
Vermont Senior Baseball News

The newsletter of the Vermont Senior Baseball League Inc., founded 1984 by Floyd Brown

A hardball league for age 35 and over that plays a safe, fun, and competitive game of baseball in an atmosphere of good sportsmanship
Issue No. 13 August 2, 2005 edited by Mike Wagner

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Results of Sunday, July 31, 2005:

Burlington 9, Champlaine 0 (first game)
Champlaine 2, Burlington 1 (second game)
Colchester 29, Winooski 1
Barre 6, Northfield 1
Montpelier 5, Waterbury 4
Mad River Valley 4, Conn.Valley 0
Chelsea 7, South Royalton 4
Lake Region 7, Killington 0
St. Johnsbury 7, Columbia Newport 4
Newport Cubs 8, Caledonia 7 (10 inn.)
Jericho 11, Williston 8

Standings:

Team	W	L	Pct.	Games Behind
Mad River Valley	10	1	.909	---
Barre	11	2	.846	---
Lake Region	9	2	.818	1
Colchester	9	3	.750	1.5
Chelsea	8	3	.727	2
Newport Cubs	8	3	.727	2
Jericho	8	4	.667	2.5
Burlington	7	5	.583	3.5
Killington	7	5	.583	3.5
Montpelier	6	6	.500	4.5
Champlaine	5	5	.500	4.5
Caledonia	5	6	.455	5
St. Johnsbury	4	7	.364	6
Williston	4	7	.364	6
Conn.Valley	4	8	.333	6.5
South Royalton	4	8	.333	6.5
Waterbury	3	10	.231	8
Northfield	2	9	.182	8
Columbia Newport	2	10	.167	8.5
Winooski	0	12	.000	10.5

See page 3 for an explanation of the playoff and championship format

Game results and updated standings are posted on our web site by 7:00pm Sunday

<http://vtmsbl.com>

Honoring Floyd Brown

League founder and long-time President Floyd Brown passed away in early January 2005 at the age of 77.

A lifelong baseball player, coach, umpire and fan, Floyd was the impetus behind the creation of the Northern Vermont Old-Timers Baseball Association in 1984 (the name was changed in 2003). Floyd served as league President from 1984 through 2003. He was a player-coach for the Newport team, and even had a few at bats during the 2004 season.

A bronze plaque honoring him will be unveiled on August 14 at Gardner Park when the two Newport teams play each other. The league championship trophy has also been named for Floyd and will be rotated among the championship teams starting this year.

Below, in July 2004 our league presented Floyd with a plaque in the shape of home plate and he also received a letter of appreciation from the national MSBL



Baseball Skills Clinic for Senior League Players Held at UVM

On Saturday, January 22, 2005, 32 players from our league attended a skills clinic presented by the UVM baseball coaching staff at the Gardner/Collins indoor facility on the UVM campus in Burlington.



After an opening session of stretches and warmups run by pitching coach Anthony DeCicco (photo above), the players broke into groups and went through 3 stations for drills in pitching, batting, and infield play. This was followed by an additional time period in which participants could repeat any station for which they wanted more instruction.

Comments by the players who participated were uniformly positive. One player noted that "I can't believe I learned something new, the 5 different types of throws from the second baseman to the shortstop on a force play". UVM head coach Bill Currier was also pleased, saying "We didn't know what to expect as far as skill level or coachability of your players, and they were terrific on both counts".



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Coaching Baseball

Starting August 29, a course for present and aspiring coaches at all levels: High School, American Legion, Babe Ruth, Little League



UVM Assistant Coach Jim Carter teaches this 2-credit course, which is offered through the Continuing Education Department at UVM. **The class meets Monday evenings from 5:00pm to 7:30pm, from August 29 through December 5, 2005.**

All facets of baseball are covered, and there is a different guest speaker at each class, including Steve Ferreira, the highly successful head coach at Essex HS who also plays for the Jericho Indians in our league.

The course number is EDPE 121 (computer code 90024).

To enroll or for more information, contact the Continuing Education Department at 656-2085 or register online at: <http://learn.uvm.edu/?Page=courses/fall/physed.htm>

You can also contact Coach Jim Carter at 899-4767 or by email to Susan.Carter@cesu.k12.vt.us

New for 2005: the League Logo is Available on a Uniform Patch

After a lot of hard work by Rocky Harlow, the league's former Secretary, a league logo was created, and it is now available as a 3" diameter sew-on patch.



