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SIDELINES

Published for the parents, players and supporters of Springfield Youth Athletic Association

OCTOBER 2002

Frank Staskiewicz, Jr., Editor

TRANSITION TIME

Baseball Commissioner Jeff Kreifels, and Softball Commissioner Jim Bowers, have spent several years serving our diamond sports program. Both were already deeply involved when I moved to Springfield six years ago, and I know their service to the ball players in our community extends even further into the past. Both of these devoted volunteers will relinquish their positions when their terms expire in February 2003, so I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their tireless dedication over the years.

They'll step aside after watching our diamond sports program achieve unprecedented success in 2002. In June the 10 and Under softball team finished second in the Todd Valley League tournament, and the Pony 2 baseball team won the inaugural Springfield Classic wood bat tournament. In July the Mustang All-Stars baseball team finished runners-up in their district tournament then went on to claim SYAA's first state title. The Pony All-Stars won their district and finished runners-up at state!

Jeff and Jim helped build our program to its present level while developing a winning tradition, and now we'll need new leaders to "carry the torch" in coming seasons. An organization like ours requires many volunteers to keep our programs running smoothly while improving. Now is the perfect time for some "fresh faces" to fill positions and share new ideas and perspectives on our purpose and how we pursue it.

As you read through this edition of **SIDELINES**, you'll realize some other key volunteer positions have opened. SYAA needs some of you to get involved, so please contact me or any officer in the weeks and months ahead to discuss any open positions you're interested in filling. Nominations for board positions are presented at the January Board meeting, followed by elections at the February meeting.

The Board approved Luke Shepherd as Basketball Commissioner at its August Board meeting. Luke is an assistant varsity boys basketball coach at Platteview High School, so he'll provide a strong connection between the high school basketball program and our program. Luke is presently putting details together for fielding our first competitive basketball teams this fall and winter. Likewise, Volleyball Commissioner Leigh Ann Amerine is working with Platteview's varsity volleyball coach, Jason Owens, to plan our inaugural season of competitive volleyball slated to get underway soon.

We're striving to provide basketball and volleyball athletes an opportunity to play competitively against teams from surrounding communities, much like our diamond sports teams have done for years. Several basketball teams have played independently for many years, and our goal is to provide them with sponsorship including equipment, uniforms and liability insurance coverage. Watch for further details on our web site, in your mail box, and in the papers sent home from school with your children.

We've also been approached by Kevin Wilson, a Platteview parent and assistant track coach, about sponsoring a track club to support off-season competition for track and field athletes. We're investigating the possibilities and should know more in the months ahead.

(continued inside)

SIDELINES is the official publication of: **SPRINGFIELD YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION** P.O. Box 409 Springfield, NE 68059

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We're online at www.syaaonline.org

SIDELINES

SYAA
P.O. Box 409
Springfield, NE 68059

TRANSITION TIME (cont.)

Our football program is thriving in its third year of existence under Mike Williams' leadership. I know the Platteview football coaches are very excited about their prospects for future success, because they see the tremendous potential of our football "feeder" program to develop better players. The same can be said of basketball, volleyball and track. All of these sports will benefit Platteview's programs in the years ahead.

We're clearly working hard toward transitioning away from our roots as "the baseball group" to a complete provider of competitive athletic opportunities for youth in our community. We'll suffer some growing pains along the way, but at some point in the future we'll be able to look back on what we've achieved with a great deal of satisfaction. Much like Jim Bowers and Jeff Kreifels can do today.

Thanks again guys for all you've done for SYAA. And thanks to the countless other volunteers who contribute a lot of little things that help us succeed at all we do.



Frank Staskiewicz, Jr.
President

EXTRA POINTS

Cheerleaders

Thanks to the efforts of Dianna Jeffery, young cheerleaders are on the sidelines of our football games this fall. The girls worked hard to raise funds needed to purchase uniforms and pom poms. They're coached by Platteview cheerleaders Ashley Brunberg, Dottie Davis, Nicci Flavell and Jill Wilson.

Springfield Classic Wood Bat Tournament

Our inaugural Pony wood bat baseball tournament, dubbed the Springfield Classic, was a huge success last June. Congratulations to Springfield 2 on winning the championship. Springfield 1 swept the skills competition as Ben Iske (long hitting), David Case (long throwing), and Brad Staskiewicz (base running) won their events and helped earn the team title for their squad. Springfield's three Bronco teams competed against two Gretna teams in a wood bat exhibition and had a lot fun.

The following players won the Kids Hitting contest for their age groups:

5-6 years old	Michael Hermann	
7-8 years old	Shawn Starks	Lauren Kreifels
9-10 years old	Jim Walters	Regan Swanson
11-12 years old	Tyler Carlson	

Numerous parents and community members worked very hard to make this event a huge success. We're grateful to every one of them for all their hard work during a very hot and dry week. We look forward to hosting the event again in 2003.

