditions resulted in a number of games being cancelled. I guess Mother Nature was not quite finished with us, as we soon found out. What is in store for us this summer? No one knows for sure what weather conditions will confront us this season. We do know this: No matter what the weather or playing conditions, the players, as in past seasons, will give it their best efforts. The players realize that our league is about good sportsmanship, having fun and getting much needed exercise. The players also know that errors will be made, fly balls will be dropped, base running mistakes will happen, batters will strike out or make out in crucial situations- the players know that this is all part of baseball and we also know, in these situations, that words of encouragement are much more beneficial than words of criticism. The player feels bad enough without someone reminding him that he” goofed up”. Remember when you point a finger at someone, three are pointing back at you!!!!

Since my last report, there have been a few significant changes in regards to WECSSO. Rick Anderson is our new slo-pitch commissioner. Rick takes over from Jack Westlake who decided not to continue in his present role. Brian Adlam is now the President of WECSSO. Brian takes over from Bob Parent who figured that it was time to give the job to another person. Brian and Rick should do a fine job in their respective roles. They have big shoes to fill but these two individuals, with your support, will work very hard to see that our organization continues to thrive as a senior sports group in Windsor and Essex County.

Our annual slo-pitch meeting was held on Wednesday April 23rd at the Serbian Center. The purpose of this meeting was to welcome players, both new and old, and to inform them about the changes that have been made since last season. Rick Anderson chaired the meeting. He introduced the current slo-pitch executive, named the convenors for each division, who in turn, introduced the managers of each division. The use of the pitcher’s screen, the schedule, bat policy, the rules, and Our Code of Conduct resulted in some lively discussions but, as usual, Don Balkwill was up to the task of answering all the questions posed to him. All in all, the meeting was very informative for the players who attended and it seemed like they were very eager to get the season started.

Our website, wecsso.com, contains a wealth of information as it pertains to our organization. Our web master, Carla Hicks does an excellent job of keeping our website current. Some information that can be found on the website includes: schedule, rules, Code of Conduct, slo-pitch executive, WECSSO executive, teams by division, managers of each team, convenors of each division, bat policy, cancelled games. Please get into the habit of using our website to keep abreast of the happenings of WECSSO throughout the year.

In closing, I would like to stress the fact that was mentioned several times by a number of speakers at our annual meeting. This is a RECREATIONAL LEAGUE. Winning is secondary to having a good time. We have a CODE of CONDUCT that we expect all our player to READ and FOLLOW. The executive feels so strongly about this, that we will require that every player signs that he has read and agrees to follow the code of conduct. There are a number of players who played last year but for a number of reasons are unable to continue to play this season. Count your lucky stars that you are not one of them. Remember what Rick Anderson keeps stressing over and over...IT IS JUST A GAME!!!!!!



President Brian's Corner

PLAY BALL!!! The sweet sound of Spring is upon us and once again we can dust off the gloves and spikes and enjoy this great outdoor sport. A special welcome to the new players playing for the first time with us. We hope that you will enjoy the season and the camaraderie with fellow players.

The new Slo-Pitch Executive under the direction of our new Commissioner, Rick Anderson, had a busy fall and winter preparing for this 2014 season. The biggest task was in setting up guidelines and rules for the use of the pitching screen. It's great that most pitchers, if not all, are making the adjustments and a few new players are now considering pitching. The safety of our players is of the utmost concern to the executive and we thank you for your support and patience as we introduce this new aspect of the game.

Opening Day was bright and cool and there was a good attendance from all 3 divisions. Special thanks to Casey Jones for opening prayers and Gord Gunnel for his remembrance of those players that have passed on since last fall. Wendy Wood with her son Eric and grandson Leaf completed the opening ceremonies with the ceremonial first pitch. Wendy's husband Jim played in the C Division. Eric was very thankful to have had the opportunity to honour his dad and other members with the first pitch.