Every team was given 20 patches to distribute to their players.

In the photo at left, Vince Buttice shows the proper way to display the patch, on the right sleeve.

Playoff and Championship Format

This information is based on league rule 17, which explains the format of the playoffs and championship. A player must play in at least 4 regular season games with one team in order to be eligible to play for that team in the playoffs and championship.

Teams will be seeded based on final standings from the regular season, using this order to break ties:

- 1- Complete won/lost percentage (*note that tie games are NOT half win, half loss, they are not counted at all*)
- 2- Head – to – head won/lost percentage
- 3- Fewest runs allowed **per game** in regular season
- 4- Coin toss or random drawing

In any playoff and championship, the home team is the higher seeded team (#1 is higher than #2, etc.). **Teams keep the same original seed position throughout the playoffs and championship;** a lower seeded team which wins against a higher seeded team does not gain the home field advantages of the higher seed position.

The first 10 teams in the regular season standings will be called the upper division and their playoffs will lead to the league championship. The remaining teams will be called the lower division and their playoffs will lead to the lower division championship.

Aug. 28, Upper Division Play-in (teams 1-6 bye)

Game 1: team #10 at team #7
Game 2: team #9 at team #8

Aug. 28, Lower Division Play-in (teams 11-16 bye)

Game 3: team #20 at team #17
Game 4: team #19 at team #18

Sept. 4, Upper Division quarterfinal round

Game 5: game #2 winner at team #1
Game 6: game #1 winner at team #2
Game 7: team #6 at team #3
Game 8: team #5 at team #4

Sept. 4, Lower Division quarterfinal round

Game 9: game #4 winner at team #11
Game 10: game #3 winner at team #12
Game 11: team #16 at team #13
Game 12: team #15 at team #14

Sept. 11, Upper Division semifinal round

Game 13: game #5 winner vs. game #8 winner
Game 14: game #6 winner vs. game #7 winner

Sept. 11, Lower Division semifinal round

Game 15: game #9 winner vs. game #12 winner
Game 16: game#10 winner vs. game#11 winner

Sept. 18, League Championship

Game 17: game #13 winner vs. game #14 winner

Sept. 18, Lower Division Championship

Game 18: game #15 winner vs. game #16 winner

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Craig Armstrong

Last Chance to Sign Up for the MSBL World Series in Phoenix, Arizona

There are still a few roster spots available for the Vermont teams in the annual post-season MSBL World Series tournament in Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 24 - 30, 2005.

If you want to play, send an e-mail message to Mike Wagner at mike@wagner-usa.net or call 802-334-7514, then mail in the form below with your money. The league does not subsidize the cost, it is up to the players to pay their own way. Be prepared to pay \$275. This will cover the tournament entry fee and uniform jerseys and hat (those who played before pay \$210 if they still have the uniform). Checks should be made out to Vermont Catamounts / Mike Wagner and mailed to Mike at PO Box 10, Newport VT 05855.

What is it?

An annual end of season tournament played on major league training fields around Phoenix, Arizona. It attracts about 5000 players on 400 teams, in different age and skill divisions. The games are 9 innings with full rules: stealing, etc. Each team plays 6 games in 4 days Monday through Thursday, then playoff and championship games Friday and Saturday as needed. There is an awards banquet on Saturday night Oct. 30; usually there is a guest speaker from the major leagues at that event.



Our teams:

Our league's two teams are each called the Vermont Catamounts. We will have one team in an age 48+ division and one team in an age 38+ division. These are both WOOD

BAT ONLY divisions. Under MSBL tournament rules a player is eligible if their qualifying birthday occurs any time through December 31. Our league's age restrictions

for pitching DO NOT APPLY to MSBL tournaments: everyone is eligible to pitch.

Travel - air:

Last year most players got tickets from Burlington to Phoenix for about \$320 round trip per person. Players should arrive on Saturday, Oct. 22, and return home on Sunday, Oct. 31.

[As of July 29, Jet Blue was offering a fare of about \$240 round trip per person from Burlington to Phoenix.]

