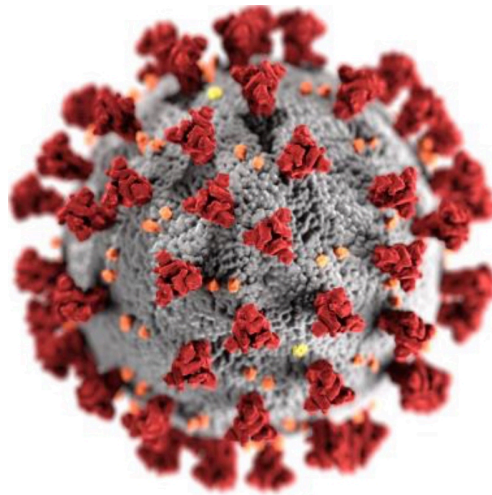


June 2020



The Enemy... it looks like a ball we would all love to wack over the fence with a trusty Ultra II.

Hopefully, all of you reading this are staying healthy and in some kind of softball shape. Who would have ever thought this little unseen bug could cause such trouble, it has taken the life of many, made countless others sick, caused an economic disaster, and totally up screwed up our softball season. There is hope, several of us have been able to get outdoors and swing the bats, I have even heard of a couple teams getting together for practice games. Youth sports are now able to start practice, so hopefully soon they will let us old guys get out and play the game we love.

SSUSA is not confirming any tournaments until 2 weeks prior to posted date. I understand why, but it sure makes it hard to make travel arrangements. Personally I have over \$1,000.00 in credits with Southwest Airlines. I talked to my buddy Fran at SSUSA and she told me they are going crazy trying to keep up with all the uncertainty. All of us as managers have been receiving emails on SSUSA's safety policy for games, in case you haven't seen it, below I copied it for your reading pleasure.

National Senior Softball Summit

Recommendations for Return to Play

May 19, 2020

These recommendations incorporate the common elements of National Senior Softball Associations' individual guidelines for reopening the sport for senior divisions.

Each association has additional rules and recommendations. These recommendations only list the common elements and are designed as a guideline and to display the united effort of all national senior softball organizations to re-open the sport in the safest possible way. It is recognized that this is a fluid situation and recommendations may change as the situation evolves.

Each association goes beyond some of these guidelines for competition in their organization.

Senior softball is NOT a large spectator sport, but an activity that lends itself to safe play and social distancing by the very nature of the sport. There are few spectators at senior games.

National Senior Softball organizations are dedicated to work together in an effort to re-open our sport in the safest possible manner so that senior athletes and their families and friends can once more enjoy softball in America.

1. All Associations refer to all applicable guidelines including, CDC, national, state, local Health Department, and facility Recommendations for Personal Hygiene, including:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose – with a tissue, if possible – when coughing or sneezing, then properly discard the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid close contact with anyone else who is coughing or sneezing or who is otherwise sick. People who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave the park.
- Wash your hands often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Social Contact

- There will be a “no-contact, no-handshake policy” to be observed, extending to all physical contact, including customary game-related activities, such as umpire-coach introductions, and post-game handshakes between members of opposing teams. Instead, staff, players and coaches should tip their caps or simply say “good game,” without shaking hands, high-fiving or fist-bumping.
- Players will be expected to maintain social distancing before and after the game – and during the game when possible.
- Plate meetings are limited to the umpire and one coach per team and are to maintain social distance.

Dugout Rules

- Players and coaches are to maintain 6 feet of distance and are allowed to be outside the dugout in order to maintain spacing.
- Bench personnel are limited to one or two coaches.
- When one team leaves the dugout, the next team will need to wait until all players have exited, before entering.
- The dugouts will be periodically disinfected, either by park personnel or tournament officials or players.
- There will be no community water jugs. Each participant will be responsible for bringing their own water.