We have now instituted an Honour Guard Policy to honour our deceased members at the funeral home.

The Convener of the division for the player that passed away will organize an honour guard following the steps below.

1. Once notification of a member's passing is received, the Slo-Pitch Commissioner or WECSSO President will contact Carla Hicks, our webmaster, to send out a mass email indicating that we would like to put together an honour guard and to **ask you to respond** to the Convener if you are able to take part. Carla will also put the obit on the website.
2. The Convener will make a decision on whether to put together a guard based on the number of responses, with six members being a minimum.
3. Once the decision is made to go forward, the WECSSO President will contact the family to see if they would like to have an honour guard. Respecting the families wishes, the Convener will contact those who responded whether it is a go or not. Members taking part are asked to wear their coloured shirt for their division.

This is a very nice way of showing our condolences and support for a members passing. Let's do our best.

Jim Bridge and Bill Fleming have done an excellent service for us in running the bingos at Classic 1V on Walker. They are in need of help. Volunteers are needed to work a couple of hours. If we can get 6 – 10 members to volunteer then you would only be asked to work one every other month or so. If you can help out, please call Jim at 519-969-9029.

Special thanks to Tom Bois and his committee for organizing and running the Lou Dupuis Memorial Bowling Fundraiser. This was the first year the event was carried out following Lou's passing last year. It marked the 10th year for the event and it was very successful. Look for a write-up in this newsletter.

President message cont'd

WECPA, the Pickle Ball group that has been with us for the past 5 years, has split into 2 groups, one of recreational players and one of advanced players and they are no longer associated with each other. Both groups feel they are self-sustaining and as a result of the split, WECPA is no longer affiliated with us, and the advanced player group will remain independent as well. We received a thank you from WECPA for help in initiating their program in 2009 and for the donations for equipment and other assets over the past 5 years. We enjoyed our relationship with the pickleball group and a number of our members have taken up the sport. WECSSO's mandate is to help develop and organize recreational activities for seniors. Even though the pickleball group has ended their affiliation with us, we are pleased that we were able to help this group get started and flourish to the point of having over 200 more seniors taking part in an active sport.

Have a great season. "Swing for the fences"

Ron Ottogalli

UMPIRES

Once again, as in past seasons, our games will be officiated by VOLUNTEERS. Bill Scheureman is once again responsible for assigning the umpires. The umpire's job is not an easy one. At times, split second decisions must be made. You may not agree with a call. That is your right. However it is not your right to show your disagreement by yelling or screaming at an umpire. This is not acceptable behaviour and it will not be tolerated. The best way to see how difficult an umpire's job is at times is to volunteer your time to ump. Bill is always looking for new recruits. He will gladly add you to his list of umpires. Bill would like to have two umpires at each game. This is not always possible due to numbers. If you have free time, please help Bill and our league by putting in your name to ump. WECSSO would like to express our thanks and gratitude to those individuals who volunteer their time during the season. Also, even though it may not seem apparent at times, your dedication and commitment is much appreciated by the players.

The Dugout

Please support the concessions at the Ciociaro Complex. Megan and Matt Janisse manage the facility. They make sure that the diamonds are well groomed and maintained. Most of the costs of improvements to this Complex have been borne by Megan and Matt, not the Ciociaro Club. If you wish to have a beverage or a bite to eat after the game, please consider supporting the Dugout. The service is friendly, the food is good, and the prices are very reasonable. By directly helping them, you are indirectly helping WECSSO.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

1. May 5/6- OPENING DAY
2. July 16th WECSSO APPRECIATION DAY- Serbian Center 1pm-rain or shine
3. August 16th-REMEMBRANCE DAY- Dieppe Park-10am-rain or shine
4. August 18/19-PLAYOFFS BEGIN
5. October 8th-WECSSO ANNUAL BANQUET-Serbian Center

REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY – AUGUST 16TH- 10:00 AM

WECSSO WILL BE HOLDING A MEMORIAL SERVICE AND PLACING A STONE IN MEMORY OF THOSE WE HAVE LOST SINCE LAST YEAR, AT THE FOOT OF OUELLETTE AND RIVERSIDE DRIVE.