Ball Field Preparation

We thank Clay Krapp, Roger Ernst, Doug Streeter and Bill Lawson for preparing ball fields for games last season. These men pitched in to help out whenever needed and did a great job. Thanks guys!

DIAMOND SPORTS SUCCESS

Our diamond sports program began its most productive run of success ever last June when the 10 and Under softball team finished second in the Todd Valley League tournament. The girls lost their first game but battled all the way back through the losers' bracket, and they didn't lose again until they fell to Bennington 1 in the championship game.

The same weekend Springfield 2 emerged from the dust of a three-way tiebreaker to edge Springfield 1 and Wahoo 1 for the Pony championship in the inaugural Springfield Classic wood bat tournament. Springfield's two teams played great baseball throughout the tournament and placed six players on the All-Classic squad. Pony 1 swept the team and individual skills competitions held in conjunction with the tournament.

The heat of July produced unprecedented achievement for our baseball program. The Mustang All-Stars finished runners-up in their district tournament at Westside/Westgate with a 4-1 record. They moved on to the state tournament, also at Westside/Westgate, where they posted a 4-0 record and earned Springfield its first PONY Baseball state title at any age level. Their second tournament game against Elkhorn, a 10-9 victory in the finals, was as thrilling a game as you'll ever see at that age level.

While the Mustang team was playing at state, the Pony All-Stars team was cruising toward a second consecutive district title in Carter Lake, outscoring its opponents 60 to 21 while compiling a 5-1 record. They defeated Tri-County PONY League rival Bennington in the finals to claim the championship. After winning their first game in the state tournament, also in Carter Lake, they defeated Bennington again in a tight, exciting ball game to earn a spot in the state finals. Bennington won its losers' bracket game to join Springfield in the finals, and they defeated Springfield twice to claim the state crown.

Our web site has all the details including rosters, game results and photos. Check it out!

NEW DIAMOND SPORTS COORDINATORS NEEDED

Before the next diamond sports season arrives, we need several new coordinators to replace volunteers who are stepping aside. We'll need a Field Maintenance Coordinator, Field Scheduling Coordinator, and an Umpire Coordinator for baseball.

Last season we didn't have a Field Maintenance Coordinator. President Frank Staskiewicz filled in and even handled most of the pre-game field preparation duties. Frank will not handle those duties in 2003, so somebody else needs to step into that role. The job involves recruiting a handful of volunteers to handle pre-game field preparation and routine field maintenance during the season. Pre-season field clean-ups need to be coordinated with all the teams too.

Mike and Michelle Kalin have done an excellent job handling Field Scheduling Coordinator duties for the past two seasons. The job is pretty simple and involves filling in the blanks on our field and batting cage schedules with games and practices when coaches call.

Art Land has been our baseball Umpire Coordinator for the past three seasons. In 2001 he hooked SYAA up with Metro Umpires to supply certified umpires for our home games. He has been responsible for scheduling umpires with Metro at the start of the season and relaying cancellations and make-up games to Metro as needed.

Please give serious consideration to how you can help fill these key positions. If we don't have volunteers in place early in 2003, the jobs can't get done and our players and coaches will suffer the effects next season. Contact any of the outgoing volunteers to learn more about the positions they held. Contact any officer to volunteer for one of the positions.

BASEBALL

Jeff Kreifels, Commissioner

Each March I organize team rosters, assign coaches and advise them of their responsibilities, then I wish them luck and send them on their way. Every season our teams compete well, but the 2002 season was exceptional. A district champ and runner-up, plus a state champion and runner-up capped a remarkable baseball season. Hats off to our teams for your successes achieved this year.

I truly believe SYAA continues to move forward and improve every year, and the past season's results were clear indicators of this. I hope the program continues on this positive course.

The teeball and coach pitch seasons went off with virtually no problems. A great big "thank you" goes out to those who coached, helped and supported all the kids who participated this year.

I'm really satisfied with the way the 2002 season turned out. It reflects well on our community and gains the respect of other area programs.

VOLLEYBALL

Leigh Ann Amerine, Commissioner

I haven't had much luck finding a competitive league for the girls to play in this year, so for our first season of volleyball will basically have a camp and play in one or two tournaments.

I'm working out the details and seeking guidance from Jason Owens, Platteview's varsity volleyball coach. We need to determine which age levels to work with this year, how much to charge for a registration fee, and which tournaments to play in.

Details will be available on our web site, and we'll send information home from school as needed. Please contact me if you're interested in helping out.