Travel - rental car:

Avis and Enterprise offer discounts for MSBL members. Last year we rented a couple of vans and the cost worked out to about \$100 per player for the whole week.

Travel - hotel:

The team stays at the Marriott at Phoenix Airport (44th St.), which is conveniently located to the main MSBL field at Tempe Diablo Stadium, and to other fields. It has a dining room, weight room, pool with Jacuzzi and full hotel services (laundry, room service). Basic rate is \$99 per room per night, plus tax. This is a team rate for a minimum of 10 rooms. Each player can take a room or 2 players can share a room, same price.



Above, last year's age 48 and over Catamounts. Back row left to right: Jimmy Keith, Ray Foley, Maury Tinker, Neil Stanzone, Scot Stevens, Robert Crain, Mike Rowe, Terry Van Gundy. Front Row left to right: Mike Wagner, Joe Allard, Jim Charkalis, Johnny Kalinen, Rey Reyna, Jeff Blankenship.

Application Form For MSBL World Series, Phoenix, Arizona, Oct. 24 – Oct. 30, 2005

Which division: age 38+ _____ age 48+ _____

Name _____ Date of birth (month-day-year): _____

Address _____

City-State-Zip _____ Played in MSBL WS before? Yes _____ No _____

Telephone _____ If no, desired uniform shirt size (M-L-XL-2XL) _____

Email _____ and desired number _____

Regular team name _____ Positions played _____

Tournament entry fee \$210 (first paid, first served). Add \$65 for uniform (2 jerseys and hat). Make check payable to Vermont Catamounts / Mike Wagner, and mail to: Mike Wagner, PO Box 10, Newport VT 05855

Interview: Joe Allard



Joe Allard, who will be 50 years old later this month, is in his 5th year in our league. He is a pitcher, catcher and infielder for the Columbia Newport team. This will be the third year that Joe will play for the league's team at the MSBL World Series tournament in Phoenix in October.

VSBN: Where were you born, where did you grow up and where do you live now?

Joe: I'm a Vermont native, born in St. Johnsbury. I went to Lyndon Institute. Now I live in West Burke and I work for Gilman Housing Trust in Lyndonville. I help people get low-interest loans and grants for fixing up their properties, for example to add handicap accessibility.

VSBN: Did you play baseball at Lyndon?

Joe: No, they didn't have a baseball program then. I was on the track and field team. I threw the discus and javelin. I wasn't that great but the team won the state championship.

VSBN: Did you go to college after high school?

Joe: No, but I'm making up for it now. In my spare time I have been going to CCV; I have a 2 year degree in Liberal Studies and I am taking classes toward a Bachelors degree in Psychology.

VSBN: I recall that you missed some games due to a military obligation. What's your military status?

Joe: I served in the Coast Guard from 1980 to 1989, at various places along the Atlantic coast. Now I'm a Senior Reserve Petty Officer in the reserves and I go to Burlington one weekend a month plus two weeks a year. In 2003 I was activated for 6 months for harbor patrols in New York City. I also worked there during the Republican convention in 2004.

VSBN: Have you done any coaching?

Joe: Sure, this year I coached a team in the age 13-15 Babe Ruth league and another team in the senior Babe Ruth league. Then I coached the all-star teams for age 13 and also age 16. The age 16 team went to the regionals in Westfield, Mass.