JAMES WOOD, ANNE HAMMOND, HAL RAWSON, GERRY VIDLER, GLEN MC PHERSON, ED GAGNON, FATHER JACK COSTELLO AND JACK SCHROEDER

Protocol for Games Cancelled Due to Inclement Weather

1. Matt or Megan Janisse will go to the diamonds early in the morning.
2. Matt will call or e-mail Rick Anderson, hopefully by 7:30am.
3. Rick will e-mail Carla Hicks (web master) and the convenors.
4. Carla will put the info on the website, hopefully by 8am
5. The convenors will call the managers.
6. The managers will e-mail or call the players.

Report on Child Sponsorship - 2014

by Brian Adlam

We are sponsoring a young boy, Jerson Gabriel Gonzalez Rodriguez, from Nicaragua. This is our fifth year sponsoring him. He is ten years old and is in grade 3. Jerson lives with his sister and parents in the small community of Oscar Turcios in the city of Esteli which is 150 kilometres north of the capital, Managua. His mother is a homemaker and his father is an agricultural worker.

We received a Child Progress Report from the Christian Children's Fund of Canada on May 22/14 indicating that in April an earthquake had hit the community where Jerson is living and that Jerson and his family are safe. In the past few weeks there have been dozens of aftershocks and many children and their families were seriously affected with water being scarce and homes damaged. Thirty-two medical clinics were damaged and all schools were closed. The Red Cross and government agencies have responded to start the difficult task of rebuilding.

Jerson is looking forward to getting back to school where his favorite subjects are math and science. Our sponsorship is \$456 per year. Money is used to buy school supplies, clothing, and anti-parasitic, anti-louse medicine. We also sent a \$50 gift for Jerson and his family this past Christmas, 2013.

We can continue to sponsor Jerson until he is 18, provided he stays in school.



OPENING DAY CEREMONY – MAY 04, 2014 – RICK ANDERSON

Slo Pitch Commissioner

SLO-PITCH EXECUTIVE – Ron Ottogalli

The WECSSO slo-pitch executive is made up of ten elected members plus the president of WECSSO. The members are elected at the WECSSO annual meeting held in November. Any player can become a member of this executive. Simply show up at the annual meeting and have someone nominate you for the executive. The names of the current executive can be found on our website. This executive is responsible for the operation of the slo-pitch league. The executive meets regularly during the winter months to discuss any changes to the league. The proposed changes are discussed in length amongst the members and any change must be passed by a majority vote. The discussions become quite lively at times and some members may not agree with certain changes- having said that, once the change is voted on and approved, all the members support the change(s). You must remember when changes are considered the executive looks what is best for the league. You, as a player, may not like some of the changes but we, as an executive, expect you to follow them. A famous person once said: You can please some of the people all the time; you can please all of the people some of the time; BUT you cannot please all the people all the time.

A major change this year was the implementation of the pitching screen in all divisions. We realize this is a controversial decision to some players but it was felt that it was incumbent that we protect the most vulnerable player-the pitcher. The pitcher is only fifty feet from the batter and with the high powered bats now available for use the risk to the pitcher of getting hit and injured by the ball is now greater than ever. We also realize that it will take some time for the players to get used to playing with the pitching screen. The rules that we will follow in regards to the screen can be found in our set of rules. Please read and become familiar with them. We realize that the use of the screen is an on-going process. Changes, if needed, will be made as the season progresses. If you have any suggestions, please contact a member of the executive.

Playing rules were either modified or changed during the off season. The changes were highlighted by Don Balkwill at our slo-pitch meeting in April. Each manager has a copy of the rules plus they can be seen on our website. Please become familiar with our rules so that you can become a more informative player and maybe avoid embarrassing situations in which you complain about a certain rule, make a big “stink”- only to discover that you were in the wrong. Once again, you may not agree with a certain rule but remember the rule is for the betterment of the league as a whole.