Remember to visit our web site to get all the latest information about each of our sports. You'll find schedules, photos, game summaries and much more. Even driving directions to the places where we play! It's all located on the web at:

www.syaaonline.org

FOOTBALL

Mike Williams, Commissioner

As of this writing, our two tackle football teams are having good seasons. The 11&12-year-old team is undefeated at 6-0, while the 9&10-year-old team is 4-2, both playing in the Panther rec league. Our teams ventured to Council Bluffs on October 5 to play the Panther's top competitive teams and get a feel for how SYAA's program stacks up. The older team won handily, and the younger team was shut out. Overall, it was a good experience for our young players to play tougher competition, and it was a good measuring stick for our program.

Our flag football team is competing in the Bellevue Junior Sports Association's rec league again this year. They're currently 3-3 on the season and having a lot of fun learning the game of football.

Our banquet is scheduled for November 10. Tickets need to be purchased in advance, so please contact Louise Jacott (592-0424) right away if you plan to attend.

BASKETBALL

Luke Shepherd, Commissioner

We'll be sponsoring our first competitive basketball teams this fall. Two girls teams, one 7th grade and one 8th grade, will be competing in the Twin River Valley League when the season gets underway October 26.

Since these teams were already formed by their coaches, we simply incorporated them into SYAA. Some boys teams have also formed, and we'll be working toward sponsoring them in the Twin River Valley League for competition starting in January. As our program evolves we'll institute a tryout process to form our teams in future seasons.

We're learning as we go through the process of starting a new program, but we're headed in the right direction and excited about where we're going with basketball. The high school coaches are cooperating with us, which will help us succeed at providing the best opportunities for the players. I'd like to hear from you if you're interested in helping in some way, or if you're interested in getting a team sponsored by us this season.

BALL FIELD RENOVATIONS

The South Sarpy School District #46 Foundation allocated \$5,000 to purchase a quick-drying agent to apply to the infields of the ball fields at Westmont and Springfield elementary schools. Wes Reed, principal at Springfield Elementary, made the initial request for the funds based upon cost estimates provided by Odey's for a product called Turface, one of the best quick-dry soil additives on the market today. After the Foundation approved the request, we got involved with Mr. Reed to help get Turface purchased and field projects moving forward at both schools this fall.

If you've driven by the ball field at Springfield Elementary School recently, you probably noticed a lot more work was done than simply adding Turface to the infield. Thanks to the generosity of Ray Heimes, owner of Heimes Excavating, the entire ball field was leveled and slightly graded to drain better. SYAA purchased grass seed for the outfield, and Heimes mechanically seeded the field for us. The Springfield Volunteer Fire Department stopped by the next night to water the entire field, then heavy rains moved in the same week and gave the field a good soaking. The outfield is already green with new grass.

Our representative at Odey's recommends another seeding early next spring. He feels we'll be able to play on the field next season, but we may have to limit activity to younger teams who won't use much of the outfield. We'll see what the field looks like before making a determination.

A crew was scheduled to work at Westmont Elementary on Saturday, October 19, weather permitting. Clay Krapp generously offered to tear up the infield with his farm equipment. The work crew will apply the Turface and smooth the infield. The Westmont field should be available for immediate use.

We're very grateful to Mr. Reed, Ray and Tom Heimes and Springfield VFD for their efforts to improve the ball fields we use. We also appreciate the work Treasurer Mike Kalin put forth coordinating and working on the Springfield project, and the time Clay Krapp sacrificed to take his equipment up to Westmont to prepare the field for the work crew assembled by John McGill.

CALENDAR

Thursday, November 14

Board meeting, 7:00 p.m., Springfield Legion

Sunday, November 10

Football banquet, 2:00 p.m., Sarpy Co. Fairgrounds

Thursday, December 12

Board meeting, time & location TBD to accommodate the board's holiday party (check the web site)

Monday, December 16

January newsletter deadline

Thursday, January 9

Board meeting, 7:00 p.m., Springfield Legion (board nominations)

Saturday, January tbd

Diamond sports registration (watch for details)

Thursday, February 13

Board meeting, 7:00 p.m., Springfield Legion (board elections)

Please note board meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change. Anyone may observe meetings, but you should check with a board member to make sure the meeting schedule hasn't changed.

SYAA DATA BASE

SYAA's growth and expansion into more sports required us to purchase a new computer program to help track teams, players and families. We're in the process of loading data from our old data base into the new one. Once the task is accomplished it will be much easier for us to track registered players and produce rosters, mailing labels and more.

One thing we will not do is share our mailing list with any other organization. We treat the data we collect from you as private information, and only our Registrar team of Angie and Kevin Carlson has electronic access to the data. Roster reports and mailing labels will be distributed within SYAA only on an as-needed basis.

SYAA is a non-profit youth sports organization dedicated to providing boys and girls in the Springfield, Nebraska, community a variety of opportunities to participate in sports and develop athletic and life skills through preparation and competition.