

ROLAND PARK BASEBALL LEAGUES, INC.
4612 Roland Avenue * Baltimore, MD 21210
410-467-9182
Imacsherry@aol.com

January 2012

Dear Roland Park Baseball Families:

Hello to everyone as we gear up for another fun-filled season of the Roland Park Baseball Leagues (RPBL). Is it too cold to think about baseball? On the contrary, in just three (3) short months, we will be on baseball diamonds throughout North Baltimore, celebrating the 61st season of our healthy league. Please be patient with the length of this letter as there is a lot of information to pass along.

Registration is now open and can be completed by returning the enclosed forms, or at the league website – www.rolandparkbaseball.com. Simply print out the registration forms on the website, and return by mail, or in person, to the address above. For those who prefer personal contact, a “walk-in” registration will be held on Saturday, January 21st at St. David’s Church, 4700 Roland Avenue, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This is a great way to have any questions answered in person and meet some of the great, hard-working volunteers who make this league what it is.

2012 REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th. Our league grows each year – last season we had around 800 players – and roster spots fill quickly. Please make your plans now. Also, note there is a place on the registration form to request that your child be placed on a certain team or with friends. ***We consider all such requests, however, due to issues of competitive balance, we often are not able to honor them. Your cooperation and understanding is appreciated, but more importantly, get your registration in NOW. Late registrations will make it more difficult to place your child onto a specific team.***

2012 Picture Day is Saturday, March 3rd. Players will be photographed, meet their coaches, and receive uniforms and caps at the School of the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, located at 5200 N. Charles Street. This is also a great opportunity to bring in your gently used equipment (gloves, pants, cleats, socks, etc.) for other players to claim. This is the reason we schedule the older teams first, so the equipment that has been outgrown can be passed down to the younger players. Please gather all you can and place it on the table in the basement where the teams are assembled.

2012 Opening Day is Saturday, March 31st.

As in recent years, RPBL will offer five leagues:

- T-Ball League: designed as an individual introduction to baseball (ages 5 and 6).
- International League: where coaches pitch to players (ages 7 and 8).
- National League: where children pitch to each other. The bases are set 60 feet apart (ages 9 and 10).
- American League: played on a diamond with 70 feet base paths (ages 11 and 12).
- Teen League: this is the real thing - baseball played on a regulation, 90 foot diamond (ages 13-15).

Eligibility is determined by a child's age on April 16th. For example, a player that is age five (5) on April 15, 2012 would be eligible for T-ball; a player that is age ten (10) on April 15, 2012 would be in the National League. Exceptions are sometimes made for special circumstances.

RPBL is a full participation or "recreation" league. All players participate in every game they attend, and the emphasis is on improving skills, making friends, and, above all, having fun. We also offer travel teams for players that are seeking a more competitive experience. For more information, please see the enclosed letter about the various travel teams.

The registration fee this year is \$100.00 for the first player in the family, and \$75.00 for each additional player in your family. These fees are the same as last year.

The 2012 RPBL Closing Ceremony is Saturday, June 9th. The RPBL Closing Ceremony will be held at The Gilman School. Immediately following the ceremony, All-Star Games will be played in the National, American, and Teen Leagues. Another great opportunity to see some great baseball, last year, we continued the Sandlot tradition and had the boys from the Teen League manage their teams. It was great fun!

RPBL Rule Changes:

Reiterating "safety first", and our continued commitment to skill development, the league adopted many rule changes for the 2010-11 season, such as mandatory rest periods for pitchers and bat size limitations. No new rule changes have been implemented for 2012, but a recap of the changes for last season are as follows:

For the 2012 Season, the bat regulations that are applicable to players in our various leagues:

Teen League

Bat Barrel: 2 5/8 inches in diameter or less.

Length/Weight Differential: No more than -3 for high school students.

No more than -8 for middle school students.

All Other Leagues

Bat Barrel: 2 ¼ inches in diameter or less

Bat Performance Standard (BPF): 1.15 or less

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE OF THESE REGULATIONS BEFORE PURCHASING BATS FOR YOUR PLAYERS!

2011 RPBL Sandlot Day:

Last year, RPBL held its first ever “Sandlot Day” on Saturday, April 30, 2011 for all teams in the National League, American League, and Teen League. On this day, the kids took control of many aspects of the game, such as establishing the batting lineup, assigning positions for all players, and even coaching the bases, among other things. By providing a platform for the players to have “control” of the game, it is envisioned that they will be afforded an opportunity to think creatively about the game, to negotiate with their teammates for equitable playing time and assignments, and to work on their problem solving skills. This is the way “we” played baseball when growing up and in this climate of “over-organized sports” it created a great paradigm shift for many kids who have not been able to participate in this manner. We will continue Sandlot Day in April and may even expand it to 2 games.

To be clear, the coaches and parents will be on hand to help, if needed, but if last year’s successful efforts by the players are repeated, this will be an annual RPBL tradition.

These are exciting times and baseball is such a great conduit for so many lessons for our children. Please remember this is about the players and having fun. As our motto states, “Little League, Big Fun!”. We, as parents, can sometimes get caught up in the competition of the game and lose sight of the main goal for our kids: having fun with their friends and being able to say they are a better player, and team mate, at the end of the season. I will continue to encourage all spectators to cheer their players on the field, show respect to the coaches and umpires by not making negative comments, and to cheer the opposing players when they make great plays. One of the many fond memories I have as a coach in this league was when my short stop made a diving, spectacular catch and the opposing team’s spectators erupted into applause to cheer an amazing play. That’s what RPBL is about!

If I can answer any questions, please contact me directly at: driegelrpl@gmail.com.

I’m looking forward to another great RPBL season!

Sincerely,



David W. Riegel
Commissioner, RPBL