The slo-pitch executive works very hard on YOUR behalf. Decisions made by this group may not be popular but are made with the intention of improving the league for all of its members - not just a select few. Unfortunately we have some players who continually “wine and complain” about any and all decisions made by this committee. Luckily this is a very small minority and the slo-pitch executive knows that any decision that we make will be supported and approved by the vast majority of our players. This is what keeps us wanting to be on the committee - we know that we can make a difference and our efforts are much appreciated by the majority of our players. The executive will continue to make decisions for the betterment of our league and not worry about the “naysayers” among us.

The WECSSO executive made a decision to investigate the costs related to adding some good bats to each team. Brian Adlam, Rick Anderson and Ron Ottogalli will check prices and were given a budget and the approval to buy 32 bats. Stay tuned and we will see what happens.

Lou Dupuis Memorial Bowling Charity Event – May 2014

As many of you know this was WECSSO's 10TH year holding a Charity Bowling event, which we renamed the "Lou Dupuis Memorial Charity Fundraiser Event." We wanted to keep the event going in remembrance of Lou's efforts over the past nine years in which he lead the committee and raised over \$53000.

Once again we had a great committee who met a few times to plan the event in Lou's honour. Several of these committee members have helped put this event on every year and keep coming back year after year. We also had some help from others who wanted to join in the planning and process of getting prizes donated. Nick Stein and Glenn Bondy opened the event by throwing the first balls.

The committee consisted of: Betty Cheswick, Brian and MaryAnn Adlam, Vern Meloche, Gary Poole, Wayne Henderson, Geoff McKay, Bob Parent, Earl Sisson, Mike Desjardins, Meri Bois, George and Nicki Brooks, Marie Martin, Brenda and Tom Bois and John Post. We also had help from Ron Ottogalli, Nick Stein, Bob Hinds and a few others to help out to set up the prize tables and help with registrations to make the event run smoothly.

We had a fantastic day, with 176 bowlers having a great time. There were several 300 games thrown. Although our total number of participants was down we managed to still have a very busy day and raised \$6267.45 for the charity. We had several bowlers who normally would have participated but due to conflicts in the date; they were unable to bowl but were very generous in supplying a donation or prizes. Over 100 bowlers went over to the Moose Lodge for a great pasta dinner following the bowling.

We could not have pulled off such a successful day without the generosity of many individuals who supplied the hundreds of items for the prize tables. We had many prizes also donated by some companies as well. Wayne Henderson won \$300.00 in our 50/50 draw and donated it all back to the event.

One of our major contributors was Motor City Community Credit Union. They were so generous and helpful. Becky Langlois , Marketing manager, could not do enough for us and provided many prizes as well as a check for \$500 to kick off our day. Please thank them when you are there conducting business if you are a member; if not consider, investing there. They are truly Community minded and help out many causes.

The charity committee met and WECSSO will be sending donations to the following youth related groups:

1. Windsor Police Community Services Branch
2. Sandwich Teen Action Group
3. WEC Special Stars Soccer League
4. Riverside Floor Hockey
5. Forest Glade Baseball League
6. Windsor-Essex Therapeutic Riding Association
7. Forest Glade Optimist Club



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Bingo dates 2014

June 21/2014	10AM - 4PM	August 30/2014	4PM - 10PM
July 25/2014	10AM - 4PM	September 0/2014	10PM - 2AM
August 16/2014	10PM - 2AM	October 24/2014	4PM - 10PM
		December 6/2014	4PM - 10PM

Anyone able to help out at these bingos, please call Bill Flemming 519 948 9984 or Jim Bridge 519 969 9029.

We need more participation from more ball players or there will be no more bingos. We only ask you to work 2hour shifts.

Jim Bridge

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