Game Recommendation

- Players and coaches are instructed not to share equipment.
- Softballs are to be kept in their original package until they are introduced into the game.
- There will be a new ball for each game.
- After a ball has been introduced into a game, it will be periodically sanitized.
- Players and coaches are allowed to wear face protection (masks or face shields) during games and it is recommended that they wear face protection between games.
- No seeds, chew, or spitting.
- Umpires wear face protection (masks or face shields).

Spectator Rules

- Spectators will be requested to bring own chairs – bleachers may be unavailable, or used as part of the expansion of the dugout.
- It is recommended spectators wear masks.
- Spectators are required to maintain 6 feet social distance.

Waivers

- Players/teams will be asked to sign a waiver recognizing potential danger of both injury and contracting of illnesses during tournament play

Memories from the Ball Field

By Steve Szabo

My Wow Moment In The Batters Box

I didn't start playing softball on a regular basis until 11 years ago at age 62. The last time I played was 35 years prior to that on an under organized neighborhood team that didn't even hold practices. So at age 62 I started on a co-ed and mens team for the Longmont CO town recreation league.

At age 66 I discovered that Colorado had senior softball teams. So I joined up on 55 plus team and I must say that the guys are competitive, but all are easy to get along with. I feel honored playing with a great bunch of individuals.

Three years back I joined a 70's plus team, so now I'm playing on two teams and really thrilled to get out twice a week, and we even have practice.

Two years ago on my 70's team I experienced my wow moment at the plate. We were playing an undefeated team and our team was at 500. The undefeated team was up by three runs at the top of the last inning. Our number two and three hitters got on base. Our number four hitter had a .800 average and had 16 home runs for the season. So the undefeated team decided to walk him and pitch to me the number five hitter. I fouled off the first pitch, so I had some anxiety. On the second pitch I hit a shot over the right fielders head and it just about made it to the fence. I ran hard and made it home, and we won by one run. Wow that was a great feeling.

I am so grateful for the Colorado Senior Softball Association in developing an excellent program for all seniors that want to get out there and play.

Steve Szabo
Longmont, CO

Note: Steve is a new member to our Scrap Iron club, he is on Terry Goodrich's 5280 travel team and plays on my Wednesday league team, if that ever happens! I met Steve at BP In Longmont and have become friends, he is a great guy I'm anxious for all of you to get to know him. Art

PERSONAL SOFTBALL THOUGHTS

By our President, John Parisi

As I sit at home this weekend, my thoughts about playing softball stay amplified. It has been 25 years since I had a season without playing in leagues and tournaments and 50 of the last 59 years. There is so much more to the game besides winning and losing. Don't get me wrong, winning is most rewarding and losing is very difficult. Winning I remember forever and losing I tend to forget over time. The feelings I have playing the game, especially now as a senior, keeps me motivated to continue to improve myself even as age and health robs me of what I was back when. Why is that?

I always want to do my best and be my best for myself and teammates. I miss the positives, high fives, fist pumps and other forms of recognition that happens on the spot and after. I have received more positives from my teammates after an important hit or fielding play than I would get saving the company at work a hundred thousand dollars.

Remember Monty Python, Life of Brian, "Always look on the bright side of life". All players on the field are supportive and positive in their approach to other teams and most players. As much as I want to win and the other team to lose, the players are all worthy of positives for plays well done. In business, I read it takes 40 positive customer experiences to make up for a single bad review. The reverse is truer in softball. One positive response far outweighs a negative experience. By human nature, we capture the positives and let go the negatives. Why, I don't know, but I can recall many positives and have blocked out many negatives. It is a good feeling to be on the plus side of life.

We want the best equipment – bats, gloves, shoes, etc. – to have an advantage and be at our best. Why do we look at our glove after not making a play or our bat after not getting a solid hit? We don't want anything to limit our success on the field.

I grew up having baseball and football heroes, wishing I could share and feel what they have, to be like them. I never came close. Softball games, especially tournament play, are the closest I will ever get. When it happens occasionally, I am on cloud nine. I can never get enough of that feeling. I cherish the opportunities to be one of the heroes and to produce for our team. I admit it is addictive, but it feels so good.