continued next column



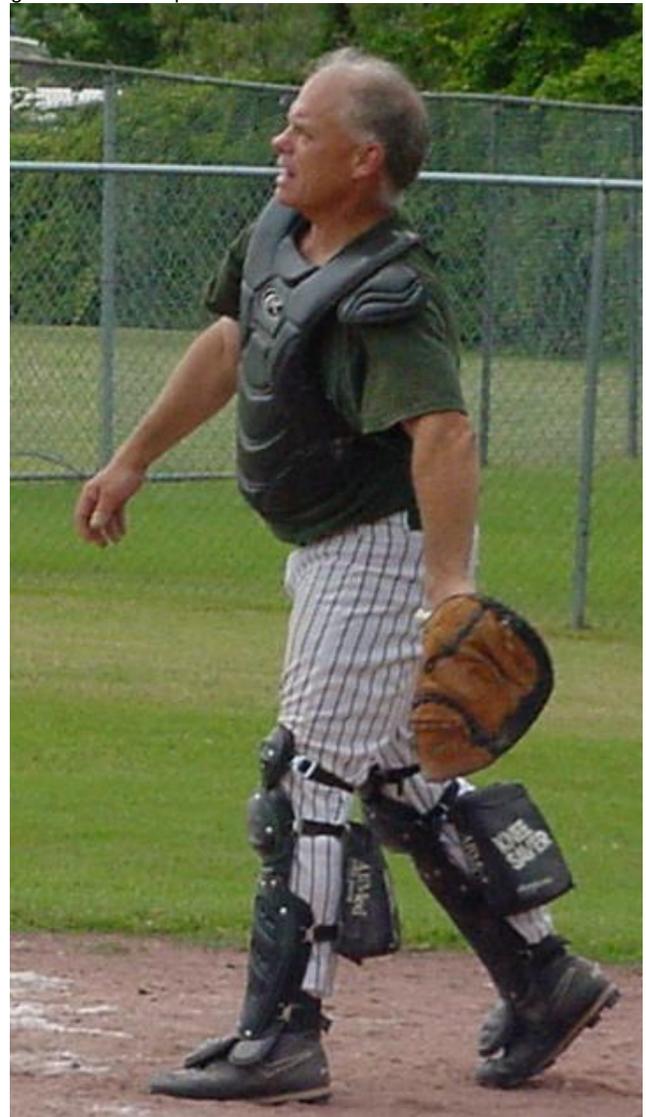
Above, Joe holds off from swinging at an outside pitch. The catcher is Gary Royer of the St. Johnsbury Tigers and the umpire is Martin Rivard.

VSBN: What do you like about the postseason tournament in Phoenix that keeps you going back to it?

Joe: It's the closest I'm ever going to come to the major leagues. You play on their spring training fields and they are in perfect shape. Also since our team there has players from different teams in our Vermont league you end up having friends on all the teams in our league. ♦



Above, Joe delivers a pitch while shortstop Carl Farnsworth watches. Below, after pitching a few innings Joe often finishes the game behind the plate.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor: How does the courtesy runner rule work? I've seen teams put runners out there seemingly at random.
Lou B.

Dear Lou,
The intent of the rule is to allow guys who might get injured if they run hard to still play, but when they get on base then someone else can come in and run for them. The player who comes in to run should be the last player who was out.

But there are some exceptions. The current pitcher and the current catcher are excused from duty as a courtesy runner. Anyone who takes a courtesy runner when they get on base cannot themselves be a courtesy runner for another player.

It does create some weird situations. In a recent game I made an out, then we had 5 hits, the last of those by a player who needed a courtesy runner, which was me. The inning continued, and eventually I was on 3rd base with 2 outs but I was also the on-deck hitter. The batter got a hit, and I crossed the plate and immediately ran to the dugout and grabbed my bat and hustled back to the plate because I was up again. ♦

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Bottom of the Lineup

By Mike Wagner

This season we have had more postponed games than ever before, 27 to be exact. Through July 31, 13 of those games have been made up, with another 6 makeup games planned before the regular season ends. The other 8 games will just be unplayed games that won't be included in the standings.



That's a pretty good result, considering the nature of our league, with teams dispersed over a 100 mile by 60 mile area and only one field available for lighted midweek evening games.

Some of the makeups were accomplished by teams playing two Sunday games in two different towns. Some involved both teams going to Barre to play at the lighted field there on a Thursday evening. Still others were doubleheaders between the 2 teams on a later date. Some teams used the July 2-3 weekend, when no games were scheduled. In all cases, there was some degree of hardship and extra effort on the part of the managers, players, family and fans.

There has also been some discussion among the managers about whether teams which will not have completed all their games have tried hard enough to schedule makeup games. I don't see any evidence of not trying. For a lot of players, the requirements of work and family mean that the only time they have for baseball is a few hours on Sunday. Their teams can't put 9 players in the field at any other time. Nevertheless, it is valid to discuss the creation of a rule or policy which would create an incentive for teams to make up missed games, and this will probably be done at the league meeting prior to the 2006 season.

League meetings are open to all players, but voting is done with one vote per team. If you have an opinion on this or any other topic and want it to be heard, either come to the meeting yourself or be sure your team manager will bring it up at the meeting. ♦

Vermont Senior Baseball News

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