WOOD BAT TOURNAMENT MAY BECOME A REALITY

Date: July 12, Sunday. One day tournament, Fund raising event

Costs/donation will be \$250.00 per team (Cannot use Scrap Iron tournament funds for entry)

If we get enough individuals who want to play, but their team is not in it, we will put them together as a team. Already have interest in this. If individuals playing but not with their regular team (a donation of \$20.00 per player).

Food will be sold there (basic picnic items, similar to Robin's tourney, several years ago
Number of teams will determine format

There will be a 45 to one hour lunch break, so we can all have lunch together.

Bruce has a beer distributor who will supply some beer, if we find a beer friendly location. Thank you Dan Silvey and your committee, Bruce Brothis, Jim Riley, and Eddie Buonaiuto for all the work you are putting in to make this happen.



Donations year to date \$750.00.



Amazon smile donations year to date \$57.38

Favorite Baseball Memory

By Pat Mcguigan

Back in 1965, I played center field and hit fourth for Whittier College in Southern California. I have many great memories from that experience, but none of them match up with the one I have of my 16 year old Grandson two years ago. Justin was a top notch catcher for a large high school program in the Chicago area. His high school team was making a run for the Summer State High School title and fought their way into the semi-final round of this huge tournament.

Concurrently, his travel team was well into their season, so he was playing almost every day at the time. In the semi's, his public High School team was set to face all powerful St. Lawrence, the top rated Catholic School in the state of Illinois. This St Lawrence team had 5 D1 commits in its lineup and had average 10.2 runs per game in the state tournament up to that point. Justin was soaking in the tub at home the night before the St Lawrence game after having caught 7 full games in 4 days. As he put it, "I'm sore as hell right now, but trying to psych up for tomorrow's game. My arm and both my legs are in pretty bad shape." After he got off the phone with me, his cell phone rang again and his high school coach was on the other end of the line. "I need a favor" is how the conversation began. His pitching staff was on borrowed time and the kid slated to start on the mound the next day had to leave town suddenly and was not available. "Can you pitch for me tomorrow? "

Now, Justin had been an excellent pitcher prior to his high school days, but his coaching staff would not take him out from behind the plate which was actually fine with him. He loves catching. Through his junior year, Justin had not pitched in a baseball game in roughly 2 ½ years. He had never thrown a high school pitch. His immediate response to "the favor" was "Sure Coach." Sure you can do this the coach asked? I know how done in you are right now. "No problem, coach. I'm feeling great." (Yeah, right. Kids like this one of mine can be the biggest liars on the planet.)

Going into details would take up half this newsletter. One of my great regrets in life will always be my failure to get on a plane to fly back and watch him pitch in a game like this, even though I knew his chances of hanging with this powerhouse group from St Lawrence was as close to impossible as it gets. I guess it's getting obvious where this story is headed. The kid gave up 4 hits, walked 2, threw 115 pitches, and walked off the mound with a 2-1 win after a scoreless bottom of the 7th. The following day, his team soundly defeated their opponent in the final by a score of 9-1 to capture the Illinois State Summer High School Championship trophy, a game in which he had 3 hits and threw out two runners at second from behind the plate. In his senior year, his high school team won the toughest public conference in the state. My guy Justin was named team MVP and then Conference Player of the Year. He now plays for Concordia in St.

Paul on a nice baseball scholarship. He won the starting job behind the plate as a freshman this year and was leading his D2 conference in throwing out base stealers when COVID brought the season to an abrupt halt. He's one of the lucky ones in getting the chance to play beyond high school and he's having the time of his life, or at least will resume doing that once they get to play ball next Spring after having their season shut down by the pandemic.
I love this kid. Me, I'm just trying to be a block off the young chip.

Food for thought...This is a recent article on the risks - while I am concerned, I will play.

'I'm Anxious to Get Out and Compete': Senior Citizens Still Plan to Play in Travel Softball Tournaments During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Public health experts aren't thrilled

Read in TIME: <https://apple.news/ATNKH1sHySSiGXwldWty8yQ>